

FEMALE TOURISTS, MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS AND
TRAVEL PREFERENCES

by

Patricia Denbok

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

I set out to determine how the contemporary Western female traveler is constructed in popular travel media, and how resonant such images were with female travel consumers themselves. Two periods of ads were compared - 2003-2004, with 1989-1990 - from three widely circulated travel magazines, to gauge any differences discernible over the course of fifteen years with respect to how female tourists are being depicted. Methods included quantitative tabulated comparisons of the gender of travel ad subjects, content analyses of ads featuring female tourists, and participant input from questionnaires and focus groups. The female travel consumers who participated in this study were demographically compatible with the readership of the magazines in which these ads are shown. An intensive interview with one executive at a creative agency responsible for several of the ads was also conducted.

Results indicated that, while representations of female travelers have significantly increased both numerically and relatively to those depicting other sorts of tourists in recent years, this trend does not broadly include more progressive representations of women's increased socio-economic independence and status.

Female travelers are predominantly portrayed in ads as:

- Young and attractive
- Sexualized
- Passive
- Sleeping or reclining, seemingly more interested in lying around (decoratively) in a trance-like state and being “pampered” than in actively engaging with their environment.

These portrayals were incompatible overall with what female travelers themselves reported they enjoyed doing when they travel, and in terms of what they reported they find resonant in travel advertising. Overall, participants found the travel ads featuring females to be unappealing.

However, there were indications that the ways female travelers are portrayed in ads are slowly evolving to better reflect wider spread female economic independence and autonomy. In particular, a new phenomenon shown in more contemporary ads was the emergence of a “female gaze”. This finding coincides with the simultaneous sexualization of female travel ad subjects – perhaps in reflection of a current post-feminist emphasis on sexual freedom for females. Also noted was an increasing de-emphasis on specific destinations in ads, in favour of a more idealized generic “placelessness.” Female participants in this study did not generally like this trend.

There appeared to be some lag in the industry in recognizing that “regular” (i.e. older, average-looking) women are an important source of revenue, in terms of making a larger proportion of travel decisions. Several possible explanations were offered to address this apparent gap between how females in travel ads are being depicted, and the stated likes and preferences of actual female travel consumers who participated in this study.

Female traveler-participants in this study indicated they would very much prefer to see actively engaged, older and realistic-looking female subjects in travel ads, in specific destinations. They noted that travel is a particularly personal form of consumerism, often closely interwoven with one’s own sense of personal identity. That result may in part explain

iv

the strong negative reactions of many participants to some portrayals in these ads. Tourism-related marketing industries could also do far better in terms of better cultivating the goodwill of female travel consumers, and more successfully attracting their favorable attention.

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Dedication

To Rob and Lucy

Table of Contents

Author's Declaration.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Dedication.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of Tables.....	xiii
List of Figures.....	xv
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Framing Remarks.....	1
1.2 Research Questions.....	8
1.3 Study Structure.....	9
1.4 Definition of Terms.....	10
1.5 Anticipated Contributions of My Study.....	11
1.6 Theoretical Foundations of My Study.....	15
1.6.1 Post-structuralism.....	15
1.6.2 Feminism.....	16
1.6.3 Positionality and Reflexivity.....	19
1.7 My Own Positionality.....	19
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	23
2.1 Methodology.....	24
2.2 Predominant Themes.....	32
2.2.1 Cultural Phenomena as Constructed.....	32
2.2.2 Tourism as a Contrived and Constructed Experience.....	33
2.2.3 Tourism as a Form of Power and Discourse.....	36
2.2.4 Tourism Consumption as a Signifier of Identity and Elitism.....	38
2.2.5 Placelessness.....	41
2.2.6 The Gendering of Tourism, Manifested in Marketing.....	42

2.3 Review of Related Literature on Female Travelers	47
2.3.1 References on Women’s Travel Motivations	50
2.3.2 Marketing To Female Travelers	52
2.4 Research on the Commercial and Discursive Hegemony of Media.....	56
2.4.1 Profit Orientation and Women	58
2.5 Research on Advertising	61
2.5.1 Gender in Advertising	64
2.5.2 The Sexualization of Females in Advertising.....	67
2.5.3 Tellis’s (2004) Contributions.....	68
2.5.4 The Consumer as a Conscious Agent	72
2.6 Potential Influences from Popular Culture on the Contemporary Portrayal of Female Travelers.....	73
2.7 Literature Review Conclusion.....	75
Chapter 3 METHODOLOGY.....	77
3.1 Introduction and Research Overview	77
3.2 Selection and Explanation of Data-related Choices	78
3.2.1 Travel Magazines as Primary Data.....	78
3.2.2 Background on Selected Travel Magazines	82
3.2.3 Criteria Used for an Ad to Be Categorized as “Travel-related”	87
3.2.4 Use of Female-only Travel Advertisements	88
3.2.5 Use of Only Full-paged Ads	89
3.2.6 Potential Limitations of My Data Set.....	91
3.3 Methodology Implementation	94
3.3.1 Initial Quantitative Organization of Advertisements.....	94
3.3.2 Division of Female-featuring Travel-related Ads Into Categories By Emphasized Product.....	95
3.4 Content Analysis of Data	96
3.5 Information from Creative Agencies on Ad Production	104
3.6 Participant Involvement and Input from Female Travel Consumers Themselves	106

3.6.1 Sampling Procedure.....	106
3.6.2 Preliminary Questionnaire	110
3.6.3 Focus Groups	110
Chapter 4 RESULTS OF TRAVEL ADVERTISEMENT CONTENT ANALYSIS, QUANTITATIVE TABULATIONS AND AGENCY INPUT.....	119
4.1 Quantitative Tabulations: Proportional Representation of Travel Ad Subjects	119
4.2 Content Analysis of Female-featuring Travel Ads	122
4.2.1 Preliminary Steps, Prior to Content Analysis Tabulation.....	123
4.2.2 High Quotient of Female Skin.....	131
4.2.3 Women in Passive, Trance-like States	132
4.2.4 Notable Changes in the Female Subjects in Ads of the More Recent Period (2003- 04).....	132
4.2.5 Continuing Emphasis on Luxury and Service as a Constant.....	159
4.3 Input Obtained From Creative Agencies.....	169
4.4 Summary/Conclusion	175
Chapter 5 PARTICIPANT-RELATED RESULTS	179
5.1 Demographic Information	179
5.2 Information Obtained From Participants’ Written Work	183
5.2.1 Questionnaire Results	183
5.2.2 Information Obtained From Focus Group Worksheets	192
5.3 Information Gathered From Focus Group Discussions	201
5.3.1 Summary of Main Points Emerging From Each Individual Focus Group	207
Chapter 6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	227
6.1 Gendering in Travel Ads and Support of a “Male Gaze”	229
6.1.1 Evidence Substantiating Urry’s (2002) Claims	240
6.1.2 Large Corporations and the Hegemonic Discourse in Ads	244
6.1.3 Discrepancies Between Depictions of Female Travelers in Ads, and Female Consumer Preferences	249
6.1.4 Progressive Changes Related to Portrayals of Females.....	256

6.1.5 “Placelessness”	261
6.2 Implications of This Research for Advertisers.....	267
6.3 Reflections on My Participant-related Methodology	270
6.4 Acknowledgment of Potential Shortcomings Related to This Data.....	273
Chapter 7 CONCLUSION	277
Appendix A Worksheet for Content Analysis Tabulations	289
Appendix B Attempted Contacts with Creative Agencies.....	295
Appendix C Participant Questionnaire	297
Appendix D Focus Group Worksheet.....	305
Appendix E Magazine Issue Tabulations : Proportional Breakdowns	313
Appendix F Content Analysis Tabulations: Comparisons of Female Travel Ad Subjects for the Periods of 2003-2004, & 1989 - 1990.....	319
Ads Cited	329
Bibliography	333

List of Tables

Table 1: Demographic Data on Annual Readership for the 3 Selected Travel Magazines ...	82
Table 2: Ads Selected For Focus Group Study.....	111
Table 3: Proportional Breakdown of Types of Human Subjects Featured in Travel Ads ...	120
Table 4: Breakdown of All Ads Featuring Female Tourists by Product Emphasized.....	124
Table 5: Comparative Highlights of Differences between 2003-2004 and 1989-1990	128
Table 6: Highlighted Categories from Semiotic Applications.....	130
Table 7: Participant Demographic Data.....	180
Table 8: The Effect of Marital Status on Participant Travel (Questionnaire #IV)	184
Table 9: Motivating Factors for Travel (Questionnaire #II.1).....	184
Table 10: Factors Reported to Most Strongly Influence Travel (Questionnaire #II.2)	186
Table 11: Anticipated Activities When Traveling (Questionnaire #II.3)	187
Table 12: Preferred Vacation Backdrops/Settings (Questionnaire #I.8)	188
Table 13: Previously noticed characteristics in travel ads featuring females, found off-putting (Questionnaire #I.6).....	189
Table 14: Prior Impressions of Females in Travel-related Ads (Focus Group Worksheet #I.1)	190
Table 15: Compelling Portrayal of Females (Focus Group Worksheet #II.4).....	191
Table 16: Ads Eliciting Strongest Response (Focus Group Worksheet #II.B).....	193
Table 17: Perceived Gender of the Intended Audience (Focus Group Worksheet #IV.1) ..	194
Table 18: “In which ads could a male replace the female subject?” (Focus Group Worksheet #IV.2).....	196
Table 19: Most Frequently Perceived Implicit Messages in Liked and Disliked Ads (Focus Group Worksheet #II.3).....	198
Table 20: Preferred Vacation Activities by Age (in descending order).....	239

List of Figures

Figure 1: Le Meridien Hotels. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov. 2004: 153.....	135
Figure 2: Visa (co-sponsored with Marriott Resorts). Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u>	136
Figure 3: Celebrity Cruises (Profile of ‘older’ woman). Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Feb. 2003: 31.	137
Figure 4: AAA . Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> May/June 1990:146.....	138
Figure 5: Honduras Institute of Tourism. Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Nov/Dec 2004: 53.....	139
Figure 6: Australia, Australia Travel Experts. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Jan. 2004: 101.	140
Figure 7: Iceland, Icelandair Holidays. . Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> July/Aug 2003: 28.	142
Figure 8: Spain Marks. (State-sponsored: www.spaininfo.com) Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> May/June 2004: 21.	143
Figure 9: Cruise. Silverseas. Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> July 2003: 62.	144
Figure 10: Utah. Advertisement. (State-sponsored.) <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Sept. 2003:199.145	
Figure 11: MasterCard. Park Hyatt Paris. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Dec 2004: 81.	146
Figure 12: InterContinental. Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> May 2004: 87.	147
Figure 13: Arizona Grand Canyon State. Advertisement. (State-sponsored.) <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov. 2004: 233.....	148
Figure 14: Bellagio Hotel Las Vegas. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> June 2003: 85.	150
Figure 15: New Zealand. Advertisement. (State-sponsored.) <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov.2004: 253	153
Figure 16: India. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> Nov. 2003: 115.	154

Figure 17: Bermuda (woman on polo pony). Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Jan./Feb. 2004: 9.....	156
Figure 18: Expedia.com. Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Sept 2004: 4.	157
Figure 19: TiVo. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Oct 2004: 61-64.	160
Figure 20: Queen Mary 2 Cruise Ship, Cunard Line. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Dec 2003:173-4.	161
Figure 21: Celebrity Cruises (“Once I was a Queen.”). Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov 2003: 26-7.....	162
Figure 22: American Express Delta SkyMiles. Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Mar. 2003: 37.	163
Figure 23: Crystal Cruises. Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Nov/Dec 2004: 73.	164
Figure 24: Travel services. Abercrombie and Kent. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> July 2004: 65.	165
Figure 25: Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos). Advertisement. <u>National Geographic</u>	166
Figure 26: Renaissance Hotels. Advertisement. <u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Apr 2004: 11.	168
Figure 27: Mirage Hotel Las Vegas. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Apr. 2004: 33	211
Figure 28: Wyndham Hotels and Resorts (co-sponsored with American Express). Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> May 2003: 86.....	212
Figure 29: Jamaica. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> Apr. 2004: 207. .	213
Figure 30: Cayman Islands. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> Oct. 2005: 101.	220
Figure 31: Grand Canyon, Arizona. Advertisement. <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov. 2004: 233	224
Figure 32: Phoenix, Arizona (- Meditation Wheel). Advertisement. (State-sponsored: “Destination Phoenix.”) <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Oct.2004: 225.....	225
Figure 33: Arizona Spa. Advertisement. (State-sponsored). <u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Dec. 2003: 339.	226
Figure 34: Airline. TWA. Advertisement. <u>Travel+Leisure</u> April, 1989: 41	238

Figure 35: Cancun, Mexico. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. Travel+Leisure May 2003:
127. 258

Figure 36: Cayman Islands. Advertisement. (Co-sponsors: Cayman Islands; Hyatt Regency;
Continental Airlines). Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Nov. 2003: 87. 259

Figure 37: Bahamas, The Islands of the Bahamas. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Feb.
2004: 75. 260

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Framing Remarks

“We see in popular culture a playing out of headline events and cultural crises, *albeit clearly for commercial reasons*. Nevertheless, popular culture may wander deeper and wider into what haunts our culture at the present moment than the methodologies of our formal discourses permit them.” (Natoli, 1997: x)

Commercial interests today not only shape the parameters of individual cultures; they define idealized individual identities by delineating what is considered valuable in a particular culture. In a world influenced by the American and “western” media, the commercial enterprise of tourism has been acknowledged in recent years to be a signifier of broad economic, social and cultural changes (e.g. Chambers, 2000; Urry, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Enloe, 2000; Seddighi et al., 2001). Tourism as a place- and mobility-based industry is also one of the fastest growing sectors of the world economy (Urry, 2002; WTO, 2005; Cartwright et al., 2001). Tourism scholars have noted that the more affluent, tourist-producing populations of the world have economically unprecedented means for pleasure travel and that they continue its undertaking in spite of post 9/11 fears for safety (Wulf et al, 2003; Cavlek, 2002). Urry (2002: 157) noted that, in relatively affluent nations such as the United States, there is a deep sense of entitlement within the middle class to travel. Tourism destinations around the globe, and certainly multinational corporations in the travel industry, spend billions of dollars on tourism advertising to capture larger shares of the tourism

market, in awareness of the economic significance of tourism, and in an effort to fulfill their tourism potential (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000: 353).

Travel is no ordinary form of consumption. It is far more personally enmeshed in consumers' own constructions of their self-identities than would be the consumption of many other frequently advertised personal products such as cosmetics, alcohol – perhaps even clothing. As pointed out by Urry (2002), Crang (1998) and Morgan and Pritchard (1998), travel consumption serves as a pivotal source of identity to many in the post-modern era – complete with associated self-starring narratives that enable people to feel they are “special” (Urry, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Many tourists consider travel to be one of the more defining experiences of their lives (Robinson, 1994; Edensor, 1998).

While more accessible and widespread in the post-industrial age, contemporary travel may represent to western women of means the rewards and ideals of autonomy and independence, much as it did to some of their Victorian predecessors. Although the same may be true for male travelers, in this study I more closely examine women's place in travel and tourism discourse, because their experiences have often been marginalized relative to men's travel (Apostolopoulos et al., 2001, 2002; Swain and Momsen, 2002; MacCannell, 2002; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Enloe, 2000; Richter, 1995; Urry, 1990). The creation and preservation of romantic or idealized notions of self through travel remain at least as important as any reality of actual travel experiences to the traveler. Something so pivotal and central to the self-identity of its consumers warrants more attention as to how it is packaged to large groups of consumers – and thus widely ingested and variously interpreted.

Gender and tourism issues today attract increasing attention from researchers (e.g. Elsrud, 2005; Small, 2005; Jordan and Gibson, 2005; Swain and Momsen, 2002; Norris and Wall, 2002; Gibson, 2001; Kinnaird and Hall, 2000; Aitcheson, 1999). As tourism continues to expand as a multibillion dollar global industry, and as Euro-American women travelers increasingly exercise their economic and social independence and clout as a large and critical component of this market (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000:353; Gibson, 2001; Swain and Momsen, 2002; Richter, 2001), the tourism and hospitality industries are beginning to regard women as consumers who are either sole decision-makers or who have a critical role in the purchase decisions of families for a variety of goods and services (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000:353; Zalatan, 1998; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Smith, 2005; Charron, 2005).

However, in spite of the economic viability of the ever-more financially solvent female travel consumer, many scholars have noted the overall marginalization of western female travelers from academic research. Travel statistics by gender are unavailable, even in federal (Canadian) marketing research publications. However, as discussed in advertising industry publications (e.g. Grimshaw, 2003), in journalism sources (e.g. Costello, 2001; Catto, 2002; McDaniel, 1999; Smith, 2005), and by Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000: 353), working women today make up about 50% of the total workforce, and they are generally more educated, more economically independent, and have greater flexibility to travel than women who stay at home and raise families. These authors discuss how working women represent a substantial and lucrative market for advertisers. Increasing numbers of western women are traveling independently – that is, without male companionship (e.g. Elsrud, 2005; Gibson and Jordan, 2005; Wilson and Little, 2005; Swain and Momsen, 2002; Westwood, Pritchard and Morgan,

2000; Apostolopoulos et al., 2001, 2002; Butler, 1995; Henderson et al., 1996; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Richter, 1995; Swain, 1995; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996, 2000; and Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000). Yet in spite of these developments, remarkably little has been written about the western female traveler in comparison to her numbers, and corresponding output of hard currency.

A substantial body of historical scholarship concerns the constructed identity of female travelers, particularly from the colonial era of the 18th to 19th centuries (e.g. Chaudhuri and Stroebel, 1990; McClintock, 1994; McEwan, 2000; Mills, 1991; Prakesh, 1995; Pratt, 1992; Robinson, 1994, 1990; Stevenson, 1982; Tinling, 1989). However, equivalent contemporary descriptions or representations regarding the autonomous western female traveler, minus a salient focus on her sexuality (e.g. the literature on “romance” tourism) – are few, and the recent exceptions are mostly appearing in the special women’s issue of *Tourism Review International* of December, 2005 (e.g. Elsrud, 2005; Wilson and Little, 2005; and Jordan and Gibson, 2005). Pritchard (2000:80) noted that roles and representations of women in tourism are an uncommon focus of study. Nor are prevalent representations of western women as individual travelers in their own right prominently accessible outside of academia. A review of literature regarding imagery of the contemporary female traveler in tourism scholarship suggests that they are generally portrayed as bikini-clad or semi-nude at a spa or, even more particularly, where they may be easily defined by their (fecund) positioning to a male as part of a heterosexual couple and/or ‘mom’ in a family context – and occasionally as stereotypical “babes” in a gender-mixed group of singles (e.g. Urry, 1990; Enloe, 1989; Richter, 1995;

Pritchard, 2001; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Thus the references to female tourists' representations as autonomous individuals remain limited.

Considering the substantial economic contribution that female travelers make to tourism industry coffers, one might question whether or not it is still the case in 2006, that post-modern-era female travelers simply continue to be portrayed reductively in a predominantly 'decorative', sexualized light as has been frequently suggested in the literature (Urry, 1990; Enloe, 1989; Richter, 1995; Pritchard, 2001; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998) – despite the many references in Western society today to female autonomy and empowerment (for example, Early and Kennedy, 2003; Grimshaw, 2003; Harris, 2003; Inness, 2004; Kingston, 2004; Wolf, 1997; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004).

Tourism and culture have a significant symbiotic relationship, whereby tourism makes use of selectively drawn cultural meanings to frame its imagery (Chambers, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). The notion that what is deemed representative of a culture or group of individuals depends on who gets to say is highly significant to this topic. Post-structuralists, such as Foucault (1980) or Hollinshead (1999), argue that multinational corporations control the worldwide image media, to the advantage of their own economic hegemony and thus they play a critical role in the documentation and shaping of specific gendered representations. As is well understood by magazine editors and ad creators for popular travel magazines, knowledge and the power to represent knowledge as one would wish are potent (Milkie, 2002; McRobbie, 1997). Media power and pervasiveness are increasingly being acknowledged by academics as a mighty force in shaping popular culture, world views, and

most certainly as an overriding determinant in gender relations (e.g. Seddighi et al., 2001; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998).

Crang (1998), Morgan and Pritchard (1998), Hall (1997b) and Urry (2002) also noted the notion of the “circuit of culture” in terms of how advertising and popular culture circuitously impact upon one another, each influencing how the other continuously evolves. As Inness (2004: 96) notes, a television or film heroine must be constructed in a very particular way in order for her to gain mainstream popular appeal – a notion which is not lost on the billion-dollar corporate advertising conglomerate. Dworkin and Wachs (2004: 613) argue that in a post-industrial society, the news and entertainment media serve primarily as vehicles to produce audience viewing time for advertisers.

Travel advertising, like any other form, exists to further commercial interests (i.e., to sell goods and services), not infrequently by featuring a *role model* or idealized person with whom the sought-after/pursued consumer may potentially identify or (even unconsciously) aspire to become more like (Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; Goffman, 1979; Williamson, 1978; Wolf, 1997). This notion also has significant geographical relevance. Ads are intended to influence tourists to travel to specific destinations, via particular carriers or agencies. If successful, ads significantly impact travel patterns.

The relationship between tourism advertising and hegemonic discourse has been well documented (Bishop and Robinson, 1998; Britton, 1982; Bruner, 1989, 1996; Butler and Hinch, 1996; Chambers, 2000; Cohen, 1988; Crick, 1992; Edensor, 1998; Edensor and Kothari, 1994; Enloe, 1989; Hall, 1994; Kaur and Hutnyk, 1999; Kincaid, 1988; Leheny,

1995; Momsen, 1994; Palmer, 1996; Turner and Ash, 1975). Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), as well as Morgan and Pritchard (1998), point out that many believe the media mirror public opinion, while Tellis (2004) argues that it lags behind. Either way, the pervasive influence of media advertising plays a huge role in Canadians' own social constructions of various identities, and in our travel habits.

Prominent tourism scholars such as Urry (1990) and Enloe (1989) contend that women travelers are portrayed in a predominantly (hetero) sexualized light (- i.e., as sexually alluring or "pleasing" to a *heterosexual male gaze*). Numerous scholars (e.g. Richter, 1995; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996; Swain and Momsen, 2002; Urry, 2002; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Pritchard, 2000, 2001; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Westwood et al., 2000; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003) also support the claim that women in tourism marketing continue to be relegated to stereotypes in ads. Therefore, closer examination of contemporary female representation is intellectually worthwhile, since their answers may provide important cultural revelations in terms of which groups are silently empowered, at the expense of those who are quietly being disempowered. Feminist geographers McDowell and Sharp (1999: 89), for example, suggest "a backlash of misogynistic movements, seeking to denigrate women through sexist representations, in reaction to women's increasing autonomy and independence." Are, in fact, patriarchal advertisers trying to subjugate a large, wealthier, better educated segment of the female populace? If current ads do actually continue to diminish and even exploit women – as has been argued by Pritchard (2001), Westwood et al. (2000), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), and Dworkin and Wachs (2004), this topic bears at the very least further illumination. If, on the

other hand, contemporary ads appear to be more “progressive”, or more reflective of how contemporary women view themselves, this finding would also warrant illumination – because it may indicate a significant, under-reported cultural turning point. If travel advertising reflects or moulds popular culture (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998), and if western females have become increasingly autonomous and prominent in a socio-economic context as travel consumers, the question emerges: do travel advertisements continue to substantiate the contentions of tourism scholars such as Urry (1990) and Enloe (1989) that women are largely depicted in a “sexually decorative” light, or are travel advertisements now more reflective of women’s enhanced independent status? Or is a more complex explanation in order?

1.2 Research Questions

In the context of the greater gender-consciousness inherent within cultural geography today, the specific questions I address in this doctoral research are as follows:

1. How is the contemporary western female traveler represented in (full-paged) travel-related advertisements in widely circulated popular travel magazines?
2. What ideals and values are implied in popular travel magazine advertisements featuring and seemingly directed toward female consumers?
3. Has the portrayal of women in such travel ads altered from 1990 to present, in terms of both sheer volume and thematic content, to more aptly reflect women’s increasingly autonomous status and more economically powerful societal role?
4. How appealing are tourism advertisers’ images of western female travelers to female travel consumers who fit within the projected demographics of the selected travel

magazines? Have the travel ads kept pace with independent female travelers and their preferences?

I hypothesized that I would find, when comparing two periods of western female-featuring travel ads separated by 13 years, that an increasing proportion of more recent ads might be more 'progressive' in comparison to more reductionistic female stereotypes that I expected to find in earlier travel magazine issues, as reported by Urry (1990), Enloe (1989), and Richter (1995). The alternative thesis would be that the white, male, hetero-normative gaze continues to predominate, as suggested by Pritchard and Morgan (2000b, 2000a), Westwood et al. (2000), and Harris and Ateljevic (2003).

1.3 Study Structure

My specific methodology included an initial gathering of full-paged, travel-oriented ads featuring traveling females only, from the three most widely circulated popular travel magazines available: *Travel+Leisure*; *Condé Nast Traveler*; and *National Geographic Traveler* – first for the period of 2003 to 2004 and then, for the purposes of proportional volume and thematic comparisons, for the period of 1989 to 1990 inclusively. This data collection was followed by a qualitative content analysis of the travel-related ads featuring female travelers, in order to compare the more prominent tendencies for both periods. Input from the ad producers was sought, to better determine intentional characteristics of the ads under study. This was followed by steps to determine the reactions to these ads by actual female travel consumers, who were demographically compatible with the readerships of the three travel magazines used. This final methodological component involved administering a

questionnaire to 38 participants, and then conducting three focus groups with 30 of these same respondents, to see how contemporary female travel consumers actually responded to samples of contemporary ads, ostensibly depicting women like themselves.

Because this study focuses more on perceptions than on some objective reality, its orientation is predominantly qualitative and descriptive. Aside from the quantitative processes involved in acquiring, sorting and categorizing the data for closer examination, the critical results of this research are based less in solid quantifiable material than in perceptions, held both by and about female travelers. The qualitative approach to which research of this nature lends itself particularly well was further endorsed by Riley and Love (2000) and Aitcheson (2000), and was argued as preferable in studying female travelers by Small (2002, 1999).

1.4 Definition of Terms

1. **Western:** The term “western” is problematic, as would be other alternatives to designate tourists’ origin and cultural orientation. For example, neither “Euro-American” nor “North American” has a clear or exhaustive definition. Because the magazines studied are also available in Europe (at least one, *Travel+Leisure*, publishing separate European issues), and the term Euro-American may unintentionally imply “white only” to some readers, I decided to use the descriptor, “western”. The meaning of this term is of course contestable, as it continues to evolve into the 21st century in light of massive global migration, and numerous citizens of broadly varying ethnic and racial origin naturalized and residing in Canada and the United States. For the purpose of this study, I assigned the status of “western” to any image of a female travel consumer, as found in the advertisements of the utilized, all American-based, magazines - regardless of the subject’s complexion. The use of the term “western” is intended to include non-white

women shown as models or consumers in these mainstream ads. I further applied this term to indicate research participants who were at ease in self-identifying themselves as *western* for the purpose of participating in this study, regardless of complexion, birthplace or ethnic heritage. For convenient sampling reasons, this study also involved only female subjects who were living in the Greater Toronto area, one of the world's most ethnically diverse cities.

2. **“Tourist” (used interchangeably with “traveler” in this thesis):** In order to adequately screen and eliminate ads for use in this study, the definition of “traveler” indicated either a pleasure-seeking tourist, or business traveler, apparently away from home for a minimum of 24 hours but less than one year (World Tourism Organization, 1993; Cartwright et al., 2001). Regrettably this criterion eliminated a number of potentially information-rich “leisure-depicting” ads, unusable if the image could have been interpreted as portraying a simple day trip or excursion near home of only a few hours. I found this distinction necessary to ensure data employed was tourism-related and replicable.

1.5 Anticipated Contributions of My Study

This work offers substantial contributions to the field of geography, both intellectually and pragmatically. Coleman and Crang (2002) stated that the notion of place is in a constant state of re-configuration, a notion also discussed by geographers such as McDowell (1997), Relph (1976), Williams, Gill and Chura (2004), Anderson (1999), Dodge and Kitchin, 2004, Coleman and Crang, 2002 and Yeung (1998). Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine (2004: 10) further point out that space and place as entities are always in the process of *becoming*, and thus are unavoidably caught up in power relations. They also suggest that place is becoming increasingly important in an economy where image is everything (Ibid: 9).

This study illuminates distinctions and evolutions in representations regarding “place” and mobility over a 15-year period of time. If higher-end travel magazines may be considered an authoritative source, this study may further assist in identifying impacts of globalization and multi-nationalization – for example, what if any impacts may be noted on how the representation of specific places is evolving. Recent interest in the implications of globalization and the presentation of specific places as generic and interchangeable (Gammack, 2005) are addressed in this research, beyond the context of the wide distribution and circulation of the travel magazines used for raw data.

Within the context of the cultural turn, this work highlights the shift in geographical focus from production to consumption as a driving force of identity in contemporary society. It further illustrates Johnson et al.’s (2000: 356) point with respect to the power of discourse within the context of the cultural turn in seeking to identify which narrative voice(s) are loudest at present with respect to what female travelers supposedly “are like” and what they enjoy – particularly in the context of postmodern consumerism as a form of (elitist) identity (Jackson, 1989; Thrift, 2000). Advertisements are to be deconstructed within the contexts of hegemony and discourse. In keeping with terms explicated by Johnson et al. (2000: 356), this study’s contributions are particularly concentrated in the integral and frequently overlapping areas of gender and tourism.

The subject matter of this study and the data used are unequivocally related to the strong geographic traditions of travel and mobility, in the context of tourism. This work bears a close and pragmatic relationship to application of geographic principles to create value

beyond academia, indicated as critical by Johnston et al. (2000: 135), by focusing on cultural products of the ‘real’ world, circulated among prospective tourism consumers from mainstream society. Rich detail will be produced regarding how female travelers are commonly portrayed in the popular culture genre of travel magazine advertisements. Female travel consumers’ specific impressions of ads presumably directed toward and featuring themselves – an area barely yet examined – will be highlighted. This research will also generate more specific information than is presently available with respect to what female travel consumers report as critical factors regarding their travel motivations, anticipated travel activities of distinction, preferred travel backdrop-settings and what, if any, perceptions they may hold regarding the gendering reported in the literature of travel advertisements.

The approach in this thesis is original in testing the veracity of the alleged gendering in travel advertisements (as discussed in Chapter 2). It undertakes content analysis across two separate periods to determine whether such longstanding allegations were, and still may be, plausible - particularly in light of more pronounced post-feminist sensibilities at present. As well, few tourism scholars have interviewed travel ad creators to determine their more specified intentions in ads showing female travel subjects. This study’s results additionally provide detailed and descriptive information not previously available with respect to the actual proportion of travel ads featuring females, as opposed to other human subjects, and also regarding what types of travel-related products predominate in female-featuring travel ads.

My results should interest travel ad creators and their corporate clients, since I conducted focus groups and interviews with actively spending female travelers, and asked them to respond to various travel ads. Participant responses should reveal inclusions and/or omissions in ads that may be potentially costly and detrimental to travel industry advertisers. Market researchers as well, in their quest for new niche markets (Nash, 2004: 467), may take interest in the findings of this study, as they reveal intra-group distinctions among women as to how various types of ads are perceived. Consumer perceptions influence the long-term viability of the travel magazines themselves, as well as that of the featured destinations promoted in specific issues, and the advertised tourism products. These viabilities in turn will have considerable impact upon the evolving shape of the tourism industry and ensuing travel behaviour.

Finally, this study may contribute toward an evolving academic approach to more effectively studying the cultural messages being conveyed by depictions of female travelers in advertising. Rose (2001:194-201) pointed out that there is no one simple image or unambiguous message to be conveyed by an advertisement, as different viewers will appreciate it or reject it in light of their own tastes and experiences. Cusack and Breathnack (2003) and Chan (2003) also argued that an image depiction is an inherently unstable carrier of meaning, since no single image can represent a heterogeneous identity or entity such as “female travelers”. Widely distributed travel magazines disseminate popular images with respect to how female travelers come to be popularly perceived and constructed.

Advertisements, if for no other reason than their contrivedness (like all other forms of advertising), offer rich and unique detail on the contemporary construction of the western

female traveler. Ads are a potent and viable source of information on the driving forces of popular culture, and what motivates or compels viewers to behave in all kinds of overt and more subtle ways. In light of the amount of money both invested in advertising and potentially to be made by hitting one's mark, it would seem fair to assert that there are no unintended inclusions in large travel ads.

1.6 Theoretical Foundations of My Study

Theoretical approaches particularly relevant to my work include feminist post-structuralism (e.g. Aitcheson, 2000, 1999; Small, 2003, 1999), particularly in terms of social constructivism (Riley and Love, 2000; Milkie, 2002; Seddighi et al., 2001; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Mellinger, 1994). Also of value are the feminist-geographer traditions of reflexivity and positionality, in striving to maintain ongoing conscious awareness that as an academic researcher, one's knowledge is highly situated (Rose, 1997, 2001; Small, 1999, 2003; McDowell, 1992; Bondi, 1992; England, 1994; Aitcheson, 2000; Gibson, 2001). Key theoretical contributions to my work from each area are highlighted below.

1.6.1 Post-structuralism

The recognition of discourse as power, and the power of "knowledge" production, are key underlying precepts to this study, as discourse analysis is critically interwoven throughout my methodology. As noted by Foucault (1980), any discourse exists as a set of 'rules' (whether acknowledged or not) which determine what statements may be made or which topics may be discussed, as well as what the criteria for 'truth' or 'actuality' may be. His work was drawn upon by other scholars discussed in this thesis (Ramazanoglu with Holland,

2004: 96; Ogborn, 2003: 11; Hollinshead, 1999; Gill, 1996; Rose, 2001). As post-structural theory posits, discourse that prevails is much more a matter of who has the power to represent than of some objective 'reality'. As discussed in Chapter 2, such power relations are inherent within the representations found in tourism marketing. Rose (2001, pp.135-163) discusses Foucault's assertions that since discourses are seen as socially produced (as opposed to created by individuals), discourse analysis may be applied to explore how images construct specific views of the social world – that is, how specific views are socially constructed as real or natural through particular regimes of truth (Rose, 2001:140). Although post-structuralism rejects binaries, polarities and rigid categorizations, discourse as power remains a central post-structural concept to the analyses of tourism.

Connected to post-structuralism, but even more specific to this study is the notion of social constructivism – also known as feminist constructivism (Small, 1999; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Riley and Love, 2000; Mellinger, 1994; Lucas, 2004; Westwood, Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; and Wearing and Wearing, 2001). Social constructivism, according to Riley and Love (2000: 72), may be ontologically defined as acknowledging that knowledge is relative, being socially constructed locally and specifically. It should be noted, in relation to this research, that there is no "reality" in these ads, or in participant assertions. Rather, there are different views and opinions, as may be situated by one's age, gender, and place/period.

1.6.2 Feminism

Swain (2002), in discussing the topic of female tourists as a neglected market segment, suggested that the concerns of gender and tourism researchers and the social justice

dimensions of tourism in host societies are embedded in liberal feminist and post-colonial perspectives, at least indirectly. My applications of feminism within this context of gender studies may be summarized, similarly to post-structural principles highlighted above, by noting that ideological discourses always involve power, as one party claims the authority to represent another. Feminist scholars have further noted that ideological discourses are necessarily gendered, and typically assign different roles to men and women (e.g. Cusack and Breathnach, 2003:581; Paechter, 2003; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004). Milkie (2002:839) articulates, “A central way women’s disadvantage is created and maintained is through widespread cultural beliefs and stereotypes that provide narrower, more distorted, or more harmful images about women than about men. These ideals about what women should do, be like, or look like are powerful yet subtle vehicles through which women are controlled.” Such concepts as these have influenced the focus of this study. Although, as Ramazanoglu with Holland (2002) point out, there is no research technique that is distinctly feminist, this study is a feminist critique regarding power and agency.

It is also appropriate to acknowledge some vehement criticisms to which feminism has been subjected. Among these are accusations of an alleged white, middle class, heterosexual, able-bodied, Western orientation – and thus lack of representation for all women, as some would argue it claims (e.g. McEwan, 2000: 13; hooks, 1992; Spivak, 1988; Bhattacharya, 1996; Mohanty, 1988; McEwan, 2000). This criticism is difficult to counter, as my work involves female subjects who overall are financially privileged in relative terms and frequently, although not always, white. My intent in this dissertation is to apply (liberal) feminist principles in as non-exclusionary a manner as I am able, much the same as I would

argue these principles were applied in the bulk of gender-related works used for this paper, such as Aitcheson (1999); Pritchard (2001); Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000); Westwood et al. (2000); Wearing and Wearing (1996); Morgan and Pritchard (1998); Sirakaya and Sonmez, (2000).

Further resistance associated with feminism is that many younger women regard feminism as passé and no longer relevant or necessary. Wolf (1997: 283) suggests that young women do not want to be associated with “feminism”. Feminist faculty have reported student aversion to feminism, and of having a sense of feeling “beleaguered, trivialized and under siege” (Webber, 2005). As well, many female tourists today would hardly consider themselves feminists for the same reasons given above (Denfeld, 1995), and also, because of a sense that, “the ‘battle’ has already been won – get on with it.” Rogers and Garrett (2002) reported that, while women’s studies attracts more students on American campuses than does any other trans-disciplinary area of study, there continues to be a fear of feminism.

Rather than becoming quagmired in a potentially paralyzing discussion regarding some of the criticisms of liberal feminism outlined above, I simply acknowledge that this study focuses upon self-identified western, comfortably middle-class women residing in the Toronto area of Canada. An inescapable degree of oversimplification in reference to feminist principles is also acknowledged and accepted, with the sincere aspiration to progress in a forward motion toward some potentially meaningful and useful new generalization (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2004: 76).

1.6.3 Positionality and Reflexivity

Feminist research methods in geography, as particularly emphasized by Aitchison (2000), McDowell (1992), Rose (1997), as well as by Wearing and Wearing (2001) and Ramazanoglu with Holland (2004), outline several factors as critical to good research. These include recognition of one's own positionality; awareness of potential power relations between self and subjects; and having a more collaborative and 'non-exploitive' orientation with participants – that is, a greater consciousness of inter-subjectivity. Rose (1997), Aitchison (2000) and McDowell (1992) also emphasized the situated nature of knowledge, and the critical need for ongoing, conscious reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Qualitative, detailed, small-scale and case study work are ideally suited to women studying women (McDowell, 1992: 406; Small, 1999, 2003; Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2004), as is the case with this study. The concepts of positionality and reflexivity were particularly prevalent among feminist geographers (e.g. Domosh, 1998; Domosh and Seager, 2001; Aitchison 1999, 2001; Rose, 1997; Haraway, 1991; Pratt, 2002), as well as by some feminist authors of other disciplines (e.g. Harding, 1993 and Mills, 1999).

1.7 My Own Positionality

I am conscious of being the practically clichéd white, middle-class, educated woman, studying women like me, and of the critiques work focused on this group may generate. The identities of western female travelers have long interested me, however. This dissertation is not as narcissistic an endeavor as I wish it were: my traveling ended several years back when

I returned to graduate school in mid-life, got married and had a baby – all in short order of one another.

In light of the above factors, I strove to retain as much vigilance as possible with regard to minimizing the following:

1. Over-identification with subject participants, to the point where I could have potentially projected onto them my own perceptions.
2. Bias toward advertisements either reflective of or in opposition to my own particular self-perceptions, outlooks, interests and preferences.
3. Being inadvertently influenced by overexposure to carefully crafted advertisements, and unwittingly reflecting this potentially “brainwashed” bias by the time I held my focus groups.
4. The fact that, although I genuinely anticipated liking and having good rapport with my participants, I may have found more natural chemistry with some than others – and that I had to be vigilant in treating each one with the same perceptible warmth, courtesy and professionalism.

In retrospect, after completion of this project, I recognized that my work had been more prone to the following, less anticipated biases:

1. Frustration associated with particular ads because the creative agencies responsible for them either declined to speak with me in the first place, or unexpectedly failed to provide promised information.
2. Disproportionate gratitude and an inconveniently placed feeling of ‘protectiveness’ toward the one creative agency that was extremely generous in terms of assisting with information, but whose ads were unfortunately not so well received by participants.
3. Pronounced and humble gratitude for the generosity and enthusiasm of my female participants, who provided a significant emotional boost within an otherwise extended

period of self-imposed exile, to complete this dissertation under time constraints mandated by other responsibilities.

I believe I was able to sufficiently confront and mitigate these challenges, although one can never fully be sure.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains a review of relevant research drawn from the intersecting areas of geography, tourism and gender, as it relates to the contemporary construction of female travelers. I begin by examining studies valuable to my work in terms of thematic content and methodology. The second section of this literature review is organized by themes that predominate in the extensive body of works reviewed pertaining to gender and tourism. Some of these strongly relate to cultural geography, such as the acknowledgment of culture as a constructed phenomenon; the large extent to which tourism itself is also a contrived and constructed phenomenon; the inherent presence of power and discourse within tourism; the gendering of tourism; how consumption (rather than production) of tourism is a signifier of identity; and the notion of placelessness. This section is followed by a review of works specifically on female travelers and how they are popularly constructed and portrayed; and the cultural hegemony maintained within popular media advertising as related to this topic. The next section covers a number of relevant works drawn directly from the realm of advertising, highlighting principles relevant to this study. Finally, this literature review is supplemented with a brief discussion of potential influences from contemporary popular culture that relate to how women are portrayed in general at present.

In keeping with this study's contributions within the new cultural geography, this research has been informed by relevant literature from other disciplines, including gender studies, tourism, marketing and advertising, cultural and media studies, leisure studies, and

anthropology. (Conclusive contributions to specific areas are highlighted in Chapter 7.) The wide scope of works included in this literature review reflect that the intersecting fields of gender and tourism are informed by a variety of disciplines, a phenomenon advocated as a highly desirable feature of the new cultural geography by Johnson, Gregory, et al. (2000: 136 – 137).

2.1 Methodology

Aitcheson (2000), Scraton (1994), Coalter (1997), and Momaas (1997) each noted a “contemporary theoretical crisis” (Aitcheson’s words) in leisure, tourism and cultural studies discourse. Academic research on gender and tourism, similar in methodology and subject matter to this study, is nevertheless well documented across several social science disciplines, including geography. Qualitative studies have been frequently undertaken to better examine image analysis, often in the context of gender and power relations. Many such studies have been based on content analysis, as outlined below. Some of these studies also applied semiotic principles outlined by Goffman (1979) and Williamson (1978). Other studies modelled the application of post-structural principles such as social constructivism, while others provided useful discussion of the feminist geographer principles of reflexivity and positionality. As noted previously, the bulk of these studies were under-girded by some form of discourse analysis. For example, Rose (2001) illuminated several aspects of visual methodology, including content analysis, semiotics, post-structuralism, and discourse analysis. Also of value was Rose’s (1997) work on the feminist geographical principles of reflexivity and positionality.

Lutz and Collins (1993), Dworkin and Wachs (2004), Pritchard (2001), Morgan and Pritchard (1998), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), Mellinger (1994) and Lucas (2004) each provided illuminating applications of content analysis. In this thesis, principles of content analysis as outlined by Rose (2001), Lutz and Collins (1993), Mellinger (1994) Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), Pritchard (2001), Dworkin and Wachs (2004), and Lucas (2004) were applied to uncover prevalent patterns and tendencies in travel ads featuring a particular type of subject.

Content analysis for graphic images, particularly as utilized by Lutz and Collins (1993), and as explicated in Rose (2001: 56 - 71), is a method of counting the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined sample of images, and then analysing those frequencies. Discourse analysis was an inherent component of this work. Pritchard (2001: 82) pointed out that a major limitation of content analysis is that it does not necessarily enable an understanding of the full interaction between media representations and their audience. However, as is the case with discourse analysis, content analysis is useful in illuminating how images are authoritatively used in a highly calculated manner to construct specific views of reality as “real” or “truthful” or “natural” (Rose, 2001: 140; Riley and Love, 2000; Small, 1999; Mellinger, 1994; Wearing and Wearing, 2001; Seddighi et al., 2001; Echtner and Prasad, 2003).

One criticism of content analysis is that the categories selected are done so within the limits of the researcher’s knowledge, background and biases. As earlier noted, different viewers bring their own tastes and experiences to any graphic image, including

advertisements (Rose, 2001: 194-201), and no objective standard exists for discerning one intended meaning. Another criticism may be directed toward simple frequency counts of subjective phenomena.

Pritchard (2001) studied a range of British tour operators' brochures, combining content analysis with a critical discourse framework. She adapted and further developed a content analysis technique based on an ordinal scale introduced by Paisley-Butler and Butler-Paisley (1974), and also used by Morgan and Pritchard (1998), to facilitate the quantitative analysis of gendered representations. The scale was adapted from Butler-Paisley and Paisley-Butler's "Consciousness Scale" (as outlined in Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 194-196). The scale is based on *ordinal* (as opposed to nominal) classification to facilitate *degree* measurement, operating as a continuum describing points ranging from "sexist to non-sexist portrayals" of roles and relationships. Similarly, Morgan and Pritchard (1998) employed the same scale for textual analysis to evaluate images of male and female tourists in holiday advertising imagery to determine the extent to which they were, in the authors' words, "sexist". Findings were that brochure advertising images remain highly stereotypical in terms of gender roles. Pritchard (2001) found that tourism representation relies heavily on the use of women as "sexualized product adornments".

Lutz and Collins (1993) applied image analysis to depictions of "third world" peoples featured in *National Geographic* magazine. Their methodology was based on counting the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined sample of images, and then analyzing those frequencies in newly formed thematic categories. Rose (2001: 57) discussed

how this travel-related magazine in particular, in light of its wide distribution, is a culturally valued and potent media vehicle in shaping North American understanding of the people it portrays.

Mellinger (1994) critically analyzed tourism representations in postcard photographs depicting African Americans in the southern United States from turn of the 19th - 20th centuries. He explored the discursive organization of these images and their situated use in a historical context, noting specific iconographic strategies to “culturally inscribe black bodies with ‘Otherness’” (1994: 760). Postcard senders’ messages were also analyzed. He made two thematic categories/sets of photos for closer study. This study offered a prime example of the analyses of *constructed subjectivities*, in keeping with MacCannell’s (1973) ‘staged authenticity.’ The photos utilized by Mellinger (1994) were examined through what he called the ‘white tourist gaze’ in the attempt to elucidate aspects of the wider society in which they were embedded. Such analyses included the meanings they conveyed, the social uses they served, and their senders’ interpretations as revealed in their written messages.

Dworkin and Wachs (2004) conducted a content and textual analysis of a pregnancy-fitness magazine, to determine how contemporary (corporeal) motherhood is constructed, focusing on “preferred meanings” in magazine texts – i.e., meanings that producers of media images and text built into the magazine with the intention of shaping the messages derived by the audience. They discussed the ways in which advertisements and articles work symbiotically to promote a narrow set of ideals in accordance with a specific (privileged) lifestyle. Focusing on language, Pritchard and Morgan’s (2000a) study of gendered tourism

landscapes examined, “the interrelationship between patriarchy and (hetero)sexuality and the language of tourism promotion” applying critical analysis to national tourist organization brochures and advertisements.

