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On the Street: A Content Analysis of Body Imagery in Streetstyle Fashion Blogs

Ashley Kraus and Nicole Martins

This study investigated whether streetstyle blogs provide an alternative to the thin-ideal found in traditional media. We analyzed images of 481 individuals from 5 streetstyle blogs. The majority of women (72%) and men (62%) were coded as below-average weight. Most women (60%) positioned themselves in accordance with Goffman's gender-role stereotypes. Further, men were portrayed as more facially prominent than women, indicating that men are valued for their intellect whereas women are valued for their bodies. Although these Web sites have been celebrated for their use of "ordinary people," the results suggest that they promote the same body ideals found in mainstream media

Scholars have studied the thin-ideal in the mass media for the past several decades (Harrison & Hefner, 2008). Content analyses of both print and electronic media consistently find that a curvaceous yet-thin ideal is the norm for females (Byrd-Bredbenner & Murray, 2003) and a lean, muscular ideal is the norm for males (Labre, 2005; Lanzieri & Cook, 2013). Yet the continued focus on body imagery in traditional media might be responsible for this finding. To date, few studies have examined the thin-ideal in new media contexts (see Harrison & Hefner, 2008).

In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that the Internet might provide a healthy alternative to the thin-ideal shown in traditional media. Streetstyle blogs are a genre of fashion Web sites that feature images of fashion-forward individuals from public spaces such as parks and outdoor cafes. Bloggers showcase authentic style via pedestrian models, or "ordinary people" that are fashionably dressed. These pedestrian models are neither professional models nor celebrities, and presumably, are devoid of any appearance altering modifications (i.e., Photoshop). Perhaps it is no surprise, then, that these Web sites have received attention in the popular press for the healthy body ideals they espouse (Sherman, 2010). Although it would seem that such models offer a healthy alternative to the idealized images featured in traditional media, no research to date has systematically studied this assumption. Given that

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Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media 61(2), 2017, pp. 351–367
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2017.1309410 *ISSN: 0883-8151 print/1550-6878 online*

exposure to idealized imagery has been linked to body dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptomology in both men and women (for review see Harrison & Hefner, 2008), an investigation of whether these ideals persist online is warranted. The present study fills this gap in the literature by performing a systematic content analysis of body imagery within Internet fashion blogs.

Literature Review

The Thin-ideal in Mass Media

Research on print and electronic media has investigated the portrayal of women's body imagery. In print media, several studies have shown that women are represented in accordance with the thin-ideal (Byrd-Bredbenner & Murray, 2003; Spitzer, Henderson, & Zivian, 1999; Wasylkiw, Emms, Meuse, & Poirier, 2009). For example, Wasylkiw and colleagues (2009) content analyzed 259 advertisements in women's fashion and fitness magazines and found the sample was overwhelmingly thin, with 95% of the sample classified as ectomorphic or lean. Moreover, the body size of women in print media has decreased significantly over time (Byrd-Bredbenner & Murray, 2003) whereas as the average American female has grown significantly over time (Spitzer et al., 1999).

The thin-ideal for women is also prevalent in television content (Fouts & Burggraf, 2000; Greenberg, Eastin, Hofschire, Lachlan, & Brownell, 2003). Fouts and Burggraf (2000) examined 37 female characters within 18 popular television programs. Most of the sample (76%) was coded as "below average" weight. In addition, this thin body-type was reinforced in the commentary made by male co-stars. There was a significant correlation between character heaviness and negative comments made by male co-stars as well as a significant correlation between thinness and positive male comments. Greenberg and colleagues (2003) analyzed a sample of 1,018 characters across ten popular television programs. Television characters in this sample were not only much thinner than the average American, but overweight characters tended to be associated with negative characteristics (e.g., overweight characters were less likely to interact with romantic partners). These findings indicate that television reinforces the thin-ideal by stigmatizing fatness and rewarding thinness.

Only a couple of studies to date have examined body imagery on the Internet (e.g., Owen & Laurel-Seller, 2006; Slater, Tiggemann, Hawkins, & Werchon, 2012). Slater and colleagues (2012) content analyzed 631 advertisements found on popular teen Web sites. The authors reported that 61% of advertisements featured an individual who exemplified the thin or muscular ideal. Owen and Laurel-Seller (2006) also content analyzed body imagery within Internet advertisements. The authors compared the body mass index (BMI) of models in Internet ads to that of *Playboy* models and found that although the BMI of *Playboy* models tended to be smaller than that of Internet models, the latter were still overwhelmingly underweight. Further, in the same study, a survey of college females revealed that Internet models were

considered to be more realistic than *Playboy* models. The authors argue that the images of Internet models might be more problematic to consumers because they are thought to be more realistic. Despite findings that women on the Internet conform to traditional body standards, there is still reason to believe streetstyle blogs might offer an alternative, because they feature ordinary people. In contrast, the individuals in the advertisements studied above were professional models. It is also likely that digital retouching of the image was used. Thus, the pedestrian models featured in streetstyle blogs are unique in that they provide a more normative body portrayal.

