

Cosmetics: Sexual Images

(Caution: this topic may not be appropriate for all age groups)

“Girls and teenagers are perhaps most vulnerable to beauty-industry propaganda.

For them, advertising is a window into adult life; a lesson in what it means to be

a woman. And lacking the sophistication of their older sisters and mothers, girls

are less likely to distinguish between fact and advertising fiction.”

(Source: Marketing Madness, A Survival Guide for A Consumer Society

Chapter 4 [Sex and Sexuality in Advertising](#): Section 1

The Iron Maiden: How advertising portrays women pp.79)

Sexual images

Print magazines display titillating imagery as well. Many magazine editorials and advertisements feature seductive models. According to one study, 40% of female models were considered “provocatively” dressed, up from 28% in 1983, and 18% of the men were in various states of undress, an increase from 11%.³² Sometimes advertisers go a step further and move from the suggestion of sex to its actual portrayal. Seventeen percent (17%) of magazine ads containing at least one man and one woman depicted or implied intercourse in 1993, up from one percent ten years earlier.³³

Yet magazines do publish articles that feature sexual health information. One study found 42% of articles dealing with sexual issues in teen magazines focused on sexual health and more than half of teen magazine articles covering sexuality (though not specifically sexual health) included mention of contraception, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and/or HIV/AIDS.³⁴

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of teens in one survey said they

received information about sex from magazines.35

Source: Mediascope: Teens Sex and the Media

Sex on TV . (1999). The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation,
44. pg. 30.