Westwood, Pritchard and Morgan (2000) examined business women’s perceptions of airline services and marketing via telephone interviews, in-depth personal interviews and focus groups. The study’s main finding was a “disturbingly dominant male perspective” in services and marketing. This work paralleled other constructionist approaches, such as Mellinger (1994) and Dworkin and Wachs (2004). Although not related specifically to gender and tourism, Lucas (2004) studied image ideals used in retirement community brochures. She applied content analysis to promotional brochures supplied to potential residents, using descriptive content analysis to code sentences and phrases of brochures into one of three researcher-constructed categories, as the brochures’ images were too small or irrelevant to be used.

Semiotics as the analysis of signs in cultural materials is particularly valuable in the analysis of tourism advertising (Crouch, 2002: 216; Davies, 2003: 207; Cohen, 2001: 69; MacCannell, 1994; Selwyn, 1993; Dann, 1996) – in spite of it also having been criticized for “isolating representations and meanings from influencing material factors in the arena of power and knowledge” (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 35). Rose (2001), however, noted that semiotics is a complex area of application in which few are well qualified. My dissertation’s working definition of semiotic application is to deconstruct the ideology underlying advertisements by scrutinizing specific *signifying* characteristics, such as appearance-related

indicators (Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; Williamson, 1978; Goffman, 1979; Shields, 2006), including the signifying meanings of specific gestures and sometimes objects, or activities (Ibid.). As distinguished by these authors, semiotics confronts how images create rather than reflect meaning; thus, as Rose (2001: 69 – 99) outlined, the image itself should be concentrated upon as the most important site of its meaning, and in conjunction with the “social modality” of that site.

Williamson (1978) focused on the ways in which advertising images generate meaning, specifically the construction of social differences, as articulated through signs (i.e., “signifiers + the signified”) to indicate such phenomena as class, gender, race, able-bodiedness and power relations. Signifiers utilized in her work included such attributes as the ad subject’s age, posture, grooming, and particular body parts emphasized by the camera’s angle (Rose, 2001: 69-99). Cohen (2001: 69) noted Williamson’s (1978) further racial distinction regarding *shade* of skin tone – i.e., she found only lighter-skinned African American subjects employed in ads, to de-emphasize their “difference”. Dyer (1982: 96-104) highlighted further suggestions for semiotic factors. These included estimated age groupings, race, body shape, specific ways of grooming, hair, facial expression, eye contact, and pose.

Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000) categorized and compared state travel advertising brochure depictions of women versus men, using Goffman’s (1979) six categories of nonverbal ‘gender displays’, within which relationships between the sexes and the meaning of more subtle nonverbal cues were then discussed. These included relative physical size of people, the tendency for females to be shown touching objects, ranking social and occupational roles,

family gender depictions, ritualization of subordination and gender detachment. They used three coders, to achieve 100% inter-coder reliability. Their main finding was that stereotypical images of women continued to be portrayed, using terms in their conclusions such as “sexy, helpless, non-competitive, shy and passive” (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000: 360).

Bowen (2002) undertook a semiotic-based content analysis of advertisements appearing in *Travel+Leisure Magazine* between 1969 and 1999. She suggested that many of the images revealed a "grand narrative in which the hetero-patriarchal neo-colonial system of tourism is normalized through reproduction". However, she also noted that the images could potentially be subverted by the reading of female tourists into sites of resistance to constraints and escapism: for example, a female viewer may alternatively view an image of a bikini-clad woman lying on a beach as that of a female tourist who has autonomously flown to a warm destination of her choice, and freed herself from the constraints of clothing, as it may have pleased her to do so.

Several studies, which did not employ content analysis, were of interest in their implementation of feminist post-structural principles. Milkie (2002), for example, interviewed ten editors at two national girls' magazine organizations, and revealed struggles over narrow views of femininity at both the organizational and institutional levels – citing as her primary example the advertisers' insistence on using “emaciated”-looking models, and the incongruence of this with articles on young women's self-esteem. Ridgeway and Correll (2004) also examined the notion of gender as salient in “social relational” contexts, as well as

cultural beliefs about gender distinctions. Similarly, Paechter's (2003) focus was on how children are conditioned to participate in masculinities and femininities as local communities of practice. She examined and analyzed the early childhood naturalization of power/knowledge-differentiated sex roles. Her main finding was that behaving in accordance with assigned gender role is rewarded.

Small's (1999) study was based upon the collective interpretation and theorisation of memories regarding a vacation that two women (generally mother and daughter) had taken together. Using memory-work as a method for researching female tourist experiences, Small (1999) initially noted the dearth of tourism methodology and methods (as did others, such as Aitcheson, 2000). She thus situated her work within a feminist social constructionist paradigm. Using a more strictly post-structural orientation, Echtner and Prasad (2003) analysed promotional brochures representing different third world countries, using *postcolonial theory* as a critical context for interpretation.

Seddighi, Nuttall and Theocharous (2001) studied how tourists' cultural background influenced destination choices. In considering how perception ultimately and critically shapes human behaviour, they used an ANOVA scale. Naoi (2003) studied cognitive perspective as applied to tourists' evaluation of destinations. Her work utilized eleven bipolar word pairs with which tourists had to group destinations into types or categories. Kingsbury and Brunn (2003) sought to determine the extent to which issues of risk, security, and anxiety were addressed or disavowed in editorials, articles, advertisements and photographs by examining twelve popular U.S. travel magazines post 9/11. They applied psychoanalytic

theory (Sigmund Freud; Jacques Lacan) as the predominant means in evaluating the magazines' responses.

2.2 Predominant Themes

2.2.1 Cultural Phenomena as Constructed

Crang (1998, 2003), Blunt (2003) and Kneale (2003) each noted that representing the world is not a neutral practice, and also that cultural geographers have studied representations in a wide range of forms, including with emphasis upon visual images. Castells (1989) also argued that media do more than simply represent a world outside: they offer different ways of apprehending and comprehending spaces, by creating mediated environments and relationships (Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine, 2004). Thrift's (2000) notion of economies embedded in social relations similarly maintains that "global flows and connections are constructed by human beings who are always embedded in networks of power and knowledge which are themselves part of an ever-changing structural context" (as cited in Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine, 2004: 297). Thus, culture is neither objective, neutral nor static.

According to Kneale (2003: 40), cultural geographers advocate that representations of the world do not mirror reality, but rather "*re-present*" elements of the world (also supported by Barnes and Duncan, 1992; and Duncan and Ley, 1993). Crang (1998) suggested that cultures are embedded in real-life situations, locatable and specific, embracing operational values that guide people's day-to-day activities and decision-making choices, and that examining

different cultures reveals the taken-for-granted assumptions of one's own. These studies shed

light on female travelers' depictions in popular travel magazine ads, via the politics of representation. Texts and images such as those found in media advertisements are part of wider discursive formations which are inseparable from the exercise of power (Kneale, 2003: 39; Said, 1978).

Power is a critical concept in contemporary cultural geography, particularly in terms of the contested nature of culture and the politics of representation (Rose, 2001; Thrift, 1999; Crang and Coleman, 2002; Crang, 2003). Crang (1998) and Ogborn (2003: 9-10) argued that cultural geography may be seen as a 'translation', a making of connections between different ways of seeing the world. Similarly, Foucault (1980), Llewellyn (2003), Dworkin and Wachs (2004), Morgan and Pritchard (1998), Milkie (2002) and Crang (1998) all further suggest that truth is not revealed; it is constructed. Thus representing something as 'valid' – including the portrayal of a subject in an advertisement – becomes a political issue in the sense that it empowers the group who *represents* the world in this way, and disables the arguments or silences the views of other groups who do not necessarily subscribe to the same view. Judith Williamson (1978) noted almost 30 years ago that marketers select and utilize particular images and aspects of society, while discarding others.

2.2.2 Tourism as a Contrived and Constructed Experience

Urry's (1990, 2002) seminal work on what he termed "the tourist gaze" was integral to this study's examination of travel ads. His work highlights that all travel ads are constructed in a calculated manner. Urry (1990/2002) adapted Foucault's post-structural concepts to develop the notion of the 'tourist's gaze', whereby the tourist demarcates the 'other', and claims the

right to name the 'out-of-the-ordinary'. As Urry (2002: 10) put it: "Images entice people to visit places and once there, people 'gaze' at that which initially drew them, photographs are then taken...particular images are carefully selected and endlessly reproduced and captured". Travelogues and travel writing arguably serve a similar function. Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 173) noted that photographs are presented as reflections, rather than constructions, of reality – and thus are accorded special value as 'proof' of existence. Congruent with works by Dann (1996a) and Boorstin (1992), Urry (1990) highlighted that tourists have to learn *how and at what* to gaze; he took this a step further in arguing that tourism is a tautology wherein tourists merely confirm the discourse which initially persuaded them to take the trip.

Urry (2002) further noted the tourist gaze was characterized by a sense of contrast from one's "everyday" experience and settings. He also discussed what he labeled a post-tourist's delight in the inauthenticity of the normal tourist experience (Urry, 2002: 12), citing by way of example the seeing of particular signs to indicate a stereotypically "authentic" (but artificial) segment of a destination or 'realistic' local life such as an English village, or a landmark-signifier simply "famous for being famous" (e.g. the Eiffel Tower). He argued that this phenomenon entails something like a sacred pilgrimage to a sacred centre, sometimes an urban centre, similar to Graburn's (1989) work on tourism as a sacred journey.

MacCannell (1989) noted the tourist's quest to escape a sense of alienation, in experiencing something more "authentic". Boorstin (1992) argued that the tourist finds pleasure in inauthentic contrived attractions (pseudo events), an assertion supported by Urry (2002) and by Morgan and Pritchard (1998). Coleman and Crang (2002: 8) further discussed

how “tourists are frequently bedazzled and allured by promotional images and fobbed off with manufactured and superficial images.” Baudrillard (1989) refers to such place-images as “simulacra”: they are imitations of phenomena that never actually existed or, as Crang puts it, “hyper-reality” (Crang, 1998: 126). Crang (1998, 2003) and Urry (2002) further discussed the manufactured and controlled environment as designed to offer fulfillment through the purchase of commodities. Cohen (1988) discussed the notion of commodification inherent in tourism, suggesting some tourists’ desires for authenticity. Wearing and Wearing (1996) suggested the general importance of examining subjective meanings and realities constructed by tourists in the “tourist space”. Turner and Ash (1975) highlighted that mass tourists themselves were placed at the centre of a severely circumscribed world, “protected”, and relieved of responsibility. (Their concept became strikingly apparent in the travel magazine ads featuring female travel consumers analyzed in this thesis.)

Some of the above approaches have been criticized for being too value-laden, for being critical of mass tourism, and for being too elitist (e.g. Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 8; Urry, 1990; Dann, 1996; Crick, 1988; Nash, 2004). As well, Urry’s (1990/2002) ideas conflict with MacCannell’s (1973) notion of the tourist quest for authenticity: work sometimes criticized, according to Morgan and Pritchard (1998), for its elitist aura of an, “I-the-traveler” versus “Them-the-mass-tourist” perspective. Furthermore, one may argue the difficulty in proving a relatively abstract notion such as a “tourist gaze.”

These themes noted above are discussed in more depth in the analytical discussion of the actual ads used in my sample, in Chapter 6.

2.2.3 Tourism as a Form of Power and Discourse

Tourism as a form of power and discursive hegemony has been well documented (Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Cohen, 2001; Butler and Hinch, 1996; Chambers, 2000; Cohen, 1988; Crick, 1988; Edensor and Kothari, 1994; Enloe, 1989; Hall, 1994; Kaur and Hutnyk, 1999; Leheny, 1995; Turner and Ash, 1975). Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 19) succinctly pointed out a recurrent theme found in tourism scholarship was that what is deemed representative depends on who gets to say. In keeping with Foucauldian principles, Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 381) further noted that the implementation of representation in turn limits other ways the same object or topic may be construed. Kinnaird, Kothari and Hall (1994: 6) suggested that tourism involves processes which are constructed out of “complex and varied social realities and relations that are often hierarchical and unequal” (cf. Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001). The symbiotic relationship between tourism and culture is significant, since tourism makes use of cultural meanings to frame its imagery, the meanings of which are drawn from varied but highly selected areas in society (Fowles, 1996; Chambers, 2000; Goldman, 1992; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998).

The study of tourism leads the researcher not to the periphery but to the core of global power structures: as tourism is a subject fundamentally concerned with perceptions of images, identity and stereotypes, the vast power to define is at stake (Enloe, 2000; Richter, 1995; Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Discourses of identity can be further deconstructed to determine what is ‘properly’ feminine/masculine, what is a good sexual reputation, how these may be established in particular cultures, and how such

identities may be permitted to shift and change (Ramazanoglu with Holland, 2004: 92; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Pritchard, 2001; Milkie, 2002).

Related to the above, the notion of space and identity as social constructions is well accepted in cultural geography (Johnston et al., 2000: 136; McDowell and Sharp, 1999: 183). As pointed out by Lefebvre (1991) and Mowl and Turner (1995), space is not simply an empty stage on which actors perform. Most analyses of power in cultural geography argue that the active social construction of ‘places, spaces and landscapes’ perpetuates relationships of unequal power between social groups (e.g. Ogborn, 2003; Gammack, 2005). Ogborn (2003) further pointed out the presence of different interests, which can come into conflict over cultural issues, leading to the notion of cultural resistance in which the exercise of power to represent is contested. As a result, an avenue may be provided for identities to be renegotiated and redefined, along with social relations – for example, those dominated by gender. In tourist sites, and in popular travel magazine ads such as those used for this study, some particular places and spaces are valorized at the expense of others (Massey, 1994; Edensor and Kothari, 1994). The privileging of certain tourist destinations and/or images may simply come down to who is paying for how many advertisements, yet nonetheless, a distinctive impression is left as to which destinations are more “relevant” or compelling.

Related to tourism as a form of discourse and power, a number of authors discussed neocolonialism in tourism marketing (e.g. Echtner and Prasad, 2003; Seddighi et al., 2001; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Crang, 1998: 120-41; Cohen, 2001; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Urry, 2002; Enloe, 2000; Richter, 1995). The hegemony of vested financial

interests and resultant appropriations of local identities are significant issues. Kaplan (1996) goes so far as to suggest that the tourist is a Euro-American construct embedded in its colonial legacy. These literary themes regarding tourism as a form of discourse and power inform this study in addressing whose views particular ads depict, and to what end.

2.2.4 Tourism Consumption as a Signifier of Identity and Elitism

Urry's (2002) work on "the tourist gaze" further explored tourism as a signifier of identity and elitism, as did Crang (1998), Morgan and Pritchard (1998), Crang and Coleman (2002) and Fowles (1996). Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine (2004: 199) noted that Jackson (1996, 2002a) helped to shift human geography's orientation from the study of geographies of production, to the geographies of consumption. Tourism is a field profoundly influenced by both image and identity in terms of both production and consumption (Chambers, 2000; Enloe, 1989; Richter, 1995; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Selianniemi, 2002; Rose, 1997, 2001; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; and Urry, 2002). Urry (2002), Crang (1998), and Morgan and Pritchard (1998) in particular argued that social groups in the post-modern era frequently define both themselves and others by their habits and patterns of consumption, consumers fashioning a self-image through goods – assembling around them goods with which they feel at ease, and which thus unselfconsciously communicate who they are. Urry (2002: 77) cited Baudrillard's (1989) observation that what we increasingly consume are "signs and representations; social identities are constructed through the exchange of sign-values".

In discussing the geography of consumption, Crang (1998) suggested that groups showing similar patterns of consumption will probably identify with one another, since positional

goods are used to convey particular status within their societies. Urry (2002: 450) further noted that “professional opinion formers”, such as brochure writers, tend to be middle class – and within the middle class is the strongest-based desire for positional goods.

Coleman and Crang (2002: 34) argued that in the current climate of individualism and consumption, rivalry can be acted out through travel consumption, just as the teller of travel stories is affirming that s/he is “special - because I have had these experiences.” Fowles (1996: 121) discussed how consumption “serves as a ticket to membership in a group with similar tastes”, while Urry (2002: 42) argued that many holiday destinations are popular not because they are intrinsically superior, but because they convey elite taste or superior social status. (He added that many tourist sites only produce satisfaction for visitors in direct proportion to how congested they are.) To better glamorize a product, Fowles (1996: 103) suggested that “advertisers will appropriate such popular culture material as celebrities, music, [and] comedic styles”, while Urry (2002: 82-2) also noted the use of celebrity in advertising.

MacCannell (1976) and Urry (1990) suggested that the media are accomplices in the construction of cultural experiences such as consumption, including the “traveling lifestyle”. Urry (2002: 161) pointed out that mobility is increasingly central to the identities of young people, to members of ethnic diasporas, and to retired people who can live on the move, and that mobility, in its countless incarnations (e.g. physical, imaginative, virtual, voluntary) has become a critical identity-related marker of consumption (Urry, 2002: 161).

Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 39) discerned that some ads represent “aristocratic leisure.” Emphases on individually tailored vacationing and insistent rejection of being treated as “one of the masses” were noted as further manifestations of elitism (Urry, 2002: 79, 86; Mowforth and Munt, 1998). The notions of Post-Fordism and the “New Tourism” – smaller-scaled, more personally tailored travel - were discussed by Morley and Robbins (1995: 27) and by Mowforth and Munt (1998: 26 - 27). To Crang (1998), the elite must always find new locations, “uncontaminated” by the masses – and which carry sufficient symbolic capital, guaranteed, for example, by the difficulty in getting there (also see Urry, 2002: 86), further suggesting that such criteria are required as distinctions of one’s *taste*, as well as affluence. Urry (2002: 59) pointed out the countering trend of the “McDonaldization” of elite experiences, indicating the wide provision of services provided under conditions of profit maximization. Service is a predominant theme in travel advertising, involving the “commercialization of human feeling” (Urry, 2002: 38, 62-4; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998), with more recent emphasis on the quality of interactions the tourist has with service providers. The tourist could become almost “child-like” in terms of having all of his/her needs addressed (Urry, 2002: 91).

Urry (2002) noted an increase in the prestige-related tourist demand for what he termed the “romantic gaze”, entailing an emphasis on a sense of solitude, and another was in gazing upon ever-more magnificent scenery. Pritchard and Havitz (2006) also indicated that, in destination-specific tourist feedback, environmental factors such as natural scenery, flora and fauna were ranked as highly important in terms of overall tourist satisfaction. Urry (2002: 84) also distinguished the tourist’s preoccupation with self-actualization or “me-ness”, discussing

prior work of Ehrenreich (1982) on the contemporary fetishizing of self-involvement/interest as manifested in self-indulgence, irresponsibility, and “isolationist detachment”, also formative of identity and elitism. In Chapter 6, I discuss whether or not the themes noted above as in the literature were evident in the travel advertisements under scrutiny.

2.2.5 Placelessness

Hubbard, Valentine, and Kitchin (2004: 9) argued that place is becoming increasingly important in an economy where image is everything. However, several works indicated a decrease in the importance of notable identities for tourism destinations (Crang, 1998; Morley and Robbins, 1995; Urry, 2002; Boorstin, 1992). Crang and Coleman (1999:10) suggested that tourism was “an event that is about mobilizing and reconfiguring spaces and places, bringing them into new constellations and therefore transforming them”. To Urry (2002: 38), the tourism industry is inevitably competitive, since “almost every place in the world could well act as an object for the tourist gaze.” Noting the “Euro-centricity” in tourism marketing, Morley and Robins (1995: 37) and Dodge and Kitchin (2004) suggested a tendency toward general de-territorialization and de-localization, remarking on the enlisted “enterprise of culture to manufacture differentiated urban or local identities...”, although geographers such as McDowell (1997) and Yeung (1998) argue that such claims have been exaggerated. Crang (1998) and Urry (2002) further suggested that, “mass” often really denotes “American.” To Urry (2002: 8), “... in the search for ever-new places to visit, what is constructed is a set of hotels and tourist sights that is bland and lacking in contradiction.” Turner and Ash (1975: 292) predicted that tourism would create “a small monotonous world

that everywhere shows us our own image...the pursuit of the exotic and diverse ends in uniformity.” Urry further noted the ubiquity of enormously powerful brands and logos (2002: 144). This literature conclusively suggested that power interests in the realm of tourism compete for discursive dominance (Echtner and Prasad, 2003; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). As Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine (2004: 10) pointed out, space and place are always in the process of *becoming*, and thus unavoidably caught up in power relations. The notion of placelessness is pertinent to the travel ads under scrutiny, as discussed in Chapter 6.

2.2.6 The Gendering of Tourism, Manifested in Marketing

The importance of gender-aware research in tourism has been highlighted in academic literature since the 1990s (Swain and Momsen, 2002; Jordan and Gibson, 2005; Apostolopoulos et al., 2001, 2002; Henderson, 1994; Richter, 1994; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996; Swain, 1995; Aitcheson, 1996; Craik, 1997; Davidson, 1996; Deem, 1996), with many critiques of the gendered signs, symbols, myths and fantasies that the tourism industry uses to market tourist destinations, and the ways in which these reinforce power relationships among men and women. Insofar as gender roles are cultural constructions, the specific processes of tourism are developed out of gendered societies (Paechter, 2003; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Wackwitz, 2003). This trend is highly apparent in the marketing of tourism (Pritchard and Morgan, 2000a, 2000b; Hall and Kinnaird, 1994; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; Wearing and Wearing, 2001). Small (1999:25) stated that growing feminist scholarship in tourism (e.g. Aitcheson, 1996; Craik, 1997; Davidson, 1996; Deem, 1996; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996; Norris and Wall, 1994; Richter, 1994; Swain, 1995, 1998, 2001) has contributed

toward the reconstruction and reinterpretation of an analysis of tourism from a gendered standpoint.

Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 187) declared the notable lack of image-based research on gender and tourism. Cohen (1995: 418) argued that to understand how tourism mediates existing power relationships, one must focus more intently upon the largely overlooked “role of sexual ideology in maintaining and reproducing these systems and structures.” Enloe (1989: 41) more pointedly asserted that “the very structure of international tourism requires the patriarchy in order to survive”, in her later work stating that tourism is infused with masculine ideas about adventure, pleasure and the exotic – and that it also depends on women for its success (Enloe, 2000: 20).

Urry’s (1990) notion of the tourist gaze has been further extended into the notion of what has been termed a distinctively white, heterosexual “male gaze”, particularly manifested in tourism marketing (Pritchard, 2001; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Richter, 2001; Wearing and Wearing, 1996) – the suggestion is that tourism industry representatives are both targeting and catering to an audience with stereotypical white hetero-normative male tastes (Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001, 2002; Gibson, 2001; Pritchard, 2001; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; and Wearing and Wearing, 2001, 1996; Westwood, Morgan and Pritchard, 2000; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996; Swain and Momsen, 2002; Richter, 1995; McDowell, 1999). Laura Mulvey (1989) also discusses the “male gaze” as highly apparent in film. As Richter (2001) concurs, the impact of tourism continues to socialize generations to the importance of what men have done, while women

are ignored, sexualized, or “immortalized on postcards, nutcrackers and t-shirts” (also in Richter, 1995: 154). Richter (1992), as well as Edensor and Kothari (1994) argued that in tourism advertisements, females’ greatest significance is portrayed within the context of their sexualized utility to male figures. Pritchard (2001: 81) further highlights the male-oriented idealization of certain roles and associations with masculinity and femininity, which tourism advertisements reinforce in self-conscious constructions (Johnston, 2001; Westwood et al., 2000; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Enloe, 2000; Valentine, 1993; and Kinnaird and Hall, 1996). Dickson et al. (2006) also noted in snowsport images the dominance of stereotypical images which convey men as active and competent participants, while women are often conveyed as inactive 'eye candy'.

Akin to the notion of the male gaze, several authors (Urry, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Wearing and Wearing, 1996; Massey, 1994; Gibson, 2001: 24) referred to the role of the *flâneur* in tourism – i.e., one who freely moves about space observing, without being himself observed - as assigned to the male tourist rather than the female. Her mere presence in public may be viewed by some as transgressive, the premise being that public space in some societies is implicitly designated as male (Haraway, 1991; Massey, 1994; Valentine, 1989). Several feminist geographers argued that public space is encoded as both masculine and heterosexually dominated (Duncan, 1996; Valentine, 1993). Mitchell (2003) and Jackson (1989) undertook related work on “structural inequalities under patriarchal capitalism”, exploring the domination of women in public and private spheres. Much of his focus was on “women as bearers of gender, while men remained something of an unmarked category” (Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine, 2004: 197).

A prevailing theme in much of the research on gender in tourism marketing and promotion has been that the range of published images has been highly gendered and, particularly with regard to women, narrow, limiting and frequently sexualized (e.g. Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Pritchard, 2001; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Westwood et al., 2000; Foster and Botterill, 1995; Rigsby, 2001). For example, Western female tourists tend to be portrayed as bikini-clad or semi-nude at a spa, or in settings where they may be easily defined in relation to their positioning with a male as part of a heterosexual couple and/or 'mom' in a family context (e.g. Bowen, 2002; Urry, 1990; Enloe, 1989; Richter, 1995; Pritchard, 2001; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Dickson et al., 2006; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994). Thus, despite prominent references in post-feminist popular culture to female autonomy and empowerment (Early and Kennedy, 2003; Grimshaw, 2003; Harris, 2003; Inness, 2004; Kingston, 2004; Wolfe, 1997; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Milkie, 2002), female travelers nevertheless continue to be portrayed reductively in tourism-related marketing. Echtner and Prasad (2003), however, found that heterosexist images of women in swimsuits predominated only for "sea and sand" destinations, not for other types of tourism.

Selwyn (1992: 355) argued that even where women are portrayed in situations which may be termed active and/or work-oriented, they are still presented as passive and attractive adornments to the tourism product, discussing by way of example, that tourist brochures help to construct the myths and fantasies characteristic of key ideological features of western culture, which include representations of men being associated with action, power and ownership, while women are associated with belonging to someone (also in Pritchard and

Morgan, 2000b, 2000a; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Similarly, Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000: 361), in their study of state tourism brochures, concluded that “women are portrayed unrealistically – even if with little conscious intent – in printed tourism advertising.” They found women to be portrayed far more frequently in “traditional stereotypical poses” indicating submission and passivity than were men, contending that this was a clear visual manifestation of power relations in the context of gender relations. Such findings were substantiated by Chambers (2000), Apostolopoulos and Sonmez (2001), Kinnaird and Hall (1994), and Oppermann and McKinley (1997). Wearing and Wearing (1996: 231-2) further distinguished that “gendered tourists, gendered hosts, gendered tourism marketing and gendered tourism objects each reveal power differences between men and women which privilege male views and which have significant impacts on tourism image and promotion.” Swain (2002: 6), Jokinen and Veijola (1997), Rojek and Urry (1997: 17), and Selianniemi (2002: 7) also suggest that a large proportion of tourist experiences in general are presented as *engendered*.

Similar arguments regarding the use of sexualized stereotypical portrayals of women in advertising as framed by the dominant white, heterosexual male perspective have been similarly made in the fields of marketing, journalism, and in media and cultural studies (Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; Bolla, 1990; Cohan, 2001; Cortese, 1999; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Frith, 1995; Ford, LaTour and Lundstrom, 1991; Goffman, 1979; Grimshaw, 2003; Heatwole, 1989; Klassen, Jasper, and Schwartz, 1993; Marshall, 1996a; 1996b; McRobbie, 1997; Milkie, 2002; Miller, 1992; Reichart, Lambiase, Morgan, Carstarphen, and Zavoina, 1999; and Rhode, 1994). Morgan and Pritchard (1998:188) point out that little

research has literally been done on gendered tourism identities ascribed to men. Goffman's (1979) seminal work on women's magazines indicated that photographs of women projected desirable female attributes, such as youth, beauty, sexuality and the possession of a man. They also endorsed stereotypes of submissive, sensual women and powerful active men (Pritchard, 2001: 79). Goldman (1992: 119) stated, "Advertising has historically signified the commodity self by the visual abstraction of body parts. We are accustomed to equating persona with unblemished components of the human body—most notably the expressive surfaces of the eyes, mouth and hands. And, of course, American media culture has abstracted female breasts so relentlessly that they are often treated as if independent of the person who bears or 'wears' them." According to Gibson (2001: 38) and Aitcheson (2000), the construction of masculine forms instead of feminine ones is a way in which male supremacy is reinforced in society. Behaviour in accordance with assigned gender roles is both expected and rewarded (Butler, 1990, 1993; Paechter, 2003; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Wackwitz, 2003; Cusack and Breathnach-Lynch, 2003: 581).

2.3 Review of Related Literature on Female Travelers

Little scholarship has been written directly about the Western female traveler (Pritchard, 2001; Jordan and Gibson, 2005; Urry, 1990, 2002; Richter, 1995; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Westwood et al., 2000), particularly without focus on her sexuality, in comparison to her alleged numbers and corresponding hard currency (Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Westwood et al., 2000). Nevertheless, numerous Western women are reported to travel independently – that is, without male companionship

(e.g. Elsrud, 2005; Wilson and Little, 2005; Jordan and Gibson, 2005; Swain and Momsen, 2002; Westwood et al., 2000; , Pritchard, 2000; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Butler, 1995; Henderson et al., 1996; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Richter, 1995; Swain, 1995; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996, 2000; and Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Anastovassa, 2002). A significant exception to this gap is the recently published *Tourism Review International Special Issue on Female Travelers*, released in December, 2005. Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000: 353) further mentioned that women comprise 50% of the total global workforce, with an increasing prevalence in professional and management positions, and overall high levels of education and economic independence. Timothy (2001: 240) noted that women traveling for business comprise one of the fastest growing market segments. Dole's (2002: 53-57) paper on women's travel magazines indicates how 'women and travel' became a "hot topic" in the 1990s in North American popular culture. She suggested two reasons for this development: business opportunities and unequivocal cultural expectations that markets be gendered. Dole (2002) quoted Tom Peters of *Forbes Magazine* who noted that women are a "premier-business-opportunity-for-anyone-and-everyone", adding that 50% of business travelers today are women. According to hotelmarketing.com (2005), all five travel professionals speaking at a panel session of the Harvard Business School Dynamic Women in Business Conference stressed that female travelers are "a valuable market still waiting to be served; that goes double when one considers women's substantial role in organizing their families' leisure vacations.....Any company that understands its female travelers' experiences and wisdom is likely to succeed." Yet no Canadian travel statistics organized by gender are presently available. Butler (1995) pointed out that when gendered guest-host

interactions are investigated, attention is commonly given to the women as the hosts rather than the guests, and that when women are spoken of as guests in a country, what is commonly meant are white, middle-class tourists, as these are the women with sufficient time, money and desire to undertake travel (Butler, 1995: 488; Gibson, 2001: 21). Garcia-Ramon and Albet i Mas (2002: 39) stated that, “most of the research on women travelers has been carried out by English-speaking authors on English-speaking women travelers,” and that this was the case in geography with very few exceptions.

Women as travelers are increasingly discussed by journalists, however (e.g. Aftosmis, 2004; Bond, 1999; Catto, 2002; Costello, 2001; Fernandez, 2001; Jacoby, 2001; Maxwell, 2003; McDaniel, 1999; Prasso, 2002; Smith, 2005; *Travel + Leisure* “2005 Women’s Travel Special”), and academicians. The *Tourism Review International* (2005) special issue on women travelers offered articles on women as active, engaged travelers – for example, backpackers (Elsrud, 2005; Obenour, 2005), or working aboard ships (Jennings, 2005) - although offerings on female travelers’ constructed identity remain limited. As Vavrus (2002: 166) in her work on media studies noted, the everyday lives of women have become the subject of a great deal of media examination, particularly in terms of a more recent emphasis on “balance” in women’s lives. Certainly women and their interests are given considerable prominence in news media. For example, *TIME* magazine in June, 2005 ran a cover story on how many women are making the most of their “mid-life crises” to make desired life changes (Gibbs, 2005).

While the academic study of independent female travelers dates well before Victorian times (Robinson, 1990; Pratt, 1992; Mills, 1994), research on contemporary women began in earnest only a decade and a half ago. In the past twelve years, five edited volumes specifically on women and tourism have been published (Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Swain, 1995; Apostolopoulos et al., 2001; Swain and Momsen, 2002; as well as the *Tourism Review International Special Issue on Women*, December, 2005). These have covered broad-ranging subjects from “romance” tourism (e.g. Dahles and Bras, 2002), to possible travel motivations (e.g. Gibson, 2001), to the frequent underlying theme of less favourable treatment for women by virtue of gender, to solo female travel (e.g. Elsud, 2005; Jordan and Gibson, 2005). Each volume’s authors lamented the dearth of more concrete information on female travelers. Nonetheless, what follows is a summary on available sources.

2.3.1 References on Women’s Travel Motivations

Several authors refer to women’s travel motivations as potentially differing from those of males (Gibson, 1998; Gibson and Jordan, 1998; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Wearing and Wearing, 1996; Small 2003; Collins and Tisdell, 2002; Hashimoto 2000). The common argument is that males travel more to explore and conquer, whereas women travel more for self-actualization, self-development and a spiritual quest for authenticity. Several authors contended that these gender differences hold true even when men and women are visiting the same place (Wearing and Wearing, 1996; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Anastassova, 2002: 70-71; MacCannell, 2002: viii; Dole, 2002; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Garcia-Ramon and i Mas, 2002: 50-51). Swain (2002: 7) also noted that

writings in travel publications appear to confirm these same constructs - i.e., female “self-discovery”, as opposed to “male empowerment”.

Anastassova (2002: 70) suggested that destination selection by the female tourist is dominated by social and intellectual components as well as “opportunities for contacts with local way of life”, while male tourists are motivated by competence-mastery and intellectual components. According to Small (2002: 29), women enjoy holidays in which there is “a socially harmonious environment where everyone is getting on well.” Gibson and Jordan (1998a; Jordan and Gibson, 2005) also suggested that “meeting people on the road” and interacting with local people are critically important for solo female travelers. A central feature of this suggestion is that contemporary tourists in general want to gaze, but they also want to feel that the object of that gaze also enjoys the “exchange”. (The numerous guidebook images of local people smiling at the camera imply that this may indeed be a widespread sentiment amongst tourists of either gender.)

Mills (1994) argued that, since women do not escape the neocolonial ideologies of their own cultures, female tourists believe to some extent in their own superiority when overseas (Davidson, Jones and Schellhorn, 2002: 210). Blake (1992: 56) further suggested that western women’s acceptance of their own superiority to women from other cultures diverts them from their own subordinate position to men. One criticism of the above characterizations is that they tend to stereotype both men and women, and to reduce complexity and ambiguity to a few variables that can easily be framed within the context of a research study.

2.3.2 Marketing To Female Travelers

Where women patrons are the specific target market of tourism advertising, Richter (1995: 152) noted the more frequent promise of physically pampering environments with “excellent shopping.” Kinnaird and Hall (1994, 214) stated that family-oriented entertainment, as well as shopping as a leisure pursuit, are often marketed toward female tourists in their assumed role as caretakers of the family. Advertisements were reported to frequently depict Euro-American women in images of passive and indulgent activities, such as lying in a spa or swimming pool. A recurrent point made in the literature was that much advertising directed toward and/or featuring female travel consumers continues, as it did over half a century ago, to reductionistically focus on the theme of women as bodies to be consumed for viewing, or as appearances to be worked on – i.e., *improved*, with a predominating focus on the ‘fecund’ age bracket (Urry, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Westwood et al., 2000). This point may be a critical one to this study since, as pointed out by Seddighi et al. (2001), Morgan and Pritchard (1998), and Kinnaird and Hall (1994), consumer perception critically shapes travel behaviour.

Diverging from this perspective, Rose (2001: 194-201) noted that different viewers will perceive advertisements through the varying lenses of their own individual experiences and tastes; thus no advertisement can convey one simple or unambiguous message. By way of example, Marshment (1997) disputed that holiday brochures emphasized a sexual sell despite the regular appearance of female models in bathing suits. She found other variables to be important, such as the nature of the destinations themselves, sorted by socio-economic class or sponsored activities. She suggested that the woman in the swimsuit was often portrayed as

a fit and wholesome family mother, rather than as the object of an imaginary sexualizing male gaze, further arguing that female models whose clothing appears provocative to some viewers might appear “fashionable, free, and exciting” to others (Marshment 1997: 21). Thus, she argued that it may be premature to conclude that all women find these advertising images completely unfavourable – particularly if one were to make age-based comparisons of consumers (similar to Bowen, 2002).

Several authors profiled Western female tourists, focusing specifically women who travel independently (e.g. Jordan and Gibson, 2005; Gibson and Jordan, 1998; Wilson and Little, 2005; Elsrud, 2005), although specifics were limited. Walker, Valaoras, Gurung and Godde (2001: 212) noted that while many women travel with their partners and children, the motives and experiences of these women are quite different from those of women traveling by themselves. Deem and Davidson (1996) argued that women traveling with families frequently do not get a domestic break. Gibson (2001: 23) found that single and childless women actually take more overseas trips than do women with children, as the presence of young children in a family is a strong deterrent to travel. She also noted that working women travel more frequently than do non-working women (one may presume for economic reasons), making the former more “valuable” to the travel industry. Little was written about women traveling without men but with their children.

Hottola (2002) and MacCannell (2002: ix) reported that sometimes women traveling alone appeared to be sexually available to local men. Research on “romance tourism” – the practice of Western female tourists having sexual relationships with male tourists or local men is a

prominent theme in tourism scholarship on gender (e.g. Hottola, 2002a; Meisch, 2002, 1995; Momsen, 1996; Dahles and Bras, 1999; Pruitt and Lafont, 1995; Dahles, 2002; Ryan and Kinder, 1996; Garcia and DeMoya, 2001; Jeffreys, 1999). Karsch and Dann (1996: 179) suggested that to destination locals, “the white female tourist stands as a symbol of escape from the drudgery of the Third World and access to a better life.” In the context of the developing world, Gibson (2001: 22) argued that any reference is specifically to white middle-class female tourists, since they are the only ones with sufficient time and money, as well as desire, to embark upon such a journey. She found that, when seeking to understand the gendered experiences of tourists, it is critical to adopt a pluralistic perspective that acknowledges the interaction between gender, race, class and nationality to the extent that these influence the experiences of the female tourist.

Collins and Tisdell (2002: 133) noted gender as a major influence on overall travel demand, concluding that women traveled more for leisure than for business purposes. Walker et al. (2001: 212-213) mentioned the participation of women in athletic activities while on vacation, arguing that to some women, such participation represents a process of resistance to gendered norms that may inhibit them from being active, outdoors and independent of men back at home in their own communities. They further noted the existence of women-only tours and adventure-based groups as both a challenge and a compromise to gender stereotypes. More recent references to women as physically active vacationers included Elsrud (2005) and Jennings (2005).

Caballero and Hart (1996: 10), Small (2003) and Stone and Nichol (1999) noted an increase in the number of “mature” female tourists, over 55 years of age. Such “21st century tourists” were noted as “market-conscious, experienced, well traveled... demanding value for money and something more than just ‘mindless hedonism’” (Caballero and Hart, 1996: 11). They added that this mature female tourist represented in Europe alone 52% of the traveling population, and that, with this proportion on a notable rise with aging baby boomers, it was hardly a demographic that an industry concerned with its own economic growth can afford to ignore.

Smith (1979) stated that women were taste-makers and dominant travel decision-makers twenty-five years ago. Her arguments were more recently substantiated by Zalatan (1998), Pearce (1989), Pritchard (2001), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), and Small (1999). A recent article specifically for female travelers in *Travel+Leisure* (October, 2005: 71) stated that women are responsible for 80% of travel decisions made. This claim contrasts with previous suggestions that women traveling in couples and family groups are frequently still burdened with domestic chores, in a way their male counterparts are not (Selianniemi, 2002; Small, 2002; Davidson, 1996), as well as MacCannell’s (2002: ix) allegation that males enjoy more power in a decision-making capacity once the vacation has commenced.

In searching for writings on women and travel safety, I noted an increase in research on travel safety in general since 9/11, but in a non-gender-specific way. The authors sought to address the heightened concerns of travelers, and the effects on the industry (e.g. Cavlek, 2003; Kinsbury and Brunn, 2003; Wulf et al., 2003; Fallon, 2003; Fisher, 2003; Lepp and

Gibson, 2003; Floyd, Gibson et al., 2004; Henderson, 2003). Little reference to travel safety as a specific concern to females appeared, beyond guidebook sections for women, the exceptions being Chasteen (1994); Walker et al. (2001: 214); Jordan and Gibson (2005); and Gibson and Jordan (1998a, 1998b). Some hotels attempt to mitigate female tourists' fear of sexual harassment or assault through improved hotel security, rooms for solo women located by the elevator, and programmable keys, alongside the more female-friendly skirt hangers, full-length mirrors, hair dryers, and complimentary bubble bath (Richter, 1995). Richter (1995) suggested that women's personal safety concerns may account for travel advertising specifically directed to female tourists that focuses upon sheltered spa holidays that offer few opportunities for adventure.

2.4 Research on the Commercial and Discursive Hegemony of Media

Magazines and advertisements are far-reaching instruments of discursive commercial power (Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Milkie, 2002; McRobbie, 1997; Williamson, 1978; Goffman, 1979; Mellinger, 1994; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Wolf, 1997). Walker (2004: 32) argued that, "the culture industry, encompassing all forms of mass culture, media and the businesses behind them, makes up such a totalizing system that some have argued it is literally impossible to rebel against it." O'Barr (1994), Fowles (1996), Kotler (2002), Goldman (1992), Williamson (1978), and Goffman (1979) each observed that advertising offers a highly selective and edited view of society, which serves to "assist" the consumer in "understanding" social realities that the client wishes the consumer to accept. Others acknowledged that hegemony of both discourse and profits were kept within the control of a

relatively small few – for example, multinational corporations (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Kothari, Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Apostolopoulos et al., 2001; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; *LexisNexis Advertising Redbooks*, 2005). Vavrus (2002: 3) suggested that the media construct particular views of the world, and “through continuous interactions with these views, we mold and shape our own perspectives and orientations toward reality”.

Crang (1998) argues that this power hegemony within the media implies one voice or perspective, which in turn influences disseminations of particular cultural projections – such as widespread images of what female travelers are *really like*, and in what they are interested. As discussed by Crang and Coleman (2002), who is counted and who is excluded from the discourse will depend on what is chosen as significant enough for representation. Dworkin and Wachs (2004: 613, reviewing Herman and Chomsky, 1988) outlined that a small number of corporations own, produce, and distribute most of the content in newspapers and magazines: “the maneuverings of multinationals limit the number of texts and ideologies that are presented to a mass audience”. Other authors bluntly postulated that magazines are first and foremost commercial endeavors (Vavrus, 2002: 176; Milkie, 2002; McRobbie, 1997; Dole, 2002; Wolf, 1997), existing for the purpose of acting as spaces in which advertisers can market their products to a large target audience of consumers, notably women. Travel advertising, like any other form of advertising, exists to further commercial interests (i.e., to sell goods and services), often by featuring a subject or idealized person with whom the consumer may identify or (even if unconsciously) aspire to emulate (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Westwood et al., 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 2001; Pritchard, 2000; Goffman, 1979; Williamson, 1978; Fowles, 1996; Wolf, 1997).

2.4.1 Profit Orientation and Women

Not all authors were moderate in their conclusions of a distinctive gender bias in advertising. Wolf (1997: 18), for example, argued the existence of an economic imperative to maintain a certain state of insecurity in the female consumer, in order to keep her buying products. Vavclus (2002: 3); Fowles (1996); Bolla (1990); Cohan (2001); Cortese (1999); Dworkin and Wachs (2004); Ford, LaTour and Lundstrom (1991); Fowles, 1996; Goffman (1979); Grimshaw (2003); Heatwole (1989); Klassen, Jasper, and Schwartz (1993); Marshall (1996a; 1996b); McRobbie (1997); Milkie (2002); Miller (1992); Reichart, Lambiase, Morgan, Carstarphen, and Zavoina (1999); and Rhode (1994) similarly suggested that sexualized and/or stereotypical portrayals of women continued to predominate in advertising images. Gender stereotyping was intertwined with capitalism and the notion of elitism. For the consumer to achieve the idealized state depicted in advertisements, spending money is not simply encouraged; it is mandatory. Thus, the connection between how women are idealized and portrayed in popular media advertisements and underlying commercial interests is unambiguous (McRobbie, 1997; Milkie, 2002; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000; Westwood, Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Enloe, 1989; Chambers, 2000). Dworkin and Wachs (2004: 622) asserted that “feminist researchers have noted how corporations have successfully commodified the empowerment messages of feminism and sold these back to the target demographic who benefited most from these gains, warning that “one must be cautious of acritical cheers for ‘choice’, ‘control’, ‘strength’, and ‘having it all’, whether this is prescribed to women in the public or the private realm.”

Some scholars did note the lack of clearly gender-divided opposition: numerous women have risen high in corporate and management hierarchies, including in advertising (Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Pritchard, 2001). I suggest that the term “patriarchy” may more accurately be interchanged with “the multinational corporate establishment,” since fewer CEOs of major companies are female. Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 188) and Reichart, Lambiase, Morgan, Carstarphen, and Zavoina (1999) suggested a recent more egalitarian shift in media portrayals of men and women, including an emergent mass market for men’s grooming products and an increasing emphasis on male appearance.

Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000: 353) argued that the media mirror public opinion and long-term changes in societal norms and values, and thus have begun to reflect the transformation of women’s role in society. They asserted that working women represent a target audience for various promotional messages, and that it would be reasonable to expect ads to portray women in their newly defined positions in postmodern society. However, Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000) concluded that women in mass media continue to be portrayed in “traditional stereotypical” roles. Crang (1998) and Morgan and Pritchard (1998) also asserted that the media actually lags behind reality.

Several scholars substantiated this lag behind reality in commenting upon the lack of representation and the failure of the tourism industry to recognize and woo several potentially lucrative market segments, such as gay consumers (Clift and Forrest, 1999; Johnston, 1999) and the elderly (Morley and Robins, 1995; Richter, 1995; Westwood et al., 2000; Caballero and Hart, 1996; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Gibson, 2001). These

groups are the fastest growing population segment of the spending market (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 129). The United States is one of the world's key tourism generating countries; and with a population nearing 300 million, it is an extremely ethnically diverse market; yet the dominance of the white consumer remains barely challenged (Cai and Combrink, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 96-7). Missing from much discussion in the literature is the "subaltern" tourist who is not white, middle class, heterosexual or young. This vacuum contradicts Nash (2004: 467), as well as Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000:355, 353), who argued that marketers are constantly trying to gain competitive advantage in an "ever-changing market" by honing in on evolving niche markets. Morley and Robins (1995: 15) noted that, where profitable to do so, global companies will respond to the demands of particular segments in the market. Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 117) suggested in contrast that historically disenfranchised groups such as women, gays, seniors, and ethnic minorities are becoming new targets of the tourism industry. This trend, both the latter sets of authors argue, reflects both the saturation of the marketplace and also the fact that these groups are gaining a greater voice and becoming more visible. In the quest for ever expanding profit margins, market segmentation is not only a sophisticated marketing technique (Nash, 2004; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998), but also as a process further underpinned by power relationships.