Content analyses of male body imagery in media assert that, like women in media, men are lean and devoid of fat (Dallesasse & Kluck, 2013; Labre, 2005; Lanzieri & Cook, 2013). Lanzieri and Cook (2013) performed a content analysis of men in 23 male-audience magazines and found that the majority of men had a muscular but lean physique. Similarly, Labre (2005) looked at 2,324 images of men found in *Men's Fitness* and *Men's Health* magazines from 1999 to 2003. Almost every man in the sample was coded as "very muscular" (82%) and "low" in body fat (96%). Dallesasse and Kluck (2013) examined 74 primary male cast members of popular reality television programs. Nearly 70% of the sample was coded as "somewhat muscular." These findings assert that the "ideal' body for men is prevalent across media. Furthermore, men in media have become increasingly idealistic over time. For instance, Morrison and Halton (2009) analyzed 150 top-grossing action films from 1980–2006 and found men's body fat had significantly decreased while their muscularity had significantly increased in that time.

Taken together, the research demonstrates that the standard of physical attractiveness for both women and men has become impossibly lean (e.g., Byrd-Bredbenner & Murray, 2003; Morrison & Halton, 2009). As a result, exposure to such imagery has been linked to outcomes such as body dissatisfaction (e.g., Agliata & Tantleff–Dunn, 2004; Swami & Smith, 2012) and disordered eating (e.g., Harrison & Hefner, 2006). In addition, the lean but muscular ideal for men has been linked to a desire for both weight loss and weight gain (Barlett, Vowels, & Saucier, 2008).

Theoretical Explanations

Given that exposure to the thin or lean ideal is associated with negative outcomes, what mechanism might explain this relationship? One such mechanism is social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2011). This theory posits that viewers learn behavioral responses through direct experience or by viewing models in their environment. These models can be parents, teachers, even people on television.

A key component to social cognitive theory is prevalence, which is how frequently a modeled event is depicted. Bandura (2011) argued that prevalence is important because greater frequency of a depicted event or behavior presents more opportunity for subsequent attention, learning, and imitation. Indeed, prevalence of the thin-ideal has been linked to endorsement/internalization of the thin-ideal (Thompson & Stice, 2001), body dissatisfaction (Swami & Smith, 2012), and disordered eating (Harrison

& Hefner, 2006). Thus, it is important that we assess the prevalence or frequency a user might encounter the thin-ideal on these Web sites. Yet rather than pose a directional hypothesis, we asked a general research question given that these sites may provide an alternative to the thin-ideal:

RQ_1: Will individuals in streetstyle blogs have body sizes that reinforce the thin or lean ideal?

Another important assumption of social cognitive theory is the viewer's similarity to the model. Bandura (2011) explains that a viewer's similarity to the model is a key predictor of whether or not a viewer will imitate the modeled behavior. One way that a viewer might feel similar to a media model is due to a shared race and/or ethnicity (Anderson & Williams, 1983). Previous content analyses of body imagery have found the media landscape to be predominantly White (Fouts & Burggraf, 2000; Greenberg et al., 2003). Scholars have argued that this serves as a protection for minority viewers (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). The assumption is that White women are most susceptible to the perils of the thin-ideal because they more strongly identify with media models, who are usually thin and White. Past research has supported this assumption (Botta, 2000; Milkie, 1999). However, a recent meta-analysis of 98 studies shows that differences between races are diminishing (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). Specifically, Grabe and Hyde (2006) found there to be a significant, but small, difference in body dissatisfaction between White and Black women, but no significant difference between White and Asian women or White and Hispanic women. The authors explain that this might be due to differences in gender-role stereotypes between racial or ethnic groups. They argue that Black women are taught to be strong and independent, whereas Asian and Hispanic women are raised to be passive and dependent in accordance with the White feminine gender-role.

Studies have supported the notion that Asian and Latina women experience body image disturbance related to the White feminine ideal (e.g., Nouri, Hill, & Orrell-Valente, 2011; Schooler, 2008). For instance, Nouri and colleagues (2011) surveyed 238 college women and found Asian American women exhibited unhealthy weight-control behaviors comparable to their European American counterparts. Additionally, in a longitudinal study of 52 adolescent Latina girls, Schooler (2008) found that as exposure to mainstream media increased so did body dissatisfaction. If there are changes occurring in the way minorities are affected by idealized media, it is possible it is in part due to changes within media content. Social cognitive theory would argue that more racial and ethnic diversity in media would allow a greater opportunity for minority viewers to achieve similarity with the media model and thereby develop body dissatisfaction. As it is unlikely that content has become more diverse, perhaps minorities in media have assimilated to the thin-ideal that was once predominately White. In accordance, the following research questions were posed.

RQ_{2a}: Will these streetstyle blogs show racial and ethnic diversity?

RQ_{2b}: Will there be body size differences among racial and ethnic groups?

Social cognitive theory not only explains why viewers attend to certain models, but also informs how attitudes and cognitions about models might be formed. In this case, the way models are positioned in the photographs might influence how viewers come to think about men and women. Goffman (1979) argues that the way in which individuals are posed in images contributes to gender stereotypes. Goffman further explains that these positions are indicative of gender differences in relation to power, influence, and authority. For instance, a common gender stereotype is that the man is the head of the household. Portraying a woman to be physically lower than a man (e.g., she is sitting while he is standing beside her) might subtly reinforce the stereotype that women are subservient to men and that men have more power. Goffman (1979) performed a frame analysis of over 500 advertisements taken from popular newspapers and magazines. The analysis yielded five categories of positions that were (a) prevalent throughout the sample and (b) potentially problematic in the way they portrayed stereotypical gender roles. The present study employed three of Goffman's positions for analysis: feminine touch (e.g., the individual touches himself /herself or his/her clothes in an unnatural way), ritualization of subordination (e.g., the individual lowers himself/herself physically in some form or other of prostration), and licensed withdrawal (e.g., the individual removes himself/herself psychologically from the situation at large).

In a recent application of Goffman's body positions, Lindner (2004) content analyzed women in advertisements within *Time* and *Vogue*. Findings assert that the positions occurred with greater frequency in *Vogue* than they did *Time*. These findings elucidate that not only are these positions still prevalent in current media, but they are especially prevalent with respect to fashion media. Social cognitive theory would likely predict that exposure to portrayals of submissive, withdrawn female models informs attitudes about a woman's place in society among media consumers. The next research question was advanced to investigate whether models in these blogs will be posed in accordance to Goffman's categories.

RQ_3: Will men and women be posed similar to the positions explained in Goffman's (1979) *Gender Advertisements*?

Another stereotypical representation that might be related to thoughts about power and authority is facial prominence, or "faceism," which is defined as the ratio of facial prominence compared to the prominence of the body. Past research has indicated that there are significant gender differences in terms of facial prominence (e.g., Archer, Iritani, Kimes, & Barrios, 1983). Research shows that men's faces are more prominent in images whereas women's faces are not, emphasizing the body instead (Archer et al., 1983). This disparity features men as dynamic individuals (e.g., independent, intelligent, and powerful) and women as static and objectified (Frederickson & Roberts, 1997). Social cognitive theory would predict that consistent exposure to female models who are not facially prominent encourages objectifying

attitudes about women. Although we did not test the effects of exposure on attitudes here, trends concerning facial prominence were examined, and the following research question asked:

RQ_{4a}: Will trends regarding facial prominence persist in streetstyle blogs?

Finally, scholars have argued that the flip side of faceism is bodyism (i.e., emphasis of the body). If bodyism places a heightened importance on the body, then standards for how that body should look might also be heightened. As such, it is conceivable that individuals who deviate from the thin or lean ideal might be portrayed with less bodyism and thereby be portrayed as more facially prominent than those who conform to the ideal. Thus, the final research question was posed:

RQ_{4b}: Will there be body size differences in facial prominence?