Vavrus (2002: 176), as well as Milkie (2002), McRobbie (1997), and Dworkin and Wachs (2004), noted how "editors of ... magazines routinely tweak, alter, and eradicate stories that might alienate advertisers". Advertisers may dictate the placement of stories in women's magazines to produce a seamless flow between ads and articles (Milkie, 2002; McRobbie, 60

1997; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004). Editors reportedly capitulate in order to continue to attract advertisers (Wolf, 1997: 77-8) and thus, as Vavrus (2002: 176) puts it, “to reproduce the commercial imperative of their industry”. This assumption was noted by Milkie (2002), who interviewed ten editors of “girls’ magazines”. She revealed an ongoing struggle over altering the “narrowing views of femininity at the organizational and institutional levels; the advertisers, however, were winning, despite conscience qualms experienced by the staff regarding, for example, emaciating depictions of young women presented as the attractive norm or status quo.” Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 43) also discussed “the very real tensions which underpin the relationships between the advertisers (the client), the advertising agency, the market research company and the consumer.”

2.5 Research on Advertising

Frith (1995: 185) suggested that an advertisement is both a marketing tool and a cultural artifact, arguing that “by using critical methods like deconstruction we can begin to undress advertising and see the role ideology plays in shaping advertising messages.” She further suggested that as cultural artifacts, advertisements shape human consciousness and reflect the values and mores of a society (Frith 1995: 194-5). According to Frith (1995), Goldman (1992), Fowles (1996), and Morgan and Pritchard (2000), advertising aims to sell products to target consumer-audiences by appealing to their characteristics, values and desires. Bowen (2002: 4) specified that tourism advertising is “aimed at potential tourists in order to sell them tourism and related products through images of themselves ... which incorporate ... dominant cultural ideology.” Sources on advertising largely supported works discussed in

Section 2.3 on the media regarding hegemony and discourse, as well as a noteworthy gender-based imbalance within the medium of advertising (Goldman, 1992; Tellis, 2004; Shields, 2006). Crang (2003: 257) theorized that advertising produces an authoritative discourse by hiding the marks of its production. Rules for its interpretation and categorization are written into the spatial order of objects in ads, to divide, classify and specify objects of knowledge, also determining the amount of attention each ad and/or image gets (Crang, 2003). Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 26), similar to the advertising scholars noted above, specified that image promotion is concerned with transferring meaning onto a product through repeated image association.

Fowles (1996: 37) discussed in greater detail how any advertisement is the product of contesting forces. The final execution of an advertisement is usually a compromise between the wishes of the cautious client and the creative advertising agency (also see Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 52). As suggested by both Urry (2002) and Coleman and Crang (2002), tourism advertising (like other forms) sells and dramatizes dreams and aspirations rather than realities. Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 53) argued, however, that most tourism advertisers spend most of their working lives acting on beliefs and information about popularized constructs which are outdated. O’Barr (1994: 7) also considered that the views of the consumers or audience of advertisements are “largely inaccessible and rarely sought.”

Similar to Urry (2002), Fowles (1996: 94) argued that commodities exist as purchasable social markers, by which the purchaser constructs desired signals. He argued that advertising exists more to stimulate consumption of commodities related to external indicators of

outward social appearances than to address longings of the inner emotional self. Fowles (1996: 152) highlighted how the relative classlessness of American advertising does not reflect social reality, for “every American senses that different social classes do exist”, further discussing how any advertisement may overtly appeal to the individual consumer while repelling the masses (1996: 94). He suggested that the designer of an advertisement strives to sell a commodity to many buyers but recognizes that sales can only happen on an individual basis; thus s/he aims to employ imagery which, while in reality “denying” the individual, appears to speak to him- or herself alone. Fowles noted that to have the greatest chance of overcoming resistance, the messages of the advertiser must be constructed so as to make fullest contact with the mind of the consumer, further suggesting that the human mind has two components of interest to advertisement creators: one governs the individual as a social creature, and the other houses basic instincts, impulses, drives and needs. Fowles (1996: 93) argued that the most successful advertising will incorporate symbolizing appeals to both.

Goldman (1992: 34) drew a stronger correlation between advertising and economics, noting that, “advertising is a form of social practice insofar as corporate profitability and control over markets relies on the existence of a built environment which presupposes commodified relations, such that the world depicted in advertisements comes to be thought of as the only possible world.”

Several authors of articles in available industry publications pointed out that women as a market are ignored at the advertisers’ own peril (Grimshaw, 2003, 2004;

hotelmarketing.com; Miller, 1992; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Westwood et al., 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Grimshaw (2003: 6), for example, highlighted in an advertising industry publication how the women's "over-30 market" was "finally broken into" (i.e., penetrated). The lucrative new target market of "middle youth" was also discussed in advertising industry literature - these being middle-aged women, aged 30-59 years old (Grimshaw, 2004; hotelmarketing.com 2005). Ford Motor Company, as early as 1987, decided to no longer run ads unless they appealed to both men and women (Salmans, 1987). *Cosmopolitan Magazine* has long remained the largest selling women's magazine allegedly due to its emphasis on "women getting the best of their relationships, their jobs and their lives" (Carter, 1997). Today African American women also attract "additional advertising dollars", in recognition of their market status (Kaplan, 2000; also Morgan and Pritchard, 1998).

2.5.1 Gender in Advertising

Advertising is often highly gendered, and the way in which this occurs may reflect a power imbalance. According to Sut Jhally (1990: 135), "In modern advertising, gender is probably the social resource that is used the most by advertisers."

Fowles (1996: 215) distinguished that advertising and popular culture are imbued with strongly delineated images of femininity and masculinity because the audience, particularly the young, are captivated by gender imagery and seek it out. He further noted by way of example that, "If men in advertising are active, women are more often passive. Women are less likely to be on their feet and more likely to be indoors. The reveries ... are those of a

relationship, of romantic complexities” (1996: 210). Fowles (1996: 176) also pointed out that “photography is the chosen artistic mode for advertising because of its deceptive ability to present fictions as if they were realities. He further suggested that, “female models are frequently young and attractive, someone many men may want to associate with, but not so beautiful as to elicit envy and/or deflect identification from the female viewer” (Ibid.: 177).

Frith (1995: 186) paralleled “the links between the treatment of women and the treatment of the environment” as “readily accessible through the examination of mass media artifacts like advertisements,” and that, “the concept of man-as-hunter and woman-as-prey is a dominant theme that is frequently expressed in the culture,” women frequently being included in the ranks of “rightful prey” (Frith, 1995: 193). Shields (2006: 261) noted that in the past decade, advertisers have made a concerted effort to develop ad campaigns that speak to female experience. Advertisers have also tried to capitalize on the fact that female viewers are increasingly conscious of the artificial and unrealistic ways in which they are frequently portrayed. She argued, however, that most such ad campaigns “offer a wink toward women and not a viable alternative to traditional sex-sells campaigns.” Advertising scholar Daniel Nicholson (1997: 182-3), as well as Shields (2006), Tellis (2004) and Frith (1995), labeled and discussed the concept as “self-referentiality” within ads – that being, advertisers want readers to recognize that: “we know you know what we’re trying to do, but because we’re letting you know we know, it makes it okay – because we’re so hip to your hipness. Get it?” (Nicholson, 1997: 182-3). Thus some of the artificiality inherent in the portrayal is presumed excused by the viewer.

Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 78) and Wolf (1997) argued that advertisements placed in magazines and newspapers are a very popular and successful promotional vehicle, as advertisers can reach any group by knowing their reading proclivities. Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 63) further suggested that image is a key marketing tool in an industry where potential consumers must base buying decisions on mental images of product offerings, such as with a travel destination. As it is imperative to create a distinctive product image in the consumer's mind (Shields, 2006; Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Wolf, 1997), brand managers do so by drawing on distinctive social and cultural markers to frame their brand identities. Audiences are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and both the media and markets increasingly fragmented (Fowles, 1996; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 141). These authors further noted how mass markets have been transformed into niche markets, as highlighted in industry literature, and thus consumer choice has exponentially expanded (also see Urry, 2002). The value in advertising lies in improving people's attitudes towards brands, thus leading to long-term sales – i.e., “the culmination of long-term advertising memories” (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 45), which are supposedly retained of advertisements that are unusually appealing or provocative. This was argued to be the basis for successful brand image building and maintenance.

Tellis (2004), Goldman (1992), Fowles (1996) and Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 139 - 141) also noted that branding says a great deal about power and discourse, and equally reflects global power relationships and the dominant ways of seeing the world. For example, global brands such as Coca Cola, McDonalds and Nike have internationally recognizable brand symbols. Brand managers try to create a product image consistent with the consumers' values

and self-images. In doing so, they thereby appeal to the powerful discourses which have shaped these same values and images. In this respect, creating the image becomes paramount – i.e. “Promotion *is* the product” (Tellis, 2004: 45). This is related to the concept of consensual marketing (- the practice of involving the consumer directly in disseminating a product ‘message’ verbally or by signifier), indicating the collaborative nature of this relationship (Goffman, 1979; Fowles, 1996): in other words, advertising works to influence society, rather than to just reflect it (Goldman, 1992).

2.5.2 The Sexualization of Females in Advertising

Tellis (2004), Goldman (1992), Shields (2006) and Fowles (1996: 155) highlighted the use of the frequently underdressed and idealized female body, suggesting that nude figures in advertising are much more likely to be female than male. They further suggested that the female body and the product are intentionally intertwined, with meanings flowing from one to the other. Fowles (1996: 152-3) made a particularly detailed contribution in this area, outlining the further imperative that female ad subjects were attractive:

“Advertisers are certain that images of people as they are ‘in society today’ will draw no more attention in advertising than do average people in the real world, whereas highly stylized paragons will attract the same fascinated gazes they would if they were spotted walking down any street in America. Thus, normal or unattractive people are rare in advertising.”

For females in ads, appearance was suggested to be most commonly the totality of their persona (Fowles, 1996: 152-3). Scholars on advertising (Fowles, 1996; Tellis, 2004; Shields, 2006; Frith, 1995) suggested that the presence of lithe and less clothed women represent

advertisers' attempt to project certain meanings onto their commodities, including vitality, warmth, accessibility, pliability, and consumability. Fowles (1996), as well as Tellis (2004), argued that while men are drawn to this certain portrayal of femininity, women are also drawn toward occupying that portrayal, further noting that both males and females in advertising tend to be youthful (1996: 153). Fowles (1996: 158) asserted that "what Americans primarily want to gaze at in advertising are exemplars of the individual" (also substantiated by Goldman, 1992).

Shields (2006: 257) suggested that the sexuality of the female body has a general exchange-value lent - in the example she cited, to the value of beer, but could just as easily be lent to the value of an automobile or cigarettes, or any other product. She supported John Berger's (1987) premise that this exchange-value was a cultural way of seeing, suggesting advertising images in this regard were read similarly to soft pornography: the consistency in representation helps define what is "natural to be seen and enjoyed – what is ideal" (Shields, 2006: 258). Shields (2006: 157) asserted the presence of a predominating "male gaze" in advertising, connoting that it is controlling and one of possession, it being presented as natural that the female body is sexualized more frequently than the male body. She further discussed Rosalind Coward's (1985) premise that the male gaze is encoded in photographic images as an extension of how men view women in the streets.

2.5.3 Tellis's (2004) Contributions

Tellis's (2004) work on advertising is highly relevant to a study of representations of female tourists. Below are highlighted some of the more important contributions gleaned

from his work, to which I will return in Section 6.2. Tellis (2004: 27) suggested that firms need to advertise when supply exceeds demand, a key feature of mature markets in developed economies, during peacetime. He asserted that technology enables many suppliers to produce goods of similar quality. Suppliers have excess capacity and can easily increase output. Consumers' predominant concern under such circumstances is finding the product that best meets their needs at the lowest price. In such situations, suppliers resort to advertising to persuade buyers of the merits of their product. However, Tellis further discussed how, in spite of the massive investments made, "only a few ads rise above the level of noise to grab attention and become big successes." He noted that much advertising as practiced today is ineffective (2004: 29), particularly because of consumers' lack of interest and active avoidance of advertising. Within the category of higher-end/luxury consumer goods such as the ad depictions used in my study, Tellis (2004: 31) noted that consumers avoid ads they may find "stale, boring or offensive." Compounding factors include selectivity of consumer attention, perception, interpretation, and retention. According to Tellis, advertisers do not and never will control the mind and behaviours of consumers to the extent believed possible by the lay public.

Tellis (2004: 37) addressed why advertisers may continue to persist with ineffective ads. He suggested a tension existing between the advertising message and the individual consumer which is frequently reflected in the composition of the message, noting that, "all the application of the advertiser and the advertising agency means nothing if the message sent is not being received" (2004: 93). According to him advertisers readily admit that persuasion is tough, and that it is difficult to change consumers' habits, or to persuade them

to adopt new opinions, attitudes or behaviours (2004: 32). Several factors contributing to persistence on the part of advertisers with ineffectual advertisements were outlined by Tellis (2004: 37), and include the following: lack of testing and tracking; conflicts between the advertiser and the ad agency (also noted in Morgan and Pritchard, 1998); competitive pressure to advertise; the incentive system; the budgeting system; price support and trade support. He further noted that many advertisers do not adequately test ad campaigns in the field before launching them; nor are campaigns that are already running necessarily tracked. Tellis (2004: 38) also outlined that because agencies are traditionally paid a fraction of the media budget used for the ad campaign, they are motivated to spend campaign funding allotments by purchasing media advertising space, rather than using funds to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign. An additional factor mentioned was the desire of advertisement designers to not want their creative efforts dampened with the tedium of market testing. One final and critical factor that Tellis (2004: 138) distinguished was that some firms advertise simply to avoid potentially losing market shares to competitors if they were to become too inconspicuous. As Tellis (2004: 40) stated: "Firms advertise with the hope that their advertising will have dramatic effects. In doing so, they draw from the best talent and techniques available in the market. However, when all competitors have equal access to such resources, it is difficult for any one firm to always have an enormous advantage." Tellis (2004: 40) further pointed out that while, "Given the heavy level of competition and noise in the market, advertisers must strive to make their ads rise above the clutter" that, "even when any one firm breaks out from among competitors with a new approach to advertising, the effectiveness of that approach is quickly diluted by many

competitors that copy it". Tellis (2004: 41) suggested that for advertisers to be effective, they must test their ads regularly to ensure maximum effectiveness, and to deploy their limited resources efficiently and effectively, not on the basis of assumptions and beliefs but on the basis of scientific knowledge and tests. Tellis (2004), Fowles (1996) and Goldman (1992) all suggested that, "Many marketers spend most of their mature working lives acting on information and beliefs which are outdated" (Morgan and Pritchard, 2000: 91).

Similar to Williamson's (1978) and Williams' (1999) distinguishing of the "referrant" system frequently employed in advertising, Tellis (2004: 130) also discussed the notion of referentiality. He described some controlled laboratory studies which supported the effectiveness of conditioning in a market setting. One particular example highlighted how a new brand of toothpaste quickly received more positive and loyal responses from consumers who had seen it in the context of water scenes, compared to the responses of those who were shown everything identically but without the water scenes. Tellis (2004: 130) stated that this behavioural change is ultimately what many advertisers hope to achieve by associating their brands with attractive pictures and personalities.

Frith (1995: 185) further noted in her discussion of referentiality that, "Within the world of advertisements, nature and the environment are valued only insofar as they can improve the profitability of the advertiser." She added that, "advertising is antithetical to environmentalism because it promotes wasteful consumption, yet it glamorizes this consumption to avoid making people feel uncomfortable or self-conscious about being wasteful" (1995: 195).

Tellis (2004: 118), in discussing the advertising principle of exposure, argued that the mere act of repetitive exposure of a stimulus can lead to preference for it, even though consumers do not remember the exposure. Tellis (2004: 120) discussed how, “A soft-sell message is a subtle one that allows for different interpretations, persuades by suggestion, and makes no direct request for action or change.” Repetition is likely to increase recall of the brand, and positive feelings toward it. Tellis (2004: 120) further suggested that repetition is likely to lead to greater comfort with and acceptance of the soft-sell message, but to greater tedium and irritation with the hard-sell message. He noted that emotion as well as humour may lower the viewer’s defenses and resistance to the message. However, he also argued that an ad appears to exploit people’s emotions if there is no link between emotion-arousing stimuli and the message of the ad and would be more likely to be rejected on that basis. In general, ads that have a better link with the brand or the message are likely to be more effective (Tellis, 2004: 152). Morgan and Pritchard (2000: 45), however, argued that good advertising is often centered on creating an emotional appeal that inextricably links the brand and the consumer.

2.5.4 The Consumer as a Conscious Agent

One final point made in advertising studies, and particularly well articulated by Fowles (1996: 161), was that to see consumers as anything other than whole, adept social creatures, working in their own interests to get the most from their resources, was to do a disservice both to them and to oneself as a representative consumer. Decoding of ads, he argued, may take place in any of several different ways (Fowles, 1996: 162). For example, the meaning received could be the “preferred one” of the advertiser. Or an ad may produce “oppositional meaning”, so that the viewing consumer rejects the product as well as the ad. But, he suggested, more likely the meaning is a “negotiated” one, within which are many varying

degrees (Fowles, 1996: 164). Either way, however, the consumer is selective in what will or will not be bought. Advertising does encounter some resistance from the consumer, in part, due to sheer volume (Goffman, 1979; Milkie, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Goldman, 1992). Consumers have many other sources from which to draw information and many individuals recognize that advertisements are misleading and dishonest (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 49). As pointed out by Anderson (1999), choice is one of the most powerful forces in the lives of people being exposed to the forces of globalization. Milkie (2002) suggested that youth in particular question ads.

2.6 Potential Influences from Popular Culture on the Contemporary Portrayal of Female Travelers

The following brief discussion, intended as supplementary to the scholarly literature reviewed, illuminates contemporary themes in western popular culture that may affect how females in travel ads are portrayed, as well as how participants in my study may have been influenced by them. This brief segment of my literature review, unlike the rest, was predominantly informed by popular non-fiction works and news media sources on the contemporary construction of western women in popular culture. These themes also further illustrate the ongoing conflict between the ideals of liberal feminism and post-feminism (sometimes referred to in academic circles as “lipstick feminism”) as discussed in the introductory theoretical section.

Three prominent themes emerged in my review of popular works on idealized contemporary females in western popular culture.

1. A contemporary emphasis on female empowerment and autonomy (Inness, 2004; Harris, 2003; Maxwell, 2003; Bond, 2001), as illustrated by the numerous action heroines to be found in contemporary television and film. While these women were portrayed as tough

and accomplished, all were invariably young, white and voluptuous, and therefore hardly transgressive.

2. A resurgence of 1950s-style domestic ambitions: more specifically, to marry ‘well’ shortly after university, and then stay at home (e.g. Dowd, 2005; Kingston, 2004).
3. A tendency toward “hyper”- sexualized portrayals of the contemporary western female (Wolf, 1997; Graydon, 2004; Inness, 2004; Yaquinto, 2004; McLaren, 2005) – that is, women depicted in an overtly sexualized light.

Particularly prominent journalistic references were noteworthy regarding the third theme (e.g. Howell, 2005; Graydon, 2004; Wolf, 1997). A distinctive societal tension and/or ambivalence regarding women’s supposed independent and empowered status, in contrast to their highly sexualized portrayals, were highly apparent in these media sources. Titles of the following sample articles, all appearing in 2005 in either *The New York Times* or Toronto’s *Globe and Mail* are offered by way of highlighting example: “Women are going backwards” (Howell, 2005); “Noticed: Slut Culture” (von Hahn, 2005); “The slut also rises.” (McLaren, 2005); “Triumph of the Bad Girls” (Cave, 2005); “Sex and Chess. Is She a Queen or a Pawn?” (unlisted author, *New York Times*, Sun., Nov.27, 2005, Sunday Styles, Section 9, pp.1-2.); “Are Men Really Necessary?” (Dowd, 2005. Sunday Styles Section); “Men Just Want Mommy: Women in support staff positions are the new sirens” (Dowd, 2005). These authors highlight and discuss the prevalence of contemporary depictions of female subjects in sexually provocative dress and demeanor in current popular culture, arguing that their intelligence and/or other professional capabilities have been obliterated or side-lined.

As pointed out thirty years ago by Williamson (1978) and Goffman (1979), and more recently by Dworkin and Wachs (2004), McRobbie (1997) and Reichart et al. (1999), sexually definitive signifiers in advertising are also highly prevalent in advertising both featuring and directed toward women. Advertising scholars such as Fowles (1996), Tellis (2004), Shields (2006) and Frith (1995) have further noted that sex continues to sell.

2.7 Literature Review Conclusion

In this literature review, I drew upon relevant scholarly works from geography, gender studies, tourism, advertising and cultural studies to discuss predominating research on gender and tourism that relates to the representation of female travelers in travel advertisements. The relatively limited research in this area integrates notions regarding corporate hegemony of discourse in tourism promotional representation, and the depictions of women in traditional, passive and sexualized ways in tourism marketing. Significant overlap in themes occurs between the tourism-related literature, popular cultural references and the literature pertaining to advertising. Tourism- and advertising-related literature further suggest a strong correlation between advertising and the signified consumptive aspect of identity and elitism, in addition to noting the sexualization and decorative relative passivity of female subjects in advertising. Advertising scholars similarly confirmed the gendered nature of advertising, and pointed out several additional principles of potential value to the findings of this study, including explanations for the persistent continuance of unpopular ads (Tellis, 2004).

My study intentionally tests the extent to which a number of assertions made in the literature are apparent in or refuted by content analysis of the ad sample, and in terms of how the travel ads are perceived by female travel consumers participating in my study.

The participant segment of my study will specifically address several notable gaps in the literature, including female travelers' more specific travel motivations, as well as activity and setting preferences, and how closely these correlate to what is actually portrayed in travel ads. Interpretations will be further informed by the general advertising principles outlined by Tellis (2004), Fowles (1996), Shields (2006) and Frith (1995), among others. I also anticipate uncovering emerging themes regarding how female travelers are currently being depicted.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction and Research Overview

The first phase of my methods involved the tabulation of all full-paged travel ads featured in three widely circulated and popular travel magazines, across the two distinctly separate time periods of 2003 to 2004, and 1989 to 1990, both inclusively. This step was undertaken to determine the comparative volume and proportional frequency of travel ads featuring adult females only, as opposed to other types of tourists, such as males only or couples only, and also to see whether the proportional volume of female-only travel ads had increased in recent years, as a reflection of women's expanding socioeconomic clout (e.g. Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Westwood et al., 2000; Pritchard, 2001; Swain, 2002). The selected magazines were *National Geographic Traveler*, *Travel+Leisure*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*. As will be discussed shortly, these were the only available data sources found with substantial content of depictions of female travelers. Once tabulated, the frequency count of types of subjects featured in travel-related advertisements for each of the two distinct time periods were then compared, to gauge any change at the far end of the thirteen year gap regarding the volume and proportional frequency with which female travelers were portrayed. Travel ads not featuring human subjects were also counted and tabulated for purposes of comparison.

The second phase of my research involved content analysis to better determine *how* female travelers were being depicted in travel advertisements, in terms of activities, settings,

affective states, etc. The first objective this served was to determine the prominent contemporary depictions of female travelers in travel advertisements. My second objective was to compare any change (or lack thereof) across the differing two time periods, in terms of how female travelers were being portrayed in travel advertisements.

The third intended phase of my research was to gain information from the advertising agencies that created the more recent set of ads regarding what may have been their intent in reference to the travel ads that featured females only. My objective was to compare what the creators said were their intended salient features, with what the female travel consumer-participants in my study actually perceived in these same ads.

The fourth methodological phase involved the gathering of qualitative participant input. This included the administration and tabulation of questionnaires, completed by 38 women who characterized themselves as 'Western female travelers'. As well, I conducted three separate focus groups involving 30 female-traveler participants in total, to determine their reactions to more frequently featured contemporary travel advertisements depicting female travelers.

3.2 Selection and Explanation of Data-related Choices

3.2.1 Travel Magazines as Primary Data

For some time, I had been interested in studying the contemporary popular media construction of the contemporary Western female traveler. As their numbers are significant, and their economic impact is increasingly substantial, I presumed there would be little

difficulty in finding their depictions to use as primary data. I decided to find advertisements isolating female tourists from “identification-through-association” with male travelers (i.e. as part of a couple; or the mother in a nuclear family; etc.), since those particular phenomena had already been observed (Morgan and Pritchard, 2001; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Enloe, 1989; Apostolopoulos et al., 2001, Richter, 1994; Urry, 1990; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996). In other words, I wished to examine how female travelers are portrayed as entities unto themselves, since they are increasingly recognized as an important market niche (e.g. Westwood et al., 2001; Pritchard, 2001; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000, 1998; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Swain, 2002; Wilson and Little, 2005). It seemed time to progress beyond noting the portrayal of female travelers in the context of signifying males, to see if more or other data were available. I was also interested in seeing how female travelers were portrayed by advertisers beyond the context of a male companion or the “male gaze” from an earlier but relatively recent period, to better determine whether their depictions were evolving both in terms of volume and content.

Finding advertisement depictions of female travelers without an accompanying male initially proved to be difficult and time-consuming. I sampled the following sources early in my research, without success:

- Tour and travel brochures as well as promotional posters at travel agencies, and through various destination marketing offices: any women present were in mixed groups.
- Embassy and consulate brochures on specific destinations: any women portrayed strongly appeared to be destination ‘locals’.

- Varied newspaper travel section articles on female travelers: there were insufficient numbers, few accompanying photos, and the text tended to be more advisory than descriptive.
- On-line travel services including Expedia.com, lonelyplanet.com, and hotel.ca: there were no accompanying pictures of traveling women, and any mention of them was of an advisory nature, in terms of safety and health-related concerns.
- I examined the display content for both Toronto and New York based photographic exhibitions in both galleries and museums throughout 2003 and 2004: none featuring potential data for examining female travelers were found.
- Two separate annual travel shows in Toronto (2003 and 2004) for their posters and brochures: as noted by several scholars who studied travel brochures (e.g. Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000), depictions of females as individuals were scarce to non-existent.

(This dearth of the autonomous portrayal of female travelers in and of itself suggests that women travelers may be marginalized.)

The following magazines were perused, available both in bookstores and at the Metro

Toronto Reference Library:

(Arthur Frommer's) Budget Travel

Leisureways

Outpost

Condé Nast Traveler

National Geographic Traveler

Outside Magazine

travelgirl

Travel + Leisure

Travel Scoop (newsletter format)

Travel Smart (also newsletter format)

In addition, I also examined the two industry publications available:

Travelweek (for travel agents)

Traveling Healthy Newsletter

At the time I commenced this part of my research (2004), I noted an insufficient number of female-only travel-related articles to justify using them as a source of raw data. However, I did finally encounter depictions of the contemporary female traveler herself in travel-related magazine advertisements. Again to my surprise, only three out of the twelve publications contained a sufficiently adequate number of usable images of traveling women. These were found in the three most widely circulated of the travel magazines: *Travel + Leisure* (T+L), *Condé Nast Traveler* (CNT), and *National Geographic Traveler* (NGT). (Even the misleadingly named *travelgirl*'s ads heavily inclined toward cosmetic and appearance-enhancement products.) These three selected travel magazines from which I have drawn my data set in light of their significantly wide distribution, are arguably “authoritative” and potent media for shaping North American representations and perceptions of the autonomous female traveler (cf. Rose, 2001: 57; Lutz and Collins, 1993). Because advertising is pervasive and affects viewers subliminally (Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; O’Barr, 1994; Williamson, 1978; Goffman, 1979; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000, 1998), how ideals are defined and given context should be apparent in popular advertisements – particularly in the values and ideals expressed, and in their subsequent impact on issues, stereotypes and ultimately on human

behaviour. Because of their popularity, these three travel magazines constitute an important medium for circulating images of gender.

3.2.2 Background on Selected Travel Magazines

Available readership demographic data for each of the three selected publications is outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Data on Annual Readership for the 3 Selected Travel Magazines

Magazine	NGT ¹	T+L ²	CNT ³
Total Readership	5,327,000	4,058,000	3,235,000
Male Readership	54%	38%	39%
Female Readership	46%	62%	61%
Median Age	44.3	48	47
Median Household Income	\$78,000(U.S)	N/A	\$102,354 (U.S.)
College (Post-secondary through to graduate degree):	70%	81.5%	65.6%

Sources: (1) TRAVELER@nationalgeographic.com (2004 data); (2) tlmediakit.com (2004 data); and (3) www.condenastmediakit.com/cnt/circulation.cfm (2005 data); SRDS, 2005

For comparative purposes, readership data for the other travel magazines was available only for *Outside*, an American publication, with a distribution of 659,822 readers (SRDS, 2005: 535); and *Outpost*, a Canadian travel magazine, with an average (“total qualified”) circulation of 28,186 readers (CARD, 2005: 137).

Information obtained from *Standard Rate and Service Data (SRDS)* (2005) further revealed that *Condé Nast Traveler* was established in 1987, and is published monthly by Condé Nast Publications in New York (SRDS: 837-8). *National Geographic Traveler* is published eight times per year by the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C., and was established

in 1984 (SRDS, 2005: 847-8). *Travel+Leisure* is published monthly by the American Express Publishing Corporation, and was established in 1971 (SRDS: 854-5).

The slogan printed on the front cover for each magazine may reveal the image that each of these travel publications aspires to project, presumably to distinguish itself from its competitors. These captions change periodically. *National Geographic Traveler* currently describes itself as, “*All travel. All the time*” (November/December, 2005). Its previous slogan was, “*Nobody Knows This World Better*” (January/February, 2005), which formerly was “*The World’s Most Widely Read Travel Magazine*”. Its slogan in 1989, the volume in which my data collection began, was, “*An educational travel resource.*” *CNT* and *T+L* project more of an elitist consumptive and “insider” orientation, in terms of visiting “the right” destinations and/or hotels, while *NGT* continues to project itself more as “educational”, in keeping with the historical persona of its parent magazine, *National Geographic*. This impression is further supported by each magazine’s “publisher’s editorial profile” (below). *Condé Nast Traveler* self-advertises on its front cover as, “*Voted Official Lifestyle Magazine.*” *Travel+Leisure* at present has no slogan; however, in regularly featured columns and sections, it makes frequent use of terms such as “Insiders’ Guide”; “cutting edge”; and “for the discerning traveler”.

Publisher editorial profiles for each magazine, as found in the *SRDS Consumer Magazine Advertising Source* (2005), provide additional context and orienting information for each magazine:

National Geographic Traveler:

“PUBLISHER’S EDITORIAL PROFILE

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER is a resource for active, curious travelers. It uses story-telling and you-are-there photography. It provides deep, reader-friendly service information to enable them to go to places wisely and well. Features focus on domestic and foreign destinations, personal travel reflections, food and restaurants, great places to stay, photography, trends, adventure, ecotourism, road trips, cultural events, and travelers; “Trips” provide short but rewarding getaways that address readers’ travel styles (solo, couples, family, etc.) and interests (culture, food, nature, photography, etc.) and “TravelWise” – which appears with every major feature - furnishes a lively and complete mini “guidebook” to help consumers plan their trips.” (SRDS, 2005: 847)

Condé Nast Traveler:

“PUBLISHER EDITORIAL PROFILE

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER is edited and designed to provide the experienced discerning leisure and business traveler with an array of distinctive travel experiences. Upfront columns offer insider tips, as well as the latest news on art, architecture, fashion, culture, cuisine, shopping, and industry innovations from every corner of the globe. Regular features include in-depth investigative reports, photo essays, and a variety of annual reader polls rating the best places in the world to stay, eat, work, and play.

“PUBLISHER POSITIONING STATEMENT

With 6 National Magazine Awards and 20 nominations, *Condé Nast Traveler* is the leader in the travel category, and remains the only travel magazine ever to have won. Ranking #1 amongst all lifestyle titles for passport ownership and with a median household income of \$131 147, *Condé Nast Traveler* delivers the most affluent, frequent travelers. *Condé Nast Traveler* readers are peer group leaders, 3x more likely to be influentials. (Source: MMR 2004, MRI Fall 2004)” (SRDS, 2005: 837)

Travel+Leisure:

“PUBLISHER’S EDITORIAL PROFILE

Travel+Leisure puts in context all the elements of the sophisticated traveler’s experience – from hotels, restaurants, and shopping to architecture, design, driving, and culture – while covering the latest trends and innovations offering fresh perspective and crucial insider information.

“PUBLISHER’S POSITIONING STATEMENT

As the world’s leading travel magazine, *Travel + Leisure* is the source for people who make travel their quest in life. Our authentic stories motivate readers, making us the catalyst for what’s next and setting trends. Being the authority we get there first. We have the trust and respect of our readers who depend on us each month to find out what’s next. As the category leader in circulation, subscription price, newsstand sales, and ad pages, *Travel + Leisure* provides access to the affluent active consumer eager to explore the world.” (SRDS, 2005: 870).

The pricing of full-paged ads (SRDS 2005) follows, in order of most to least expensive.

The number of “times” indicates the number of issues in which the ad would appear, for the rate indicated.

Travel+Leisure:

4-color, one full-paged ad:

Once: \$87,530

6 times: \$84,904

12 times: \$82,278

18 times: \$79,652

Condé Nast Traveler:

4-color, one full-paged ad:

1 time: \$76,910

3 times: \$74,603

6 times: \$73,065

9 times: \$70,757

12 times: \$68,450

National Geographic Traveler:

4-color, one full-paged ad:

1 time: \$58,315

3 times: \$55,980

6 times: \$54,815

8 times: \$53,650

Placing a full-paged travel ad in any of the three travel magazines used for this study entails considerable financial commitment by the advertiser. Despite some limitations regarding the resonance between projections on the part of advertisers with actual travel consumers, the *SRDS* (2005) statements given above indicate what publishers would like advertisers to believe their readership is “like.”

The earliest full set of issues obtainable for an entire year of all three magazines in the Toronto Public Library system was 1989. I decided that this would be suitable for the earlier time period with which to compare travel-related ads from the present. A 13-year interval seemed sufficiently long enough to determine whether any changes were more recently manifested, yet sufficiently compact enough to provide comparable illustrations regarding how females have been portrayed in tourism marketing.

3.2.3 Criteria Used for an Ad to Be Categorized as “Travel-related”

Criteria for an ad to be considered *travel-related* was as follows. The content of any selected ad required an unequivocal relationship to tourism, travel and/or mobility as related to tourism. This was generally indicated by product but in some cases by backdrop of a specific destination, or by other signifying props such as luggage and camera. In other words, the model featured in any selected travel ad had to be identifiable as a tourist. The definition of tourist as used for the purpose of this study is someone who is traveling away from home either for pleasure or business, for at least 24 hours, but for less than one year (WTO, 1993; Cartwright et al., 2001). Thus, any person(s) depicted in the travel ads had to appear to be credible in such context. Only ads featuring an adult subject could be used as data for females, males and couples. I defined “adult” as a person who appeared to be 18 years of age and older. Ads featuring only persons who appeared to be under the age of 18, without accompanying adults, were classified under the heading of “Family.” I considered the presence of children in a travel ad with one adult of either gender to be acceptable for inclusion under “Female” or “Male”, noting for my own records the number of ads within each of these categories which featured unaccompanied “Female with children” or “Male with children.” There were few ads featuring one single adult of either gender with a child or children; these were thus integrated into the larger associated heading on the data table – for example, “Non-traveling male”. All ads which qualified according to the criteria set out above were further divided into categories to indicate whether or not the ad subject(s) was a “tourist/traveler” (these ads being the primary source of focus), a destination “local”, or a

service-related person such as an airline attendant. These latter two distinctions were combined on the data table (Appendix E) as “*Other* Travel-related”.

3.2.4 Use of Female-only Travel Advertisements

I focused upon full-paged ads featuring adult female tourists without an accompanying adult Western male(s), in order to learn how women were portrayed beyond the context of their relationships to men. Urry (1990), Enloe (2000), Pritchard and Morgan (2000b), Westwood et al. (2000), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000) and Richter (1995) suggested that research on female travelers as more autonomous and self-contained entities is limited, beyond context of their relationships to men, or as objects of the male gaze. Selecting to study unaccompanied female travelers as they appear in travel ads allowed a concentrated focus solely upon *them*, as autonomous individuals within their own right. The only exceptions of adult males present in the ad sample for female travelers included clearly demarcated service personnel, destination-locals and/or males appearing as part of a setting’s backdrop, with no implied relationship to the female featured.

Travel ads depicting women with children only, while few (only three in the 2003-04 data set, and two in the 1989-90 sample) were included in my data set, because they met my initially stated criterion that the female travelers featured be depicted independently of a male travel companion. I presumed that in general, solo or maternal female subjects in travel ads were intended to represent women who make their own travel decisions, and spend their own earned money.

3.2.5 Use of Only Full-paged Ads

An ad was included in my tabulations if it covered a minimum equivalent of one entire page. Most of the studied ads were only one page; however, the less frequent, double- or multiple-paged ads were also included in my data, and given the same weight as a ‘regular’ single full-paged ad. My rationale was that the two were equally noticeable. In the interest of consistency, if an ad was more than one page, and one page featured a lone female, with another showing the same female as part of a couple, I categorized the ad as under “Couples”, since I presumed the latter was at least an equally intended target market. This was rarely the case with travel ads, however.

My decision to use only full-paged ads as my unit of study was based on several considerations. First, few advertisements featured female travelers, but full-paged ads by far comprised the majority. Second, this single-sized unit far better enabled different ads and their content to be equally weighted in size (as done by Pritchard, 2001; and Morgan and Pritchard, 1998), which I believed otherwise could have been complicated and problematic. This criterion further eliminated discrepancies as to how small an ad had to be before it should be eliminated from my study. Few smaller ads featuring only women were found, but those varied considerably in size and thus, arguably, in significance. I used only full-paged ads in the interest of achieving more stable study-unit consistency, and also so that this segment of my work could be replicated. Given the expense of publishing, full-paged ads are expensive, as outlined above. I inferred a serious level of investment and commitment to their financial success on the part of an advertiser, to hone in on what would most effectively “speak to” the particular consumer target group(s) to buy the travel product in question.

3.2.5.1 The Treatment of Multi-paged Supplements (MPS)

Initially, I was concerned that multi-paged supplements may create a complication. They were handled as follows. If the multi-paged supplement was included within the body of a magazine issue, the pages within the supplement that qualified under the full-paged ad criteria were simply included in my data, as any other qualifying full-paged ad would be. The rationale for this was that these had the same ‘opportunity of exposure’ to influence collective perceptions regarding female travelers as would any of the otherwise placed full-paged ads in the same magazine issues. Commonly, multi-paged supplements were included within the body and actual page numbers of the magazine issue itself. If a multi-paged supplement was assigned page numbers additional to those of the magazine body (e.g. E1 – E24), these were noted and indicated as added onto the particular issue’s number of pages, for the purposes of proportional comparisons regarding the number of various types of tourist-featuring ads that appeared per magazine issue. Additional but separate supplements attached onto the backs of magazine issues, normally advertising a specific destination, were not included as they were literally separate from the body of the magazine issue. A relatively small minority of ads found in multi-paged supplements qualified as inclusions for this study, since my requirement was for a full-paged ad that featured only a female adult or adults, who were ostensible consumers of a travel-related product. Because this study of full-paged ads was predominantly image-based, most pages in supplements did not qualify for inclusion because they frequently contained text, continuous over several pages. Any self-contained full-paged ad contained within a multi-paged supplement was recorded the same way it would have been if it were found in the regular body of a magazine issue, with the rationale

that it was accorded the same amount of space-opportunity for public exposure and consumption.

3.2.6 Potential Limitations of My Data Set

Potential criticisms of my choice of magazines may come from its arguably elitist socio-economic orientation. My dissertation focuses on a distinct medium: relatively expensive, upmarket travel magazines and advertisements sponsored aimed toward an elite group of tourists. This work is open to charges of an imperialist focus, in which phenomena are only seen from the viewpoint of the “West.” The women travelers featured in my study are predominantly Euro-American. Moreover, these advertisement images are not of actual female travelers; rather they are models hired through corporations intending to sell products to economically privileged women.

Depictions of female travelers as autonomous individuals were difficult to find, however, and these travel ads were the most complete data set available. It may be that, in keeping with these magazines’ demographic data, the middle-aged female traveler tends to be richer than average. Regardless, I simply could not find depictions of female travelers in lower-end, sporty or more youth-oriented publications. Also, the income, age and education levels of my female subject-participants were highly compatible with the magazines’ readership demographics, enabling a significant comparison of representations of female travelers with the target audience.

While it is regrettable that the more “subaltern” female tourist is missing from much of this discussion, this void unfortunately reflects the state of the academic literature, as well as the content of advertisements representing female tourists. My study indicates how Western female tourists are currently represented in popular culture, and thus must begin with what presently is available. It would be inaccurate to suggest that this study represents all sorts of female travelers – based in the west, or otherwise (e.g. Hashimoto, 2000; Cai and Combrink, 2000). The same held true for the sample of women who responded to my requests for “Western female travelers to participate in focus groups.” My concern was with finding women who were economically active in travel participation; if that meant using a sample of those who were relatively economically privileged who could entertain travel-related proclivities, then so it was. Although women from varying socio-economic strata in North America undertake various forms of travel, the necessity for a researcher who wishes to study images of female travelers to rely upon upmarket publications only confirms that women as individuals remain marginalized in more “mainstream” travel publications (e.g. Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Richter, 1994; Enloe, 2000; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994).

As previously acknowledged, I can not conclusively confirm or refute the unequivocal compatibility of my participants with the female readership of the three selected magazines, despite their apparent demographic similarities, and the fact that five participants coincidentally mentioned they were also readers. That having been acknowledged, for the purpose of this study, I am operating under the assumption that the two groups of women sufficiently overlap to draw some noteworthy comparisons.

One further disadvantage in selecting this data sample was a small degree of ambiguity regarding ad inclusions. In the gathering of my data, I had to make a number of subjective judgments regarding what would be included and excluded in reference to many varied phenomena, such as whether the ad/product was definitely travel-related; and on one occasion, whether or not the female subject of the ad was indeed an adult traveler. (I decided not.) Most categorizations were based on the graphic image, but a few necessitated the involvement of text, and/or product for confirmation. The subjective categorization process was occasionally fraught with subtle differences as to what caused me to categorize one ad as travel-related but not another. Initially, I found car ads somewhat challenging in this respect. Ultimately, if a car was situated in a showroom or in seemingly a residential neighbourhood, I decided it could not be included. Even when there was suggestion that the female driver had traveled from home for a day trip, it could not be included without clear evidence she might have been gone overnight, in keeping with the definition of tourist mandating that one had to be away from home a minimum of 24 hours (WTO, 1993; Cartwright et al., 2001). Needless to say, a few ad categorizations involved speculation on my part. Overall, however, I am confident of the replicability of my choices, and became even more confident with the additional and valuable confirmation from my female participants regarding my choices.

There were some associated difficulties, and therefore arguable disadvantages, associated with the necessity to rely on public library resources for my primary data. The most difficult of these involved issues missing from designated branches in the system, erroneously confirmed as available in advance. As well, pages had been torn out of a few magazine issues, presumably by a prior user. Great care was taken to eventually track down missing

issues and pages through various branches of the Toronto Public Library system. Some missing pages, however, could not be traced and obtained, in spite of considerable effort, until the final stages of my research. This unearthed two additional female-featuring travel ads which would have been included in the set of ads I showed my focus groups, had the issues with missing pages been available sooner. Overall, however, while such frustrations were tiresome, I am also confident they did not significantly impact upon my overall findings.

3.3 Methodology Implementation

3.3.1 Initial Quantitative Organization of Advertisements

1. I counted and noted numbers of all full-paged ads (including those found in ad supplements included within the body of the magazine), as well as the number of pages per issue.

The full-paged ads were classified into one of the following categories:

Adult female(s), without any adult Western male(s) present.

Adult male(s), without any adult Western female(s) present.

Couple(s) only.

Mixed groupings of adults (i.e., people of different genders, but presumably not couples).

Nuclear families.

Person-less ads: the product was portrayed without human subjects present.

2. All of the above were then further classified as either “*Travel-related*” or “*Non-travel-related*” ads.

3. I further distinguished within all categories of “travel-related” ads between those depicting travelers/tourists, and those featuring either destination-locals, and/or service-related people. The tourist-related ads subsequently became the focus of further explanation, described below.
4. The results of the above were tabulated, to indicate the proportional breakdowns of ads, by the gendered identity or familial associations of the human subject(s) featured.
5. This process was then entirely repeated for the three magazines’ issues from January, 1989 through to December, 1990, in order to be able to compare any notable differences between the two time frames separated by thirteen years.

3.3.2 Division of Female-featuring Travel-related Ads Into Categories By Emphasized Product

The travel-related ads featuring adult females only for both periods (these being, 2003 – 2004; and 1989 – 1990) were all colour-photocopied, and then designated into one of the following categories, contingent upon the predominating *product* apparently being emphasized for consumption in the ad:

1. ***Hotels/Resorts***
2. ***Destination-oriented*** These were predominantly, but not necessarily, sponsored by specific destination marketing boards. Some ads were airline-sponsored, or paid for by credit card companies. However, in all such ads, the product being emphasized was a specific destination – for example, a Cayman Airways-sponsored ad to go diving in the Cayman Islands (*Travel+Leisure*, April 2000, p.101) – rather than necessarily the product more commonly associated with the advertiser, such as airline tickets.
3. ***Cruises*** This category is self-explanatory.
4. ***Airlines*** Unlike destination-oriented ads, these ads strictly dealt with the airline service experience or product itself.
5. ***Travel-related Services*** Most frequently, these were credit card company-sponsored ads, with several being for travel agencies.

6. *Travel-related products*: Travel signifiers in the ad itself – such as ads for luggage, cameras, etc. – demonstrated that the product featured was being advertised specifically within the context of travel.

These classifications were admittedly subjective. Another researcher, for example, may have simply separated ads by their literal type of sponsor – for example, all airline-sponsored ads going into the same category. I believe that alternative classification schemes would have ultimately yielded similar findings and suggested the same overall patterns. I opted for the above system because, as a geographer and as a former traveler, I was particularly curious as to the frequency with which specific destinations themselves would be manifested in the ads, as opposed to the certain generic “placelessness” alluded to in the literature (e.g. Urry, 2002; McDowell, 1997). I also wondered whether ads for particular types of travel-related products and places would be more inclined to use the stereotypical “woman in bikini” trope.

3.4 Content Analysis of Data

As discussed in the literature review, to uncover prevalent patterns and tendencies in travel-related ads featuring female subjects, I employed the principles of content analysis, particularly as outlined by Rose (2001); Lutz and Collins (1993); Pritchard (2001); Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000); Mellinger (1994); and Dworkin and Wachs (2004).