Method

Sample

The blogs sampled were chosen based on a ranking of the top 10 streetstyle blogs by TopSitesBlog.com (http://topsitesblog.com/street-fashion-blogs/). The ranking was conceived by use of Alexa Rank (e.g., the percentage of all Web users who have visited that site), as well as popularity on social networking sites. We chose five of the 10 blogs on this list. These five blogs were chosen because they allowed readers to post comments on the image, which was a research question explored in another study. Once the streetstyle blogs were selected, we had to consider the sampling frame. Two factors were taken into consideration. The first factor was the season. The sample was comprised of both summer and winter months to ensure that seasonal clothing did not skew findings (e.g., a thick coat during winter months would hide a model's body). The second factor taken into consideration was the occurrence of "Fashion Week," which is a series of premiere events in the fashion industry when runway shows for the season occur. As these fashion shows are frequented by elites of the fashion industry, and streetstyle bloggers tend to photograph these elites outside of the shows, the sample may not reflect the same aesthetic found in the other months. The two months containing the Fashion Weeks were removed from consideration. After the removal of Fashion Week months, one cold weather month and one warm weather month were randomly selected. The two months selected were November 2011 and May 2012. We looked at all streetstyle photographs posted by the bloggers in these months (n = 503). Images outside of the streetstyle portion of the blog (e.g., advertisements) were not included in the sample. Once the sample was chosen, we captured the visual data by saving each individual image to a hard drive for coding.

Conceptual Definitions

Professional Models. Professional models are fashion models, actors, musicians and/or famous media personalities (e.g., Ryan Seacrest, Kim Kardashian). Coders were instructed to identify professional models in one of three ways: if the individual was a well-known celebrity (e.g., Oprah Winfrey), if the blogger described the individual as a model, actor, and/or musician in the blog post or headline, or if the blogger provided the name of the individual. When the blogger provided the name of the individual coders were instructed to Google search the name in order to determine if the model was a celebrity.

Pedestrian Models. Pedestrian models were not identifiable as professional models/actors/musicians or celebrities in general. They appeared to be ordinary people.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was the individual or individuals in the image. Individuals who were in the background of the image were not coded. When there were multiple individuals in the foreground, coders were instructed to label each individual (from left to right) as "a," "b," "c," or "d" and code each individual separately. When there were more than four individuals in the image coders were instructed to only code the first four; this only occurred in one image.

Power

To ensure that our sample would yield enough power to catch rare variables Krippendorff (2012) recommends a sample of 299, assuming the desired level of significance is .05 and the probability of the least likely units is .01 (e.g., 1 in 100). To be conservative, we opted for a desired level of significance of .01 and the probability of the least likely units of .01. This resulted in the recommendation of $N = 459$.

Measures

Demographic information. Each image was coded for basic demographic information including: apparent age (1 = Child/17 and younger, 2 = Adult/18–65, 3 = Elderly/66+), apparent race or ethnicity (1 = Asian, 2 = Black, 3 = Hispanic/Latino/a/Spanish, 4 = Middle Eastern, 5 = White, 6 = Other), and apparent biological sex (1 = Male, 2 = Female, 3 = Indeterminable). Individuals were also coded as pedestrian models (1), or professional models (2). Images with no individuals

(e.g., landscapes, buildings, and objects) were not coded. The last category in this area is country of origin. Coders were instructed to record the city and country that the image was taken in, if the blogger provided such information. The recorded locations were later organized by region (1 = North America, 2 = Europe, 3 = Asia, 4 = Africa, 5 = Australia, 6 = South America and Central America, 7 = Indeterminable).

Body Size. The Fallon-Rozin (1985) 9-point scale was used to code body size. Coders were instructed to select the figure drawing that most represented the model of study. The scale figure drawings run from 1 (*very below average weight*) to 9 (*very above average weight*). In order to curb difficulty achieving inter-coder reliability across the nine-point scale we allowed for a deviation of +/- 1, as was practiced by Fouts and Burggraf (2000).

Feminine Touch. Feminine touch occurs when the individual caresses himself or herself (e.g., hair, face, lips, or clothes) or uses fingers and hands to trace the outline of an object, cradle it, or caress its surface. Individuals who did not display these criteria were coded as no (0). Individuals who did exhibit any of these descriptors were coded as yes (1). Individuals who were ambiguously positioned (e.g., the body was segmented) were coded as indeterminable (2).

Ritualization of Subordination. Coders were instructed to look for four descriptors of ritualization of subordination. Models who did not display any of these criteria were coded as no (0). Models with at least one of the descriptors were coded as yes (1). The first descriptor was an individual positioned with his or her body lowered physically in some form of prostration. This includes lying or sitting on the ground, bed, or sofa. The second was an individual who canted his or her head or entire body. The third was an individual being embraced by another, inhibiting his or her movement. The fourth was an individual leaning on an object, person, or structure as a means of support.

Licensed Withdrawal. The individual appears removed psychologically from the situation at large or is shown mentally drifting from the physical scene, leaving him/her disoriented and dependent on the protectiveness of others. This is indicated by an expansive smile or laughter, covering the face or mouth, being involved in a phone conversation or withdrawing gaze from the scene at large. Although an expansive smile or laugh might be considered a sign of someone's engagement in a conversation, these behaviors were coded as licensed withdrawal when the individual appeared to be smiling or laughing for no reason, or for a reason that was disconnected from the scene at large. For example, an individual photographed alone and smiling giddily to her or himself would have been coded as licensed withdrawal. Individuals who did not display these criteria were coded as no (0). Individuals who did exhibit any of these descriptors were coded as yes (1).

Faceism Ratio. The faceism ratio is the measure of facial prominence compared to the prominence of the body. Coders were instructed to follow the calculation laid out by Archer and colleagues (1983). The numerator is the distance from the top of the head to the lowest point of the chin (in millimeters). The denominator is the distance from the top of the head to the lowest visible part of the body (in millimeters). The ratio is calculated by dividing the numerator by the denominator. Coders were instructed to round measurements to the nearest tenth. Images containing any of the following characteristics were deemed inapplicable to the faceism ratio, as per Archer and colleagues (1983) stipulations: photographs that aimed to capture a specific region of the body, photographs of disembodied heads, instances where the body is turned completely from the camera so that the back is photographed and the face is not at all visible. In order to insure reliability each coder was instructed to view the assigned model, print the image and then measure the model from the print out.

Training and Reliability

Two female graduate students (one of whom is the first author), and one male undergraduate at a large Midwestern university completed the coding for this content analysis. The coders were given the codebook, which included detailed definitions of each variable as well as several appendices of example images in order to facilitate training. Next, the coders performed six practice reliability sessions over the course of approximately two months. Once training sessions revealed that coders were reliably coding the variables of interest (e.g., alpha >.70), each coder was assigned a randomly determined overlap of 29% of the sample (140 cases each) to allow for an assessment of intercoder reliability. The remaining cases were coded by the first author. Intercoder reliability was assessed using Krippendorff's (2012) alpha. The coefficients for each variable are reported as follows: Apparent race or ethnicity (.79), Feminine Touch (.74), Ritualization of Subordination (.59), Licensed Withdrawal (.70), Apparent sex (.90), Pedestrian model (.79), Body Size (.73), Faceism (.80).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The sample consisted of n = 481 unique individuals. The majority of the individuals were photographed alone (n = 448, 93.1%). Images that consisted of only scenery and/or non-humans (n = 14, 2.8%) were not included in the analyses. The blogs included in the sample were: The Sartorialist (n = 147, 31%), StyleList (n = 122, 25%), Facehunter (n = 97, 20%), The Locals (n = 35, 7%), and Streetpeeper (n = 80, 17%). Overall the sample consisted mostly of individuals who were adult (n = 463,

96%), female (n = 373, 78%), European (n = 227, 47%), and a pedestrian model (n = 474, 99%). The frequencies related to race or ethnicity are as follows: White (n = 327, 68%), Asian (n = 69, 14%), Black (n = 31, 7%), Other (n = 23, 5%), Hispanic/Latino (n = 19, 4%), Middle Eastern (n = 7, %), Indeterminable (n = 4, 0.8%).

Correlations for key variables of interest are reported in Table 1. Related to the research questions of interest, body size is negatively correlated with apparent sex (i.e., women had a lower body size than men) and positively correlated with race/ethnicity (i.e., Blacks had a larger body size than any other racial or ethnic group). See Table 1.

Research Questions

The first research question asked whether individuals in streetstyle blogs would have bodies that reinforce the thin-ideal. The majority of women, 72%, were coded as a body size of *2* or below, and the majority of men, 62%, were coded as a *3* or below on the Fallon and Rozin (1985) nine-point scale. These figures correspond to below-average weight and average weight for women and men, respectively. Thus, the answer to the first research question is yes; individuals in these blogs reinforce the thin-ideal. Additionally, an independent samples t test revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean body size for men (M = 3.36, SD = 1.01) and that of women (M = 2.24, SD = .83), $t(476) = 11.55$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The first part of the second research question asked about racial and ethnic diversity. The sample consisted of mostly White (n = 327, 68%) and Asian (n = 69, 14%) individuals. The second part of the second research question asked whether there would be body size differences between racial or ethnic groups. We ran a univariate general linear model analysis of variance (ANOVA) that tested differences in mean body size regarding race or ethnicity. In the model body size was the dependent

Table 1
Point Biserial Correlations of Key Variables (N = 484)