Overall distribution of data for each of the three magazines divided by yearly periods may be found in Appendix E. Each of the two-year time periods used for data gathering (i.e., 1989-90 and 2003-04) was collapsed into one focal unit of study to examine how female tourists were portrayed in travel advertisements during that time span, in relation to the

alternate period separated by thirteen years. In the case of each individual magazine, the data for each one of the two individual consecutive years did not differ notably (as shown in Appendix E), and therefore a sum for each two-year period was displayed. However, some apparent differences existed between the two periods/sets of data, and these were tested for statistical significance as shown in Table 5 on page 128, to determine significance in ways that a simple qualitative observation may not detect.

Content analysis involved quantifying and classifying both the volume and the thematic nature of the roles in which the female subjects of travel ads were portrayed, and the traits ascribed to them. My intent was not only to analyse and illuminate the contemporary depiction of women in travel ads, but also to offer some comparison as to how depictions may have evolved (or not) from 1989 – 1990 to the present period (2003 – 2004). This content analysis, as utilized by Lutz and Collins (1993), and in Rose (2001: 56 - 71), was applied as a method of counting the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined sample of images, and then analysing those frequencies. Discourse analysis was implicitly integrated into this segment of the work. As pointed out by Pritchard (2001: 82), a major limitation of content analysis is that it does not necessarily enable an understanding of the full interaction between media representations and their audience. However, as is the case with discourse analysis, content analysis was useful in descriptively illuminating how images were *authoritatively* being used in a highly calculated manner to construct specific views of reality as “real or truthful or natural” (Rose, 2001: 140; Riley and Love, 2000; Small, 1999; Mellinger, 1994; Wearing and Wearing, 2001; Seddighi et al., 2001; Echtner and Prasad, 2003).

I concluded that this type of research - intentionally descriptive in nature, with data that are inherently subjective - would be best suited overall to qualitative methodology. Pure quantitative methods would have implied a level of precision that may not exist in such data. While Cresswell (2002) simply acknowledged qualitative work as a widely applied, legitimate form of research in the social sciences, others such as Riley and Love (2000) advocated a qualitative approach as an intrinsically superior means of addressing data. This argument was further substantiated by Aitcheson (2000). Small (2002, 1999) adds that qualitative methodology lends itself particularly well to studying female travelers.

A number of scholarly studies comparable in qualitative methodological orientation to my own (i.e., content analysis and/or participant interviews) omitted in-depth statistical analyses (e.g. Lucas, 2004; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Pritchard, 2001; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Mellinger, 1994; Milkie, 2002; McRobbie, 1997; Westwood et al., 2000; and Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). I concluded, however, that further value would be added to my work by illuminating several factors of a more quantitative nature. These factors included the following:

1. With what proportionate volume and frequency were female travelers depicted in relation to male and other types of travelers, and did this proportion increase or alter from the initial data period of 1989-90, to the latter period of 2003-04?
2. According to the criteria I employed for content analysis (Appendix A), did the specific ways in which female travelers were depicted in ads differ in terms of sheer frequency and proportion between the two time periods in which such data was examined?

Because this study was predominantly qualitative in orientation, the frequency count information I determined and included was intended to be predominantly descriptive. Findings of numerical note were highlighted for comparative purposes. As noted, however, I also conducted tests to determine the statistical significance on the more prominent comparative findings that resulted from my frequency counts for the two differing time periods, even though the two periods had an imbalanced number of ads which qualified as data. The test to determine statistical significance was Chi-Square, in accordance with the principles outlined in Roscoe (1975) and Moore and McCabe (2006). The equation used was *Chi-Square = ('Observed' + 'Expected') squared, divided by 'Expected'*. The degree of freedom was '1', and the probability level was 0.05 (numerically, 3.841). Although this test frequently did not permit me to claim numerical comparisons as statistically significant in conventional terms, I also calculated the probability outcomes for 80% statistical significance, as well as for 70%, which in a number of cases suggested data was in fact statistically significant by the less stringent standard.

One potential criticism of content analysis is that the categories selected are done so within the limits of the researcher's knowledge, background and biases, just as different viewers of a graphic image will enjoy and accept it or dismiss it in light of their own tastes and experiences (Rose, 2001: 194-201). These limitations of content analysis (i.e., my subjective interpretations), however, were cross-checked by my participants, all significant consumers of travel products themselves, who were asked direct questions about a representative sample of the more frequently appearing ads that I was analyzing for content. Although the

objectivity of content analysis remains open to debate, my research participants mitigated some of the problems of researcher-only categorizations and frequency counts.

As recommended by Lutz and Collins (1993), I initially strove to determine that images selected were appropriate to the question being asked. A large “post-it” note (in lieu of separate index cards) was used for the coding of each individual ad, within its pre-categorized “product grouping.” An individual card was kept for every ad. The presence of particular attributes was counted, to produce a frequency count of their content. (Appendix F contains the detailed list of content analysis categories.) Female-featuring travel ads seldom contained more than one female subject – a potential challenge for content analysis classification of each individual ad’s female subject. In such cases, however, the women were portrayed in similar ways. Once each ad had been subjected to the same content analysis criteria, with an individual card coded, each product grouping of advertisements as outlined above was tabulated as a whole, for overall comparison.

Lutz and Collins (1993:285) stated that the categories devised for coding should be “exhaustive, exclusive and enlightening” (also see Rose, 2001: 59). While I would concur that this may indeed be an ideal, I opted instead to emphasize richness of detail in terms of which attributes were particularly prevalent in ads, since my ultimate quest was to uncover underlying themes; thus I did not find it necessary to insist upon all attributes having mutually exclusive counter-categories. To have forced each and every category per question to be “exhaustive” would have created artificial and unnecessary competition between more than one mutually present and equally valid factor. (Appendix A contains the tabulation sheet

used). For example, in Section I, #2 of my tabulation sheet, a female subject could potentially be shown as smiling, without her face being fully visible. I made the conscious decision that more was to be gained and potentially demonstrated in my final results by descriptively showing what sort of inclusions regarding female travelers were portrayed in proportion to the number of ads shown, rather than in terms of forcing each to compete with another, neither mutually exclusive nor nullifying, phenomenon. I believe my more holistic approach to this end largely achieved its objective. As well, a considerable amount of what I documented was objective, such as the backdrop setting of each ad, or the skin tone of the subject.

Numerous scholarly assertions suggest that women in travel ads are presented as sexualized, in stereotypical/traditional roles, and tend to be shown as passive (e.g. Urry, 1990; Richter, 1995; Enloe, 1989; Pritchard, 2001; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003). As previously acknowledged in the literature review section on advertising, very similar-appearing models also appear in women's magazines – the rationale being that attractive female bodies sell, and make a good product referrant (Tellis, 2004; Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; Shields, 2006). To test the accuracy of these assertions as they relate to travel ads, I paid particular attention to the following in my application of content analysis:

1. The level of (un)dress in which the female subject(s) were shown and the frequency with which particular body parts (for example, cleavage) appeared as prominent.
2. In what roles and/or activities the ostensible female travelers were depicted – and whether they were shown as “active” or “passive”.

3. The backdrop or setting of the ad, in order to subsequently compare the frequency of what was shown with what female participants literally reported were their backdrop/vacation preferences.
4. The seemingly “Decorative” versus “Autonomous” factor. Although this categorization was subjective and therefore potentially problematic, I classified women in the ads into one of the following three possibilities:
 - i. *Decorative*: arguably more intended for the male gaze, as understood from literature references (e.g. Goffman, 1979; Williamson, 1978; Tellis, 2004; Goldman, 1992; Shields, 2006; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Pritchard, 2001). I noted traditional signifiers of what I ascertained were intended to denote generalized (hetero)sex appeal: a high level of exposed skin and/or photographically emphasized erogenous zones; an arguably “sexually intentional” gaze directly at the camera (e.g. parted lips, direct stare with dilated pupils); perfection in grooming to indicate more of a “model-like” than “regular-person” appearance; a youthful appearance – i.e., appearing to be under 35 years of age. (Worth reiterating is that such signifiers also commonly appear in advertisements in women’s magazines, such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Glamour*. This subject will receive further discussion in Chapter 6.)
 - ii. *Autonomous*: Portrayed simply as a person, presumably executing her own agenda, rather than simply passively present to be “stared at” – and groomed in a sufficiently casual manner as to be deemed lacking in a high level of calculated (hetero-sexualized) sex appeal, presumably so as to appear more as a person one may encounter in public (i.e., “ordinary”), rather than a more stereotypical magazine advertisement model.
 - iii. *A combination of the two*. That is, a case could have been made for both of the above categories.

I also left open a miscellaneous category for those ad subjects whom I really felt were beyond my capacity to classify.

This content analysis segment was useful preparation for what to ask participants, to determine how well matched their general travel ‘likes’ and preferences were to how I

classified female travelers in the studied ads. Overall, the judgments of participants to some of these same ads portraying female travelers were similar to mine, except that generally their perceptions were to a more pronounced extent.

Guided by applicable principles as outlined by Rose (2001), Williamson (1978), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000) and Goffman (1979), as well as the Paisley-Butler Butler-Paisley (1974) consciousness scale, I also gathered some semiotic data. As noted earlier, I paid particular attention to appearance indicators related to the female subject, such as posture and body positioning, level of degree in detail of personal grooming, clothing and other non-verbal cues (Williamson, 1978), as well as surrounding signifiers such as setting, and ‘props’ (e.g. luxury-related items, attentive service personnel, sports equipment, presence of children, etc.) (Goffman, 1979; Williamson, 1978; Mellinger, 1994; Paisley-Butler and Butler-Paisley, 1974; Pritchard, 2001, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Rose, 2001: 164-185; Shields, 2006).

Upon completion of classification for each individual ad in both of the two periods, and tabulating my findings by product-type groupings, I then compared portrayals of female travelers across the two time periods. Two important questions in particular were examined. The first was whether female travel ad subjects were more frequently and more prominently featured in the latter time period, or whether there were no notable differences. Secondly, I examined how closely the roles and activities in which the contemporary females were portrayed compared to ‘post-feminist’ claims of greater female autonomy, empowerment, etc.

3.5 Information from Creative Agencies on Ad Production

At the outset of my study, I planned to interview staff at the creative agencies responsible for the more common ads shown in my sample, and possibly for the more striking ads featuring female travelers. The focal points of my questions were to determine the specific market at which the particular ad was aimed, including gender; what key features were emphasized with this intent; and how variable features were determined. I hoped to compare the ad creators' intent for each ad's salient features with how female travel consumers themselves interpreted the ad, and ultimately how appealing or unappealing the latter reported such particular features to be to them.

I had been warned in advance by a friend who formerly worked for an advertising agency of some inherent difficulties I could encounter in interviewing the creative designers of the advertisements in my sample. People in this industry were alleged to work long and intense hours. As well, there was a high rate of turnover and "burnout", leading to frequent switching of employers, which could potentially make original creative designers more difficult to track down. This problem would be compounded by the fact that some of the ads in my study would have been composed two years prior to the time at which I was encountering them. Unfortunately this forewarning proved to be well founded. Nonetheless, I will briefly outline the steps taken, along with some of the obstacles encountered.

To determine the creative agency responsible for each ad, I had to first determine which companies were owned by which, if any, larger corporations, and then to ascertain which creative ad agency had the corporation's tourism-related contract. Fortunately, most of this

information could be found in the *LexisNexis Redbook of Advertisers* at the public library, although it was necessary to sift through several years' worth of material. In the cases of advertisers and/or companies who were not listed, I called the advertisers' head office, and attempted to obtain this information from someone in the marketing department. As forewarned, one large obstacle encountered was that some of my ads, indeed having been designed two years prior, were produced by creative agencies no longer associated with a particular advertiser. Some creative agencies were traced through direct contact with marketing personnel at the advertising company's head office. More frequently than not, my calls and emails were not returned – and even when they were, there had frequently been a turnover of employees, further obstructing my quest. A record outlining my attempted contacts with the numerous creative agencies responsible for ads in my data are recorded in Appendix B. These disappointments and frustrations notwithstanding, my search indicated the real difficulties in validating the intentionality on the part of ad creators of scholarly claims about the “male gaze” or the “woman on the beach” trope.

There was one notable and very valuable exception to an otherwise generalized unwillingness to participate on the part of creative agencies: information from that interview with Trevor Nardini of Arnold Worldwide is outlined in Section 4.3 in my actual findings. This individual was immensely generous, and provided valuable input toward my study's conclusions.

3.6 Participant Involvement and Input from Female Travel Consumers Themselves

One final component critical to this study was to determine how congruent and appealing, or potentially alienating and disconnected, the representations of contemporary female travelers were to actual female travel consumers themselves who fell within the selected travel magazines' stated readership demographics - and thus arguably the intended female consumer base.

After obtaining ethics clearance to work with human subjects, this section of my methodology involved administering questionnaires to female participants, and then conducting focus groups with a demographically compatible sample of Toronto-based female travelers. This process further served to cross-check and compare all previous findings.

3.6.1 Sampling Procedure

A sample drawn from the magazine readership of the three selected travel magazine sources would have been ideal. However, as explicated by Milkie (2002) and McRobbie (1997), magazine editors are beholden to their advertisers, and cooperation from the magazines in providing readership data seemed highly improbable, readership confidentiality issues notwithstanding. As well, the costs to have advertised for participant volunteers within the selected magazines would have been highly prohibitive.

Cresswell (2002) suggested that an ideal study sample should have 'generalizability' to the larger population. My study, however, focused on a highly specific market segment. Thus, my sampling procedure may be characterized as one involving non-probability (Cresswell,

2002), which was both convenient and opportunistic, as I targeted two specific travel organizations. I had prepared to have to also rely on “snowball” sampling (Cresswell, 2002); this, however, did not become necessary. I reflected upon the possibility that people with particularly strong views may be more inclined to respond to invitations which involved offering opinions; that possibility, however, would arguably affect this particular sample no more than most others.

I found my participants from the two main sources:

1. *Great Expeditions*: For some years, I have been involved in a casually constituted travel club of approximately 200 members, in which people interested in “non-mass” travel meet monthly in various people’s homes around the Greater Toronto area, to share their common interests and to view slide and/or PowerPoint presentations of other members’ recent excursions. This group was founded twenty years ago by two individuals, and has grown considerably since then, through word-of-mouth, and from fliers posted at venues such as Mountain Equipment Co-op. Emails inform members regarding monthly gatherings.
2. *journeywoman.com* I called the editor of an on-line travel magazine for women, *journeywoman.com*, Evelyn Hanlon. She was interested in my study, and helpful to the extent that she told me the next issue was going to be finalized and sent out shortly, so I should send her an outline immediately of what I needed. I included my email address and cell phone number in a brief message. Within 72 hours, I had approximately 30 inbox messages from would-be participants.

I acknowledge that, while my participant base appeared superficially to be demographically compatible with the magazine readership statistics provided by each magazine in terms of age, household income and levels of education, I could neither

conclusively confirm nor refute the unequivocal compatibility of my participants with the female readership of the three selected magazines, despite their apparent demographic similarities, and the fact that five participants coincidentally mentioned they were also readers. That having been acknowledged, for the purpose of this study, I am operating under the assumption that the two groups of women sufficiently overlap to draw some noteworthy comparisons.

My participant base started out with 48 women, 38 from whom I ultimately received a returned questionnaire, and 30 of whom actually materialized for my focus groups. Ten of the original group informed me prior to the focus groups that they were too busy with other obligations to participate in the study as they had originally hoped. An additional eight submitted completed questionnaires, and said they would be attending their pre-assigned focus group session, but did not show up for the focus group.

I spoke to most of participants by telephone in advance. Once a potential participant had been contacted regarding the basic parameters of my study and her interest was confirmed, a letter of consent with the preliminary questionnaire were mailed to the address she provided me, along with a stamped addressed return envelope. In the few cases where women wanted me to email them the invitation, they were always informed that I would need to receive hard copies back as I required their signatures on the Ethics Office consent form; they were told that the envelopes and postage they would then require would be reimbursed at my focus group.

Because of my involvement in Great Expeditions, I knew a few of my participants socially, and over about 10 years of time. I also knew they really wanted to be helpful to me. While in hindsight, I would judge the frankness of their questionnaire responses in particular as a distinct advantage of the relationship, I felt uncomfortable in presenting social acquaintances, even in writing, with questions pertaining to income and sexuality on vacation – even when prefaced with, “Please don’t feel obligated to answer *anything* you consider to be too personal.” I further tried to remain conscious during my focus groups of treating all participants with equal solicitude, and braced myself to re-direct the conversation away from anyone who might monopolize the discussion. (Interventions were actually more difficult with people I did not know – and did not wish to offend as the only basis for our relationship was that they had *volunteered* two hours of their own time to participate in my study.)

One minor challenge I did not anticipate was the considerable amount of time consumed with participant liaison prior to the focus groups. While I remain extremely appreciative of the generosity these women showed by participating in my study, I had not anticipated the volume of contacts I would receive from women who contacted me simply wanting to discuss travel interests, as well as from participants who sought extra reassurance that they were in fact qualified to participate in my study. Although several women informed me they had to drop out of the study due to other obligations, and several more never showed up for their pre-arranged focus group session, I did not find it necessary to refuse any interested participants, with the exception of several who contacted me after the focus group sessions had been completed.

3.6.2 Preliminary Questionnaire

Once a potential participant had indicated and confirmed that she was interested, she was mailed a letter of consent and preliminary questionnaire, the completion and return of which were each indicated to be mandatory for participation both in my study, and in one of the upcoming focus groups. A copy of each of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix C. The questionnaire served several functions. Its predominant purpose was to ensure that each participant was indeed a sufficiently active travel consumer: I selected as a minimum requirement that each participant had spent at least \$2500 of her own discretionary income on travel within the past 2 years. (This minimum was well exceeded.) A second and considerable advantage to the questionnaire was the opportunity it afforded to acquire a written record of pertinent information and cross-checking with regard to the overall themes of this study. Data of interest included information on reported travel motivations; preferences of activities and settings; preferred sources of vacation information; reported impacts of marital or relationship status on female participants' travel decisions; and any preconceptions regarding how women are portrayed in travel media and tourism marketing

3.6.3 Focus Groups

A sample of 30 well-traveled women based in the Toronto area whose age, income and level of education were compatible with those of the three travel magazines' readership demographics was assembled to participate in one of three separate focus groups of approximately ten women each. Approximately 20 ads which were most frequently run during the course of 2003 – 2004 in the three selected travel magazines were shown to focus group participants for feedback. Four currently running ads (i.e., in October, 2005) which had also appeared in the 2003-04 data set were added into the sample, to enhance the current

nature of the depictions of female travelers. These ads are listed in Table 2. The need to avoid inundating my participants with too many ads to scrutinize led to my decision to select ads for the sample that were shown with greatest frequency, at the expense of others which may have potentially (although not necessarily) better reflected a broader range of female travel experiences. This decision was made to better enhance study replicability.

Table 2: Ads Selected For Focus Group Study

Criteria for selection (either or both):

1. An ad had to have appeared a minimum of four times in the three selected travel publications during the 2003 – 2004 period.
2. If an ad had appeared less than four times but was still being run in one of the same three travel magazines during October, 2005, it could be included in the sample.

Selected Ads (By Sponsor)	Figure/Page	Number of appearances	Other Ads Run by Sponsor Featuring a Female Tourist	# of other ad(s)' appearances
1. American Express Delta Sky Miles (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Mar. 2003: 37)	Figure 22/163	7	2	2
2. Bellagio Las Vegas (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> June 2003: 85)	Figure 14/150	14	N/A	
3. Bermuda (Bermuda Tourism) (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> July 2004:21)	Figure 17/156	1 + Oct./05	2 individual ads	2
4. British Airways (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Dec. 2003: 201)		4	N/A	
5. Cayman Islands (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> Oct. 2005: 101)	Figure 30/220	1 + Oct./05	2 individual ads	2
6. Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos) (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> July/August 2004: 42-3)	Figure 25/166	8	6 individual ads	11
7. Celebrity Cruises (“Once I was a queen.”) (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov 2003: 26-7)	Figure 3/137	2 + Oct./05	As directly above	
8. Crystal Cruises (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Nov/Dec 2004: 73)	Figure 23/164	5	N/A	
9. Expedia.com (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Sept 2004: 4)	Figure 18/157	8	N/A	

Selected Ads (By Sponsor)	Figure/Page	Number of appearances	Other Ads Run by Sponsor Featuring a Female Tourist	# of other ad(s)' appearances
10. Hilton (beach massage) (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> July 2004: 19)	N/A	6	1 (family theme)	1
11. Holland America Cruises (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Oct. 2004, p.60-3)	N/A	5	N/A	
12. Honduras (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Nov/Dec 2004: 53)	Figure 5/139	6	N/A	
13. InterContinental (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> May 2004: 87)	Figure 12/147	4	1 (Le Grand Hotel Paris)	2
14. Jamaica (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> Apr. 2004: 207)	Figure 29/213	4	N/A	
15. Le Meridien Hotels (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov. 2004: 153)	Figure 1/135	8	N/A	
16. MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Dec 2004: 81)	Figure 11/146	1 + Oct./05	1	2
17. Mirage "Explore" (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> Apr. 2004: 169)	Figure 27/211	4	2 other ads in series	3
18. Queen Mary 2 (Cunard Lines) (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Dec 2003:173-4)	Figure 20/161	7	2	5
19. Renaissance (Painter) (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> Apr 2004: 11)	Figure 26/168	4	As directly below	
20. Renaissance (Multi-identities) (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Nov. 2004: 61)	N/A	1 + Oct./05 (3x)	As directly above	
21. Singapore Airlines (<u>Condé Nast Traveler</u> Feb. 2003: 5)	N/A	8	N/A	
22. Visa (sleeping woman) (<u>National Geographic Traveler</u> May/June 2003: 4)	Figure 2/136	11	1	2
23. Westin ('good mom') (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> Apr 2003: 45)	N/A	4	1 (nude sleeper)	2
24. Wyndham Resorts (<u>Travel+Leisure</u> May 2003: 86)	Figure 28/212	6	1	1

Within each focus group, questions such as the following were qualitatively addressed:

- Which of the selected travel-related ads appealed to individual participants' personal preferences and consumer impulses, and which did not.
- Reasons for stated likes and dislikes.

- What proportion of these ads would have been considered transgressive if the female ‘protagonist’ featured were to be identically replaced by a male counterpart.

I held my three focus groups in my home (in the living room) because renting space would have been expensive. As well, the focus group I had designed required a considerable amount of necessary associated paraphernalia:

- Selected ads in plastic protectors to be hung up and viewed
- Office supplies such as nametags, masking tape, colour-coded sticky-dots for participants to mark ads they found strikingly compelling or repellant, workbooks, pencils, and question sheets
- Tape recorder and spare cassettes
- Overhead projector and slides of ads
- Screen
- Stamps and envelopes to reimburse those who had requested receiving their letters of consent and preliminary questionnaires as emails
- Ample refreshments, as well as serviettes, plates, cups and forks

The three separately held focus group sessions were each organized into three segments.

1. Welcome, refreshments, and “ice-breaking” group exercise
2. Time for individual viewing and ranking of the ads, as well as marking down comments in workbooks for further discussion within the larger group
3. Larger group discussion, with prepared overheads of ads of greater interest available for mutual viewing and discussion

3.6.3.1 Rationale for Workbooks

The participants were invited to record any additional comments or remarks they may have had in their workbooks, which I was then able to peruse later – to verify or negate impressions received during the larger discussion group. The workbooks were valuable in addressing two prior concerns of mine.

1. They provided valuable backup in the event of the tape recorder malfunctioning. (Unfortunately, such was the case.)
2. I recognized in advance that human interactions are not tidy. It seemed naïve to expect a group of people previously unknown to one another to think and speak collectively, or even in discernible clusters. As well, some group members were bound to be less inhibited or more outspoken than others. I had hoped that in giving each participant an equal written opportunity to express her perceptions of the ads, I was more likely to obtain a more accurate perspective of the potentially varying points of view, which may not have necessarily been so freely expressed in a larger group discussion – particularly one where I was compelled to treat each participant with the utmost courtesy and delicacy, as each was in a sense ‘working’ for me free of charge.

My three focus groups were held on the following dates:

1. Wed., Oct.26, 2005. 7 -9pm.
2. Thurs., Nov.3, 2005. 7 – 9pm.
3. Sat., Nov.5, 2005. 10am – Noon.

3.6.3.2 The Ads Selected to Show the Focus Groups

One of the most compelling reasons for holding focus groups was so that the more commonly appearing contemporary ads could be shown to female travel consumers for their

feedback. Because there was a total of 141 separate individual ads featuring unaccompanied female travelers during the period of 2003 – 2004 in the three magazines, some means was required for providing a manageable sample. I consequently selected the most frequently shown ads of female travelers, since these are arguably the images with optimized opportunity to reach and thus influence both travel consumers and the general public as to what female travelers “are like” and what supposedly appeals to them. As indicated above, I selected the 20 most frequently appearing ads – each of which had appeared a minimum of four times in the three magazines during 2003 - 2004. In addition, in the interest of ensuring that my material was somewhat more up-to-date, I also scrutinized the October 2005 issues of each of these same three travel magazine sources – since the last magazine issue from which my material had been retained was already almost a year old by the time of my focus groups, and selected four additional ads which had also appeared during the 2003 – 2004 data course of my study, and which were still on display at the times my focus groups were being held, ten months later.

3.6.3.3 Outline Utilized for All Focus Groups

Participants were invited to arrive up to 30 minutes in advance, to enjoy refreshments and mingle. A name tag was issued, and refreshments and seating pointed out.

My general script for each session was as follows.

I. Welcome and Intro

(Approximately 15 minutes)

1. Welcome and thank you.

I introduced myself and the subject matter. With the explicit understanding that participation was voluntary, we went around the circle to each state our name, if we wished, our occupation, and what our more specific interests and/or experience in travel were. (I felt this would put participants more at ease, and help them become less reticent to speak aloud from that point onward.)

2. I explained that a number of ads shown in the three selected, widely distributed travel publications were on display in the kitchen. Each participant was given a blank notebook, pencil, question sheet, and three sets of coloured dots, to indicate their reactions to various ads, as described below.

Their instructions were as follows:

- i. With the four green dots you have been given, mark up to any 4 ads which particularly appeal to you.
 - ii. With the four red dots you have been given, mark up to any 4 ads which you dislike, or which you find lacking in appeal.
 - iii. The four yellow dots you have been given are for any ads which you don't particularly like or dislike, but perhaps find interesting or striking for some other reason, and would like to discuss further.
3. I invited any questions.

The worksheet which participants were given may be found in Appendix D.

II. Time to Peruse Ads, and Record Comments in the Notebooks Provided

(Approximately 40 minutes)

After about 20 minutes had passed, I would go into the kitchen, make note of which ads had generated the most interest (i.e., accrued the greater numbers of dots), and then prepared the appropriate overhead slides to be shown in the discussion. I had prepared an overhead for each of the slides in advance.

III. Discussion Segment

(Approximately 45 minutes)

To generate discussion and feedback, I asked the groups the following questions:

1. “Any initial comments regarding your impressions? Were these what you had expected to see?”
2. “How much direct correlation would you say there is between what you enjoy (i.e., activities, values, desires), and what the ads depict?”
3. **The Empowerment-versus-Exploitation Question:** “Some people would argue that the bulk of travel ads featuring unaccompanied women frequently depict them in bikinis lounging on a beach. There are two differing schools of thought about this. One would suggest that this is gratuitous exploitation of the female as a sexualized decoration. The other would say that this is more indicative of female empowerment – i.e., we can fly somewhere nice and warm, and get rid of our constrictive clothing, perhaps use our sexy looks to be given better service or desired attention. What does everybody think about that? Which school of thought do you think is more on the mark?”

The overheads of the most frequently selected ads were shown for discussion, particularly those well-liked and those well disliked. Further comments were invited and discussed.

Closing Questions (While these were intended, we inevitably ran out of time. As well, by this point, they had to a large extent been addressed.)

“If you had the opportunity as a Toronto-based woman who travels independently to address travel-oriented advertisers with some pragmatic advice on how to (better) lure you

and your consumer dollars toward their product(s), what would you say, generally and/or specifically, with regard to each of the following:”

- “What is presently working?”
- “What is presently *not* working?”
- “What, if anything, *would* better appeal to you?”

In employing these variant forms of methodology outlined above, I hoped my research would produce well triangulated and richly descriptive results.

Chapter 4

RESULTS OF TRAVEL ADVERTISEMENT CONTENT ANALYSIS, QUANTITATIVE TABULATIONS AND AGENCY INPUT

This chapter contains my research findings on proportional quantitative representation of female travelers in ads, my content analysis of female traveler portrayals, and input from the creative agency representative interviewed. Participant-related findings are covered separately in Chapter 5.

4.1 Quantitative Tabulations: Proportional Representation of Travel Ad Subjects

Calculations were undertaken to determine:

1. whether the volume of travel ads featuring only female travelers had increased in terms of frequency and percentage from 1989-90 to 2003-04, interpreted as advertisers' greater recognition of women's increased socio-economic clout; and,
2. the proportionate representation of female travelers in advertisements, in relation to male travelers, couples, mixed singles, families, and travel ads that do not feature human subjects.

Complete quantitative data, listed by individual year in each individual magazine, are in Appendix E. Data were gathered from 128 magazine issues for a total of four years, and are summarized in Table 3 on page 120. *Travel+Leisure* consistently maintained the highest number of pages and advertisements per issue on average in any given year across both periods of data collection, while *National Geographic Traveler* consistently maintained the

lowest number of each. As indicated at the bottom of Table 3, 1989-90 data was based on a total of 11,976 magazine pages, 2,954 of which were full-paged travel advertisements. Data from 2003-04 was gathered from 12,797 magazine pages, 3,331 of which were full-paged travel advertisements.

There was a substantial increase in the latter period not only in the number of pages and advertisements in each of the three travel magazines, but also in the proportion of female-featuring ads. Proportional representations for each type of subject portrayed were calculated by adding the totals for each of the 128 individual magazine issues of the three selected magazines during the particular period labeled (Appendix E), and are as follows.

Table 3: Proportional Breakdown of Types of Human Subjects Featured in Travel Ads

	<i>1989 / 1990</i>		<i>2003 / 2004</i>	
	No. of Full-paged Ads	Percentage of Total Full page Ads	No. of Full-paged Ads	Percentage of Total Full page Ads
Total Female Tourist Ads	106	3.6%	303	9%
Total Female Tourism Providers and/or Locals	86	3%	17	0.5%
Total Male Tourist Ads	84	3%	133	4%
Total Male Tourism Providers and/or Locals	77	2.6%	22	0.7%
Total Couple Tourist Ads	322	11%	408	12.2%
Total Family Tourist Ads	96	3.25%	64	2%
Mixed Group Tourist Ads	115	3.9%	59	1.8%
Total Tourist Personless Ads (No human subjects featured)	605	20.45%	521	15.64%
Total Number of Magazine Pages	11976		12797	
Total Number of Full-paged Ads	2957		3331	
Total percentage of all magazine ads that were travel-related		45.2 %		44.64%

The purpose of Table 3 was to offer the number of actual travel advertising pages devoted to each configuration of human subject – the two main points being that female travelers are not underrepresented in proportion to other types of travel subjects, and that their numbers in full-paged travel advertisements have in fact increased. In descriptive terms, several notable changes in the latter period of full-paged travel advertisements became apparent. There was a minor diminishing of featured families, as well as of mixed groups of singles, and person-less travel ads, in favour of a larger proportion of ads featuring female travelers (up from 3.6% in 1989-90 to 9% of all full-paged ads in 2003-04). The portrayal of male travelers, significantly smaller than that of female travelers to begin with, remained steady with a minor increase from 3 to 4%, as opposed to the females' almost three-fold increase. If sheer numbers in terms of gender of subject-representation are indicative, women were already recognized as almost on par with male consumers back in 1989-1990, and they are even more commonly depicted now. Thus, female travelers are not relatively underrepresented in travel ads by sheer volume, their presence having tripled over the past 15 years, even though the actual number of full-paged ads in the selected publications has only increased by 8.8%. Another interesting result in these data pertains to both females and males depicted either as destination locals and/or tourism service-providers. While such representations were not large in the initial period (3% for females, and 2.6% for males), there was nonetheless a diminishing of the featuring of both males and females in travel ads as either service providers, or as locals (0.5% for females in 2003-04, and 0.7% for males).

Several interpretations of these data are possible. One is a greater societal recognition that many tourists are not part of the traditional nuclear family, and that single people are a

lucrative travel market unto themselves. A large proportion of the travel ads contained no people at all, frequently allowing magnificent scenery to speak for itself. This finding has been supported by Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000: 357), and it arguably supports Urry's (2002) claim of the post-modern tourist's increased desire for "romantic gazing" and "solitude". Nonetheless, ads featuring no human subjects, while remaining the most prominent type, appeared to have diminished in favour of those portraying the female traveler.

There are two possible explanations for the relatively higher proportion of lone female representation in the latter-period sample. Women may now be better recognized as an important market (e.g. Grimshaw, 2003; Apostolopoulos, 2001; Swain, 2002; Enloe, 2000; Westwood et al., 2000; Zalatan, 1998; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; hotelmarketing.com, 2004; Fernandez, 2001; Smith, 2005; Rigsby, 2001), and thus more recently considered a worthwhile target to provide with more representative subjects with whom they may identify in ads. An alternative explanation would be that advertisers continue to believe that (particular) depictions of females sell travel products well (Shields, 2006; Goldman, 1992; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; Morgan and Pritchard, 2001, 1998; Richter, 1994; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Milkie, 2002; Marshall, 1996a, 1996b; Reichart, Lambiase, Morgan, Carstarphen, and Zavoina, 1999). As some subsequent findings will suggest, a good case could be made for either of these conclusions.

4.2 Content Analysis of Female-featuring Travel Ads

The following discussion highlights some of the more prominent ways in which females in travel ads have been portrayed, for each of the two time periods under study: 1989-90, and

2003-04. Also highlighted are some discernible differences between female travel ads shown recently, from those featured in the period 13 years prior. As indicated above, fewer full-paged ads featuring unaccompanied female travelers were shown during the earlier period (38 individual ads in 1989-90, versus 141 individual ads in 2003-04). However, for the sake of proportional comparisons, percentage figures of prominently appearing features are noted for both. Not indicated in this content analysis is the frequency with which each particular ad was repeated. Those more frequently shown arguably have more influence on perceptions of the contemporary identity of the Western female traveler. The most frequently shown ads from the more recent sample, displayed a minimum of four times during 2003-04, are highlighted in Chapter 5 as they were also utilized as the sample shown to focus group participants.

4.2.1 Preliminary Steps, Prior to Content Analysis Tabulation

I turned my attention solely to the travel ads featuring females only, once the counting of all full-paged advertisements in the 128 magazine issues spanning both periods was completed, and the travel ads had been further divided by the type of tourist-subject(s) depicted. I categorized the travel ads featuring female tourists by the particular *product* each ad appeared to emphasize, with individual ads going into one of the following categories (Table 4):

1. Destination-oriented
2. Hotels/Resorts
3. Cruises
4. Airlines

5. Travel-related Services (such as credit cards)
6. Travel-related Products (such as luggage)

Table 4: Breakdown of All Ads Featuring Female Tourists by Product Emphasized

2003 – 2004

Categories of Ads	# of Ads by Type	# of Individual Ads	# of Advertisers
Hotels	119	50	30
Destination-related	77	56	41
Cruises	54	18	7
Airlines	12	2	2
Services	36	10	7
Products	8	5	5
TOTALS:	306	141	92

1989 – 1990

Categories of Ads	# of Ads by Type	# of Individual Ads	# of Advertisers
Hotels	29	13	11
Destination-related	35	15	14
Cruises	7	2	2
Airlines	4	1	1
Services	13	4	4
Products	16	3	3
TOTALS:	104	38	35

(Sources: *Travel+Leisure*; *Condé Nast*; *National Geographic Traveler*)

The data in Table 4 offer the proportion of various products emphasized in travel ads for each of the two data-collection periods. These divisions were based on my own perception of *what product* was the emphatic prominent selling feature in an ad, and were made not according to actual ad sponsors such as by airline or hotel chain. For example, an American Airlines ad specifically promoting a Hawaiian destination would have been classified under the heading, “Destination-oriented”, rather than under “Airlines.”

According to my method of categorization, the most prominent category for the number of ads actually shown for the latter period, and the second largest for the first period, was hotels/resorts. The number of ads in this particular product-advertisement category quadrupled in the more recent period of 2003 – 2004. This will receive further attention in the Chapter 6 discussion.

Highlighted below in Table 5 are some of the more prominent ways in which female subjects in travel ads have been portrayed, during each of the two time periods under study. Although the available data sample was not vast numerically, I found it nonetheless sufficient to the descriptive purposes of this study. There were 38 individual travel ads in the 1989-90 data sample featuring a female subject, and a comparatively larger sample of 141 such ads in the 2003-04 data. My intent in implementing content analysis was to determine and describe some discernible differences between female travel ad subjects shown more recently, from those featured in the data period 13 years prior. Although fewer individual full-paged ads featuring unaccompanied female travelers were shown during the earlier period (i.e., 38 individual ads in 1989-90, versus 141 individual ads in 2003-04), for the sake of descriptive proportional comparisons, I have included frequency counts and percentage figures of the more notably prominent features for both. A complete listing of all content analysis categories may be found in Appendix A.

Ad characteristics with sufficiently distinct and notable numerical frequency and topical relevance have been highlighted in Table 5 for further analysis. As discussed in Chapter 3, the categories were not mutually exclusive, but rather were given to describe with what

frequency particular traits were more commonly ascribed to female travel ad subjects, and whether any of these particular qualities appeared to be either on the increase, on the decline or holding constant.

Statistical analysis was also conducted to compare differences between the two time periods in which content analysis was undertaken, as outlined in Table 5. Although this study was intentionally qualitative and descriptive (as outlined in Chapter 3), Chi square testing was selected as an interesting and appropriate form of statistical analysis (Roscoe, 1975; Moore and McCabe, 2006), to potentially lend more weight to inferences made from the comparisons between periods as to how female subjects in travel ads had been depicted. Table 5 outlines the results of this application, using the more traditional 95% rule applied in social sciences. Because of the limited size of my data sample, I also offer results using a standard of 80%, and then 70%.

The limited quantities of my data samples, particularly for the earlier period of 1989-90, were problematic in the application of statistical testing. According to Roscoe (1975) and Moore and McCabe (2006), Chi square tests are invalid if there are fewer than five observations in one cell, or if there is an observation of “0” in a particular cell. Due to the fact that there were only 38 ads in total in the 1989-90 ad sample, some cells indeed had less than five ad examples in total, with several in fact having zero. The Chi square test was applied for the sake of interest and inference, and solely as a supplement to the qualitative, predominantly descriptive data.

Findings were mixed in terms of data period comparisons, and sometimes at least superficially inconsistent. For example, in strictly descriptive terms, it would appear that women featured in bathing suits had declined from 1989-90 to 2003-04. However, proportional frequency counts of female subjects featured nude increased notably between periods in descriptive terms, from 2% in 1989-90 to 14.2% in 2003-04. Notably, the vast majority of content analysis differences between the two periods outlined in Table 5 were not found to be statistically significant at the more rigorous 95% level. Considerably greater contrast between the two periods were notable using standards of 70% and, to some extent, 80%. One obstacle in comparing these two data sets was that the numbers of ads were unevenly matched (i.e., 38 individual ads in the earlier period, versus 141 in the latter). In light of the relatively limited data sets available and the intentionally descriptive, qualitative nature of this study, I would suggest that if tests of statistical significance are to be applied and discussed, it is reasonable to consider levels of significance at 70%.

Not indicated in this content analysis is the frequency with which each particular ad was repeated, despite the potential argument that advertisements more frequently shown may actually have more influence on perceptions of the contemporary identity of the western female traveler.

Complete data are available regarding all content analysis tabulations in Appendix F.

Table 5: Comparative Highlights of Differences between 2003-2004 and 1989-1990

	2003 – 2004 (141 Ads)		1989 – 1990 (38 Ads)		Significance			
	n	%	n	%	X ²	95% (3.84)	80% (1.64)	70% (1.07)
I. APPEARANCE OF SUBJECTS (Number of Women featured in/as)								
1. High Skin Quotient								
1. Bathing suits	45	32%	17	45%	1.42	no	no	yes
2. Nude or nearly nude (e.g. getting a massage)	20	14%	1	2.6%	3.41	no	yes	yes
3. Cleavage otherwise prominently featured	5	3.6%	0	0%	1.35	no	no	yes
4. Other body parts otherwise prominently featured (e.g. shoulders and arms; throat plate; or other)	20	14%	1	2.6%	3.41	no	yes	yes
Total percentages of ads in which female subject are in bathing suits or nude		46%		47.7%				
2. Facial Expression								
1. Smiling (not directly at the camera)	56	40%	9	24%	2.12	no	yes	yes
2. Smiling directly at camera	18	13%	4	11%	0.12	no	no	no
3. Eyes closed, as though sleeping	30	21%	9	24%	0.08	no	no	no
4. Looking directly at camera, in a “sexually suggestive way”	5	3.5%	1	2.6%	0.07	no	no	no
5. Face not fully visible	40	28%	7	18%	1.13	no	no	yes
3. State of Conscious Engagement								
1. Either sleeping or reclining	37	26%	10	26%	0.00	no	no	no
2. Passively standing, sitting or other (doing nothing else)	58	41%	17	45%	0.09	no	no	no
3. Involved in deliberate physical activity	43	31%	5	13%	3.36	no	yes	yes
4. Racially Diverse: Ads featuring a non-white subject:	14	10%	0	0%	3.77	no	yes	yes
II. BACKDROP OR SETTING OF AD								
1. Private room, veranda or terrace	13	9.3%	1	2.6%	1.66	no	yes	yes
2. Beachfront	28	20%	14	37%	3.68	no	yes	yes
3. Hotel/resort pool	13	9.2%	4	11%	0.05	no	no	no
4. Hot tub in specific destination/hotel-resort setting	4	3%	0	0%	1.08	no	no	yes
5. Massage table, in specific destination/hotel-resort/cruise ship setting	8	5.7%	0	0%	2.16	no	yes	yes
6. Other specific spa setting	8	5.7%	1	2.6%	0.55	no	no	no
7. Nature-oriented setting in actual destination	28	20%	4	11%	1.46	no	no	yes
8. Urban outdoor setting in destination	9	6.4%	2	5.3%	0.06	no	no	no
9. Public area of hotel/resort/casino	10	7.1%	3	8%	0.03	no	no	no

	2003 – 2004 (141 Ads)		1989 – 1990 (38 Ads)		Significance			
10. Simulated natural outdoor setting at a resort (e.g. Las Vegas ads)	4	11%	0	0%	1.08	no	no	yes
11. Spa-meditation area	2	5%	0	0%	0.54	no	no	no
12. Cultural setting (e.g. historical buildings)	4	3%	6	16%	8.99	yes	yes	yes
13. Subject at home, post- or pre-trip	10	7.1%	0	0	2.70	no	yes	yes
III. PROMINENT SIGNIFYING PROPS								
1. High level of service and/or luxury apparent	44	31%	8	21%	1.06	no	no	no
2. Items to indicate multi-interests and/or multi-roles	6	16%	3	8%	0.79	no	no	no
3. Presence of child(ren)	3	2.1%	2	5.3%	1.05	no	no	no
4. “Idyllic” natural setting	33	23%	11	29%	0.37	no	no	no
5. Discarding of sarong	5	3.5%	0	0	1.35	no	no	yes

These findings will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

Some of the visual characteristics in ads listed in semiotic studies, such as age estimations and facial expressions of subjects (outlined in Rose, 2001; Williamson, 1978; Goffman, 1979; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000a, 2000b), were also counted and tabulated in my study. Highlights of my semiotic applications are detailed below in Table 6. Several of these observations are arguably subjective and even speculative (for example, age estimations of the models), again highlighting the qualitative rather than quantitative orientation of this intentionally descriptive research. For example, The Mandarin Oriental Hotel used five different female celebrities in its ads, each with whom I am, probably like most viewers, somewhat familiar. Each woman *looked* to me considerably younger than I factually knew her to be (- for example, Jerry Hall and Whoopi Goldberg *appeared* to be around 40 years of age, not their actual 50-plus.) In the interests of applying the same

consistent criteria to the celebrity travel ad subjects as to the non-famous models, I categorized women strictly according to their appearance in the ads. This process at times seemed artificial, and could not have been undertaken in a valid quantitative manner. Nonetheless, the semiotic data from these tabulations are included in this section to offer as complete a perspective as possible on predominant assigned features to women in travel ads, and to better compare any changes that may have occurred throughout the two periods of ads under examination.

Table 6: Highlighted Categories from Semiotic Applications

Female Subject Portrayals	2003-2004	1989-1990
1. Subject's Apparent Age Bracket		
i. Likely under 35	66 (47%)	21 (55.23%)
ii. Possibly could be around 35	39 (28%)	7 (18.4%)
iii. Could be over 35	10 (7%)	4 (10.5%)
iv. Appears to be over 45	5 (3.5%)	2 (5.3%)
2. Body Type		
i. Notably slim	36 (25.52%)	14 (37%)
ii. Notably curvaceous/fuller breast-size apparent	31 (22%)	4 (10.52%)
iii. Body shape "average", and/or not particularly noteworthy	46 (33%)	10 (26.3%)
iv. Heavier set	0	1 (2.63%)
3. Hair		
i. Done up in a bun	25 (18%)	0
ii. Shoulder-length or longer	57 (40.4%)	14 (37%)
iii. "Deliberately" uncoiffed	7 (5%)	0
4. Overall Grooming (i.e., use of make-up, clothing, hair styling)		
i. "Model-like" appearance	43 (30.5%)	18 (47.34%)
ii. Deliberately "average-looking"	27 (19%)	0
iii. A combination of the above two	59 (42%)	10 (26.3%)
5. Overall Impression of Ad, in relation to the Presence of the Male Gaze Versus Female Subject as Autonomous Individual		
i. Woman as decorative/ornamental	35 (25%)	14 (39%)
ii. Woman as autonomous and actively engaged	45 (32%)	11 (29%)
iii. Some combination of the above two	39 (28%)	11 (29%)
iv. Spa treatments: excluded from this count:	19 (13.5%)	0
v. Ambiguous: I could not definitively categorize (I was unsure of which category would be more appropriate to these)	4 (3%)	2 (5.26%)

The criteria applied to gather data for Table 6 were highly subjective and based solely on my own interpretation. They are intentionally descriptive, but not objectively measurable (e.g. age “guess-timations”). As well, a number of cells had a value of zero, further minimizing the value of applying Chi square for testing the strength of comparisons (Moore and McCabe, 2006). I concluded that it would be neither appropriate nor add value to conduct tests of statistical significance on these data. Findings outlined above in Table 6 are further discussed in Chapter 6.