	1	2
1. Faceism		
2. Body Size	–.07	
3. Race—Asian	.02	–.08
4. Race—Black	–.02	.15**
5. Race—Hispanic/Latino	–.05	.07
6. Race—Middle Eastern	.06	–.01
7. Race—White	–.13	–.07
8. Race—Other	.04	–.01
9. Sex	–.02	–.47**

Note: Codes assigned to the sex variable were males = 1 and females = 2. * $p < .05$., **$p < .01$

Figure 1
Frequency of Body Sizes for Men

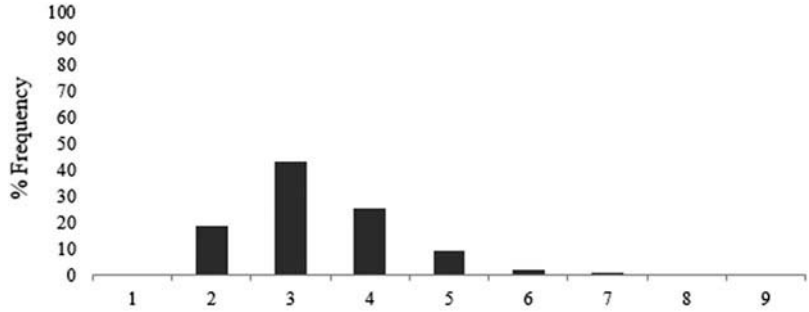
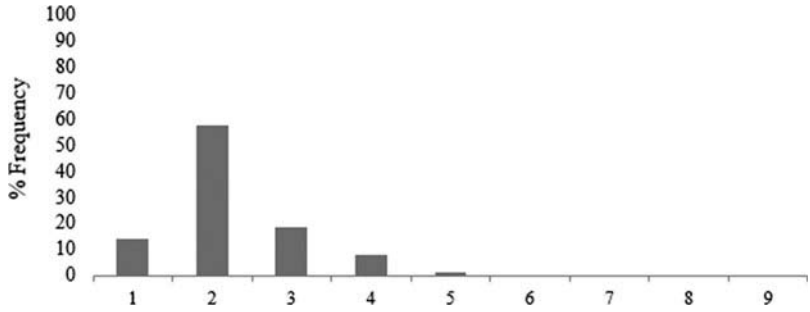


Figure 2
Frequency of Body Sizes for Women



variable and apparent race or ethnicity as well as apparent sex were independent variables. Both apparent race and apparent sex were run as fixed factors. Results of the ANOVA showed a significant difference in mean body size between racial or ethnic groups, $F(3, 432) = 4.65$, $p < .01$. A Tukey post-hoc test showed that Blacks ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 1.00$) had a significantly larger body size than Whites ($M = 2.45$, $SD = .97$) and Asians ($M = 2.29$, $SD = .91$). The ANOVA also revealed a significant interaction between race or ethnicity and sex, $F(3, 432) = 3.37$, $p < .05$, such that Asian women ($M = 2.13$, $SD = .86$) were significantly smaller than all other racial or ethnicity groups.

The third research question asked whether individuals would be posed similar to the positions explained by Goffman's (1979) *Gender Advertisements*. First, chi square analyses were run individually, comparing ritualization of subordination,

licensed withdrawal, and feminine touch to apparent sex. The chi square test of the association between ritualization of subordination and apparent sex was statistically significant, $X^2(1) = 22.23$, $p < .001$. Women ($n = 225$, 60%) were more often shown in this position than were men ($n = 37$, 35%). A post-hoc comparison of the observed and expected values indicated that the frequency of women with ritualization of subordination was significantly different than the frequency of men without ritualization of subordination ($p < .05$) and the cell for women without ritualization of subordination was significantly different than the cell for men with ritualization of subordination ($p < .05$). The association between apparent sex and licensed withdrawal was not statistically significant, $X^2(1) = 0.04$, $p = .83$. Women ($n = 118$, 32%) were not posed with licensed withdrawal with greater frequency than men ($n = 35$, 33%).

We further examined Goffman's body positions in relation to body size. In order to run this analysis an index of the three Goffman positioning variables was computed. The index was computed by recoding each variable as either occurring (1) or not occurring (0). Thus, an individual who showed none of the Goffman variables would be coded as "0" and an individual with all three would be coded as "3." Results of an univariate general linear model ANOVA, in which body size was the dependent variable and the index of Goffman variables as well as apparent sex were fixed factors, showed significant differences between the mean body size of individuals concerning the occurrence of one or more of Goffman's variables for gender stereotyped positioning, $F(2, 468) = 4.18$, $p < .05$. A Tukey post-hoc test indicated that those shown with no Goffman positions had a significantly larger mean body size ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.02$) than those who were shown with at least one Goffman position ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.96$) and those shown with at least two ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 0.89$). It should be noted that individuals who were coded as having all three Goffman variables ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 0.82$) were not included in the analysis because they only accounted for 0.8 percent ($n = 4$) of the sample.