4.2.2 High Quotient of Female Skin

While the number of female travel subjects shown in bathing suits has shrunken to one third in 2003-04 from almost 45% in 1989-90, the total percentage of ads in which the female subject was either in a bathing suit or nude is currently 46%, in close comparison to 1989-90, in which the same was true for almost 48% of female subjects in ads. Thus, little in this regard has changed: the “woman in bathing suit” trope is still present, as suggested by authors such as Urry (1989), Pritchard (2001) and Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), particularly in the case of “sunny beach” destinations. There appeared to be a connection between getting oneself to a (generic) sunny beach, and being able to take off one’s clothes – again, invoking the debate as to whether or not this is exploitative of female bodies, or representative of the empowerment of traveling females to “fly and peel” - or something in between these two. The settings in which female tourists were more frequently depicted in little to no clothing were, not remarkably, beaches and spas/massage tables.

Although the “bathing suit trope” may show some indication of a very modest decline in the more recent period, female travel subjects’ bodies are contemporarily very much on display on massage tables, with a greater number of other ads photographically emphasizing cleavage in particular, and other body parts prominently featured, such as shoulders, and legs. Additionally, the more recent female subjects had a slightly higher tendency to be shown as gazing “seductively” at the camera, although this was only present in 3.5% of the later ads, compared to 2.6% in the earlier ads. (This difference is not considered to be statistically significant.)

4.2.3 Women in Passive, Trance-like States

About one quarter of the ads in both periods portrayed the female subjects with their eyes closed, either sleeping or otherwise passively reclining (Figure 1 on page 135 and Figure 2 on page 136). Approximately 65% of the ads for both time spans portrayed the female subjects as notably passive. Women were frequently portrayed as though in trance-like states. One may have surmised that women who can afford expensive four- or five-star hotels *just want to be left alone to relax*. Related to this notion was the relatively high preponderance of images of women at spas or being massaged (also noted in Richter, 1995), or in hot tubs.

4.2.4 Notable Changes in the Female Subjects in Ads of the More Recent Period (2003-04)

The more recent proliferation of ads featuring female travel subjects would appear to indicate at least some recognition by advertisers that women are important travel decision-makers, and potentially lucrative as a market. However, in light of the two very prevalent

characteristics of female-featuring travel ads outlined above, several paradoxes exist in my findings, which require closer examination.


4.2.4.1 The Increasing Tendency to Portray Female Travelers as More “Regular”-looking

My own subjective observations, as noted in Table 6 on page 130, indicate a slightly increased tendency for female subjects to more recently be portrayed as older, increasingly with a more average-looking body type (now in one third of the ads, as opposed to 26% in 1989-90). I also recognized an increasing tendency toward more of a “regular-looking-person” appearance in the latter period’s ads. I further noted, however, the more recent period’s slightly increased emphasis on more prominent cleavage, from 0% in the earlier period, to 5% in contemporary ads. One third of the women in the latter period also appeared to be autonomously and actively engaged as individuals; however, this proportion is not vastly different from what I surmised in the 1989-90 ad sample.

Cruise ads in particular, appear to be making concentrated effort to portray more “real-looking”, deliberately less meticulously groomed women. (Cruise ads in the 1989-90 period had a greater tendency to show “older-looking” couples, however.) Fifteen percent of women in the 2003 – 2004 ad data set appeared to be over 35, with 5% of those estimated to be over 50, in some cases complete with gray hair (Figure 3 on page 137). Only in 6% of the individual 1989-90 ads would I have estimated the female travel subjects portrayed to be over 35 (Figure 4 on page 138).

4.2.4.2 Higher Levels of Activity

A further recent change was the tendency to show female travelers as more actively engaged in some physical activity (30.5%), whether it was dancing or diving, compared to only 13.2% in the earlier period. The increased depictions of women as athletically competent (e.g. Honduras ad, Figure 5 on page 139; Australia ad, Figure 6 on page 140) rather than simply decorative (e.g. Little Dix Bay, a resort ad from *Travel+Leisure* June 1990, p.39, depicting a voluptuous cartooned woman-as-mermaid) was notable in the latter ads.



land in a
place where
you can
just be.

Take time out to recharge, relax and to just be. At Le Meridien resorts, we offer our guests a world where luxury and exotic locations combine, with hotels that provide a standard of service that's second to none. Choose from our selection of resort hotels situated in some of the most beautiful places around the world, each one reflecting the unique style that is Le Meridien.

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Figure 1: Le Meridien Hotels. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Nov. 2004: 153.

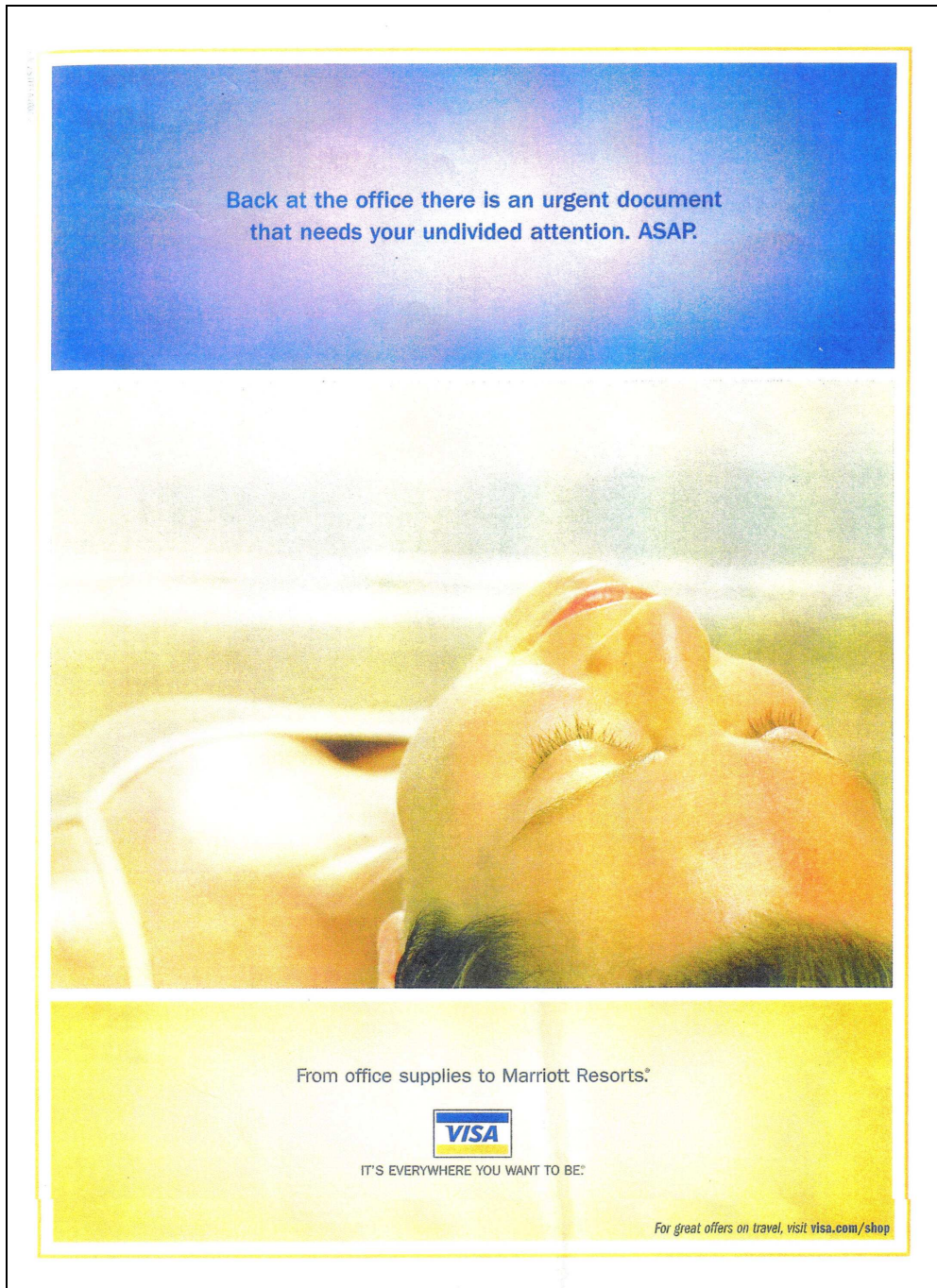
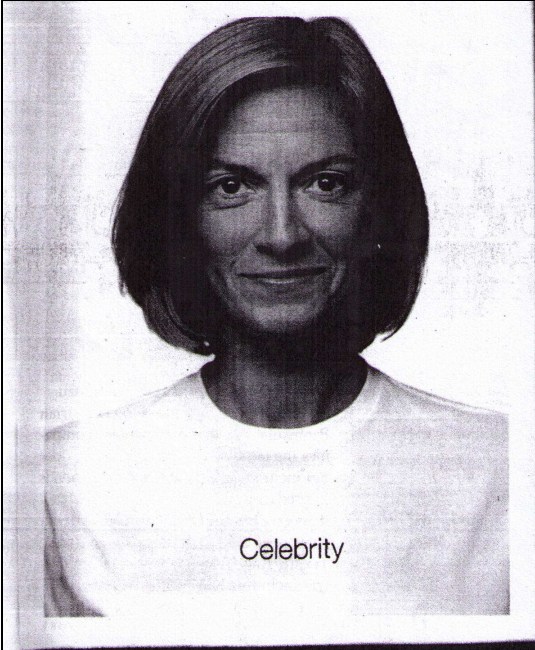


Figure 2: Visa (co-sponsored with Marriott Resorts). Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler

May/June 2003: 4.



Celebrity

CELEBRATING 20TH ANNIVERSARY
 HUSBAND: MICHAEL
 **CAPTAIN'S CLUB MEMBERS

STATEPOOD DELIVERY OF ONE DOZEN
 LONG-STEMMED ROSES/EMBARKATION DAY

BREAKFAST IN BED/CHAMPAGNE MIMOSAS,
 FRESH TROPICAL FRUIT, TOAST

ARRANGE PORTRAIT SITTING FOR
 PORTRAIT PORTFOLIO (SURPRISE)

11:00 AM FRIDAY

REQUEST CONTACT@SEA SERVICE
 FOR FRIDAY /E-MAIL FROM
 CHILDREN (SURPRISE)

RENEWING VOWS IN MAUI

Celebrity Cruises **X** a true departure

For one week. For two weeks. For three, if you choose. You will be treated famously aboard one of our cruises. From the inspired cuisine to the world-class AquaSpa™ by Elemis, come experience everything that makes a Celebrity cruise a true departure. For more information on Celebrity's nine spectacular ships and their fabulous itineraries, please call **1-800-CELEBRITY, ext. 966** or log on to www.celebrity.com/trip6.

Celebrity Cruises, Inc., 1050 Caribbean Way, Miami, FL 33132 ©2002 Celebrity Cruises Inc. Ships' Registry: Liberia and The Bahamas.

Figure 3: Celebrity Cruises (Profile of 'older' woman). Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Feb. 2003: 31.

WHY MRS. BARNES' TRIP TURNED OUT JUST THE WAY SHE PICTURED IT...



... because Mrs. Barnes gets the most out of her AAA membership. Sure she calls on AAA for road service and repair. But she never forgets that AAA is the world's largest travel service. She never goes anywhere without calling her local AAA Club for Tourbooks[®] maps and personalized Triptiks[®] that will help her get the most out of her travels.

AAA prints over 340 million pieces of travel literature a year. And we update each piece every year. So the information on where to eat, where to stay and where to play is more than helpful and

convenient... it's current too. As Mrs. Barnes states in her letter to AAA... "We've been members of AAA for 34 years and our family has been more aware of places of interest across the country, thanks to the AAA Tourbooks[®]."


So, if you belong to AAA, visit your local AAA Club before you plan your next trip and take advantage of the free travel material we offer. If you're not a member, call toll-free, 1-800-AAA-HELP (1-800-222-4357) and join AAA today.



The Most Trusted Name in Travel.[®]

Figure 4: AAA . Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler May/June 1990:146.

There's a world...




There's a land
 where you will
 learn the poetry of
 the wind through
 the rain forest,
 where the immense
 silence of its raw
 and untouched
 beauty will make
 you feel that time
 is no longer of
 consequence.


Where you can learn the secrets of the forest.

HONDURAS


Tropical
Nature



Maya
Renaissance



Caribbean
Creation



Honduras
 One small country: three wide worlds

HONDURAS INSTITUTE OF TOURISM 1 800 410 9608 P.O. BOX 140458 CORAL GABLES FLORIDA 33114-0458 www.letsgehonduras.com

Figure 5: Honduras Institute of Tourism. Advertisement. National Geographic

Traveler Nov/Dec 2004: 53.

seen a rock scrape the sky? howled at the moon like a Dingo? ruled an island?

HAVE

gone halfway around the world to find yourself? answered the call of the didgeridoo?

YOU

shared a laugh with an aborigine? dreamed about a vacation after it was over?

EVER

found yourself in a land without strangers? **been a fish?**

For those who long to take home more from a vacation than pictures and souvenirs, Qantas is offering two week air & hotel vacations to Australia starting from under \$2,000. For more information, call an Australia Travel Expert at 877-346-5207. Or visit Australia.com to find out how two weeks can change your life.

Price is per person based on double occupancy for Monday-Wednesday Economy Class departures from Los Angeles. Add-on fares available from other cities. Travel 4/28-6/19 or 7/21-8/28/04. Pricing available for other dates. Add \$35 for each Thursday-Sunday trans-Pacific flight. Seats are limited and may not be available on every flight. Hotel subject to availability. US/foreign taxes of approximately \$137, including September 11th Security Fee, are additional. After ticketing, no change is allowed to outbound sector; inbound may be changed for \$150. Cancellation penalties and other restrictions apply.

Figure 6: Australia, Australia Travel Experts. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler

Jan. 2004: 101.

The presence in ads of “Items to indicate multi-identities/interests” for female travel subjects remained stable over the 15-year span (i.e., 8% in 1989-90, and 8.5% in 2003-04). Noteworthy in the more recent period, however, was evidence of more ads featuring spa and massage services, as well as ads depicting female travelers participating in yoga and meditation. These images relate to the frequent undercurrent of “stress relief” notable in tourism advertising.

4.2.4.3 Increasing Prevalence of the “Female Gaze”

Several scholars outlined in Chapter 2 argued for a pervasive “male gaze” in travel advertising depictions of women (e.g. Pritchard, 2001; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Westwood et al., 2000) and, indeed, the content analysis undertaken may provide some evidence for this perspective, as is further discussed in Chapter 6. However, a recent contemporary trend is the increasing presence of what I would counter-term “the new female gaze”, wherein the female traveler is portrayed as the observer (see Figure 7 to Figure 13 on pages 142 to 148).

**Iceland.
Elbowroom with a view.**

WE'LL TAKE YOU TO YOUR WILDEST DREAMS.

Iceland, Europe's #1 destination for adventure and ecotravel, has it all. Surroundings like no other including geothermal hot springs, volcanoes, and geysers. For fun, there's golfing, whale watching, horseback riding, whitewater rafting, fishing—even some of the most talked about nightlife and cuisine in the world.

Traveling to Continental Europe, Scandinavia, or Great Britain? There's no better way to unwind than to **Take a Break in Iceland** for up to three nights at no additional airfare.

We call Iceland home. You'll call it *something else*.

DREAM TRIPS...

< Adventure Package >
This flexible air and hotel package is ideal for your own holiday in Reykjavik. Simply add in your car rental and gourmet dining to create your trip.

< Escorted Tours >

Iceland Complete (10 DAYS) Follow the famous Ring Road on a circle of wonders around Iceland.

Glaciers, Geysers and Waterfalls (7 DAYS) Experience a complete, compact sampling of the renowned natural wonders.

Viking Challenge (8 DAYS) It's maximum adventure with 21 weeks' worth of horseback riding, hiking, biking, rafting and more.

< Driving Holidays >

Ring Rider (10 DAYS) Drive the Ring Road, in evenings at Iceland's unique holiday farm, guests.

Highland Mountain Adventure (10 DAYS) Try an adventurous driving holiday including off-road driving, glacier walking, river rafting and more.

Book online at www.icelandair.com or call Icelandair Holidays at 1.800.779.2899 for more information and to order a free copy of the Spring/Summer/Fall 2003 brochure.

Reykjavik Helsinki* London
Copenhagen Amsterdam Glasgow
Oslo Paris Edinburgh
Stockholm Frankfurt

*Includes SAS codeshare flight from Stockholm.

**ICELANDAIR
Holidays**




**Figure 7: Iceland, Icelandair Holidays. . Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler
July/Aug 2003: 28.**

www.spain.info

SPAIN MARKS

If you love art and culture, come to Madrid. Here, Velázquez, Goya and El Greco sit side by side in the Prado, which along with the Thyssen-Bornemisza foundation and the Reina Sofia, have made Madrid the world's art capital. Close by are unique places such as the Escorial Monastery and the Aranjuez Palaces. Madrid has preserved the spirit of Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Calderón in every square and on every street corner. Come and experience their genius.

Be marked by www.spain.info

Velázquez's "Meninas", El Prado Museum, Madrid

TOURIST OFFICES OF SPAIN

Water Tower Place, suite 915 East 845, North Michigan Ave. Chicago, ILL. 60-611 Tel. 1.312.642.1992 Fax: 1.312.642.9817 e-mail: chicago@tourspain.es
 8383 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 960 Beverly Hills, Cal 90211 Tel: 1.323.658.7188 Fax: 1.323.658.1061 e-mail: losangeles@tourspain.es
 1895 Brickell Avenue, Suite 1130 Miami, Florida 33131 Tel: 1.305.358.1992 Fax: 1.305.358.8223 e-mail: miami@tourspain.es
 666, Fifth Avenue - 35th floor New York, NY 10103 Tel: 1.212.265.8822 Fax: 1.212.265.8864 e-mail: nuevayork@tourspain.es

Figure 8: Spain Marks. (State-sponsored: www.spaininfo.com) Advertisement.

National Geographic Traveler May/June 2004: 21.

see

the unseen. You have to go to know.



When wishes are fulfilled, when whims are anticipated, when gratuities are gratis, when every detail is included, you are at luxury's zenith. Join us there and greet the world's most desirable ports from your suite's private veranda. Join us and delight in truly inspired cuisine. Join us and experience why Silversea is consistently voted World's Best by prestigious publications, travel associations and most notably, our pampered and treasured guests.

For reservations, a complimentary brochure or information about the flexible freedom of our Personalized Cruising and Reassurance Program, consult your travel professional, visit silversea.com or call **877.724.4318**.



SILVERSEA

Above and Beyond All Expectations™

VOTED WORLD'S BEST SMALL SHIP CRUISE LINE
Condé Nast Traveler 7 Consecutive Years Travel + Leisure 4 Years Robb Report 3 Consecutive Years

Figure 9: Cruise. Silverseas. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure July 2003: 62.

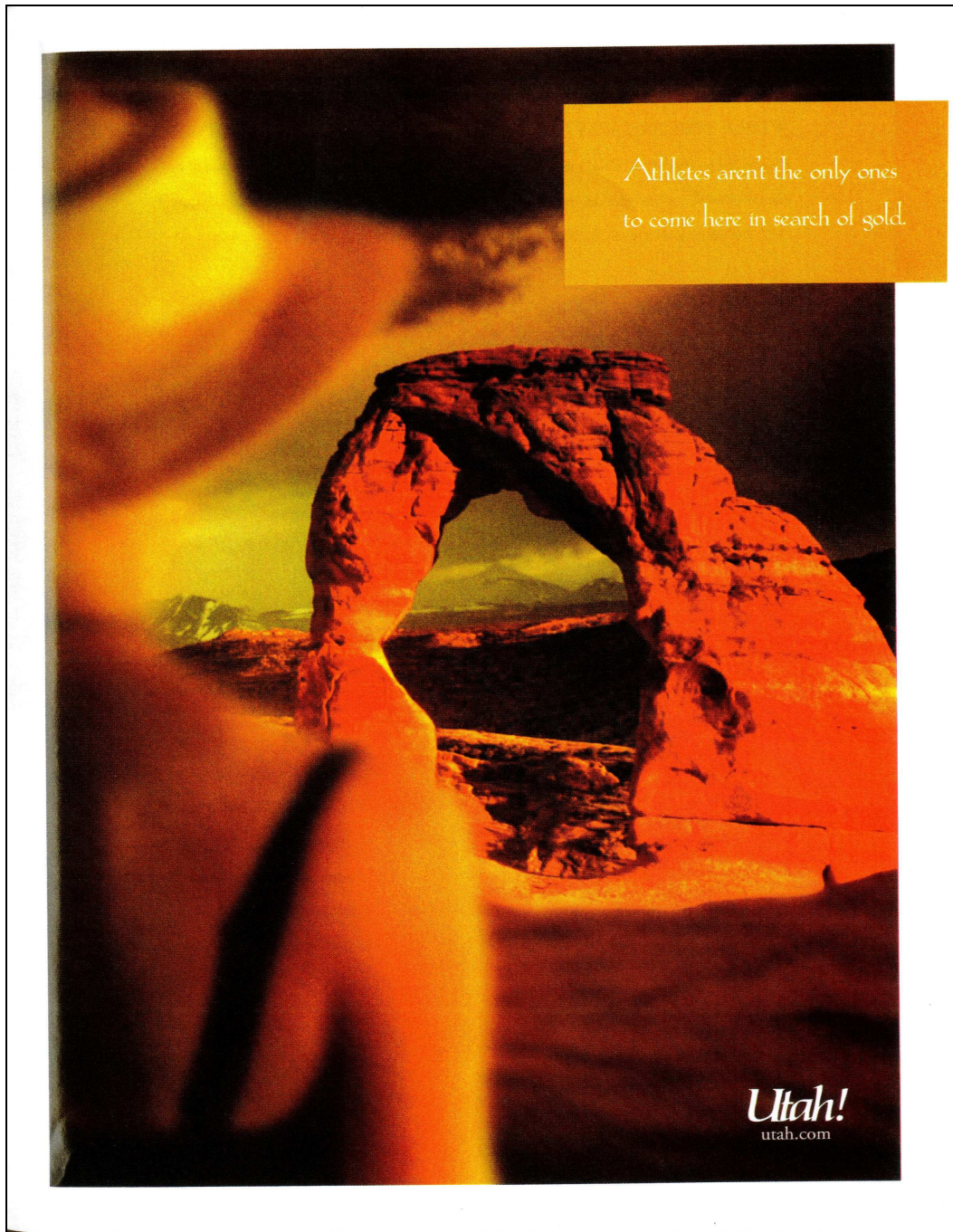


Figure 10: Utah. Advertisement. (State-sponsored.) Condé Nast Traveler Sept. 2003:199.

weekend at Park Hyatt® Paris: \$1,300
(seeing paris in your french silk pajamas: priceless)

Why not turn your next weekend into a mini vacation? MasterCard® is accepted everywhere from local museums to exotic locales. And to find out how you can earn extra nights at Hyatt or other great hotels, go to mastercard.com. there are some things money can't buy, for everything else there's MasterCard.™

© 2004 MasterCard International Incorporated. Park Hyatt is a registered trademark of Hyatt Corporation.

Figure 11: MasterCard. Park Hyatt Paris. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Dec 2004: 81.

All we could improve upon was the price



As you relax in luxurious surroundings enjoying exceptional service, it's easy to forget that InterContinental hotels are in some of the best locations around the world. When you book a city centre break or a beach holiday at one of our beautiful resorts, you can take advantage of our summer offer. You'll benefit from attractive bed & breakfast prices and late check-out times. **We know what it takes.™**

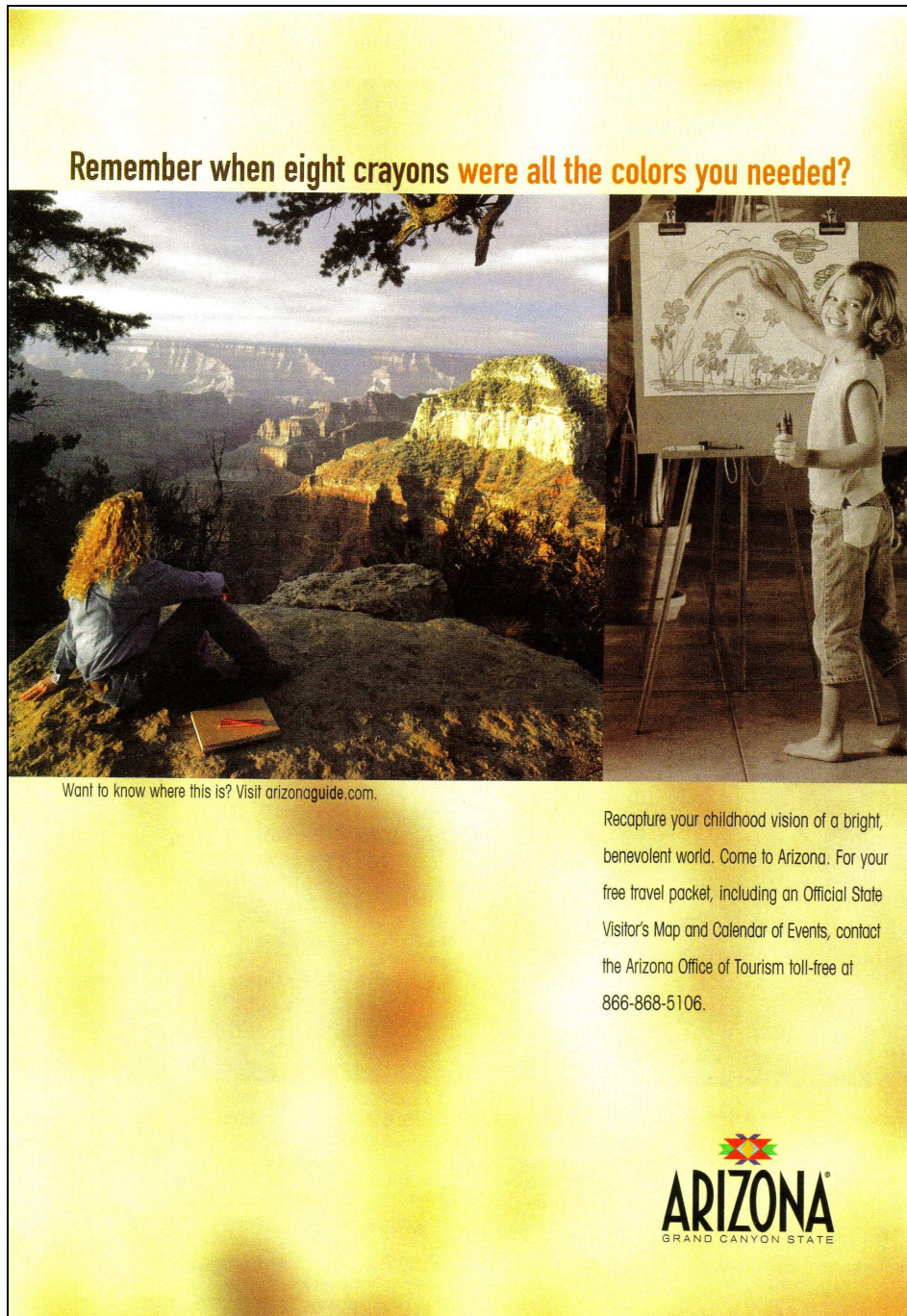
Call or go online to check availability
1-800 IC HOTELS
www.intercontinental.com/condenast



INTERCONTINENTAL
HOTELS & RESORTS


Figure 12: InterContinental. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure May 2004: 87.

Remember when eight crayons were all the colors you needed?



Want to know where this is? Visit arizonaguide.com.

Recapture your childhood vision of a bright, benevolent world. Come to Arizona. For your free travel packet, including an Official State Visitor's Map and Calendar of Events, contact the Arizona Office of Tourism toll-free at 866-868-5106.



ARIZONA
GRAND CANYON STATE

Figure 13: Arizona Grand Canyon State. Advertisement. (State-sponsored.) Condé Nast Traveler Nov. 2004: 233


In these ads, the female traveler, while still visible to the “gaze” of the viewer, was also able to view surroundings from the background, as though *not* being watched herself. This finding further supports Urry’s (2002) notion of increasing emphasis on the “romantic gaze”, to which he attributed a sense of solitude, and ever-more magnificent scenery. The “female gaze” was more apparent in destination ads – for example, Arizona (Grand Canyon), Utah and Iceland. (As will be discussed shortly, ads such as these also particularly appealed to the focus group participants.) One notable difference in the newly so-called female gaze from those indicating an alleged male gaze was that, while the gazing female may not be visible to that which she is observing, she herself is still visible in these ads to what a number of scholars have argued to be the male gaze of the camera (e.g. Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; Urry, 1990; Pritchard, 2001; Mulvey, 1989; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998).

4.2.4.4 Facial Expressions

In the latter period the women’s faces were frequently not fully visible (28.4%, versus 18.4% in 1989-90, and of 70% statistical significance). This imagery could create two quite differing impressions, depending on the ad. Sometimes, the female subject’s face seemed “irrelevant” because the ad clearly emphasized other parts of her body, or jewelry (- for example, the *Bellagio* ad shown in Figure 14).

*Of the select few hotels
that boast Five Diamonds,
we're the only resort
that can also deal
hearts, clubs and spades.*

Bellagio is the first and only resort casino to have achieved the highly coveted AAA Five Diamond rating. So, for those who wish to bask in the world's finest luxury accommodations, dine in establishments like the Five Diamond Award-winning Picasso, see "O" by Cirque du Soleil and revel at thrilling games of chance, there is but one destination.



BELLAGIO
LAS VEGAS
877.967.9777 or bellagio.com

Five Diamond Award

Figure 14: Bellagio Hotel Las Vegas. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler June 2003:

85.

Conversely, however, in a number of the ads where either the woman was actively engaged in an athletic activity (e.g. Honduras ad, in Figure 5 on page 139), or participating in her own “female gaze” (e.g. Utah ad, in Figure 10 on page 145), her face also seemed irrelevant, and the lack of focus on it a seemingly “progressive” trait worth appreciating.

More female subjects were shown smiling in 2003-04 than in 1989-90 (recently 40%, versus 23.7% in 1989-90 ads, of 80% statistical significance). Williamson (1978), Goffman (1979), Pritchard and Morgan (2001) and Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000) have argued that women are more obliged to look pleased and to smile than are male subjects. Foucault (1978, 1980) also suggested that the less powerful are more obliged to present themselves as acquiescent. Only in two ads in the more recent period which were both for *THEhotel* (*Condé Nast Traveler* Jan. 2004, p.15; and *Condé Nast Traveler* Sept. 2004, p.32), female subjects were depicted with cold, even haughty expressions, as though appraising the viewer for worthiness. There was a slight increase in the latter period of female subjects looking at the camera in what could be interpreted as a “sexually suggestive way” (see ads for *Mirage* “*Explore*” (Figure 27 on page 211) and the *Cayman Islands* (Figure 36 on page 259)), although at 3.5%, this still seems relatively insignificant, and was not deemed statistically significant.

4.2.4.5 No Longer All White

A further change has taken place in recent years with regard to the ad subject’s race. In 1989-90, all female subjects found in travel ads were white. By 2003-2004, 10% of subjects were non-white, with black women most typically representing the larger proportion. This

change was particularly prevalent in ads for Caribbean islands such as the British Virgin Islands and Barbados, but also found in singular ads featuring the Grand Canyon, similar to the one displayed above featuring a white female, from a series sponsored by Arizona Tourism (Figure 13 on page 148), and for Renaissance Hotels (*Condé Nast Traveler*, November 2004, p.61).

Another related trend in the contemporary period was the tendency on the part of some advertisers to show women with some local (i.e. aboriginal) population features. One example included a female subject for a Hawaii ad with Polynesian facial features and a flower behind her ear, but engaged in vacation activities, such as fishing, and watersports (Hawaii (state-sponsored), advertisement, *Travel+Leisure*, Aug. 2004, pp.207-209). Others for India and New Zealand are visible below.

One complication with the inclusion of these ads was some uncertainty as to whether the models were intended to be tourists, or whether they were intended, even if simultaneously, to appeal to a “male gaze” as “local girlfriends”. However, since there was no empirical evidence to indicate they were not tourists, I applied the same criteria to these female subjects as I did to all of the others, including them in my sample as female tourists.

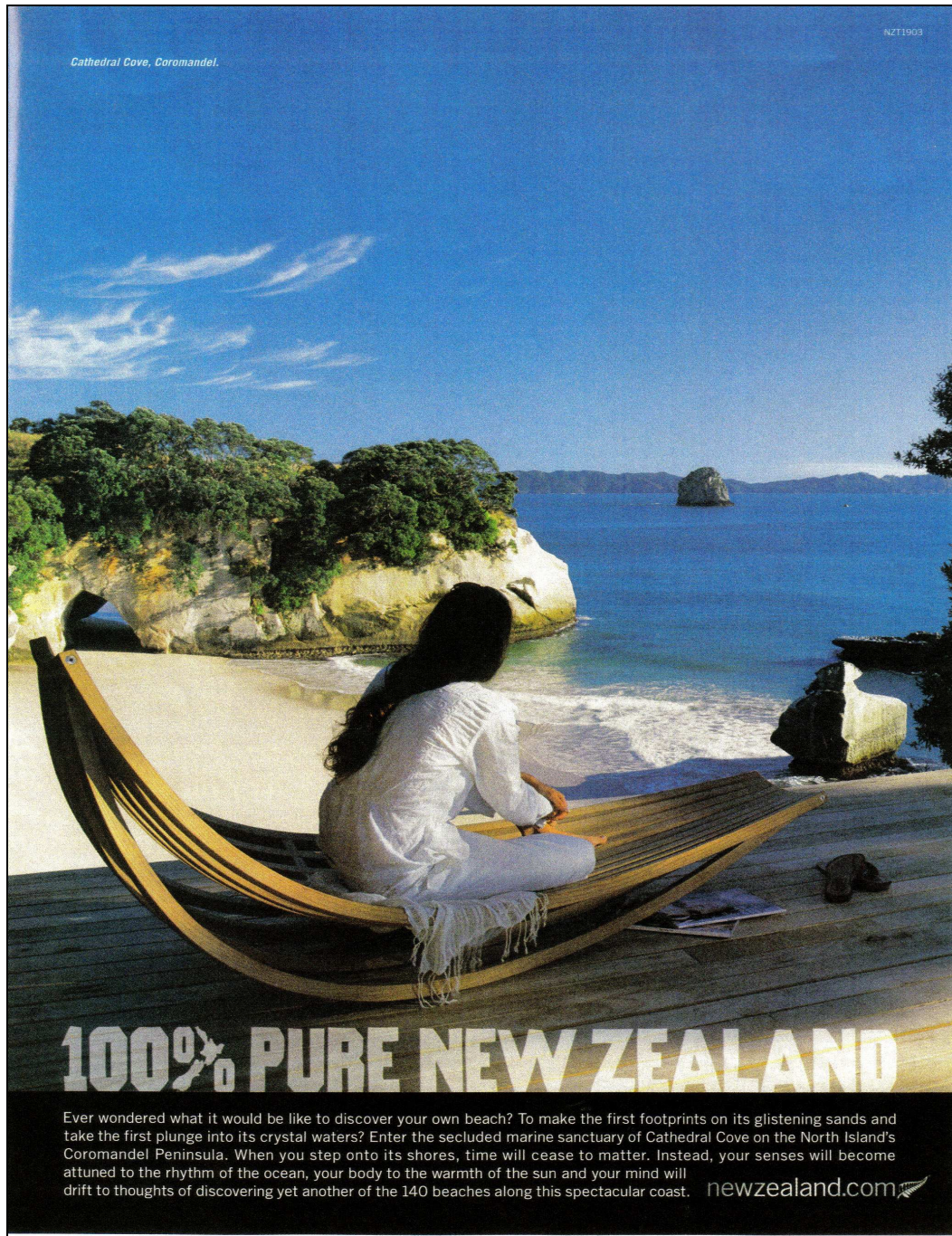


Figure 15: New Zealand. Advertisement. (State-sponsored.) Condé Nast Traveler

Nov.2004: 253



Figure 16: India. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Nov. 2003: 115.

There was some evidence to support the presence of neocolonial signifiers in my sample of travel advertisements (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 194; Richter, 1994; Chambers, 2000) - for example, in destination-oriented ads for former British colonies, such as Bermuda (e.g. British-styled uniformed guards, polo wear, ponies and similarly styled flag). An alternative interpretation may be that such an ad as the one depicted in Figure 17 on page 156 (*Bermuda*) below simply conveys signifiers of local heritage.

4.2.4.6 Ad Backdrop Changes

Beyond the more literal portrayals of female travelers themselves, there were some striking changes to the backdrops and settings of various ads during my two periods of comparison (as outlined in Appendix F, and in Table 5 on page 128). Perhaps in reflection of the greater proportion of hotel advertisers in the more current period, almost 10% of the current ads were set in private rooms or terraces. Beachfront settings dropped from 37% in 1989-90, to only 20% in 2003-04 which was statistically significant, although resort pools as a setting remained stable at approximately 10% for both.

In addition, there was a far more pronounced tendency to use nature-oriented settings in the latter period ads, perhaps in response to market research regarding this as a preference of tourists (Pritchard and Havitz, 2005). Nature-oriented backdrops doubled from a previous 10% in 1989-90, to 20% in 2003-04 (only 70% statistically significant), while cultural settings have greatly diminished as backdrops, from almost 16%, now down to 3%, this latter difference being 95% statistically significant. Examples of nature-oriented backdrops categorized in this manner and displayed above include fjord vistas (e.g. *Silverseas*, in Figure 9 on page 145), the *Grand Canyon* (e.g. *Arizona*, in Figure 13 on page 148), and expansive ocean views (e.g. *Expedia.com*, shown in Figure 18 below).

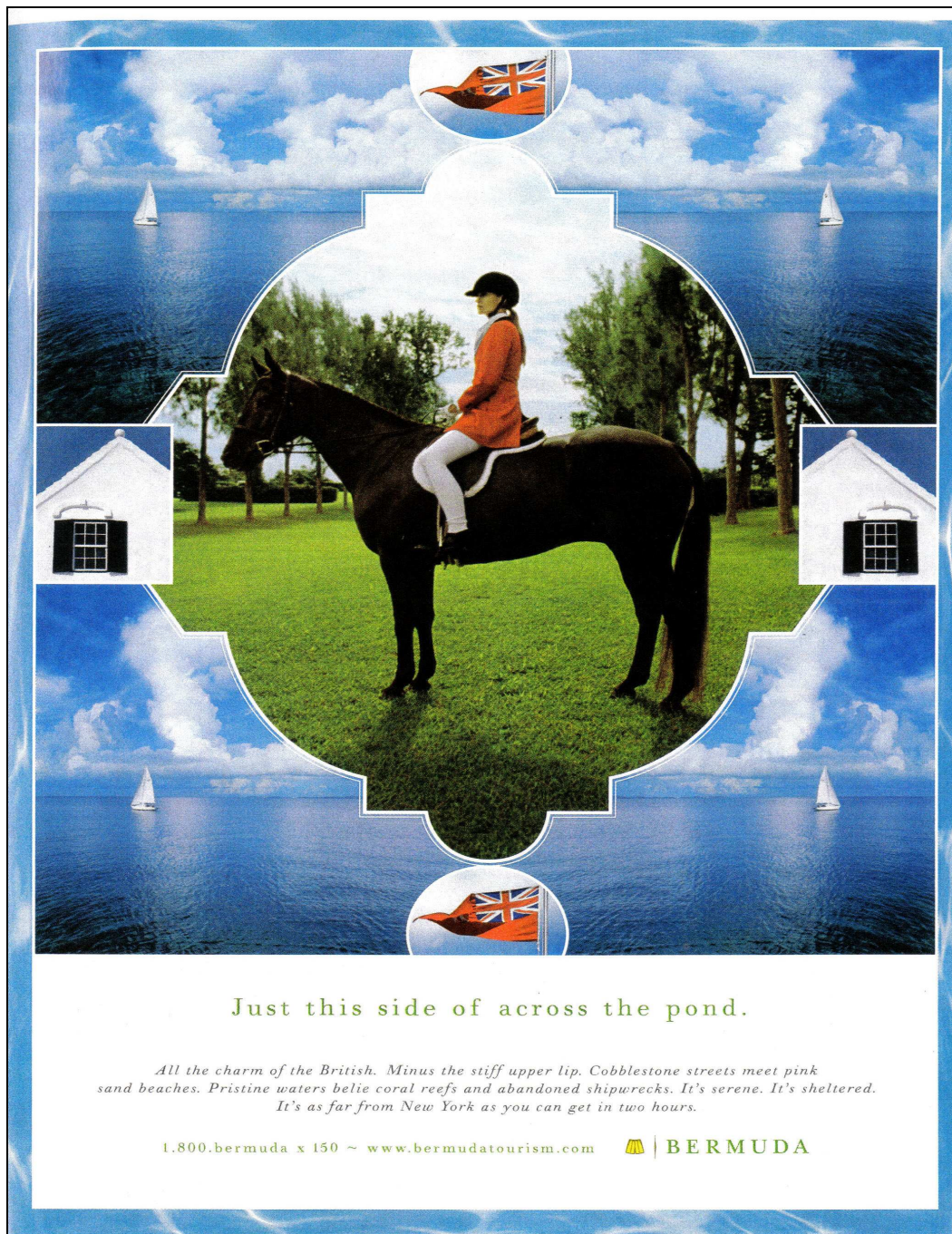


Figure 17: Bermuda (woman on polo pony). Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Jan./Feb. 2004: 9.



Figure 18: Expedia.com. Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Sept 2004: 4.

Another recent trend was to show subjects at home, either preparing for or daydreaming about their trip (e.g. TiVo: Figure 19; Queen Mary 2: Figure 20), or in the case of several

Celebrity Cruises ads, wistfully reminiscing about how great their vacation was. This recently emerging image in female-featuring travel ads may be paraphrased as, “I’m a regular person *just like you*.” (This trend may bear some relationship to Crang’s (1998: 7) noting that the home is the predominant arena in which consumption takes place, arguing that most geographic theories, by focusing on ‘production’, leave the traditionally feminine domestic sphere dependent upon the male-dominated economy.)

4.2.4.7 “Placelessness”

The implications of globalization were apparent in this research, extending well beyond the distribution and circulation of the travel magazines used for data. As a geographer, I was particularly curious about how and in what context specific locations would be portrayed in the data – i.e., what if any specific characterizations and/or portrayals would be discernible. Although Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine (2004: 9) argued that place is becoming increasingly important in an economy where image is everything – a claim supported by McDowell (1997) and Yeung (1998), the examination of these female-featuring travel ads, to the contrary, often conveyed a sense of placelessness in tourism. To a large degree, the ads used as data for this study frequently promoted a generic replicable experience that could be had in various far-flung parts of the world – simply punctuated by a high level of aesthetics, luxury and service. This was particularly visible in hotel/resort ads, but also in those ads selling some form of mobility – i.e., cruise ads, airlines, and train travel. Travel-related service ads as well, most often for credit cards, frequently made use of a nameless beach, *somewhere* sunny and warm (Figure 22 on page 163). As Urry (2002) argued, globalization

has been largely responsible for disseminating a standardized repertoire of consumer goods, images and lifestyles worldwide.

4.2.5 Continuing Emphasis on Luxury and Service as a Constant

Just as Urry (2002: 64) proclaimed service as a prominent theme in travel advertising, evidence of service-orientation in the travel ad sample remained fairly stable throughout both periods, although the services indicated in the earlier ad set were more inclined to be lower-end (e.g. AAA: Figure 4 on page 138), as opposed to the luxury-laden resort and cruise sponsored ads of the more contemporary period. Urry's (2002: 62, 91) related discussion of the commercialization of human feeling in travel services, including emphasis on the quality of interactions (Ibid.: 38, 63; see also Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; and Hall, 1994), was apparent to some extent in hotel/resort ads, and in the less numerous cruise ads.

Can't decide which is COOLER,
the FACT my TiVo® box
has all my SHOWS waiting
for me when I get HOME
from MY TRIP, or that I got it
for JUST \$99.

TiVo Online Scheduling lets me record programs from any Internet connection, anywhere.

My friends love looking at big digital photos of our travels on my TV screen. At least they say they do.

Only TiVo offers Season Pass™ recordings to get every episode of my favorite shows (minus the repeats).

don't forget to send a postcard

CAT MAN de

You've got a life. TiVo gets it.™

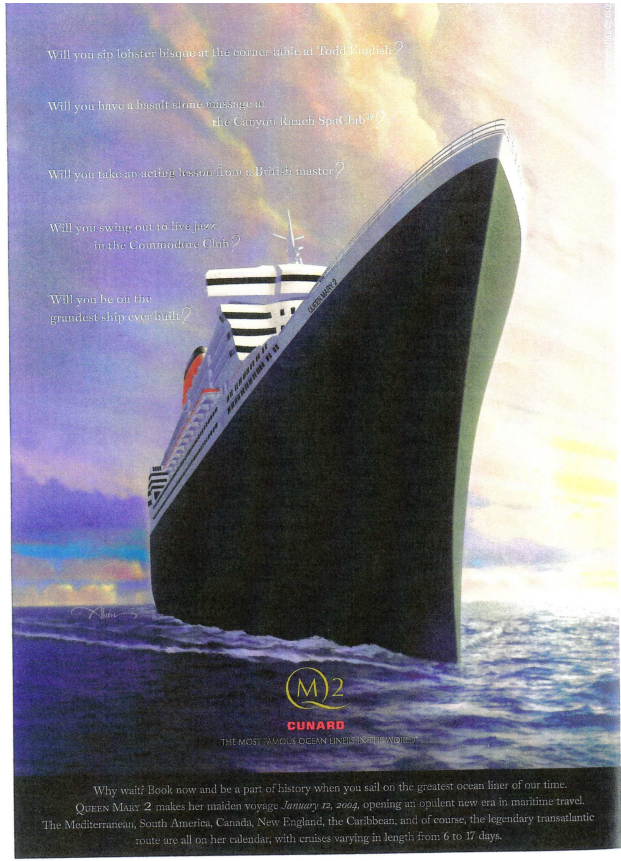
SAVE \$100 ON THE TiVo® BOX.

Only TiVo offers the easiest way ever to get the entertainment you care about. Find out why - get the TiVo® box at your nearest Best Buy, Circuit City, or other electronics retailers today for just \$99*. Then put the one-and-only amazing TiVo® service to work for just \$12.95** a month. For more info visit tivo.com.

* MSRP of 40" TiVo DVR after \$100 mail-in rebate. DIRECTV products ineligible. Offer valid from 10/11/04-10/30/04. Actual recording capacity may vary. ** Subscription to TiVo service required and sold separately. Service, terms and conditions subject to change without notice. Access to phone jack required. TiVo not available. See tivo.com for full terms and conditions. © 2004 TiVo Inc. TiVo and TiVo logo are registered trademarks of TiVo Inc. Season Pass, What's so Cool About TiVo are trademarks of TiVo Inc.

Now Playing on TiVo		
Survivor (3)	Thu	10/14
Road Trip	Tue	10/12
The Out-of-Towners	Sun	10/10
Mediterraneo	Sun	10/10
Arrested Development (4)	Sun	10/10
Forget Paris	Sat	10/9
The Blue Lagoon	Sat	10/9

Figure 19: TiVo. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Oct 2004: 61-64.



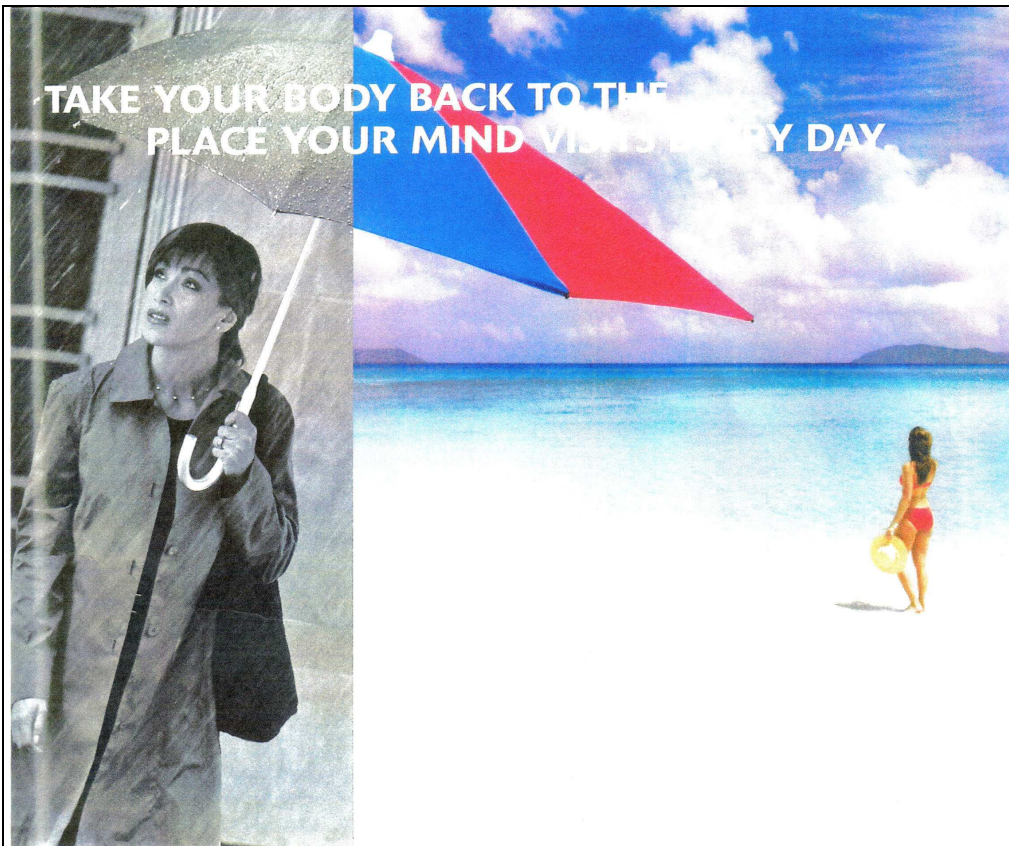
Start your trip by calling your travel agent or 1.800.7.CUNARD or visit www.cunard.com

CANYON RANCH SPA CLUB DANIEL BOULUD CHANEL WEDGWOOD

Figure 20: Queen Mary 2 Cruise Ship, Cunard Line. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Dec 2003:173-4.



Figure 21: Celebrity Cruises (“Once I was a Queen.”). Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Nov 2003: 26-7.



TAKE YOUR BODY BACK TO THE PLACE YOUR MIND VISITS EVERY DAY

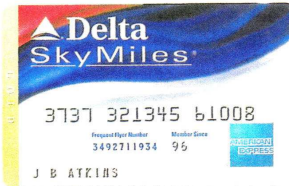
The Gold Delta SkyMiles® Credit Card from American Express

can get you back on vacation fast. Because you can earn double miles at supermarkets, drugstores, gas stations, home improvement stores, the U.S. Postal Service, as well as on wireless phone bills and Delta purchases.

Before long, you'll feel like a whole new person.

Earn up to 10,000 bonus miles with your first purchase.

Call 1 800-SKYMILES to apply.



Your next vacation is closer than you think.

10,000 bonus SkyMiles will be awarded upon first purchase unless you are upgrading from a classic Delta SkyMiles Credit Card in which case 5,000 bonus SkyMiles will be awarded. All other Double Miles offer applies at qualifying stand-alone supermarkets, drugstores, gas stations, home improvement and hardware stores, the U.S. Postal Service and on Delta purchases. In each year of Cardmembership, your points are limited to \$60,000 of eligible spending (\$100,000 for Gold Delta SkyMiles Credit Cardmembers, unlimited for Platinum Delta SkyMiles Credit Cardmembers) not including bonuses. Bonus miles will be posted to your Delta SkyMiles account 8 to 12 weeks after the end of each month. All standard Delta SkyMiles program rules and conditions apply. © 2004 American Express.

Figure 22: American Express Delta SkyMiles. Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Mar. 2003: 37.

2004
 TRAVELER
 READERS
 CHOICE
 WORLD'S BEST LARGE-SHIP CRUISE LINE
 8 YEARS IN A ROW

Look around you, the difference is Crystal clear.

Relax. Our ships offer more space per guest. More room to breathe, to roam the endless Promenade deck, to savor the cuisines of Nobu and Plero Selvaggio, to expand the mind in our Creative Learning Institute. More room to appreciate the qualities that prompted readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* and *Travel + Leisure* to award us 'World's Best Large-Ship Cruise Line' eight years in a row. Explore the difference for as little as \$1,495*.

For the luxury you deserve, please call 1 800 960 7700.


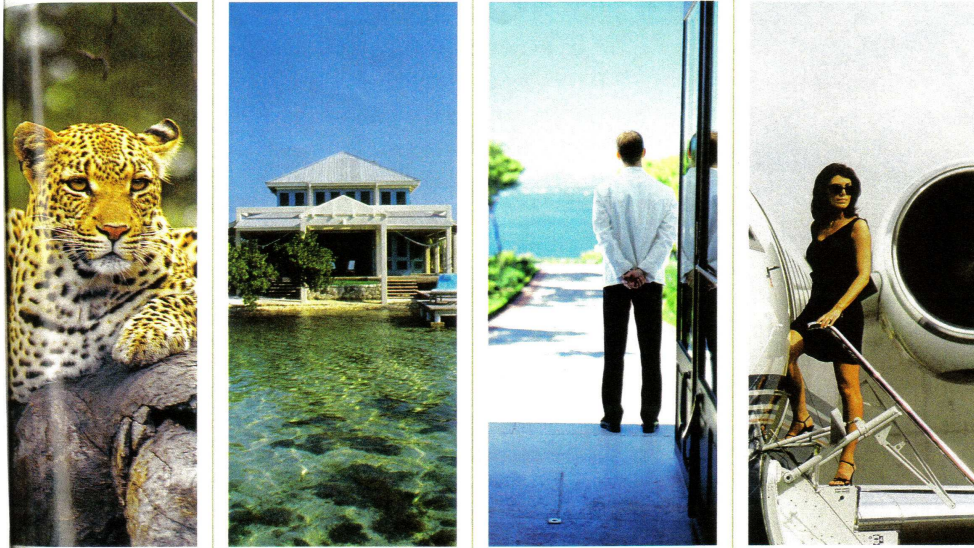
CRYSTAL  CRUISES

Figure 23: Crystal Cruises. Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Nov/Dec

2004: 73.

A&K
Abercrombie & Kent



SAFARIS, TOURS & CRUISES • DESTINATION CLUBS • CONCIERGE VILLAS • JETS • TOWNE CLUBS

Welcome to the Travel Revolution.

You are about to discover a truly unconventional, reinvented paradigm of luxury travel and leisure experiences that are revolutionizing the way discerning travelers think about worldwide travel, second-home ownership and private jets. This convergence of extraordinary Abercrombie & Kent travel companies is like nothing you have ever seen. Explore Abercrombie & Kent Safaris, Tours & Cruises, Destination Clubs, Concierge Villas, Jets and Towne Clubs and you'll find truly unparalleled amenities, experiences and services, all distinguished by the uncompromising quality of A&K.

IT TRULY IS "SIMPLY THE BEST WAY TO TRAVEL."

1-800-230-9310 WWW.AKDESTINATIONS.COM
or contact your local travel professional

Figure 24: Travel services. Abercrombie and Kent. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler July 2004: 65.

Signifiers of luxury and/or a high level of service (e.g. a uniformed service person seemingly going beyond the call of duty; a silver breakfast tray with a flower; and so forth) increased from 21% in 1989-90, to being present in 31.2% of all individual ads by 2003-04 (Figure 23 on page 164), although this was not found to be statistically significant. Expensive travel product consumption is considered to be a conveyor of taste (Urry, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 81). The related concept of Post-Fordism, with its emphasis on individually tailored vacations and insistent rejection of being treated as “one of the masses”, was actually apparent to me in only one ad (Abercrombie and Kent, Figure 24 on page 165, in the travel service category) in the latter period.

Despite mention in the literature regarding the gendering of the landscape (e.g. Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 198), the only noted example of this was the (frequently appearing) Celebrity Cruises Galapagos ad, where the lower half of the woman’s nude body literally blends into becoming the iguana’s tail.



Figure 25: Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos). Advertisement. National Geographic

I also found no indication in the ads of post-tourism – i.e., the self-conscious acknowledgment that one is a tourist (Urry, 2002: 90-1). Nor were there indications of the supposed interest in heritage and the ordinariness of other people’s lives in tourism destinations. I would, however, support Urry’s (2002: 84) discussion of self-actualization or “me-ness”, beyond the prevalence of spas, and having one’s body “worked on.” Examples would include ads for *Renaissance* (Figure 26, page 168); the *Grand Canyon* (Figure 13, page 148); and most of those I believed were indicative of a “female gaze” (e.g. *Utah* (Figure 13, 145); *Iceland* (Figure 7, page 142); *Silverseas* fjords (Figure 9, on page 144)), each of which depicted a female apparently in any apparently self-directed and engaged state of fulfillment, even bliss.



ALL OF OUR HOTELS
NONCONFORM
TO YOUR
HIGHEST STANDARDS.

Of course there are hair dryers
in every Renaissance® hotel room.
And luxurious bathrobes.
And complimentary
organic shampoos.
And the finest sheets on a bed
you'll never want to get out of.
But you may also
find a fishbowl
filled with goldfish.
And a hundred other
unexpected touches of style
and originality designed to
make your stay with us
unlike any other.
Because all Renaissance hotels
have one thing in common.
Each is unique.
UNIQUELY RENAISSANCE™


RENAISSANCE.
HOTELS & RESORTS

Renaissance participates
in Marriott Rewards®
For details, call 1-800-MARRIOTT
or visit Marriott.com.

Figure 26: Renaissance Hotels. Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Apr

2004: 11.

While there was no shortage of ads demonstrating the ambivalent “Bare your booty as empowerment”-versus-“the gratuitous display of female flesh” tropes, and the ads used in my study featured women without a contextualizing presence of males, I found no signifiers of young women’s supposed preoccupations with marrying (Dowd, 2005; Kingston, 1998). In fact, only three female ad subjects out of 141 ads in 2003-04 were wearing a visible wedding ring. (None were noted at all in the 1989-90 period.) Children also only appeared with the female travelers in three of the ads in the latter period (and only two in the former). Although a few ads in the more recent period portrayed a “girlfriends on vacation together” trope, these ads appeared at least to me to be more about female-bonding and having a great time with one’s friends, than about meeting males. Nor did any of the female subjects in either period bear any resemblance to the violent but voluptuous action heroine figures referred to in the brief literature review discussion on popular culture (e.g. Inness, 2004; Harris, 2003; Tung, 2004) in Section 2.5. More commonly, as mentioned, women were depicted in a passive, even coma-like state.

4.3 Input Obtained From Creative Agencies

As explained in Section 3.5, with one notable exception, I was unable to interview appropriate creative agency personnel. (A list of attempted contacts by date, with the outcomes, is in Appendix B). The one executive who did generously agree to be interviewed for my study added valuable data, which further reinforced some of my conclusions in Chapter 7. Information obtained in this interview is summarized below.

The interview was conducted by telephone on October 19, 2005, with Trevor Nardini, who is Vice-President Management Supervisor for Arnold Worldwide, a large international creative agency responsible for seven *Celebrity Cruises* ads of the 141 individual female-featuring travel ads used in my study, from the period of 2003-04. (There were no *Celebrity Cruises* ads in the 1989-90 samples of ads featuring solely female travelers: all those noted for that period featured couples.) Mr. Nardini kindly granted permission to be fully quoted in my study. I contacted Arnold Worldwide with the intent of discussing two ads in particular since these had appeared during 2003-04 with sufficient frequency to be included in the sample for my focus group.

The questions I planned to ask Mr. Nardini are listed below.

I. Questions regarding each specific ad:

1. Please specify the demographic market that this specific ad was intentionally aimed toward, in terms of the following (- as you consider relevant):
 - i. Gender
 - ii. Age group
 - iii. Income bracket
 - iv. Level of education
 - v. Marital status, if relevant
 - vi. Other relevant psychographic variables related to the targeted consumer audience to be kept in mind (e.g., personality type, motives, behavioral characteristics, and so forth).
2. With the intention of appealing to such a market, what key features did you choose to emphasize?
 - i. How are these manifested in this particular ad? (To rephrase the question for the sake of greater clarity: Would you kindly highlight some (e.g. 4 – 5) of the

very deliberate features included in this particular ad, intended to appeal to the particular consumer group(s) targeted?)

- ii. If applicable: How would this have differed for a predominantly male (/female) audience?

As applicable:

3. How did you determine to use this particular travel context (i.e. destination, landscape type, other travel signifiers such as _____) as the backdrop in this ad?
4. What sorts of instructions/parameters would you be given before creating an ad such as this one by _____ [the advertising client] and/or your own supervisor?
5. How are such points of appeal predetermined? What types of market research were conducted? (i.e., How does an ad creator decide what this targeted audience was supposed to like?)
6. Were any advertising conversion studies conducted? What, if any, feedback did you receive regarding this particular ad's success?
7. Are there any particular questions you would like addressed to the women in my focus group regarding this particular ad?

II. Broader-ranging Questions

8. How would someone in your industry effectively keep his/her ideas current and sufficiently compatible with popular culture – i.e., in terms of what is currently most likely to attract consumers to particular types of products?
9. Has there been an increase in demand over the past 10 or so years for you to design more female-oriented ads, or not perceptibly so? Please comment.
10. How, if at all, is your approach to ad design affected by natural catastrophes and terrorist acts (e.g., SARS, the Tsunami, 9/11)?

The first Celebrity Cruise ad (see Figure 25, page 166) was for a cruise going to the Galapagos Islands. It appeared eight times during 2003-04 in the three travel magazines used

for this study. The ad showed, on one half, a woman enjoying a professional massage; the other half of the ad showed what would otherwise be the lower half of the woman's body in the form of an iguana's tail, with a gecko on top of it as well as another iguana's head. The caption reads, "Where the unspoiled meets the spoiled."

The second ad (see Figure 21, page 162), which I had found striking for its portrayal of a very "average"-looking woman, showed her back at home on a park bench having looked up from her book, wistfully recalling her vacation on a Celebrity Cruise. The caption reads, "Not so long ago, I was a Queen." It appeared twice in the 2003-04 data, but was included in my focus group sample of ads because it was still appearing during October 2005, at the time of my focus groups.

Mr. Nardini was forthcoming to the extent that he volunteered most of the information I required without my raising the pre-planned series of questions. I paraphrased his responses. Quotation marks indicate his exact words.

Each of the two Celebrity Cruise ads noted above was intended to appeal "equally to both men and women, but more to women." The ads were believed to be appealing to former "cruisers", likely between the ages of 35 to 54, with an income of about \$75,000 (U.S.). People in this market were believed to be married with their own homes and had, as a minimum level of education, a Bachelor's degree. They were further believed to be "socially active, interested in cultures and informed". Mr. Nardini estimated that the majority of passengers were couples (83%), about 12% were single women, and "probably" 5% single men. The points of appeal in the ads were determined by "going out and talking to people

who already love it.” “No exact metrics”, such as conversion studies (to measure the return on the ad, dollar earned to dollar spent), were available to determine either ad’s specific success, but Mr. Nardini noted that “awareness for the product” was found amongst people spoken to, particularly in the case of the Galapagos cruise, which was a fairly recent offering.

Early on in our conversation, Mr. Nardini stated that with cruises, *destination* is not a factor, “because they all go to the same places.” He pointed out that people normally ask “where?” before taking a trip, but that, “particularly with cruises, destination is not a differentiator”, with the exception of highly luxurious brands, since cruises otherwise go mostly to the same places. Luxury brands mentioned by name were *Radisson Seven Seas*; *Windstar*; *Seabourn*; and *Crystal*. He also mentioned that only the smaller ships of such luxury cruise lines could navigate the smaller harbors in some destinations. In reference to the Galapagos cruise ad, he detailed for me that Celebrity had recently purchased a ship which held a rare Galapagos license that was up for renewal, as only four to five commercial cruise ships are allowed in the vicinity. Since the cruise market is a “cluttered category”, sometimes price was the only differentiator. A cruise line needed to avoid price wars, and stand out in some other way; thus the Celebrity ad creative team opted to emphasize service, and more particularly, for the client to be left with a sense of feeling “over-serviced.” Mr. Nardini stated that Celebrity did indeed have the best service offering in its category. The cruise line’s name was thus accorded greater relevance in this ad campaign, in terms of projecting the image of “treating its clients famously”. The Celebrity ad with the wistful woman reminiscing, “Not so long ago I was a Queen” (Figure 21, page 162) was part of a series of six ads – three with female subjects, three with male – each similarly depicting an

“ordinary-looking” person longingly remembering the highly attentive service s/he received recently on a Celebrity Cruise, while performing mundane but routine tasks such as pumping one’s own gas, or buying groceries. Mr. Nardini said that, since real models in ads “are alienating” to the average consumer, the models in Celebrity ads looked like “real people”, further noting that “people taking cruises are basically Middle America.”

The strategy behind the Galapagos cruise ad was further outlined by Mr. Nardini as follows. Since 90% of the Galapagos Islands are a protected area and, again, only four to five commercial ships are allowed, it was a fortunate break for Celebrity when the opportunity came to acquire its ship, “Sunray”, with its Galapagos license coming up for renewal. To best market this new cruise offering, “We asked: ‘What does Galapagos have?’ The answers were ‘wildlife’ and ‘foliage’, but also ‘roughing it’. What needed to be addressed was that a cruise audience wants comfort. Thus, the Galapagos ad is intended to make a statement about a *brand*. The scenery and setting are very special and unique; yet you don’t have to sacrifice comfort for unique beauty or natural scenery: there is a perfect *fusion* of the best of these two worlds.... It was like a safe safari.”

With respect to women as a travel market, Mr. Nardini stated that “women in families take on a greater sense of responsibility for the family’s enjoyment” than do men, and “tend much more to internalize this responsibility.” When I asked whether there had been any increased demand to design more female-oriented ads, he replied that, yes, there had been in the past two years. Arnold, he explained, was “starting to shift”, noticing that “focusing on women should be very advantageous”. He noted that creative agencies are *starting to recognize*

increasingly that women play a more active role in travel plans than was previously recognized, particularly in terms of “developing a short list” for family or couple vacations of two or three options, the point at which other family members then become involved.

When asked if there was any information he may wish me to obtain from my focus groups regarding his ads, he requested more specific information regarding whether or not women actually were the principal travel planners for their households, since “this was just starting to be recognized” in the industry as a large possibility.

In response to how someone in his industry might keep his ideas current with popular culture and with what may be presently most likely to attract consumers to products, he stated that it was “a blend of primary and secondary resources” which included, for a fee, “Mintau and Roper reports and ‘CLIA’ site reports, originating from a travel industry association website with annual and bi-annual reports.”

On a reflexive note, I was struck both during and after my conversation with this very cordial man at how, despite his apparent good sense and knowledge, the majority of women in my focus groups did not actually care for the two Celebrity Cruise ads shown. I personally liked both ads, and found each certainly piqued my own consumer impulses. Designing ads with broad mass appeal would appear to be a complex line of work.

4.4 Summary/Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined my findings pertaining to the quantitative proportional representation of female travelers in travel magazine ads, the highlights of my content

analysis findings in such ads for the two selected periods, and the sole input I was able to obtain from creative agency personnel. My results indicate that both travel advertisements themselves, and particularly female-featuring travel ads, have increased substantially in volume over the 13-year period between my two sets of data. Unaccompanied women have proliferated in proportional representation in travel ads relative to other ad subjects, and were depicted more than twice as often as male travel subjects. This is congruent with information provided by the one creative agency representative who agreed to be interviewed, Mr. Nardini, who noted that the travel industry was “just beginning” to recognize female travelers as a potentially lucrative market. This input reveals a greater consciousness among advertisers of late that it may be highly advantageous to them to more effectively target female travel consumers.

My content analysis revealed that there were some proportional similarities in how women were portrayed across the two periods, and also some paradoxes in the latter period. While unaccompanied women appear with greater frequency more recently in travel related ads, little has changed in terms of the frequency with which they are shown exposing a large amount of flesh. There appeared to be a greater emphasis on subjects’ cleavage being made more prominent in the latter period’s ads. Ads from the more recent period also showed a strong tendency to depict women as passive and/or in a lowered state of consciousness, although any difference between the latter and former periods in this regard was not deemed statistically significant. An interesting trend in the latter period was the advent of “the female gaze”, whereby the female subject was presented as more actively engaged in her environment, rather than merely the passive subject of the camera lens. Women were also

176

portrayed more actively in the more recent ad set, this difference having a 90% rate of statistical significance. Overall, test results for conventional statistical significance with respect to content analysis observations over the two periods were mixed, although lower probability tests (i.e., 80% and 70%) revealed greater statistical significance. However, it has been noted that these data are intended to be more descriptive than statistically significant.

These findings shall be integrated and discussed further in Chapter 6 with those in the upcoming chapter on participant-related findings.

Chapter 5

PARTICIPANT-RELATED RESULTS

Focus group discussions, workbooks and the preliminary questionnaire provided relevant information on women's travel motivations and specific travel preferences, including vacation activities and preferred settings or backdrops. All participant-related findings from the questionnaire results, the focus group worksheets and the focus group discussions have been integrated into this chapter. The first half of this chapter highlights findings gathered from participants' written records, both on their preliminary questionnaires, as well as on their focus group worksheets. The second half of the chapter outlines information obtained in the three focus group discussions. Information obtained from focus group discussions was compatible with input obtained from workbooks and questionnaires, the main difference being that the written work provided greater richness of detail, as indicated in quotes included later in the chapter. Results presented in this chapter are discussed and synthesized with other results in Chapter 6.

5.1 Demographic Information

Thirty-eight participants completed the preliminary questionnaire (found in Appendix D). Their age, income and education levels were superficially compatible with the magazine readership demographic data (Table 1 on page 82). Participant demographic data is summarized below in Table 7. Each participant is identified by her originally assigned participant number.

Table 7: Participant Demographic Data

Participant #	Age	Income	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Amount spent on travel in past two years
2	30-39	\$35 000 – 50 000	College	S	Legal Assistant	\$2000-3000
3	45-49	\$100 000 +	College	M	Photographer	\$2000-3000
4	53	\$61 000 – 70 000	College	D	HR Consultant	\$2000-3000
5	45-49	\$60 000 -	College	S	Marketing	\$2000 - 3000
7	55-59	\$71 000 – 80 000	Masters	S	Writer / Editor	over \$6000
8	61	\$81 000 – 100 000	Nursing School	M	Registered Nurse	over \$6000
9	50-54	\$100 000 +	PhD	Separated	Research Scientist	\$4000 - 6000
10	59	\$60 000 -*	College	Separated	Medical Secretary	\$4000 - 6000
12	30 - 39	\$100 000 +	University	S	Project Management	over \$6000
14	50	\$60 000 +*	Masters	S	Marketing	over \$6000
16	55 - 59	\$60 000 – 70 000	Nursing Diploma	S	Registered Nurse	\$3000 - 4000
18	58	\$35 000 – 50 000	Bachelor	S	University Administrator	\$4000 - 6000
19	23	\$70 000 – 80 000	Bachelor	S	Office Assistant	less than \$2000
20	68	\$100 000 +	Masters	D	Custody Evaluator - Mediator	over \$6000
21	40	\$100 000 +	Masters	Live with Partner	Teacher	\$4000 - 6000
22	20 - 29	\$100 000 +	Bachelor	S	Special Event Administrator	over \$6000
23	59	\$60 000 -	Bachelor	Live with Partner	Advertising	\$2000 - 3000
24	36	\$100 000 +	Masters	S	Accountant	over \$6000
25	40	\$100 000 +	Bachelor	M	Self-employed	over \$6000
26	33	\$100 000	Masters	M	Director	\$2000 - 3000
27	51	\$35 000 – 50 000	Bachelor	D	Administrator	\$4000 - 6000

Participant #	Age	Income	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Amount spent on travel in past two years
28	25	\$35 000 – 50 000	Diploma	S	Sales	\$4000 - 6000
30	28	\$50 000 – 60 000	Bachelor	S	Registered Nurse	over \$6000
31	61	\$60 000 -	R.N. Diploma	D	Retired Nurse	over \$6000
32	30	\$100 000 +	Masters	Living with Partner	Communication Coordinator	over \$6000
33	51	\$100 000 +	Masters	D	Investment Strategist	Less than \$2000
35	38	\$70 000 – 80 000	Masters	S	Teacher	\$3000 - 4000
36	42	\$60 000 +	Masters	S	Teacher	over \$6000
37	42	\$35 000 - [part-time]	Masters	S	Technical Writer	over \$6000
38	38	\$100 000 +	Masters	M	Corporate Lawyer	\$4000 - 6000
39	42	\$51 000 – 60 000	Bachelor	Live with Partner	Travel writer, social worker	\$4000 - 6000
40	55 - 59	\$70 000 – 80 000	Bachelor	D	Former Director	over \$6000
41	56	\$60 000 +	Bachelor	M	Appraiser	over \$6000
42	63	\$100 000 +	Masters	M	Self employed consultant	over \$6000
43	55-59	\$35 000 -	Masters	M	Development Work	over \$6000
45	60	\$60 000 -	College	Separated	Administrative Assistant	over \$6000
46	51	\$100 000 +	Bachelor	M	Billing Analyst	\$4000 - 6000
47	50 - 54	\$61 000 – 70 000	BA	D	Teacher	over \$6000
Average	46	\$74 000	Most frequent mode: Masters	Most frequent mode: S		Most frequent mode: More than \$6000
Median	51	\$60 000				\$6000

Table 7b: Summary of Participant Demographic Data

AGE		EDUCATION		TRAVEL SPEND	
20 – 29	4	Diploma	1	Less than \$2000	2
30 – 39	7	College diploma	6	\$2000 - \$3000	5
40 – 49	7	Nursing diploma	2	\$3000 - \$4000	2
50 – 59	15	RN diploma	1	\$4000 - \$6000	10
60 – 69	5	University degree	13	More than \$6000	19
		Masters	14		
		PhD	1		
INCOME (\$)		MARITAL STATUS			
Less than 35 000	2	Single	15		
40 000 - 50 000	5	Separated	3		
50 000 - 60 000	1	Divorced	7		
Less than 60 000	6	Live with partner	4		
More than 60 000	6	Married	9		
70 000 - 80 000	4				
80 000 - 90 000	1				
More than 100 000	14				

Because of the personal nature of questions asked in Part III of the preliminary questionnaire (Appendix C), I provided respondents with the option of placing their answers within more ambiguous categories with respect to income and age (e.g. “Age bracket: 41-45” as opposed to exact age; “Income bracket: \$81,000 - 100,000” instead of exact figure). To determine averages, in the cases where only category ranges were checked off, I used the middle point of each category as an estimated figure (- in the example above, this being 43 years of age; and \$90,500 as annual income). Also in the interests of respecting privacy, quoted participants were identified by their assigned participant number, rather than by name.

The average age of my participants was 46 years old, and the median age was 51 years old. This result was highly compatible with the averaged median age published in magazine

demographics - 46 years old (Table 1, on page 82). Their income levels were also relatively compatible. The magazine readerships' available median incomes were \$78,000 (U.S.) (*National Geographic Traveler*, 2004 data) and \$102,354 (U.S.) (*Condé Nast Traveler*, 2005 data), and the average income of my participants was \$74,000, which in actuality may be presumed higher, as 14 participants had a household income of *over*, rather *than*, \$100,000. Similarly, levels of education were comparable: 15 participants had a Masters degree or a PhD, and 13 more had a Bachelor degree (totaling 74%); and nine had college diplomas. By comparison, over 72% of the magazines' readership was more generally reported to have obtained education ranging from some post-secondary through to a graduate degree. One may surmise from these data a predictable relationship between those who travel also having the socioeconomic means necessary to do so. While readership statistics on marital status were unavailable, among my own participants, fifteen were single, nine were married, four lived with a partner, seven women were divorced and three women were separated.

The questionnaire was administered to the full pool of 38 respondents, while questions on the focus group worksheet were administered to a total of 30 women from the original questionnaire sample who also participated in one of the three focus group sessions.

5.2 Information Obtained From Participants' Written Work

5.2.1 Questionnaire Results

Participants were asked on the questionnaire whether or not their marital status had any effect on their travel and, if so, to indicate how (Questionnaire #III.4).

Table 8: The Effect of Marital Status on Participant Travel (Questionnaire #IV)

Comment	# of participants who made comment
Single	
Travel mostly alone	1
Travel is more difficult	1
More receptive to romantic attention	1
Divorced	
More family oriented: would like destination for single parents	1
Divorce changed destination and type of travel.	1
Clusters of Similar Comments:	
Traveled more after becoming single	6
Travel more when romantically engaged	5
Travel destination and duration changed due to partner	3

Only 18 participants out of a possible 38 responded to this question. The more notable answers were that six of the women reported traveling more after becoming single again, while five said that they traveled more as a result of having a partner. Three women said their travel destinations and/or durations of trip were altered as a result of having a partner, but did not further specify.

5.2.1.1 Expressed Preferences Regarding Travel and Vacationing

Table 9: Motivating Factors for Travel (Questionnaire #II.1)

Sample Comments per Heading	Number of Related Participant Statements
DISCOVERY	26
Discover a new country	
Experience new culture	
Experience a new place	
See the world	
Meet new people	
New experiences	

Sample Comments per Heading	Number of Related Participant Statements
Daily change	
New sights	
New foods	
Different landscape	
REST AND/OR ESCAPE	18
Rest, relaxation	
Escape work and daily pressures	
Get away	
Escape daily routine	
To gain perspective on normal life	
Escape from stress	
Change from daily	
Re-energize	
Escape routine, boredom	
Escape winter	
PERSONAL FULFILLMENT	13
Intellectual stimulation	
Inner fulfillment	
Curiosity	
Personal Growth	
Able to tell stories	
Inner peace	
TIME WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY	10
Sharing experiences with family and friends	
Social interaction	
Time with mother	
Quality time with loved ones	
Reconnect with partner	
HOBBIES	9
Photography	
Theatre, opera	
Missions	
Adventure	
Seeing things from books	
Material for traveling	
Outdoor activity	
CULTURAL SITES	5
Explore cities, museums	
History	
Learn by seeing	
Exotic delicacies	

Table 9 displays the results to the question, “What are the most important factors which motivate you to travel?” Predominating answers included: a sense of discovery (26 participants); rest and/or escape from day-to-day pressures and routines (18 participants); personal fulfillment (13 participants); and time with friends and family (10 participants).

Table 10: Factors Reported to Most Strongly Influence Travel (Questionnaire #II.2)

Factor	Very Unimportant	Fairly Unimportant	Neutral	Fairly Important	Very Important	Total
1. Outdoor Setting	3	3	7	10	12	35
2. Rest & Relaxation	6	1	8	12	8	35
3. Sunbathing	13	7	7	8	1	36
4. Athletic / Sporting pursuits	11	4	9	7	4	35
5. Bonding with girlfriends	12	3	7	10	1	33
6. Being pampered and waited upon	14	5	10	2	4	35
7. Being physically worked on (spa treatments)	15	6	7	3	4	35
8. Spending quality time with your children	10	2	6	2	5	25
9. Spending quality time with your partner	4	2	6	9	8	29
10. Opportunity for sexual intimacy	8	5	6	7	6	32
11. Having attained significant financial success	10	5	10	3	4	32
12. Acquiring a greater sense of inner peace/serenity	2	2	4	12	14	34
13. Inner growth / spiritual input	4	5	4	8	13	34
14. A sense of bliss	2	1	13	7	11	34

Table 10 above outlines the of factors reported to influence travel, the more prominent of those listed being “acquiring a greater sense of peace/serenity” (26 respondents indicating this to be important); “inner growth/spiritual input” (21 respondents indicating this to be

important); being in an “outdoor setting” (22 respondents indicating this to be important); spending time with one’s partner (17 respondents indicating this to be important); and rest and relaxation (also 20 respondents indicating this to be important). Notably unimportant were “sunbathing”, “pampering”, “spa treatments”, and “having attained significant financial success”.

Table 11: Anticipated Activities When Traveling (Questionnaire #II.3)

Activity	Choice I	Choice II	Choice III	Choice IV	Choice V	Total
A. Relaxation	8	2	6		2	18
B. Athletic	1	1	4	3	2	11
C. Cultural Attractions	16	4	5	3	1	29
D. Outdoor scenery	4	12	2	3	2	23
E. Shopping		3	4	2	3	12
F. Service				4	1	5
G. Sleeping		1	1		3	5
H. Lying on the beach	1	1	1	2	2	7
I. Spa Treatments	1		1		1	3
J. Meditation	1		1			2
K. Bonding with friends	1			3	4	8
L. Romance	1	3	1	4	2	11
M. Time with children		3	1		2	6
Top Rated Activities						
1. Visiting cultural attractions			6. Bonding with girlfriends / female relatives			
2. Viewing outdoor scenery			7. Lying on the beach			
3. Relaxation			8. Quality time with children			
4. Shopping			9. Sleeping / Being waited upon			
5. Romantic time with partner			10. Spa Treatments			
6. Athletic pursuits			11. Meditation			

The most common activities participants indicated they looked forward to when traveling (Questionnaire #II.3), as outlined on Table 11, included:

- Cultural attractions (29)
- Outdoor scenery (23)
- Relaxation (18)

- Shopping (12)
- “Romantic time with partner” (11)

Table 12: Preferred Vacation Backdrops/Settings (Questionnaire #I.8)

Backdrop	Number of Participants
1. Urban setting with historic buildings	22
2. Markets – night, open-air	19
3. Beach/ocean front	17
4. Snow-covered mountains	11
5. Solitude in nature	11
6. A well-known ‘Wonder of the World’ (famous site)	10
7. Trail through woods	9
8. Lake setting	9
9. Food in unique/upscale dining setting	6
10. Cruise ship, boat	3
11. Archaeological sites	3
12. Tropical settings	3
13. Open meadows	2
14. Agriculture – wineries, farms, fishing	2
15. Hills	2
16. Festivals	2
17. Rural areas	1
18. Spiritual places	1
19. Highly attentive ‘personal’ service	0

Preferred vacation settings in ranked order, as indicated on Table 12 were:

1. Urban historical setting (22 participants)
2. Markets (night- or open air) (19 participants)
3. Beach or oceanfront setting (17 participants)
4. Natural settings, such as those involving “solitude” (11) or “snow-covered mountains” (11)

Table 13 contains the relatively brief information participants offered in questionnaire responses regarding their impressions as to how women were commonly portrayed in travel ads, prior to their participation in this study. Predominantly, participants noted that female subjects had model-like, frequently sexualized appearances that seemed more oriented toward a male audience. Also noted with relative frequency was that female travelers were often depicted as part of a couple.

Table 13: Previously noticed characteristics in travel ads featuring females, found off-putting (Questionnaire #I.6)

Specific comments offered on characteristics of noticed ads	Number of participants
Featuring of scantily-clad woman or women in bathing suits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g. Cuba ad: woman in bikini on beach • Beer ad on beach: husband stares at girl while his wife becomes angry • TV Caribbean ads: woman in bikini rises out of water • Club Med 	10
Usually feature women with men or in groups	6
Only portray young women	1
Only mention positive aspects of vacation	1

(Note: Only 14 participants responded to this question.)

Participants were asked again at the beginning of the focus group worksheet, for the purposes of cross-checking prior information, gaining more information, and ice-breaking, “Prior to participation in this study, did you have any particular impressions as to how female travelers are portrayed in popular media?” (Focus Group Worksheet #I.1) Their answers are tabulated below in Table 14.

Table 14: Prior Impressions of Females in Travel-related Ads (Focus Group Worksheet #I.1)

Portrayal	Total Percentage of Participants
Perfectly coiffed, glamorous	9 participants (34.6%)
Objects for male consumers, decorative, sexual	8 participants (31%)
Part of couple or family or group	8 participants (31%)
Young, fit	7 participants (27%)
Wants pampering, luxury	5 participants (19%)
Young single women, independent	3 participants (11.5%)
Stereotype of business woman	2 participants (7.7%)
Wealthy	2 participants (7.7%)
In a romantic setting	2 participants (7.7%)
As consumers	1 participant (4%)
Vulnerable	1 participant (4%)
Passive	1 participant (4%)
Inactive	1 participant (4%)
As athletes	1 participant (4%)
'Party people'	1 participant (4%)

Note: 26 out of 30 participants indicated previous impressions of female subjects featured in travel-related ads.

Sample quotes from participants regarding the portrayal of women in travel ads included the following. “Women in ads are under 35, slim, well-dressed” (Participant #4). “Mostly as decoration” (Participant #9). “I think women are portrayed as young sex symbols (e.g. in bikinis) rather than down-to-earth everyday women of all ages” ((Participant #8). “Party people – do not seem to be taken seriously” (Participant #41). “We are rarely shown on our own, and when we are it is usually bikini clad as an enticement to male consumers” (Participant #28). “I thought women were just used in ads to sell to men travelers” (Participant #3). “As needy (needing pampering, a rest, protection). As objects set in a place (hotel, on a chair or bed, in an artificial object – pool or plastic boat) rather than connected to a place” (Participant #7).

Participants were also given a list of adjective pairs, and asked to indicate by placing a point on a linear scale between the two words which of the two ways of portraying a female in a travel ad they believed they would find more compelling (Questionnaire #II.4).

Responses are ranked in Table 15.

Table 15: Compelling Portrayal of Females (Focus Group Worksheet #II.4)

“Which of the following ways of portraying females in travel ads do you believe you would find compelling?”

CATEGORY	Highest Ranked	2nd highest	3rd Highest
Ordinary – “normal-looking”	4	4	5
Casual - office attire	3	4	3
Active – Athletic	2	6	4
Bathing suit - Partially clothed	2	0	2
Friendly – approachable	16	5	5
Engaged with others	1	3	1
Meditative	0	1	1
Sexuality is not a factor	20	3	2
Receiving attention – Service	3	3	0
Youthful looking	0	0	0
Glamorous	1	0	0
Stylish – fashionable	0	0	0
Relaxing – Passive	2	1	2
Fully clothed	4	6	2
Aloof	1	1	0
Independent	4	4	0
Fun-loving	4	5	2
Sexually provocative	1	0	0
Alone	1	2	1
Closer to your own age	5	1	0
TOP RANKINGS			
Sexuality is not a factor	Voted #1 or #2 by 23 participants		
Friendly - Approachable	Voted #1 or #2 by 21 participants		
Fully Clothed	Voted #1 or #2 by 10 participants		
Fun-loving	Voted #1 or #2 by 9 participants		
Active-Athletic/Ordinary-“normal”-looking	Voted #1 or #2 by 8 participants each		

5.2.2 Information Obtained From Focus Group Worksheets

5.2.2.1 Women and Travel decision-making

Focus group participants were asked to what extent they would agree with a generalized assertion that women tend to make the bulk of travel decisions (Question #III.5). Out of 20 recorded participant responses, 60% (12 participants) said that women do, only 8% (2 participants) said men, and another 16% (4 participants) suggested it was equal. An additional 16% (4) specified that they were unsure. (The relationship of this to the literature will be discussed in Chapter 6.)

5.2.2.2 Focus Group Responses to the Sample of More Frequently Shown Ads

As outlined in Section 3.6.3.2, focus groups were shown a selection of the 20 most frequently appearing travel ads featuring female subjects shown during the period of 2003 – 2004, with the inclusion of four additional ads from the same period's sample pool which were still being run in October, 2005 in the same magazines, to help offset any influence of the time lag of 10 months from when the last ad in the data set may otherwise have been shown. (A list of the ads shown to the focus groups is in Table 2 on page 111.) Table 16 below indicates the ads about which focus group participants expressed the strongest reactions, in terms of likes and dislikes.

Table 16: Ads Eliciting Strongest Response (Focus Group Worksheet #II.B)

Advertisement	Figure/Page	Liked	Dis-liked	# of votes on this Ad
Amex - Delta Sky Miles	Figure 22/163	4	1	5
Bellagio	Figure 14/150	1	11	12
British Airways	N/A	5		5
Cayman Islands	Figure 30/220	2	3	5
Celebrity Cruises - Galapagos	Figure 25/166	1	4	5
Celebrity Cruises – “I once was a queen”	Figure 3/137	3	1	4
Crystal Cruises	Figure 23/164			0
Expedia.com	Figure 18/157	3	5	8
Hilton - Beach message	N/A	1	2	3
Holland America	N/A	1		1
Honduras	Figure 5/139	13		13
Intercontinental	Figure 12/147			0
Jamaica	Figure 29/213	1		1
Le Meridien	Figure 1/135	1	2	3
MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris	Figure 11/146	15	1	16
Mirage	Figure 27/211		10	10
Queen Mary 2	Figure 20/161	1	8	9
Renaissance – Painter	Figure 26/168	2		2
Renaissance - multi-identities	N/A	2		2
Singapore Airlines	N/A		3	3
Visa – Sleeping woman	Figure 2/136	1	1	2
Westin - Good Mom	N/A		1	1
Wyndham	Figure 28/212	1		1
Visa Marriott Resorts	Figure 2/136		1	1

112 votes on individual ads were noted. This figure may be divided by 3 focus groups, which would equal 37.3. This number further divided by 10 participants per focus group (on average) indicates that close to 4 ads were selected by each individual participant on average. This number accorded with their instructions to select two ads they particularly liked, and two ads they particularly disliked, for the particular distinction of detailing.

In response to being asked “Which one of the following responses would *best* describe your reaction to this ad?” (#I.6), participants reported that in the cases of 59.3% of the ads

they particularly liked, they tended to “project” themselves into being the ad’s subject. In 28% of the cases where participants liked an ad, they noted that they “identified” with the ad’s female subject. No ad reported as well liked by a participant was perceived as intended for a male audience.

Table 17: Perceived Gender of the Intended Audience (Focus Group Worksheet #IV.1)

“Do you believe this ad is directed toward females, males or either one?”

Advertisement	Figure/Page	i. Female	ii. Either	iii. Male	iv. Can't Say	No Answer
1. Delta Sky Miles	Figure 22/163	7	8	0	0	3
2. Bellagio	Figure 14/150	3	6	5	1	3
3. Bermuda	Figure 17/156	12	1	0	0	5
4. British Airways	N/A	5	8	0	1	4
5. Cayman Islands	Figure 30/220	1	11	2	0	4
6. Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos)	Figure 25/166	4	6	1	2	5
7. Celebrity Cruises (Once I was a Queen.)	Figure 3/137	12	1	0	0	5
8. Crystal Cruises	Figure 23/164	4	7	0	1	6
9. Expedia.ca	Figure 18/157	2	5	6	0	5
10. Hilton	N/A	6	5	0	0	7
11. Holland America	N/A	4	6	0	0	8
12. Honduras	Figure 5/139	3	8	0	0	7
13. InterContinental	Figure 12/147	0	8	1	1	8
14. Jamaica	Figure 29/213	2	8	0	0	8
15. Le Meridien	Figure 1/135	5	3	1	0	9
16. MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris	Figure 11/146	4	6	0	0	8
17. Mirage	Figure 27/211	0	2	7	1	8
18. Queen Mary 2	Figure 20/161	6	1	1	2	8
19. Renaissance (water colours painter)	Figure 26/168	6	3	1	0	8
20. Renaissance (multiple Identities)	N/A	5	5	0	0	8
21. Singapore Airlines	N/A	4	4	1	0	8
22. Visa (sleeping woman)	Figure 2/136	4	3	0	2	8
23. Westin	N/A	7	2	0	0	8
24. Wyndham	Figure 28/212	3	6	0	0	8

Table 17b: Summary of Perceived Gender of the Intended Audience Summary

Rankings	Votes
Top ads believed intended for a female audience	
1) 3. Bermuda; 7 Celebrity Cruises (...queen):	12
2) 1. Delta Sky Miles; 23. Westin:	7
3) 10. Hilton; 18. Queen Mary 2; 19. Renaissance (Painter):	6
Top ads believed intended for a male audience	
1) 17. Mirage	7
2) 9. Expedia.ca	6
3) 2. Bellagio	5
Top ads believed to appeal to either males or females	
1) 5. Cayman Islands	11
2) 1. Delta Sky Miles; 4. British Airways; 12. Honduras; 13. InterContinental; 14. Jamaica	8
3) 8. Crystal Cruises	7
Total number of valid votes	307
Proportion of ads believed to be for:	
Female Audience	41.7% (128)
Male Audience	9.45% (29)
Either Audience	44.3% (136)
Unsure of which audience	4.56% (14)
Additional non-answer	196 non-answers

For each of the 24 ads they examined, participants were asked to select one of the following categories. The question was, “Which of the following audiences would you say this ad is intended to predominantly court?: Female consumers __; Could appeal to either male or female consumers __; Male consumers __; Can’t say __.” (Focus Group Worksheet #IV.1). The total number of usable participant votes was 307, out of a maximum possible number of 720 (i.e., if all 30 participants had ranked each one of the 24 ads). Not all participants fully completed the worksheet. The recorded responses were tabulated as follows: 41.7% of the ads evaluated were perceived as intending to appeal more to a female audience; 9.45% were rated as intended more for a male audience; and 44.3% of ads were deemed as intended for either gender. I observed a correlation between ads more frequently ranked as unappealing, and those more frequently perceived as for a male audience (for

example, *Bellagio* and *Mirage*) while, to a lesser degree, more frequently liked ads such as *British Airways* and *Honduras* were perceived as appealing to either gender. One shortcoming intrinsic to this particular finding is that the earlier listed ads on the worksheet, in alphabetical order, had a greater chance of being evaluated during the focus group sessions in light of time constraints.