The fourth research question asked about facial prominence. The first component of this research question asked whether ratios in facial prominence would be consistent with past research. In order to answer this question an independent samples t test was run. The t test revealed a significant difference between the facial prominence ratio for men ($M = .22$, $SD = .14$) and that of women ($M = .17$, $SD = .08$), $t(455) = 4.92$, $p < .001$. These findings indicate that men were more facially prominent than women.

The second part of the fourth research question, asked whether there would be body size differences in facial prominence. A Pearson correlation analysis showed that facial prominence and body size were significantly, positively correlated, $r(454) = .21$, $p < .001$. Given that body size and sex are related, separate correlations for males and females showed a significant correlation for men, $r(98) = .25$, $p < .05$, but not for women, $r(353) = .04$, $p = .45$. Thus, for men, but not women, when body size ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.03$) increases facial prominence ($M = .22$, $SD = .14$) increases.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that individuals featured in streetstyle blogs conform to the thin or lean ideal found in traditional mass media. Findings also indicate that these portrayals might influence viewer attitudes concerning sexual stereotypes of men and women because women are more often positioned in ways that characterize them as powerless compared to men. Thus, body imagery in streetstyle blogs is not different from the idealized portrayals found in traditional media.

The results of this study have several implications for social cognitive theory. First, in terms of prevalence, this study finds that the thin or lean ideal is commonplace in streetstyle blogs. This study found the average woman to have a body size of 2.2 and the average man to have a body size of 3.4, on a 9-point scale. Other studies that have used the Fallon and Rozin (1985) 9-point scale have equated body sizes between 1 and 3 to be below average weight (Fouts & Burggraf, 2000; Fouts & Vaughan, 2002). The women in this sample, then, are firmly in the below average-weight group. The men in this sample were also below average. Thus, women and men featured in streetstyle blogs contribute to the prevalence of the thin and lean ideal, and provide additional models from which viewers can learn.

Second, these findings shed some light on which models may be the most attractive to viewers. According to social cognitive theory, a viewer's similarity to the model is an important predictor of whether the viewer might be effected by the model (Bandura, 2011). Race or ethnicity has been explained as an important variable of similarity. As our sample was predominantly White and Asian, social cognitive theory would suggest that White and Asian viewers are most likely to feel similar to these models and thereby attracted to the modeled behavior. In addition, Asians and Whites in our sample were both significantly smaller than Blacks. According to social cognitive theory, White and Asian viewers, females especially, are the most at risk to the prevalence of the thin-ideal represented in these blogs. It should be noted that although Asian and White women had the smallest body sizes, the mean body sizes for Black and Hispanic women are also categorized as below-average weight. Thus, all racial and ethnic groups are represented in accordance to the thin-ideal, which might explain why other studies (e.g., Grabe & Hyde, 2006) have found minority women to experience a heightened drive for thinness than before.

In addition, social cognitive theory explains that viewers can learn attitudes and cognitions from models (Bandura, 2011). As such, portrayals that align with sexual stereotypes might teach viewers to subscribe to corresponding attitudes about men and women. Body positioning is an important characteristic in the matter of enduring sexual stereotypes that portray women as powerless or submissive (RQ_3). In this case, gender differences with regard to ritualization of subordination emerged. Women's positions aligned with ritualization of subordination significantly more frequently than men's. Past research has found ritualization of subordination to occur frequently

in print advertisements, especially those found in fashion magazines (Lindner, 2004). As this is a pose that models in magazines are presumably instructed to adopt, it is surprising that it also occurs in these blogs where it can be assumed that individuals position themselves. Perhaps women have internalized this position of submission. Social cognitive theory explains how this internalization might have occurred. Given the pervasiveness of these portrayals, exposure to body positions in traditional media might have taught these individuals to assume corresponding attitudes about how to position their own bodies.