Table 18: “In which ads could a male replace the female subject?” (Focus Group Worksheet #IV.2)

Advertisement	Figure/Page	Yes	No	Can't Say	No Answer
1. Delta Sky Miles	Figure 22/163	13	2	0	3
2. Bellagio	Figure 14/150	1	13	1	3
3. Bermuda	Figure 17/156	5	8	0	5
4. British Airways	N/A	12	2	0	4
5. Cayman Islands	Figure 30/220	6	8	0	4
6. Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos)	Figure 25/166	4	9	0	5
7. Celebrity Cruises (Once I was a Queen.”)	Figure 3/137	3	9	1	5
8. Crystal Cruises	Figure 23/164	6	6	0	6
9. Expedia.ca	Figure 18/157	2	9	1	6
10. Hilton	N/A	6	4	1	7
11. Holland America	N/A	8	2	0	8
12. Honduras	Figure 5/139	8	3	0	7
13. InterContinental	Figure 12/147	6	4	0	8
14. Jamaica	Figure 29/213	9	1	0	8
15. Le Meridien	Figure 1/135	0	9	0	9
16. MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris	Figure 11/146	6	4	0	8
17. Mirage	Figure 27/211	1	9	0	8
18. Queen Mary 2	Figure 20/161	1	9	0	8
19. Renaissance (water colours painter)	Figure 26/168	7	3	0	8
20. Renaissance (multiple Identities)	N/A	3	5	1	9
21. Singapore Airlines	N/A	4	4	1	9
22. Visa (sleeping woman)	Figure 2/136	2	7	0	9
23. Westin	N/A	7	1	1	9

Table 18b: Summary of “In which ads could a male replace the female subject?”

Rankings:	Votes
Top 3 ads in which participants thought a man could replace the female subject:	
1) 1. Delta Sky Miles	13
2) 4. British Airways	12
3) 14. Jamaica	9
Top 3 ads in which participants did not think a man could replace the female subject:	
1) 2. Bellagio	13
2) 6. Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos); 7. Celebrity Cruises (...queen); 9. Expedia.com; 15. Meridien; 17. Mirage; 18. QM2	9
3) 3. Bermuda; 5. Cayman Islands	8

I observed some correlation between the ads more frequently liked (such as those for Honduras and British Airways) by participants also having a female subject believed to be interchangeable with a male subject. Inversely, the more disliked ads (such as those for Mirage and Bellagio) tended to have subjects judged by participants not to be interchangeable with a male subject. In such ads, the female travel subjects were frequently perceived as passive or sexualized. However, this table’s findings are not conclusive.

For each ad, participants were asked, “Could the female subject in this ad *unproblematically* be replaced by a male, with no corresponding alterations needing to be made to this ad?” (#IV.2) Out of 292 countable responses (again, out of an optimized maximum number of 720), 49% (143) indicated the perception that the female subject in the ad could be replaced by a male, while 48.6% (142) of responses indicated the female in an ad could not be replaced by a male. Thus responses that could be tabulated indicated participant perception that the female subjects portrayed in travel ads were not interchangeable with male subjects in almost half of the ads evaluated. The subsequent discussions affirmed that this factor was related to their professed dislike of those particular ads. Participants generally

preferred ads in which they perceived that a male subject would be more interchangeable with the female subject, presumably because these ads were less oriented toward the interests of a perceived male-centered audience.

In response to being asked about perceived implicit messages in the ads, participants reported on those they particularly liked (Focus Group Worksheet #II.3) (Table 19). About a third of participants indicated partiality to the ads signifying wealth, luxury and/or perceived sophistication, in contradiction to the low rankings in Table 10 of earlier tabulated findings indicating that signifiers of financial success were not influential in terms of travel motivation. One possible explanation is that such signifiers were difficult to avoid in this sample of ads.

Table 19: Most Frequently Perceived Implicit Messages in Liked and Disliked Ads
(Focus Group Worksheet #II.3)

Liked Ads:

Implicit Message (Sample participant responses, with which similar responses were also categorized)	Total Number of Participant Responses
“This location is for wealthy people who are looking for luxury travel, who are sophisticated and who can forget the cost.”	11
“This location is peaceful and exotic; a good destination; come join its culture and history.”	7
“You are important, our number one client.”	4
“If you travel to this location you will be like the subject of this ad – thin, happy, pretty, etc.”	3
“You are creative, do not conform, be yourself.”	3
“Find your own enjoyment; indulge yourself.”	3
“You have financial independence and strength.”	3
“Live your fantasy.”	1
“This ad is geared towards non-white male clients.”	1
“Intellectually engage with your surroundings.”	1
“Sexy.”	1

Disliked Ads:

Implicit Message	Total Number of Participant Responses
“Women should be in their traditional roles: sexual objects that need to be pampered.”	9
“Sexually appealing to male clients – you will find sex at this location.”	8
“In this location there is glamour and luxury.”	3
“You need wealth and money.”	2
“Women should be glamorous; if you take a vacation you will be glamorous too.”	2
“Life on vacation is better and more relaxing than work.”	2
“You are the most important.”	1
“Appeals to women’s fantasies.”	1

The findings with respect to perceived messages in disliked advertisements were highly congruent with earlier tabulated results, such as those in Table 15, suggesting that participants would prefer to see female travel ad subjects depicted in a non-sexualizing way, and fully clothed.

Participants were also asked to rank each of the 24 ads into one of the following categories:

1. Women with authority over men.
2. Women portrayed as autonomous individuals.
3. Women in non-traditional roles.
4. Women in traditional roles.
5. Women as one-dimensional sexual objects or ‘decorations’. (Focus Group Worksheet, #IV.3)

These categorical rankings were adopted from a scale designed by Paisley-Butler and Butler-Paisley (1974) which the authors called “A Scale for Measuring Sexism in Tourism Representations”, and which was also employed by Pritchard (2001) and Morgan and

Pritchard (1998). My intent in employing this scale was to determine, based on assertions outlined in Section 2.2, whether more ads would be viewed by participants as either objectifying female subjects sexually (i.e., their image in the ad predominantly perceived as gratuitous “eye-candy”) or portraying them in particularly traditional and/or passive roles (e.g. Richter, 1995; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Urry, 1990), versus whether research participants would note female subjects in more autonomous roles, contrary to expectations resulting from the literature. I included the same basic categories used in the original study by Butler-Paisley Paisley-Butler (1974), and subsequently by Pritchard (2001) and Morgan and Pritchard (1998). In retrospect, however, the category “women with authority over men” was not particularly useful or relevant to my data set, in large part because the ads were of females only.

Again, 292 valid responses were counted. Out of these, participants indicated that 57.2% of the ad subjects were portrayed either in “traditional or sexually objectifying” roles - 37% having been categorized as “traditional” in depictions, and 20.2% as sexually objectified. Almost one third (32%) of the subjects were perceived as “autonomous”. Eight percent of ad subjects were perceived as having been portrayed “non-traditionally”. Three percent were rated as “having authority over men.” While these data are incomplete, they are congruent with focus group-based discussions.

In response to being asked whether image, text or product itself in an ad had a greater impact on the participant’s overall impression (Question #III.6), 74% of respondents replied that graphic image made the greatest impression upon them when viewing an ad, as opposed

to the literal product featured (21.7%), or the text (4.34%). Thus, image arguably does have considerable impact, regardless of whether this is the result of referrant systems or signifiers.

When asked for, “Comments as to what you believe makes some travel ads directed toward women more effective/appealing than others?” (Question #III.4), five more recurrent themes that could be clustered by multi-response included the following.

“More realistic-looking”	7 participants
“Women portrayed as more autonomous”	6 participants
“Activities should reflect the interests of the target audience”	4 participants
“Less emphasis on sexual appeal”	3 participants
“Show an actual location”	3 participants

5.3 Information Gathered From Focus Group Discussions

The reactions of participants in my focus groups indicated that these travel ads were far more viscerally experienced than I had anticipated. For this discussion, significant points from the three focus groups have been combined. Remarks appearing in quotation marks below come directly from participants, unless otherwise specified.

Overall, focus group participants were alienated by the ads they were shown, stating that the sample neither reflected their interests nor portrayed a person to whom they could “relate”. Most participants further indicated that they found a large proportion of the ads were more in keeping with the preferences of a male viewing audience. Some sample compatible quotations taken directly from focus group booklets are as follows. “I have

looked at these ads longer than I would in a magazine. Most depict women as models or sexy. Models don't travel hard" (Participant #23). "They reiterate traditional stereotypes of women as eye-candy" (Participant #19). "Where are the ads that will appeal to my sense of adventure, whether physical or seeing new cultures or roughing it in exotic place (Himalayas, for example)" (Participant #40, who happened to be in her mid-50s). "The ads are just not hitting the activities I like to do or style in which I like to do them – several are just hard to figure out (what they are selling, what is the message – do I care, should I bother looking closer to figure it out?)....Very limited appeal – where are the backpacking ads, dirt roads and market pics like those we see at [Great Expeditions]? That's what sells me on a destination product" (Participant #21). "Women portrayed in realistic settings appeal to me. Putting a woman's image on a flower or a cloud, for example – not appealing, and I would ignore the ad" (Participant #4). "The ads were sexist, especially the Vegas ads – Mirage and Bellagio both seemed to target a male audience, as surely doesn't portray an average woman. Photos sexist trying to be seductive." "Too many ads for mode of travel rather than for destination" (Participant #46).

As the quotes may indicate, participants thought poorly overall of the way women were portrayed in travel ads, again, frequently expressing far more negative and even hostile reactions than I personally had experienced toward the sample ads. They largely found the female subjects "too passive", "sexualized" and "disengaged". Participants were considerably more sensitive than was I to what they perceived as the permeating equivalent of a "male gaze" (participant words) present "where the camera was", "looking in" at the ads with them, the viewers – particularly in ads where the female subject revealed a considerable

amount of skin (for example, in the Expedia.com ad, Figure 18, page 157). In the interests of reflexivity, I was unsure whether to congratulate myself on my disengaged objectivity from their perceived “sexism” in the ads, or to feel foolish at so readily having parted with what some considered obvious.

In general, participants strongly expressed the desire to see women “far more active”, “more engaged with their surroundings”, “looking older”, and being far “less sexualized”. They further wanted to see women who seemed “less taken care of” and “less regulated” – that is, women who appeared to be making their own conscious decisions, and were actively involved with their environments. Participants also said they wanted to see more subjects in ads who were, for lack of another summarizing term, “wholesome” (as opposed to “sleazy”, as a few characterized the *Mirage* “Explore” ad (Figure 27, page 211), for example) and, they emphasized, more “reality-based”: in particular, “less artificial”- which I interpreted as less contrived-looking, and “model-like perfect” in terms of appearance. Participants also frequently stated in the group discussions a desire to see women in ads the same age as oneself. (The question remains as to whether or not these participants would respond so well as to actually buy the advertised product featuring an older subject: I have no authority to say.)

Participants also voiced resentment at an implied theme perceived in a disproportionate number of the ads (also noted in Section 4.2 on content analysis) that female travelers were intent upon “losing themselves” and “escaping from their realities”, as though the ads were suggesting there must be something quite wrong with their lives. Descriptors offered by

many participants during the discussions in evaluating the ads included: “dull”; “overemphasis on pampering”; “overemphasizing luxury”; (distastefully) “money-oriented”. Several women, notably in the third session, and in contrast to literature emphases on luxury and service, stated that they travel “for their soul,” and disliked the materialistic orientation in ads - “too sexual” (a very frequent criticism); and, “no overweight women” (in light of the professed desire to see reality, or perhaps their own self-images, reflected).

A number of participants further verbally expressed disdain and a sense of superiority to the portrayal of female subjects in the ads, whose depictions were characterized as, “passive”, “cushy”, “elitist”, “removed from the locals” and “pampered” (participants’ words). I might further add that, like me, few of my participants resembled the women shown in the travel ads. The focus group members were multi-racial, contained several larger body types (unlike any of the later period’s ads); a number had white or gray hair (although a few who were 60 plus years of age looked much younger to me), and the level of outspokenness seemed incongruous with the subdued demeanor of many ad subjects.

Although the average age for focus group participants was 46, there was a broad age span (23 – 68 years of age). I became aware at the time and even more so in retrospect of a distinct, seemingly age-based division regarding whether or not certain ads were deemed sexist and therefore unappealing (women roughly over 40 years of age) versus whether the same were considered “sexy and feminine” ads with which “one could identify” (the three women under 30). Notably, the three younger female participants in their twenties (generally with less means to travel) expressed more favorable views of ads that other participants,

generally over forty years of age, criticized as “very sexist” (e.g. *Expedia.com*, Figure 18, page 157; *Cayman Islands*, Figure 30, page 220). This difference may indicate post-feminist consciousness among the younger women. My sample of frequently appearing ads nevertheless did not resonate well with the ‘older’ female travel consumers - who had the greater means and potential interests to be an excellent target audience for many of the advertised products.

Coleman and Crang (2002: 9) asserted that, “one might say that MacCannell’s idea of the tourist as a modern figure questing for authentic knowledge fits academics far better than empirical tourists.” I am certain that the majority of women in my focus groups would disagree with this speculation. Undoubtedly the bulk of my participants would have considered themselves “travelers”, as opposed to mass tourists, whom I would suggest they may have viewed with some scorn. One of the more frequent criticisms of the ads shown was their lack of “authenticity”, and their artificiality. Ads for Las Vegas, in particular – arguably a shrine to fantasy - were particularly unpopular (e.g. *Bellagio*, Figure 14, page 150; *Mirage*, Figure 27, page 211). As noted earlier, a significant proportion of participants (13) mentioned “spiritual input” or something similar as a predominant travel motivation. Furthermore, in spite of the common backdrop of spas and massages, only two participants out of 30 verbally expressed a liking for spas (also substantiated in Table 10 data): yet spa-related ads actually constituted more than 20% of the ads shown (five ads of the 24 shown).

Overall the participants suggested that they were most offended by ads where the female subject could not have been replaced by a male subject without the ad subsequently

appearing odd or ludicrous. I interpreted this to mean that they found most of those female portrayals sexualizing and/or passive. The majority of travel magazines originally perused for this study did not portray female travel subjects and thus were unusable for my study. Advertisers may believe female advertisement viewers to be more tolerant than male consumers to an ad featuring a model of the opposite sex. Ads where the female subject could not have been interchangeable with a male without making the ad ridiculous caused the greatest level of resentment. The women overall were displeased and alienated by a large proportion of these ads. The majority of participants further stated that the text was minimally influential in a few of the ads, and generally not a decisive factor in the appeal of any particular ad. Thus, the offense had its genesis predominantly in the images.

Finally, in every focus group, participants initiated discussions regarding their disappointment at not seeing more actual, distinctive destinations featured, so that one was not simply “interchangeable with another.” For example, the *Honduras* ad (Figure 5, page 139) was among the better liked, but was also criticized for being interchangeable in appearance with “Algonquin Park”. The ads with beach and landscape settings generally “could have been anywhere.” One better liked ad, sponsored by *MasterCard* and featuring the *Park Hyatt Paris* (Figure 11, page 146), was mentioned favourably by some of the women specifically because they could identify distinctive Parisian scenery.

5.3.1 Summary of Main Points Emerging From Each Individual Focus Group

5.3.1.1 Focus Group I: Wed., Oct.26, 2005 (9 participants in attendance)

Strong negative opinions were expressed both orally and in writing on how women are presently being portrayed in travel ads, including those on display. The most vehemently expressed verbal opinions regarding the “female travelers” featured in the ad sample are directly quoted from participants as follows:

- “They are all under 35 years of age, slim and well dressed.”
- “They are shown as too passive – all just lying around.”
- “They are very rich.”
- “These ads are too luxury-oriented.”

Two women however expressed, somewhat quietly, “I wouldn’t consider staying at a resort without a spa.” (Participant #24), and “I really did think just sleeping looked very appealing.” (Participant #9). They may have been subdued by differing strong opinions being vociferously expressed by other group members. However, the more negative opinions unmistakably permeated focus group discussions.

The group discussion revealed a widespread dislike of ads which struck them as more oriented toward a male audience. (Therefore, the *British Airways* ad, depicting a woman asleep in business class, was mentioned with favorable distinction.) Several women also expressed a dislike of ads that were more product-oriented (e.g. large hotel chains, credit cards) rather than destination-oriented. (Several women stated that this was why they had selected *MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris*, Figure 11, page 146, as a favourite ad.) A similarly

emphasized complaint about the ads was that they emphasized service and not destination. The women said they would rather look at destinations. I noted in my first focus group that I would have preferred to show them a few of the arguably more “progressive”, destination-oriented ads (e.g. *South Africa; Utah*, Figure 10, page 145), but almost all had only appeared once during the period under study, and thus did not qualify for focus group selection.

One participant (#21) said that she really liked to see female travelers interacting with local people, a point with which at least two other group members agreed. Several also mentioned their own interest in visiting night markets when traveling, in meeting local people, and in having more seemingly “authentic” experiences. Strong interests such as these were noted by participants as absent in the ads.

In summary of main points of agreement, the group said they wanted to see more older-looking women; women involved in more action and activity, even if on a cruise (- although, again, a couple of women expressed more quietly that there was no way they were “going on a cruise to do aerobics”); women *engaged* – for example, “intellectually involved”. A few women agreed on the expressed desire to see the text better reinforce the photographic image. *Expedia.com*’s slogan “Search for:...” (Figure 18, page 157) came up as a criticized example, as did *Mirage*’s slogan, “Explore” (Figure 27, page 211): the general consensus expressed was that these captions seemed more to actually indicate the female subject, rather than the product. They further expressed a preference for gender-neutral ads.

Not surprisingly, points of disagreement also surfaced in the discussion. Some women argued that the female subjects in the ads were represented as “very needy” and “very

passive,” “sleep-deprived,” and “waiting for someone to look after them.” An equally adamant but differing opinion was that the female subjects in the ads were seeking luxury “because they can”, and that that was “an indication of female independence” and autonomy. Two women countered a strong group current by saying they really did want to go to sleep, arguing that those particular ads featuring sleeping women were for hotels. It may also be worth mentioning that the ad for *Singapore Airlines ‘Spacebed’* was amongst the more popular with this group, which depicts a sleeping woman on a surreal large feather.

The best-liked ads in the first focus group included:

1. *Honduras* (Figure 5 on page 139) The reason most frequently offered was that, “She was active and engaged.” Some said they chose it by default, because they disliked many of the other ads to a such significant extent.
2. *MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris* (Figure 11 on page 146). The main points of approval included: “She did it because she could afford to, all by herself.” Also mentioned were that “She got to luxuriously take in the sights of Paris from her balcony” and, “She was intellectually engaged.”

The most disliked ads were:

1. *Bellagio* (Figure 14 on page 150). The reason most commonly verbalized was that it was “sexist”, and “directed toward males”, rather than women. Others didn’t care for the “excessive” diamonds and found it too materially centered and “shallow”.
2. *Mirage* (Figure 27 on page 211). A few women stated that if that was their only input on Las Vegas, they would not ever bother going. This ad was again deemed “sexist”, and directed more toward a male audience. Several participants expressed that they further disliked the ad because they could not immediately determine what it was for.


3. *Expedia.com* (Figure 18 on page 157). Similar to the two ads above, those who disliked this ad suggested it portrayed the female as a mere “decoration,” and seemingly “gratuitously displayed her”. It again was judged as catering more to the tastes of a male audience.

Some ads were also poorly received for leaving “too bland” an impression, the most frequent criticism being they were simply “poorly constructed”, with “no focal point.” Examples included *Wyndham Resorts*, Figure 28, page 212 (“If it’s so luxurious, why does she need an extra night for free?” “Too busy.”); the *Queen Mary 2*, Figure 20, page 161(-frustration was expressed as the result of “not knowing what the ad was for,” and thus they preferred to disregard it); and *Jamaica* (Figure 29 on page 213): the participants argued that the ad had “no focal point to latch onto.” In other words, no singular part of the ad was eye-catching.



Figure 27: Mirage Hotel Las Vegas. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Apr. 2004:

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



**I want to stay
an extra night for free**



Stay Two Nights
and get the
**THIRD
NIGHT
FREE**
Ask for
R&R ByRequest


WHAT'S YOUR REQUEST?SM What could make a perfect vacation even better? How about an extra night for free? Wyndham Resorts is offering you an additional night for every two nights you pay with the American Express® Card. Enjoy one more day being pampered in our world-class spas, dining in our celebrated restaurants, or doing simply nothing at all. Join Wyndham ByRequest to customize your stay to your tastes and preferences. Arrive and find your room arranged to your specifications with a welcoming beverage and snack. Your request is our pleasure.

For reservations, contact American Express Travel at 800-AXP-3410 or americanexpress.com/travel or Wyndham at 866-FOR-WYND or wyndham.com/amex. Be sure to ask for **R&R ByRequest** to receive this offer.

Must be reserved under R&R ByRequest at the time of booking. Get the third consecutive night free for every two nights paid for with the American Express Card at participating Wyndham Resorts and Luxury Resorts from February 16, 2003 through September 30, 2003. Subject to availability, blackout dates and other restrictions apply. Tax, resort fee and gratuity not included. Not applicable to groups or on prior reservations. The reservation confirmation of each qualifying stay under this offer will reflect the total number of nights. The cost of the free night(s) will be deducted from and reflected in the final bill. © 2003 Wyndham Hotels & Resorts.

American Express Travel Related Services Company, Inc. acts solely as a sales agent for travel suppliers and is not liable for the acts or inactions of such suppliers. CST# 1022318-10, TA-149 Registered Ohio Travel Agency, Washington URB# 600-469-694, ML#1192. © 2003 American Express. POID: B874-0001



WYNDHAM EL PASO HOTEL & CASINO

Figure 28: Wyndham Hotels and Resorts (co-sponsored with American Express).

Advertisement. Travel+Leisure May 2003: 86.

Overindulgence
is underrated.

We've always been
passionate about
spoiling our guests.
It's one of our most
popular traditions.

One Love
JAMAICA

1-800-JAMAICA
visitjamaica.com

©2003 Jamaica Tourist Board

Figure 29: Jamaica. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Apr. 2004: 207.

5.3.1.2 Focus Group II: Thurs., Nov.3, 2005 (11 participants in total)

The second focus group contained perhaps the most gently expressed group of participants. I was fascinated by some of the similarities regarding ad preferences, but even more particularly by the differences, between the first two focus groups.

The best liked ads in this second group included *Honduras* (Figure 5 on page 139) again (8 votes); *Delta Sky Miles* (Figure 22 on page 163) (6 votes, and this being the only group of participants that liked this ad overall – the first group having criticized it for looking “like something from the 1950s”); the *Celebrity Cruises* ad for *Galapagos* (Figure 25 on page 166) (4 votes); *British Airways* (4 votes) - they “liked seeing a woman in an airline ad, especially one sleeping in *business class*”; *Jamaica* (Figure 29 on page 213) (4 votes) - this was the only group in which this ad was appreciated. Those who expressed opinions liked the fact it was about a place, and featured a woman they “could be friends with”, or whose company they could enjoy. Finally, although the *MasterCard* ad featuring the *Park Hyatt Paris* (Figure 11 on page 146) only actually received two official dot-votes of approval, it received considerable verbal acclaim in the discussion, again in large part for featuring an actual place.

There were repeats in the least liked ads from the first focus group. The most vociferous criticisms in the second group were directed toward the ad for *Expedia.com* (Figure 18 on page 157). Written comments included: “A myth of exoticism.” “*Consume this women.*” She looked “too perfect.” She was “too nude.” Disappointment in the company was expressed by women who use *Expedia.com*, at how sexist they found the ad. “Search for...” they felt

“meant the woman.” It should be noted, however, that two (younger) women liked the ad. *Bellagio* (Figure 14 on page 150), receiving five negative votes in this group, and *Mirage* (Figure 27 on page 211) four, were disliked for the same reasons cited in the first focus group: they were deemed “sexist”, and “backwards” in terms of their representation of women. As well, a few felt the woman looked like “maybe she could be bought and was a prostitute.” For reasons similar to those for which participants disliked the *Expedia* ad, they also expressed dislike for the *Visa* ad (Figure 2 on page 136): “Could *she* also be bought with Visa?” The ad for the *Cayman Islands* (Figure 30 on page 220) attracted more negative attention in the second focus group than the first, receiving four negative votes. Some labeled it “too sexist”; others thought it was simply “not an effective ad.” A couple of participants liked it.

The *Queen Mary 2* ad (Figure 20 on page 161) also again drew three negative votes: participants expressed annoyance at being made to feel as though they were “not getting” what the ad was for. They expressed resentment at the woman being shown in the kitchen, stating that it was “too traditional.” Anger was expressed more vocally in this group about the feminization of passivity and luxury.

5.3.1.3 Focus Group III: Sat., Nov.5, 2005, 10am to Noon (10 participants in attendance)

The third group of participants was lively and the most outspoken. There were also three younger women in their twenties present with somewhat differing views than the rest with respect to the ads showing more skin. As was the case with the first two sets of participants,

the group's overall reactions to the ads was that they did not much like them. Specific comments included the following:

- “Too passive” “Why not show more activity and the things that women like to do?”
- “Too many spas: that’s not what [we] like to do” (- with the exception of one participant)
- “Too much wearing of diamonds”
- “Low racial diversity”
- “Placeless”. “The only [ad featuring a place] shown was highly transferable.” The ad referred to was that for *Honduras*, which once more was compared in terms of generic appearance to “Algonquin Park.”

Several women in this group verbally noted that they had never paid attention to ads featuring female travelers before now, and could now see why, as the ads did not depict, or give any information on, the types of travel/vacation activities they enjoy. They offered examples of preferred activities, none of which were included in the ads, including: “night markets”; “visiting galleries”; “taking cooking or other classes” (e.g. language); and “volunteer travel” (e.g. a volunteer organization that worked with children called, “The Right to Play”). Several women referred to themselves as “adventure travelers” (- as opposed to “mass travelers”). One woman (Participant #22) directly emphasized that these ads appeared to be for “mass tourism”, and that that was not what she/they were interested in. She stated the following in her work booklet: “I feel as though if I go on a cruise, or participate in mass tourism, I am less of a person. Or if I go to a resort that I know prohibits locals from using the beach. I can’t make a decision based on an ad because I know it’s a lie...”

The women in their 20s expressed that there was “too much Caribbean” in these ads, and that they “would never go there” (apparently as a matter of pride, combined with self-identity). One of them (Participant #19) stated “there should be more Thailand.” (I noted that this participant was in her twenties and arguably not of the income that may interest some of these higher-end advertisers.)

The ads found appealing by this third group differed somewhat from those selected by the other groups. The *MasterCard* ad featuring the *Paris Park Hyatt* (Figure 11 on page 146) received six favorable votes; the *Honduras* ad (Figure 5 on page 139) received four; the *Bermuda* ad was voted as appealing three times; and in this group, the *Expedia.com* ad (Figure 18 on page 157) was selected as amongst their favourites by four participants. It was described in this group, in dramatic contrast to the other two groups, as “artful”; being “beautiful and feminine without being sleazy”; it was noted for its “good composition”; and the statement was made that, “There is a fantasy component which works.” Interestingly, by show of hands, four thought this ad was female audience-intended; while three perceived it as male audience-intended and, consequently, less appealing.

Disliked ads were very similar to those in the first two groups. *Mirage* received five red dots, *Bellagio* received four, and the *Queen Mary 2* was given two – and a barrage of verbal criticism during the discussion, again alluding to how they “didn’t get it”: “why was she dressed like that?” Some didn’t like her “overly made-up” face – and “other-worldly” expression. Also questioned was “whether she had a negative attitude toward her children.” As well, the ad was judged as “too male-oriented.” Some sample quotations from participant

workbooks included: “Offputting – her dress/ her attitude. I hope that is never me” (Participant #22). “Leave your family life behind and become some glamorous high-class woman all of a sudden. When you do what exactly? Not sure what’s QM2 ...It’s kind of crass and nasty” (Participant #37). “Snobbery, lack of reality” (Participant #7). “Impression she has disconnected from the family” (Participant #4).

I was surprised by a fairly pronounced dislike of two ads which had been better received in the previous two groups. These were:

1. *Celebrity Cruises* Galapagos ad, with four negative votes, and complaints that it was: “too passive!” and “too sexual.”
2. *Singapore Airlines* Spacebed. Comments indicated dislike via confusion: “What is this?” “Is she on a cloud? Is she an angel?” “Is this ad meant to look like female genitalia?”
3. the *Celebrity Cruises* ad with the caption, “Once I was a Queen.” (Figure 21 on page 162) In this group, a number of women verbally expressed their favorable opinions at finally seeing “a real woman” in an ad. Interestingly, however, a few, as in the previous groups, expressed their distaste for this ad. More vehemently expressed comments particularly focused on her being “too frumpy”, and the ad aimless. Also questioned was “why they should relate to someone who seemed so unhappy with her normal life.” Finally, a couple of participants concurred that they “didn’t like the reminding that the vacation ends.” It also came out at this point that the majority of the women, at least in this group, said they did not read the text in ads.

Because this group was particularly keen and, with one exception, participants actually opted to stay longer so that they could look at more ads on the overhead, we were able to discuss the following ads in greater depth. (This focus group continued for an extra hour,

with participants having full understanding they were in no way obliged to stay.) The following four ads were found to be of particular interest to this group.

1. “*Spain marks*” (Figure 8, page 143) It was a personal relief to finally have opportunity to show a destination-product ad. Most said they found this ad interesting. One found it “too trendy, like Dove soap’s ads for ‘natural beauties’”. They liked that a gallery was shown, since that indicated greater engagement on the part of the traveler.
2. *The Cayman Islands* ad (Figure 30, page 220) used in the sample was given greater attention and discussion time. Eight participants indicated by raising of hands that they identified with the model. Some pictured themselves as her and liked the colours. One expressed, and was supported by others, that the female subject was too small, wore unrealistic jewellery, and may be intended as “just another tasty morsel.” Some who liked the ad said they were simply attracted by the food.
3. The *Mirage* ad (Figure 27, page 211), again, was indicated to be intensely disliked, with a strong belief it “cater[ed] to prurient male interests”. Some participants said they had wondered “whether it was a perfume ad”, or “what it was for.” And again, the question was raised regarding the ad’s caption – “‘Explore’ what? The female subject?”
4. *TiVo* (Figure 19, page 160). I was curious as to how participants might react to an obviously “real woman” (my own words), who was markedly unadorned, and certainly not sexualized. I liked this ad personally, and had anticipated a generally favourable reaction from the participants. My speculation was incorrect. A few liked the comic aspect, and wanted to know what the cat was saying. More, however, apparently “resent[ed] this thing about single women and their cats”. A couple of participants also indicated they thought she looked like a “biker chick.”

CAYMAN FREE FALLIN'

\$150
Gift Cheque

Book a minimum 5-night Cayman Free Fallin' air-inclusive vacation package and get an additional night free. Use your American Express® Card and receive a \$150 Gift Cheque. Call your travel professional or visit www.caymanislands.ky for details.

Valid with participating partners only when sold in conjunction with a fully prepaid tour. Operator reserves right to discontinue promotion at any time without notice. Blackout dates and restrictions may apply. Deposit and final payment must be made on an American Express® Card to receive a \$150 Gift Cheque when you purchase a 5-night Cayman Free Fallin' vacation package. Valid on new bookings from 5.01.05 to 11.15.05 for travel completed by 11.15.05. Valid one per booking, per Cardmember and cannot be combined with other American Express Cardmember offers. \$150 Gift Cheque will be received at hotel check-in upon presentation of voucher. Not responsible for lost or stolen vouchers.

AMERICAN EXPRESS

exits.

entrées.

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Close to home. Far from expected.
Call your travel professional or visit www.caymanislands.ky.

Figure 30: Cayman Islands. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Oct.

2005: 101.

There was also more in-depth discussion in this group with respect to ads using the “bathing suit trope”, and whether such ads were indicative of “sexual exploitation of female bodies” or “female empowerment and freedom.” Not of great surprise, the three younger women under 30 years of age tended to say “female empowerment”, whereas women comfortably over 40 unequivocally declared, “Exploitation!” A couple of the younger women I thought quite cogently illuminated an important point that “the context of how the woman was portrayed made all the difference.” Participant #28 stated: “Feminine is good. Sexy is good. However, they must be tastefully portrayed in a way that indicates respect for the woman” as a person they can relate to. Just as “sexy” and “feminine” were deemed as positive, “sleaze” and “exploitation” to merely gratify a male viewer were considered highly undesirable attributes in an ad by participants of all ages.

One participant (#14) who worked in marketing offered that it was very difficult to nail down the “attitudinal frontier”. She said that although there could be clustering in terms of attributes related to “lifestyle and attitudes”, the two realms could not always quite precisely be matched. I found this point highly significant, as I concluded that many advertisers were truly missing the mark in terms of how these female travel consumers wanted to see themselves portrayed. Most of these participants had never noticed travel ads before, and now better understood why: the ads were simply not compelling to them.

A younger participant (#19) made a further point in terms of a generational divide regarding advertising media. She suggested that people in their twenties go on-line for all of their travel information, and thus are only exposed to ads there. She further speculated that

they also make all of their bookings there, offering by way of direct example in her own words, “*Books/Movies Amazon.com* and *Trip Advisor*”. This participant indicated that her preferred travel guides were “*DKI Witness*”, because “it’s highly visual with large and correctly corresponding photographs related to what I want to see.” She especially disliked the *Frommers* guide because “it has too much text, and small, irrelevant pictures.” She could not recall seeing depictions specifically of female travelers in any of the sources she normally used.

The third focus group particularly emphasized the importance of being able to “see themselves” as the woman in the travel ad. Their main point was that to be more appealing to them, the ad subject had to be more active and engaged in the activities they themselves found compelling. A couple of participants went further in saying an ad subject-model should also be someone they could at least imagine “being friends with.” Like both groups before them, the women in the third focus group overwhelmingly stated that women in the ads shown were much too passive. They wanted to see engaged, active women in interesting destinations.

5.3.1.4 Arizona Ads Experiment

Having heard complaints in each focus group about lack of actual destinations shown in the ads, in the latter two focus groups, I decided, as time permitted, to find out how participants responded to three different ads, all for the same destination. Because Arizona was the destination most frequently appearing in various ads for the time period of 2003-2004, I chose the three images (Figure 31, Figure 32, and Figure 33) most frequently

portrayed in my data set, which depicted a female subject in three variant backdrops. One showed a woman gazing into the Grand Canyon, her sketch pad beside her, beside a photograph of her as a young girl; one showed two non-white female subjects walking around a yogic circle outdoors in a trance-like state; and one depicted a woman being massaged at an Arizona spa, with an outdoor desert backdrop.

While a few women liked the outdoor massage ad, and one – only one - liked the Phoenix meditation-wheel ad, by far they indicated their preference was for the Grand Canyon ad. The reason most frequently stated was: “She is actively engaged with her surroundings.”

In summary, the majority of my participants across all three focus groups were unified in disdain for the perceived passive and sexualized depictions of female subjects in travel ads, with the noted seemingly age-related difference in participants under 40 years of age indicating a greater level of tolerance for ad subjects shown featuring lots of skin. Any differences in preferred ads amongst the three groups of women were not incompatible.

There was some mild contradiction in results between discussion and participant written work. For example, in the questionnaire, a large proportion of participants expressed “relaxation” as a key travel motivator. Yet in reaction to the ads featuring sleeping or inactive female subjects, they expressed aversion and even outrage over the high frequency of women depicted in disengaged states, since this was highly unrepresentative of their own travel interests. However, I did not find this discrepancy incompatible to overall results.

Remember when eight crayons were all the colors you needed?

Want to know where this is? Visit arizonaguide.com.

Recapture your childhood vision of a bright, benevolent world. Come to Arizona. For your free travel packet, including an Official State Visitor's Map and Calendar of Events, contact the Arizona Office of Tourism toll-free at 866-868-5106.

ARIZONA
GRAND CANYON STATE

Figure 31: Grand Canyon, Arizona. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Nov. 2004:



Figure 32: Phoenix, Arizona (- Meditation Wheel). Advertisement. (State-sponsored: "Destination Phoenix.") Condé Nast Traveler Oct.2004: 225.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

SPA CENTRAL

Arizona's Rejuvenating Retreats

Miraval
Copperwynd Resort and Club
The Phoenician

Arizona is more than just a state: it's a state of mind. Whether you are swept away by the landscape—the tall mountain ranges, swift rivers, grasslands, sand dunes, and cactus forests—or inspired by a heritage of Native American traditions, Hispanic culture and Old West spirit that reaches back thousands of years, it is easy to fall under the spell of this mystical land.

Figure 33: Arizona Spa. Advertisement. (State-sponsored). Condé Nast Traveler Dec. 2003: 339.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

I set out to examine how the contemporary female traveler was represented in popular travel magazine advertisements, what ideals and values were attributed to her, as well as what her preferences were for preferred vacation activities and settings. My context was the prevalent suggestion highlighted in Section 2.2.6 that tourism marketing tends to depict women in reductionistic stereotypes that are sexualized and passive. I further examined whether the volume and substance of representation had altered between 1989-90 and 2003-04. I had hypothesized that the more recent period of ads would be more likely to reflect women as autonomous and economically independent. I also set out to determine how resonant such contemporary depictions of female travelers in ads were with active female travel consumers themselves.

My findings were not definitive. Depictions of females in travel ads were open to interpretation: some appeared to be subjects of a discourse which objectified them, but some others were depicted as though they were autonomous agents. I begin this discussion chapter by outlining the segments of my findings which were congruent with authors who found that ads reductionistically portrayed women in passive, sexualized stereotypes, reflecting the so-called “male gaze” bias (e.g. Enloe, 1989; Urry, 1990; Harris and Ateljevic, 2003; Shields, 2006; Pritchard, 2001; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). My findings also substantiated some less prominent yet distinctive assertions, such as Urry’s (2002) discussions of travel consumption as an elitist endeavour and a marker of identity, as

indicated in the many ads depicting high levels of service. I also found a commercially based discourse that included the widespread employment of “placelessness” in the large number of ads sponsored by large multinational corporations such as hotel chains and credit card companies.

The second section of this discussion addresses disparities found within my findings. The most striking was the discrepancy between what female traveler-participants reported that they liked to do while on vacation and what they liked to see in ads, with the prevalent images portrayed in travel ads featuring females. A pivotal point in this discussion is an apparent lag on the part of the industry in recognizing independent active women as both important travel decision-makers, and as lucrative present and potential consumers of tourism products, particularly the more mature (baby boomer) women. Partial explanation for this seeming lag may be explained by some of the advertising principles outlined by Fowles (1996) and Tellis (2004).

In the third section of this chapter, I highlight some apparent emerging trends in female-featuring travel advertisements. These include the emergence of a new “female gaze”, whereby the female subject is no longer just a passively-viewed aesthetic object or supplement to the photograph, but an actively engaged, autonomous viewer in her own right. The notion of placelessness is also discussed in greater detail. A fourth section outlines potential implications of this research for tourism advertisers. I will follow up with some reflections on my own methodology. Finally, I will conclude my discussion chapter with

some of the potential shortcomings in my data that should be acknowledged in examination of my final results.

6.1 Gendering in Travel Ads and Support of a “Male Gaze”

Examination of my data set of female-featuring travel ads, for the two periods of 1989-90 and 2003-04 revealed that culture and tourism are highly contrived phenomena, and tourism advertising is indeed a marked form of hegemonic discourse. A large proportion of ads in my content analysis sample sets for both time periods, as well as the sample of those more frequently featured shown to the focus group participants, support the assertions that women in tourism marketing continue to be relegated to sexualizing, passive stereotypes in ads (e.g. Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000; Enloe, 2000; Richter, 1995; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994, 1996; Swain, 2002; MacCannell, 2002; Urry, 2002; Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Pritchard, 2000, 2001; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b, 2000a; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). As Pritchard (2001: 80) remarked, “the range of images used to represent women have been and continue to be very narrow, most typically portraying them as being sexually attractive and domestically competent.” The hegemonic norms of whiteness and heterosexuality also continue to predominate, further supporting the notion of discourse and the power to represent in terms of an apparent white, heterosexual “male gaze” orientation in the ads, as suggested by Harris and Ateljevic (2003), Pritchard (2001), Urry (1990), and Morgan and Pritchard (2001, 1998), and Mellinger (1994), among others.

An important point made in the literature review segment on popular culture (Section 2.5) may be worth re-visiting at this point. Sexualized images of women in various forms of

popular culture are commonplace, including in women's magazines – both in articles and in advertisements (also noted by Tellis, 2004; Shields, 2006; and Goldman, 1992). One possible explanation for this, as discussed earlier, is that women are conditioned to judge themselves in accordance with a hetero-normative male perspective as to what constitutes their being “attractive” or desirable; they are continuously presented with such idealized images that they then integrate and possibly believe they may emulate (e.g. Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Wolf, 1997; Milkie, 2002; McRobbie, 1997).

With respect to the more recent period of travel advertisements, although the “bathing suit trope” may show a very modest decline, female subjects' bodies today remain very much on display on massage tables, as well as at spas. A notable number of other types of ads photographically emphasized cleavage, bare shoulders, and legs. Timothy (2001: 238) argued that women in travel advertising are a consumable product: appealing to sexual desire remains one of the advertising industry's most prominent approaches to selling products today, utilized in the promotion of tourism as much as any other industry. Participants also noted and criticized this perceived approach.

Several authors have argued that the high frequency of models' cleavage made prominent in the image, and/or lots of subject skin showing, circumvents any interpretation of the more recent set of ads, even where women were more active, as more transgressive than those of the period thirteen years prior, the argument being that such features make these ad subjects less threatening to an alleged hetero-normative, male-oriented status quo (e.g. Inness, 2004; Tung, 2004; Kingston, 2004; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000a, 2000b; Morgan and Pritchard,

1998; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Enloe, 2000; Massey, 1994; McDowell, 1999; Bordo, 1993). Although subjects in the latter period of ads had a notably increased rate of more “average-looking” appearances, they nonetheless remained particularly attractive, and continued to look predominantly under 35 years of age (my own subjective interpretation, as well as that of my participants). Subjects were more frequently shown smiling in 2003-04: some would interpret this as friendly and/or pleased; others may argue this makes the female subjects appear non-threatening or non-confrontational. Subjects also remained often more undressed than dressed. They were shown reclining with significant frequency (and thus more “prone”). Subjects were also more frequently depicted as fast asleep, or shown with their eyes closed.

Morgan and Pritchard (1998), Pritchard and Morgan (2000b), Pritchard (2001) and Apostolopoulos and Sonmez (2001) argued that some destinations, such as Las Vegas or the Caribbean, were frequently marketed as hedonistic experiences. The ads in my data set substantiate this point. Apostolopoulos and Sonmez (2001: 7) noted that promotional literature often uses “body shots” (photographs of beautiful young woman) to promote the sensual nature of destinations, and to highlight potential “rewards” in visiting (see also Heatwole, 1989).

Thus, while it has been almost 30 years since Goffman (1979) highlighted the stereotyping of females in advertisements, ample evidence exists to suggest that it continues in tourism marketing. A notable proportion of contemporary advertising to female travel consumers examined in this study focused upon the theme of women as bodies or appearances, or even

psychological states, to be worked on – with an increasing tendency to depict them in zombie-like states of “recovery from stress”, perhaps to address women’s alleged contemporary difficulty and stress in having to juggle multiple roles. Subjects were still predominantly portrayed as part of the “fecund” age bracket. The fact that 46% of ads (65 out of 141) featured female subjects in bathing suits or nude, compared to nearly 48% of the ads (18 out of 38) in 1989 – 1990 would suggest that little has changed in this regard. Most of my focus group participants noted an emphasis, not on female empowerment in these advertisements, but rather upon youth and sexuality. Morgan and Pritchard’s (1998: 193) more pointed assertion that “tourism representations of gender and sexuality portray women not only as exotic, but *there to be experienced*” was certainly how some of the more reviled ads in the focus groups were interpreted, such as those for *Bellagio*, *Mirage* and *Expedia.com* (Figure 14, Figure 27, and Figure 18). Enloe (1989: 28) noted that tourism is dependent on presumptions of masculinity and femininity, and came to a similar conclusion. These findings are also consistent with the feminist post-structuralist perspectives expressed by Milkie (2002); Dworkin and Wachs (2004); Pritchard (2001); Small (2003); Riley and Love (2000); Aitcheson (1999); and Hawthorne and Winter (2003) in Section 2.2.

Nevertheless, there is a second way of interpreting some of these ads, most frequently suggested by younger participants in their twenties during focus group discussions, and also referenced in the literature discussing post-feminism (e.g. Marshment, 1997; Bowen, 2002). To some women, sexual expression - including the minimizing of one’s (constrictive) clothing - is viewed as an entitlement, and indicates their emancipation. An ad depicting a bikini-clad woman on a beach may be seen as objectifying by some women. The same model

may be counter-interpreted by other women, who more readily identify with her, as being economically independent and autonomous enough to select the option of flying to a warm resort and sensually feeling the sun upon her bare skin. The current post-feminist trend in popular culture advocates that women should capitalize on their sexual allure as an instrument of “empowerment,” with the flipside of the coin being that others may view this same tendency as the sexual exploitation of the female body, presumably to cater to the perceived tastes of a male heterosexual audience. The number of ads pointedly disputed within my focus groups were relatively few. One archetype lightning-rod ad was *Expedia.com* (Figure 18 on page 157), followed by the *Cayman Islands* (Figure 30 on page 220). (Other less provocative examples included *Delta Sky Miles* (Figure 22 on page 163), *Hilton* (beach massage) and *Celebrity Cruises Galapagos*, in Figure 25 on page 166). A common sentiment expressed by women of all ages was that for an ad to appeal to them, it had to depict a female in a “respectful” and “tasteful” way. Strikingly, the disliked ads frequently showed clothed subjects who the participants considered more sexually objectified in thematic “tone” and/or depiction (again, *Mirage* and *Bellagio* (Figure 27, page 211 and Figure 14, page 150) being the ultimate ad villains).

A post-feminist interpreter may argue that ads featuring a lot of exposed female skin are actually sites of resistance, in which female tourists may autonomously project themselves into such an ad, transposing the notion of the passive sexualized “decoration” of a female travel subject into an ‘escaping’, self-actualized and empowered woman on vacation, on her own terms (e.g. Marshment, 1997; Bowen, 2002). This dichotomous struggle regarding whether a sexualized woman is a symbol of her own “empowerment” or indicative of

“objectified exploitation” was noted in Section 2.6 as not only manifest in how these travel ads were interpreted, but in many other aspects of popular culture itself (e.g. Graydon, 2004; Dowd, 2005; Milkie, 2002; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004; Azizur Rahman, 2005; Howell, 2005; McLaren, 2005; Moses, 2005; von Hahn, 2005; Winters, 2005). Which side of the debate one ultimately adopts is highly relevant to the conclusions of this study. The word feminism has clearly fallen out of favour with younger generations (Webber, 2005; Dowd, 2005).

However, a number of old struggles regarding a perceived double-standard for men and women continue to be raised regularly, at least in popular media, implying that discussions brought up during the second wave of feminism continue to rage in both public and private forums (for example: Azizur Rahman, 2005; Cave, 2005; Galloway, 2005; Howell, 2005; McLaren, 2005; Moses, 2005; vonHahn, 2005; Winters, 2005). Regardless of whether one interprets an image as depicting “empowerment and autonomy” versus “gratuitous sexualization”, there is no shortage of images available to use as evidence for either argument.