In contrast, there was not a significant difference in the frequency of licensed withdrawal among men and women. Licensed withdrawal is explained as an individual who appears psychologically removed from the situation at large. Usually the individual appears to be disoriented, their gaze drifting into the distance. Licensed withdrawal has been explained as portraying women as dependent on the protection of others, whereas men are typically shown to be alert and in control of the situation (Lindner, 2004). The similarity in frequency among men and women in this sample might be due to the nature of the position. Although licensed withdrawal was originally conceived to analyze women and not intended to be found in men (Goffman, 1979), these characteristics might also lend themselves to stereotypes of masculinity. Scholars have argued that the detached and individualistic cowboy is the quintessential ideal American male (Kolbe & Albanese, 1996). Kolbe and Albanese (1996) found over a quarter of their sample to be purposefully averting their gaze from the camera in accordance to the "cowboy" ideal. Perhaps men and women were positioned according to licensed withdrawal at similar rates because both sexes are stereotyped in this way.

Another way we examined the occurrence of Goffman's body positions was by body size. There were significant differences in body size between those devoid of Goffman's positions and both individuals who display one of the variables as well as those who display at least two of the variables. Those who were depicted with one or at least two of the positions both had a significantly smaller mean body size than those shown with none of the positions. As these positions are closely tied to stereotypes of femininity, the implication might be that women who deviate from the thin-ideal are less feminine than women who align with this ideal. This further supports the notion that exposure to these portrayals might inform attitudes about sexual stereotypes.

The discrepancy in facial prominence among men and women, also referred to as faceism, is yet another stereotypical representation that might be related to thoughts about power and authority (RQ_4). In order to examine faceism in these blogs, we calculated the ratio of the individual's face as compared to their body. Findings showed men had higher faceism ratio than women, indicating that men are more facially prominent. These findings are consistent with past research (Archer et al., 1983). However, despite this consistency, the difference in the facial prominence among men and women was not as stark other scholars have reported. For example, Archer and colleagues (1983) reported a .2 difference in the faceism ratios of men and women in American periodicals. They explain this difference as almost a full standard deviation. In the present study there was just a .05 difference in the faceism

ratio of men and women. Perhaps the difference was not as dramatic here because the goal of streetstyle blogs is to feature the clothes. This goal certainly lends itself to emphasizing the body more so than the face. Future research should further explore faceism in the context of fashion media.

In addition, the relationship between faceism and body size was examined. We found that for men, but not women, body size is significantly and positively correlated to facial prominence. As men deviate from the lean ideal they become more facially prominent. Stereotypes of masculinity have aligned with a muscular body ideal (Morrison & Halton, 2009). Faceism has also been argued to align with stereotypes of masculinity in that it portrays men as independent and intelligent (Archer et. al., 1983). It is plausible that men with a larger body size are also more muscular and are shown to be more facially prominent in order to highlight their apparent masculinity. As the present study did not take into account the muscularity of the model, future research should make this consideration when examining male body imagery.

To summarize, results of this study indicate that pedestrian models on the Internet do not necessarily equate to realistic portrayals. Pedestrian models align with traditional models in reference to thin-ideal, body positioning, and facial prominence. However, the present study is not without limitations. For instance, social cognitive theory was employed to make inferences about how the thin-ideal might be retained by viewers as an observational model and thereby influence subsequent attitudes and cognitions. These inferences should not be confused for claims of causal or correlational effects on viewers. Also, in an effort to capture blogs that had the greatest potential for influence we only included popular, top-ranked streetstyle blogs in the sample. Less popular streetstyle blogs might feel less pressure to conform to industry standards and thereby provide viewers with a healthy alternative.

Despite these limitations, the present research makes an important contribution to media and body imagery scholarship. Recently, fashion magazines and other traditional media outlets have been pressured by journalists as well as the American public to employ models that are more realistic (Haughney, 2012). These demands specifically call for models who are “real” women and who are portrayed with little Photoshop manipulation (Haughney, 2012). Outlets that have complied with these demands have been celebrated as body image heroes (Haughney, 2012). However, are these “realistic” depictions of beauty really the answer? Given the findings of the present research it seems that answer is no. Despite the fact that individuals in streetstyle blogs are, for the most part, pedestrian models, their body sizes do not reflect that of actual real people. For instance, the average American man and woman is overweight (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). There is a blatant disconnect between the pedestrian models shown in these blogs and real people. It seems clear that the use of pedestrian models is being prematurely celebrated as a healthy alternative. This study provides a good first step at examining body imagery on the Internet as well as the use of pedestrian models. Future work should examine body imagery within other facets of the Internet, as well as the effects of pedestrian models on individuals.

Notes

1. Frame analysis is a technique conceived by Erving Goffman (1974). It is a coding system that focuses on subtle clues (e.g., facial expressions) that might convey deeper meaning.
2. It should be noted that two categories for apparent race or ethnicity, Middle Eastern and Other, were not included in this analysis.

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