One explanation with respect to why there has been an apparent increase in the prominence of emphasized cleavage and generally displayed female flesh (see Table 5 on page 128) in the more recent period may be that the designers of ads shown in the earlier period of 1989-90 were less removed in time from the more revolutionary-era consciousness of second-wave feminism which included heightened awareness of, and disregard for, sexualized media portrayals of women. Thus, ad creators may have been treading somewhat more carefully then than at this time, when digitally emphasizing a female subject’s erogenous zones may be packaged as “female empowerment” (see Dworkin and Wachs, 2004), and has been argued

by advertising scholars such as Tellis (2004), Fowles (1996), Goldman (1992) and Shields (2006) to sell products. The current prevalence of revealing, post-feminist-era fashion trends may relate to the same explanation: public forums regarding female depictions have largely dwindled in recent years, and female skin sells (e.g. Goldman, 1992; Fowles, 1996; Tellis, 2004). Although the ads in both periods demonstrated a prevalent tendency to show women passively lying around wearing little, two of the three most frequently repeated ads during the 1989-90 period in fact depicted two of the most seemingly autonomous, actively engaged women of the entire bunch – one of whom was overweight and middle-aged (AAA, Figure 4 on page 138), and the other who was fully and conservatively attired, shown having solo adventures in various locales (TWA, Figure 34 on page 238). (The third most frequently appearing ad in the 1989-90 sample, however, for *Little Switzerland* boutique shops, depicted a woman in a bathing suit on a beach who had just been shopping for luxury-goods.)

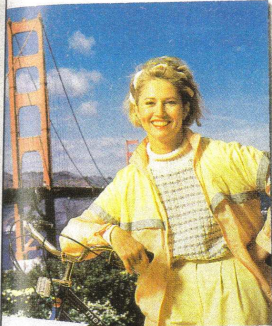
This latter point segues into a pivotal point recurrent through out this thesis, that ads are the products of profit-driven corporations, whose *raison d'être* is to make money via the consumer by projecting a particular discourse that includes a calculated image. It must be noted that there may have been a potential inherent bias within my sample against the types of ads featured in the three travel magazines selected – the only substantial sources of female traveler images. However, a point of irony which emerged in my work was that a great deal of travel advertising depicting women did not influence these particular consumers to spend and was alienating to this sample of active female travel consumers. As became apparent in focus group discussions, there may be some generational divide between what women view as sexual freedom and empowerment versus what they perceive as sexually objectifying

women in a commercially exploitative way. Several authors, including Vavclus (2002: 171), argued that many female portrayals are “really nothing but a male producer’s fantasy of feminism.” One explanation offered for the prevalence of spa ads was to mitigate safety concerns women may have in traveling (Richter, 1995); the majority of participants, however, suggested that they found the disengaged passivity of these models to be alienating.

Milkie (2002: 841) asserted that, “While symbolic annihilation of women in mass media represents a powerful aspect of stratification, it is also an arena in which definitions can be resisted or contested by individuals and collectives.” She goes on to suggest that, “the core-problematic in feminist media research is to understand how femininity is defined in the culture.” Some of the key findings of this study in the context of travel media may be reduced to her statement. Readers actively make meanings with cultural materials and may also, as indicated in my focus groups, explicitly criticize or resist the dominant messages (as suggested by Fowles, 1996; Goldman, 1992; Tellis, 2004; Goffman, 1979; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Milkie, 2002). Post-feminist precepts of women as sexually empowered and alluring beings did not appear to have as strong a foot-hold with my participants as did more classic liberal feminist principles. For example, although there may be an even sharper age division than was fully apparent in my study, the majority of female participants complained that female bodies were gratuitously displayed in an unnecessarily sexualized way to sell travel products – in spite of current popular assertions that feminism may be considered out of date and suffering its own current lack of “sex appeal” in image (Webber, 2005; Wolfe, 1997; Dowd, 2005).

A further explanation regarding the gap between common ad depictions of female travelers, and participants' resentful perception of them as sexual and literally pacified objectification, may boil down to genuine and non-maliced oblivion on the part of the ad producers, as indicated by Tellis (2004), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), and Morgan and Pritchard (1998), in reference to what female travelers themselves truly enjoy. Another may be slowness on the part of creative advertisement agencies to recognize that "regular" (i.e. older, average-looking) women are an important source of revenue, in terms of making a larger proportion of travel decisions – and that they prefer seeing women in ads with whom they can identify and to whom they may relate. Older participants expressed interest in participating in activities while on vacation, sexual and otherwise, and a marked desire to see women closer to their own ages in ads, with whom they would better identify, rather than a young, perfect-bodied model who did not engage in any of their preferred travel activities. These older participants were also more inclined to have incomes of interest to advertisers of a number of the higher-end goods and services portrayed in these travel ads. To illustrate these discussion points, Table 20 indicates that the older women in my participant sample displayed pronounced interest in activities of all kinds listed. However, they did not see any subjects their own ages in the travel ad sample with whom they could identify.

The new TWA TAKEOFF PASS gives you a year of travel and a world of possibilities for just \$1,995.



Six roundtrip flights — one low price!

The TWA TAKEOFF PASSSM is a one-year pass that lets you take six roundtrip flights on TWA to the most desirable locations in the world — all for one low price. Choose from 20 TWA cities in Europe and more than 80 TWA cities in the U.S. and the Caribbean. For just \$1,995, the TWA TAKEOFF PASS gives you:

- Europe**
one roundtrip
- Hawaii**
one roundtrip

The Bahamas or Puerto Rico
one roundtrip

The continental U.S.
three roundtrips

A year not long enough to travel? You may choose an 18-month TWA TAKEOFF PASS for only \$150 more. Either way, you're guaranteed six roundtrips for one low price that cannot change — no matter what happens to airfares.

Seniors save an extra 10%.

If you're at least 62 years of age, we'll give you 10% off the already incredibly low price.

Specially priced for a limited time.

At this low price, we must limit the number of TWA TAKEOFF PASSes sold. So call now, or mail the attached reply card. We'll send you a free, full-color brochure with complete details. Or contact your travel agent. Then get ready for a very exciting year of travel with TWA.



TWA TAKEOFF PASS



1 800 872-8374

The TWA TAKEOFF PASS is non-transferable, non-refundable, good for coach travel only. Seats are limited and may not be available on all flights or days of week. Security surcharges and applicable government fees of \$32 not included. Other restrictions apply.

TODAY'S TWA.
FIND OUT HOW GOOD WE REALLY ARE!

TWA

Figure 34: Airline. TWA. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure April, 1989: 41

Table 20: Preferred Vacation Activities by Age (in descending order)

Participant #	Age	Income	Amount spent on travel in past two years	Cultural Activities noted as important	Physical Activity / Sports noted as important	Sexual activity on vacation noted as important
20	68	\$100 000 +	over \$6000	yes	no	no
42	63	\$100 000 +	over \$6000	yes	yes	yes
8	61	\$81 000 - 100 000	over \$6000	yes	no	no
31	61	\$ 60 000 -	over \$6000	yes	yes	no
45	60	\$60 000 -	over \$6000	yes	no	yes
10	59	\$60 000 -	\$4000 - 6000	yes	no	no
23	59	\$60 000 -	\$2000 - 3000	yes	no	no
18	58	\$35 000 - 50 000	\$4000 - 6000	yes	yes	no
43	57	\$35 000 -	over \$6000	yes	no	yes
41	56	\$60 000 +	over \$6000	yes	yes	yes
7	55-59	\$71 000 - 80 000	over \$6000	yes	no	no
40	55 - 59	\$70 000 - 80 000	over \$6000	yes	no	no
4	53	\$61 000 - 70 000	\$2000-3000	yes	no	yes
46	51	\$100 000 +	\$4000 - 6000	no	no	yes
27	51	\$35 000 - 50 000	\$4000 - 6000	yes	no	yes
47	50 - 54	\$61 000 - 70 000	over \$6000	yes	yes	no
9	50-54	\$100 000 +	\$4000 - 6000	yes	no	yes
14	50	\$60 000 +*	over \$6000	yes	yes	no answer
3	45-49	\$100 000 +	\$2000-3000	no	yes	no
36	42	\$60 000 +	over \$6000	yes	yes	no
39	42	\$51 000 - 60 000	\$4000 - 6000	yes	no	yes
37	42	\$35 000 - [part-time]	over \$6000	yes	no	N/A
21	40	\$100 000 +	\$4000 - 6000	yes	yes	no
25	40	\$100 000 +	over \$6000	yes	no	no
38	38	\$100 000 +	\$4000 - 6000	no	yes	yes
24	36	\$100 000 +	over \$6000	yes	no	no
2	30-39	\$35 000 - 50 000	\$2000-3000	yes	no	no
22	20 - 29	\$100 000 +	over \$6000	yes	no	N/A
28	25	\$35 000 - 50 000	\$4000 - 6000	yes	no	no
19	23	\$70 000 - 80 000	less than \$2000	no	yes	yes

6.1.1 Evidence Substantiating Urry's (2002) Claims

While it must be considered within the selective context of the three higher-end travel magazines used to provide data, a considerable amount of evidence supported several of Urry's (2002) suggested thematic emphases in post-modern tourism marketing. Content analysis as well as participant input confirmed contentions made by Urry (2002), Crang (1998), Coleman and Crang (2002) and Morgan and Pritchard (2001, 1998) with respect to tourism as a form of consumption associated with elitism and identity. The bulk of these ads suggested a preoccupation with passivity and luxury – arguably because one was able to enjoy them. The “high-end” cachet was usually implicit (e.g. a uniformed service person; a silver breakfast tray close by) but occasionally more blatant (e.g. *MasterCard Park Hyatt Paris* was priced for the weekend at \$1,300). A notable emphasis on high levels of service appeared in both periods of ads, but particularly in the more recent. Ambler and Hoffer (2004) argued that the extravagance and indicators of luxury in advertising are predominant selling features. These service signifiers also provided evidence of the system of referentiality discussed in the advertising literature (e.g. Tellis, 2004), in terms of associations with which advertisers strive to link with their products. Frith (1995), as well as Ambler and Hollier (2004) also pointed out that the waste and excess in ads were a large part of what made them appealing, although the reasons for this were not explained. While signifiers of luxury and elitism were well distinguishable in the ads, the irony was that my research participants blatantly reported their dislike of them, as discussed in Sections 5.2 and 5.3.

Tourism advertising in my sample also borrowed from both “popular” and “high” culture (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 86; Urry, 2002). Several scholars referred to the use of celebrities in ads (Fowles, 1996; Urry, 2002: 82; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000, 1998), suggesting that the use of images with such associations reinforced particular symbols, views and identities, and thus continued the perpetuation of stereotypes. One may presume, for example, that the inclusion of Isabella Rossellini (*Mandarin Oriental Hotels*, and *Silverseas Cruises*, overlooking Venice), was intended to associate the product with elegance, (tastefully subdued) glamour and wealth. (Indeed, *Mandarin Oriental Hotels* included in individual ads Isabella Rosellini (twice), as well as one ad each featuring Jerri Hall, Michelle Yeoh, and Whoopi Goldberg. *Abercrombie and Kent’s* ad subject (Figure 24 on page 165), embarking onto a private jet, may bear a deliberate resemblance to Jacqueline Kennedy. These celebrities’ personas, particularly in the cases of Isabella Rossellini and Michelle Yeoh, confer an upscale quality.)

The link between tourism and popular culture ensures that each “reflects” the other, rendering the process of image creation and consumption a circular process (Crang, 1998; Urry, 2002; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). Images drawn from popular culture may influence tourism ad creators and consumers, and the reverse. Evidence of a potential dysfunction in this proposed circuit of culture, however, was manifested by my participants who expressed resentment regarding such projections of prestige. The elitist approach to tourism marketing was not one favoured by most of them: in fact, they more frequently expressed resentment and contempt toward this approach when they perceived advertisers using it, as was apparent in some of their quoted comments in Chapter 5. Their disapproving reactions may go

unheeded a lot longer, since the types of images which many of them disliked are still proportionately as prevalent in the ads currently featuring female tourists as they were sixteen years ago.

I also found further evidence regarding Urry's (2002: 84) theme of self-actualization or "me-ness"—beyond the prevalence of massages, spas, and having one's body "worked on." Examples would include two ads for *Renaissance* (Figure 26 on page 168); the *Grand Canyon* ad (Figure 13 on page 148); and the others previously highlighted as indicative of a "female gaze" (e.g. *Silverseas* fjord view, *Utah*; Figure 9, page 145 and Figure 10, page 145). Each depicted a female apparently in a self-directed state of engaged fulfillment, even bliss. The numerous sleeping/trance-like ads also supported this notion: the implicit message is that women *want* to 'zone out', so they do. Urry (2002: 84), discussing prior work of Ehrenreich (1982), highlighted how this contemporary fetishizing of self-involvement/interest was manifested by advertisements portraying self-indulgence, irresponsibility, and "isolationist detachment", also formative of identity and elitism. These messages were indeed apparent in my magazine data; and again my participants disliked them.

Data from my study further indicated that advertisers do sometimes create the impression of "tourism as a sacred journey" (Urry, 2002; Graburn, 1989; MacCannell, 1989). Ad examples include those for *New Zealand* (Figure 15 on page 153); *India* (Figure 16 on page 154); the *Grand Canyon* (Figure 13 on page 148) and *Phoenix* meditation wheel walk (Figure 33 on page 226). This sacrality was also apparent in some of the "romantic gaze"/"female gaze" ads, in which the female was shown in an apparent state of deep reflection as

she gazed into the “magnificent scenery,” cited as a requirement of Urry’s (2002) “romantic gaze”. This trend was once more particularly apparent in what I have labeled the “female gaze” ads, depicting autonomous women enjoying their views, as opposed to being the enjoyed view (e.g. *Iceland* (Figure 7 on page 142); *Utah* (Figure 10 on page 145). Urry (2002) noted an increase in the prestige-related tourist demand for what he termed the “romantic gaze”, entailing an emphasis on a sense of solitude, and in gazing upon ever-more spectacular scenery. These observations also substantiate work done by Pritchard and Havitz (2006) which indicated that, in tourist feedback which was destination-specific, environmental factors such as natural scenery, flora and fauna were ranked as highly important in terms of overall tourist enjoyment. Natural scenery was by no means lost on the advertisers I sampled in term of referentiality. All of the ads cited in this paragraph associated their product with natural scenery, presumably to advance commercial gain.

My sample ads also related to the discussion of how “tourists are frequently bedazzled and allured by promotional images and fobbed off with manufactured and superficial images” (Crang and Coleman, 2002: 8; Crang, 1998; Urry, 2002), particularly in the ads for Las Vegas hotels (e.g. *Mirage*, Figure 27; *Bellagio*, Figure 14; *MGM*; *Mandalay Bay*). Crang (1998) and Urry (2002) had also discussed how tourism’s manufactured and controlled environment was designed to offer fulfillment through the purchase of commodities. Turner and Ash’s (1975) suggestion that mass tourists were placed at the centre of a severely circumscribed world, protected, and relieved of responsibility, was confirmed in most of these ads, particularly those depicting women in state of minimal consciousness (for

example, *Le Meridien*, Figure 1; *Visa*, Figure 2; *Sheraton*; *Westin*; *British Airways*; *Singapore Airlines*).

6.1.2 Large Corporations and the Hegemonic Discourse in Ads

Ads are created so that the manufacturers of products – and the publishers of magazines – may maintain and expand their profit margins. Chambers (2000) pointed out that tourism consequently is a highly mediated activity, and Urry (2002) noted that the tourist gaze can not be left to chance: people must be taught how, when and where to gaze. Composition aside, the calculated intensity of the photographic techniques employed in producing these ads were not accidental, from models' prominent cleavage, to Whoopi Goldberg and Jerri Hall appearing not a day over 36 years old in the *Mandarin Oriental Hotel* ads.

Aside from the considerable funds required to place a full-paged ad, considerable overlap appeared in the types of themes shown. Out of 141 ads in the latter period, 20 ads featured massage or spa-related activities; 37 featured women reclining and/or semi-conscious. As noted in the literature, corporations appear to retain a large degree of control in directing tourists toward what remains profitable (Echtner and Prasad, 2003; Hawthorne and Winter, 2003; Jackson, 1991; Mellinger, 1994; Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Thurot and Thurot, 1983). A notable proportion of these ads were sponsored by conglomerate-owned tourism enterprises such as large hotel chains and credit card-company-sponsored endeavors, who could afford to run their advertisements repeatedly. (For example, the *Visa* ad (Figure 2, page 136) appeared 11 times in my sample data for 2003 – 2004.)

Intertextuality (Hollinshead, 1999; Foucault, 1980) is also relevant to this discussion: the meanings of any one discursive image or text depended also on meanings carried by others. Depictions in these ads did not oppose or contradict depictions in other ads. One generic resort had the same desirable minimal three of the “4 ‘S’ s” (i.e., sun, surf, sex and sand) as any of the others, and the same apparent high level of service.

The depictions in these ads are logical from a commercial perspective: large hotel chains profit by selling places to sleep; higher-end spa services offer massages and relaxation. (Business meeting facilities featuring women appeared in only one recent ad for *Sofitel*, which could not be included in my sample for its lack of unequivocal relevance to tourism.) Nonetheless, an emerging possibility from this study is that such large corporations may be able to attract even greater profitability from female consumers by better emphasizing iconography of great destinations in which they are situated, as well as more engaging activities in which women may participate while using their premises. Exceptions to large-corporation ads featuring disengaged subjects included the *Renaissance Hotel* ads (Figure 26 on page 168), which were well received overall by focus group subjects. Ads such as *Le Meridien* (Figure 1, page 135) and *Visa* (Figure 2, page 136) were not.

According to Urry (1990/2002), those who consider themselves “elite” must continuously find new locations, uncontaminated by mass tourism. A vague or ambiguous sense of destination in advertising may give an advertiser (such as *Visa*) more ‘bang for its advertising buck’ by not associating with a “has-been” or undesirable destination – a categorization that can occur quickly and unexpectedly as in the case of natural disasters or terrorism-related

attacks. Generic placeless ads can also sidestep the depiction of destinations so elite as to alienate more mid-range consumers by being too obviously out of their economic and/or social grasp.

The review of these travel ads indicates that the sense of “identity through consumption” is in fact critical to the commercial imperative to sell products. Wolf (1997: 18) quoted economist John Galbraith in noting that “woman in her role as consumer has been essential to the development of our industrial society... Behaviour that is essential for economic reasons is transformed into a social virtue.” Travel consumption of the commonly depicted activities in travel ads has been presented in such a manner. Urry (2002: 74) further noted the importance of daydreaming to most forms of consumption, and how central this is to holiday-making. Arguably, travel advertisements reviewed for this study are intended to create such a kind of collective daydreaming.

Nash (2004: 467) noted that marketers must constantly strive to gain some competitive advantage in an evolving market to fill and even carve out new niches. His insight explains the evolving portrayal (if slowly) of female tourists in ads. At least parts of the industry apparently believe that it is now in their economic interests to depict women participating in sports, looking a little older than previously, and shown engaged in a “gaze” of their own. Representations of female travelers, whether deemed appealing to a large number of female viewers or not, may be traced back to someone’s commercially-motivated perception of what will ultimately best sell a product. As Herbst (2004: 40) summarized, “Ultimately, the meaning of power depends not so much on the act historically defined as empowering but on

the interests of those in power who define the meaning of power.” There was evidence in this study for the post-structuralist assertion that multinational corporations control globalized image media to their own hegemonic economic advantage and thus play a critical role in the constructions and perpetuations of specific gendered representations which contribute to this end, as argued by Rose (2001: 140).

The most striking way in which ads sponsored by multinational corporations such as hotel chains reveal control over the travel industries was by the genericism each ascribed to the destinations depicted or visually erased (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Enloe, 2000; Cohen, 2001). The irony was that hotel chains in particular were generally themed in the least appealing ways as far as the travel consumer-participant herself reported. Individual destinations (such as Iceland, Figure 7, and Utah, Figure 10), more inclined to produce ads better in sync with what the women reported they actually liked, probably had much smaller advertising budgets – as indicated by their less frequently repeated ads.

From a corporate standpoint, the ads in this study’s sample amply demonstrate multinationalism and globalization, in the generic “placelessness” with which many of the prominently featured ads are imbued. Morgan and Pritchard (2000: 273) also noted the complexities in tourism destination advertising, and the persistent failure of tourism advertising to create “a sufficiently differentiated identity for the tourist destination, so that the place stands out from the competition.” They also noted that most national tourism organizations have limited budgets and yet they have to market globally, competing not just with other global destinations, but also with other global corporate brands (2000: 274).

Massey (1994) as well as Edensor and Kothari (1994) highlighted that some particular places and spaces are valorized at the expense of others, a notion highly applicable to tourist sites. This point was illustrated by resort and destination depictions in popular travel magazine ads used for this study. The prominence (“privileging”) of certain tourist destinations and/or images, mostly by great contrasts in frequency of appearance, largely came down to who was paying for how many advertisements; yet nonetheless, a distinctive impression was left as to which destinations, usually by way of resort ads, were more “relevant” or compelling. For example, Hawaii was depicted in seven ads in the 2003-04 period; and Arizona in four. Utah was only found in one, as was Nevada.

The privileging of particular ways of portraying female travelers also become apparent within this study, culminating in one critical question: who makes the decisions to represent contemporary female travelers in these ways, and to what end? The ads indicated little pluralism or multiculturalism in terms of subject representation. Only 10% of recent ads depicted a non-white subject, with none depicted in the ads examined for the period of 1989-90 (Table 5 on page 128). To paraphrase Mona Domosh (2003: 141) in citing Bernard Anderson, communities are imagined, delineating a group of people who believe they belong together because of perceived commonalities. One could also argue the presence of a “middle class (upwardly mobile aspirations) gaze,” as noted by Urry (2002) and Morgan and Pritchard (1998) (e.g. ads for *MasterCard Park Hyatt* (Figure 11); *InterContinental Le Grand Paris*). (These ads portrayed a bias toward the able-bodied; the slim; the youthful; and no doubt several others.)

6.1.3 Discrepancies Between Depictions of Female Travelers in Ads, and Female Consumer Preferences

The findings of this thesis suggest a distinctive disconnect between how travel-related advertisers present women in travel ads in terms of their appearance, pursuits (or lack thereof) and setting, in comparison to what the sample of active female travel consumers themselves reported as appealing. Female travel ad subjects are seemingly more interested in lying down in minimal attire in a trance-like state, and in being “pampered” than in actively engaging within their environment. These images are largely incompatible with activities female traveler-participants reported they enjoy doing or looked forward to when they travel, and in terms of what they report they find resonant in travel advertising. The ads also bore little relationship to what participants reported motivated them to travel (Table 9 - Table 11).

Another point of divergence between what was commonly depicted versus stated participant preferences was the variation in settings commonly shown in travel ads, compared with settings that female travelers reported they sought and enjoyed. Their first preference was by far for an “Urban Historical Setting”, followed by open-air or night markets (Table 12). Instead, as demonstrated by content analysis, the 2003-04 ads featuring female travelers show them more predominantly in:

- Beachfront settings – 20%
- Spa-related settings – 12.5%
- By resort pools – 11%
- In private hotel or cruise rooms and balconies, passive – 8.3%
- In public hotel areas such as casinos – 7%

The natural settings, however, depicted in 20% of the contemporary ads, were more in keeping with the stated interests of my research participants.

Another recent advertising trend, for which I found no indication in the scholarly literature, was to show subjects at home, either preparing for or daydreaming about their trip (e.g. *TiVo*, Figure 19; and *Queen Mary 2*, Figure 20) or, in the case of several *Celebrity Cruises* ads, wistfully reminiscing about how great their vacation had been (e.g. Figure 21). This trend suggests an increasingly prevalent image in female-featuring travel ads that may be paraphrased as, “I’m a regular person *just like you*.” The at-home ads relate to Crang’s (1998: 7) assertion that the home is the predominant arena in which consumption takes place, and that most geographic theories, by focusing on ‘production’, leave the traditionally feminine domestic sphere dependent upon the male-dominated economy. These home-focused ads, however, were generally unpopular with my study’s focus group participants, who wanted to look more at actual destinations.

The lag in the industry’s view of women as important travel consumers was well noted in the literature (e.g. Apostolopoulos and Sonmez, 2001; Gibson, 2001; Cohen, 2001; Swain, 2002; Richter, 2001; MacCannell, 2002; Westwood et al., 2000; Pritchard, 2001; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998). What I found surprising, however, was that the one creative agency executive interviewed, who seemed highly astute regarding other contemporary trends, noted that women are just beginning to be recognized as a valuable travel market, and as key decision-makers in families. Participants further confirmed the belief that women make more of the travel decisions in a household. This discrepancy illustrates the limited level of communication between academic findings and industry information. It has now been 17 years since Valene Smith (1989) first published her work on women as taste-makers. Since then, her observations have received further confirmation by

250

Pearce (1989), Pritchard (2001), Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000) and Small (1999); yet they are apparently novel to the travel industry.

Several possible factors may further help explain the disconnect between common ad depictions and participants' stated preferences. The point was raised in Section 1.1 that travel is arguably a very personally experienced form of consumption (Urry, 2002; Westwood et al., 2000; Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000), that is highly interwoven with one's own self-image and sense of identity. When participants perceived ads as more in accordance with the tastes of a male-oriented audience, than as respectful of participants' own senses of "female traveler" identity, they criticized the imposition of someone else's extraneous ideal as to how a traveling woman should look.

Tellis (2004) discussed reasons why advertisers may continue to run ads which were not well received by viewers. Factors relevant to this sample of travel ads may include the following: not wanting one's competitors' names or products to out-represent one's own to consumers; repetition of a particular ad supposedly breeds a more comfortable and therefore affectionate familiarity with the product; limited budgets; outdated beliefs; and failure to monitor an ad's effectiveness (Tellis, 2004; Fowles, 1996; Goldman, 1992; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000). Indeed these explanations may clarify the seeming gap between advertiser offerings and stated participant-consumer preferences. Nonetheless, these explanations have their flaws. Tellis (2004: 118), for example, argued that the mere act of repetitive exposure of a stimulus can lead to preference for it, even though consumers do not remember the exposure. A more reviled ad in my focus group sample, *Bellagio* (Figure 14, page 150), was

also the most frequently shown ad in the three magazines used in my study during 2003 – 2004, appearing 14 times. According to Tellis (2004), my participants would have liked it better with repeated exposure. Regardless of explanations, if the majority of my participants believed that many of the ads in the sample shown were offensively limiting to women – not to mention uninteresting – the possibility exists that the aversion may intensify, or at least simply not subside, with repeated exposure.

Not insignificantly, many participants professed that prior to participation in this study, they had paid negligible attention to female-featuring travel ads, also not a good thing for advertisers. They disliked a number of commonly employed strategies. Particularly negative reactions were brought on by, in participant words, the “passive” and “disengaged” states of the subjects in many of the ads, their “blatant sexualization” and youthful appearances, and also by the “placelessness” (i.e. genericism) in the majority of the ads studied (to be discussed in more detail below). They wanted more of a travelogue-like backdrop, depicting women doing more of the interesting activities they themselves enjoyed while traveling. From the advertisers’ perspective, however, one critical question may remain unanswered: in spite of the hostility and even outrage expressed with respect to ads in my sample, would female consumers in fact identify to the extent of opening their wallets for a product whose ad portrayed a less attractive, overweight or older person?

This question relates to information gleaned in the interview with the one creative agency willing to provide input for my research, Arnold Worldwide. Executive Mr. Nardini referred to the alienating effect of “model types” in ads, congruent with what my participants also

expressed. Mr. Nardini noted that since real models in ads may be alienating to the average consumer, the models in *Celebrity Cruises* ads deliberately looked like “real people”, further suggesting that “people taking cruises are basically Middle America.” The complicating factor, however, is that a significant proportion of participants rejected the implications of the routine “frumpiness” and “lousy life” of the subject in *Celebrity*’s “average-person” ad shown to focus groups (i.e., the ad with the reminiscing woman on the park bench and the caption, “Once I was a Queen”, Figure 21, page 162).

Although I found no indication in the ads either of post-tourism – i.e., the self-conscious acknowledgment that one is a tourist (Urry, 2002: 90-1), nor of the supposed interest in heritage tourism and the ordinariness of other people’s lives, what did become apparent in reading participant answers and in the group discussions was that participants wanted to see more of these. In response to being asked about depictions of female travelers that the research participants would prefer to see (Focus Group Worksheet Questions #2 and #4), participants offered the following sample remarks: “Older, sophisticated, demure, friendly, professional, single” (Participant #2). “Less stylish, more wholesome, more unique, curious, more experienced in life ... Depicting women engaged in more adventurous terrain, working with kids, meditating, sightseeing” (Participant #19). “Portrayal of woman as autonomous” (Participant #9). “As a single traveler, I prefer to see ads that depict women traveling on their own” (Participant #28). “Real women. Backpackers. Practically dressed. Capable. Adventurous. Energetic and vibrant” (Participant #23). “Regular/normal looking; active, happy, relaxed, natural, no special fashion, engaged in an activity with others (any age)” (Participant #36). “Real women in real travel situations, e.g. at markets, boarding trains,

hiking, site seeing, museums, trying new things, etc.” (Participant #23). “- middle-age – intelligent – active-adventurous” (Participant #47). “Someone you can relate to/see yourself in place of.” (Participant #37). “Someone who is actually interested in the people/place that they are visiting, and not the locals’/operators’ perceptions of what [they] think we want.” (Participant #22). “Casually sophisticated and approachable – centered – focused” (Participant #20).

I would argue, based on focus group discussions and results, that ad subjects shown on a more mentally engaged level, placing greater emphasis on Urry’s (2002: 84) suggested preoccupation with self-actualization or “me-ness,” would have been better received and more in accordance with participant interests than were most of the present depictions shown in this sample of advertisements, particularly those images deemed to sexualize women. Participants substantiated some of what Gibson and Jordan (2001) reported with regard to the motivations of female travelers. For example, participants confirmed that they were indeed motivated to travel by a sense of autonomy and “inner fulfillment”, as well as the desire to meet and interact with different people. Tellis (2004), Fowles (1996) and Morgan and Pritchard (2000) discussed the use of emotion and humour to effectively break down the consumer’s “defenses” against a product. Ironically, participants may have better enjoyed ads employing more emotion and humour than they did the status quo.

The prominent theme of women being depicted as mentally disengaged or sleeping warrants further attention. This phenomenon may acknowledge the stress associated with women’s involvement in the professional workforce, while continuing to manage the bulk of

domestic duties (Small, 2005, 2002; Selanniemi, 2002). These ads presuppose women's immense desire for stress relief. A more cynical interpretation, in light of the many patriarchal allegations outlined in Chapter 2, would be that "tranced-out" women are non-threatening, a presumably desirable state from the vantage point of a hegemonic "male gaze" (compare Dworkin and Wachs, 2004 and Wolf, 1997). If a massaged, semi- to undressed woman is a happy one then, the argument may follow, it would not take much to keep female tourism consumers quietly and contentedly opening their wallets, without disturbing a longstanding gender order. I personally suspect accuracy lies somewhere in the middle of these two opposing views – i.e., that the advertising industry simply projects what it believes women with financial means want – even if based on increasingly obsolete, gendered-biased notions that are no longer accurate. Marketing decision-makers at the large multinational corporations who largely sponsor the "zoned-out" ads are likely more interested in turning a profit than in insidiously sending women off for a long sleep to maintain some sort of hegemonic, patriarchal control. However, several authors strongly suggest that the notions of "what women want" seem to be laden with outdated patriarchally-influenced assumptions (Westwood et al., 2000; Pritchard, 2001; Dworkin and Wachs, 2004). Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000: 361), as well as Frith (1995) and Shields (2006), also noted that when female consumers sense subliminal (or more blatant) messages of female submissiveness in tourism advertisements, it tends to negatively affect the image they hold of the destination under consideration, and even make the destination appear to be biased against women.

The outcomes of this research suggest that female travelers are not typically in the anti-intellectual state in which many of the ads examined depicted them. Fourteen of the original

38 respondents had Masters degrees, and one had a PhD. My one interview with an ad creator also provided some indication of the increasing recognition that female consumers often had advanced levels of formal education. It may be that the so-called circuit of culture of image creation and consumption as a circular process (Crang, 1998; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Urry, 2002; Crang and Coleman, 2002) is malfunctioning in terms of continuing non-resonating female portrayals in travel ads, but the industry has not yet noticed. Alternatively, perhaps the larger corporations continue to profit so well in spite of any poorly received ads that, in light of explanatory advertising principles (such as maintaining sheer product exposure competitive with that of rivals), the advertisers' interest in changing their representations of women would be negligible.

6.1.4 Progressive Changes Related to Portrayals of Females

Evidence of evolutionary progress was apparent in the more recent period of travel ads featuring females. Their actual number increased from 3% in 1989-90 to 9% of all travel ads shown in the three travel magazines used for this study in 2003-04. An increasing proportion of passably "regular"-looking women now appear in ads. Mr. Nardini of Arnold Worldwide further indicated that the industry is in fact finally "beginning to recognize" that women are important decision-makers in reference to travel plans. Female subjects are shown in a proportionally higher degree of activity and engagement than previously and, significantly, partaking in a "gaze" of their own (even if simultaneously still "under surveillance"). The emergence in the more recent ads of this "female gaze" may indicate some recognition that,

as expressed by the focus group participants, female travelers are indeed interested in greater engagement with their surroundings.

Analysis of the more recent period of ads was considerably more complex, perhaps in part because of the proliferation that took place over the 15-year period of more travel ads featuring solely females. Complications are apparent in the observation that, although a striking number of arguably sexualizing portrayals of female travelers continues, some depictions may be interpreted as more blatantly suggestive than the bulk of what appeared in 1989 – 1990. Two such ad examples follow in Figure 35 for *Cancun*, and Figure 36 for the *Cayman Islands*. (In Figure 36, the woman in the upper middle frame is inserting a straw into her mouth and is staring at the camera.)

At the same time, beyond volume, there is a notable increase in individual ads which depict women as increasingly more autonomous executors of their own holidays, in terms of clearly being the party who made the travel plans (for example, see Figure 22, page 163 showing an ad for *Delta Sky Miles*). There is also an increased level of depiction in the latter period of women engaged in more actual activities, such as sporting in ads for Bahamas (Figure 37 on page 260), Honduras (Figure 5 on page 139) and Australia (Figure 6, page 140).

Mayan Kings
discovered a land of eternal pleasures...

Isn't it about time for a beachside massage? Revitalize and relax? Reach spiritual equilibrium in a thousand-year-old steam lodge in the middle of tropical jungle? Or rejuvenate in thalassic tubs, mineral and salt therapies, Vichy showers, gyms and more. Pamper yourself in the land of legendary pleasures.

Live it like a king
cancun
MEXICAN CARIBBEAN

www.cancun.info

MEXICO
www.visitmexico.com

Fall in Cancun...into a million dollars!...Visit us from August 20th to December 20th and you could win a cool million dollars!
For more info. cancun.info

Figure 35: Cancun, Mexico. (State-sponsored.) Advertisement. Travel+Leisure May 2003: 127.

Help yourself to
three delicious days.

February 5 – 8, 2004 The Cayman Islands invites you to join world renowned chefs Randy Lewis and E. Michael Reidt, along with wine experts Anthony Giglio and Joshua Wesson, at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Grand Cayman Resort and Villas for “The Cayman Classic,” a three-day epicurean escape. Call your travel professional or Continental Airlines Vacations at 1.800.829.7777 to book your trip.

FOOD & WINE
MAGAZINE

HYATT
REGENCY
GRAND CAYMAN
RESORT AND VILLAS AT BRITANNIA

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Grand Cayman • Cayman Brac • Little Cayman

Continental Airlines
Vacations

Figure 36: Cayman Islands. Advertisement. (Co-sponsors: Cayman Islands; Hyatt Regency; Continental Airlines). Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Nov. 2003: 87.

© 2004 The Islands of The Bahamas

Island Hopping.
Day 2. Eleuthera.

Meet Amber Morton.
Amber works on Wall Street.
She is a city girl
through and through.
Today, Amber said "giddyup" 36 times.
And liked it.

Our 700 islands could
change you forever.
bahamas.com

THE ISLANDS OF
THE bahamas

**Figure 37: Bahamas, The Islands of the Bahamas. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler
Feb. 2004: 75.**

Some advertising changes indicated that portrayals of women in travel ads now more accurately reflect their other expanding societal roles and arguable proclivities and interests. Related to this broader identity for women, the presence in ads of “Items to indicate multiple identities and interests” remained constant over the 15-year span at approximately for 8%, perhaps reflecting women’s alleged dual professional-domestic responsibilities, along with independent interests and proclivities (e.g. Small, 2005, 2002; Anastovassa, 2002). This type of ad may also acknowledge the large market of single female travelers.

6.1.5 “Placelessness”

The implications of globalization and multi-nationalization, and an increasing tendency in travel advertisements to present places as generic and interchangeable rather than specific, became clear in the course of conducting this research, beyond the wide circulation of the travel magazines used for raw data. To a large degree, the ads used as data for this study promoted a generic replicable experience that could be had in far-flung parts of the world, accentuated by a high level of aesthetics, luxury and service. This trend was particularly visible in hotel/resort ads, but also in those ads selling some form of mobility – i.e., cruise ads, airlines, and train travel. Travel-related service ads as well, frequently sponsored by credit card companies, made prolific use of a nameless beach, *somewhere* sunny and warm. As Urry (2002) argued, globalization is largely responsible for disseminating a standardized repertoire of consumer goods, images and lifestyles worldwide. Morgan and Pritchard (1998: 96) concluded that women are not the only subjects in ads to be portrayed stereotypically.

For example, countries and regions may be advertised through caricatured identities or stereotypes.

The diminished proportion in the more recent ad sample of specific destination-oriented ads was striking. From a geographical perspective, they have morphed into what I now refer to as, “*‘Nice place!’-lessness.*” Chain hotels published five times as many ads as they did fifteen years earlier in the publications I studied. They, along with credit card companies, are responsible for the larger majority of placeless ads. Spa/massage ads also had a largely “transferable” quality. Today multi-national corporations have commodified a particular destination trope (usually implying at least three of the “4 Ss”: sun, sand, surf, sex), promoting a generic place image to sell their travel products/services. Clearly, hotel chains and credit card companies have far deeper pockets in terms of advertising budgets than do specific destinations, the majority of which only ran their ads once. This study provided ample illustration of how image corporations do in fact create pseudo places (Boorstin, 1992; Urry, 2002; Crang, 1998; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000). For example, entirely absent were any indicators of reality such as any other (potentially annoying) tourists either at the beach or in hotel pools.

The sample of ads used for the focus groups unfortunately held fewer unequivocal examples of female autonomy than a smaller number of such ads that could not be utilized in the sample, due to insufficient frequency of appearances in the magazines. Individual destination ads in particular, such as *Utah* (Figure 10, page 145) or *Iceland* (Figure 7, page 142), more frequently depicted “the female gaze” or active engagement, and I believe

research participants would have better received them. From a geographical perspective, it was regrettable that more destination-oriented advertisements could not be included in the sample shown to focus group participants, to better facilitate some consideration of female travelers 'in place'. However, that the utilized ad selection illustrated an increased use of "placelessness" in ads is no less significant in terms of geographical contribution.

In 1989 – 1990, both hotels and airlines were far more inclined to emphasize place/destination as the main selling point for their actual product. In this earlier period, I also noted that scenery was far more frequently left to speak for itself – that is, a greater proportion of travel ads contained no human subjects at all. However, luxury and opulence were major selling features in the more contemporary period, in keeping with the types of magazines and associated readership in which they were found. The types of products advertised were often "transferable" in the sense that they could be "consumed" in multiple destinations, rather than just one (e.g. chain hotels, resorts, credit cards, airlines).

Contextual changes across the time spans studied deserve consideration. The world economy was robust during both 1989-90 and 2003-04 (Truman, 2006). Cavlek (2002: 479) has noted an ongoing exponential growth in tourism, stating that on average from 1950 to 1998, the average annual increase in world tourism was 6.97%. He postulated that since much of the growth of the tourism industry may be attributed to the increase in prepackaged holidays, the success of many destinations continues to depend on whether foreign tour operators include them in their programs.

Mowforth and Munt (1998) pointed out that the mass tourism of the 1980s and early 1990s was increasingly being replaced by niche tourism. This finding has been more recently substantiated by scholars such as Jordan and Gibson (2005) and Wilson and Little (2005), specifically in the context of female travel. Cavlek (2002: 482) argued that safety and security issues over the past decade further contributed to the growth of niche tourism, since some mass destinations declined as a result of government travel advisories, to which tourism operators and carriers must closely adhere. He cited by way of example the “Kosovo effect”: during and after the Balkan war, Croatia was not only off-limits, but tourists were also afraid to travel to Budapest, Prague, and Vienna; this in turn bankrupted a number of tourism operators. There was, however, no apparent decline in destination-oriented advertising proportionate to actual numbers of ads in each sample.

Between the two periods of data collection were a series of events in which tourists were either the intended targets and/or the victims of terrorism or acts of violence. Examples include China’s 1989 Tiananmen Square incident, the Islamic terrorist attacks occurring in Egypt between 1992 and 1994, and again in 1998 to 1999 and, perhaps most notably, the September 11, 2001 attacks occurring in the United States. One might speculate that these acts would have led to greater security concerns for the more contemporary tourist. Paradoxically, however, such concerns were no more apparent in the latter period of ads than they were in the former. One partial explanation for this may be that a considerable proportion of the specific destinations advertised in the three travel magazines utilized were in fact domestic, all based in the United States. The latter period of data also indicated a proliferation in more generically structured, “placeless” ads, frequently featuring the “4 Ss”

264

or spa services, sponsored by large multinational corporations, particularly hotel chains. The more recent set of ads, post-9/11, did not appear to particularly emphasize security concerns in the context of lone female travelers. An increased concern with security may possibly have been perceptible, even if implicitly, in travels ads directed to other types of tourists such as family – and therefore would not have been visible in this female-based study. The largely increased volume of female subject-focused advertisements from the earlier period suggests tour operators increased awareness of their viability as a niche market. Economics appear to have trumped security concerns. Cavlek (2002: 482) further postulates that tourists nowadays have such a wide holiday choice that they usually do not even consider traveling near places where they might be at risk: “One destination can easily be substituted by a similar or even a completely different one elsewhere.” This notion may help explain the increased presence of “placelessness” in ads.

The emphatic nature of tourism advertising has changed significantly over the years between the two periods of data collection. For example, the more recent increase in cruise holidays and spas, as well as the global mergers of airline and hotel corporations, may explain the vast increase in ads emphasizing the product-category “Hotels/Resorts.” Trends, such as the growth in recent years of ecotourism, adventure tourism and cultural/educational tourism, were absent from the ads in my ad data set. Such phenomena were more prominent in the ads emphasizing “Destinations” as products and, as noted above, may have potentially better represented the interests of some of my participant sample. The necessity to narrow down from 141 the number in the sample of recent ads I showed my participants made it

necessary to exclude other potentially information-rich travel ads, specifically those which were destination-oriented.

Advantages to the employment of “placelessness” were apparent. In the cases where an ad featuring highly transferable space of a sunny, pristine beach, for example, was labeled as a particular destination such as Hawaii, Jamaica (Figure 29, 213) or India (Figure 16, page 154), presumably the potential consumer could referentially associate any romantic and iconic associations with that particular place (for example: from film or literature), while assured of certain “standards”, such as comfortable familiarity in surroundings, food well within the range of one’s comfort zone, solicitous service, and even guidance or emotional support in addressing any local phenomenon which may be novel or unfamiliar. Such a package also implied sanitized, safe conditions – sometimes in stark contrast to the miserable and sometimes more frightening aspects of the actual poverty of some destinations’ inhabitants. The *India* ad (Figure 16), shown during the discussion period to two focus groups, provided a striking example. Several participants who had traveled to India expressed a distinctive dislike for the lack of authenticity depicted in that particular ad, comments including, “This is not really India,” and “This is not the India I know.” Any unpleasantness or inconvenient aspects of the developing world – and to some participants’ thinking, these adding to the richness and depth of experience - were sidestepped in such ads, to instead portray a safe, clean, exotified playground. The female travelers interviewed made clear that this sanitization does not reflect what they want to experience on a vacation, and that they do not respond well to these images.

Despite mention in the literature of the gendering of the landscape (e.g. Pritchard and Morgan, 2000b, 2000a; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 198; Massey, 1994; Rose, 1997), the only obvious noted example was the *Celebrity Cruises* Galapagos ad (Figure 25, page 166, found 8 times), where the lower half of the woman's nude body literally blends into becoming the iguana's tail – a point criticized by several participants. Some sample quotes were as follows. “I like spa services but I find it offensive that this company would combine that with a Galapagos trip where the primary goal would be exploration and discovery – to me the opposite of focusing on pampering oneself, I feel that women are being stereotyped” (Participant #38). “You are scaly and ugly and need a cruise” (Participant #20). (Perhaps there was some perceived human association with the iguana.) “Seems like two ads that have little to do with one another” (Participant #43).

6.2 Implications of This Research for Advertisers

Prior to conducting my focus groups, I presumed the ad creators would provide pivotal input – and was initially very frustrated by my lack of success in obtaining it. After the focus groups, I was more of the perception that the ad creators were missing out on critical information expressed by focus group participants regarding their ads. As Seddighi et al. (2001) argued, perceptions shape ensuing travel behaviours. Advertisers may truly be missing the mark in terms of how female travel consumers want to see women portrayed. Most study participants had never noticed travel ads before, and now better understood why: they were simply not compelling to them.

I suggest in light of this study's findings that producers of travel-related advertising for women would be wise to consider that female travelers in this study strongly indicated they would very much prefer to see actively engaged, older, and realistic-looking female subjects, in specific destinations. More importantly to corporations and organizations expending large sums of money to have such ads designed and printed, the (older) women who tended to spend the most money of the group on travel were the ones particularly inclined to react negatively to ad depictions of female travelers in perceived sexualized, passive or traditional roles.

Some important opportunities with respect to the older segment of the female travel consumer market are overlooked in present advertising. The subset of focus group participants over 50 years of age all expressed interest in cultural activities, and a greater proportion of these older women than those in any of the other age brackets expressed an interest in participating both in physical activities or sports while on vacation, and in sexual activity while on vacation (Table 20). My own surprise at this latter result suggested to me that I had also unthinkingly presumed some of the same inaccurate stereotypes perpetuated in ad depictions (- perhaps a microcosm of a fallaciously based circuit of culture) – such as an absence of sensual, active older women. Since women in this age segment appear also to be the greatest spenders on travel, the industry may ignore the interests of these older female travelers at its own peril. Assuming the travel industry is ultimately motivated by profit orientation, perhaps an appropriate question to be posed may be whether it should really be predominantly maintaining the images of younger, sexualized traveling females, or whether – particularly in light of aging demographics in the Western world - it may better increase

268

profits by better glamorizing “older, active and sexy” in travel ads. Large hotel chains, as well as travel-related services such as credit card companies, could enhance their profits by presenting a larger, lucrative female travel consumer markets with more compelling representations, such as those suggested above.

Also worth the industry’s attention is that, while 59% of participant respondents indicated they liked ads into which they could “project” themselves, 28% noted that they had a greater tendency to “identify” with the subject in a travel ad, and clearly, in the sample of prominent ads, there was a dearth of subjects with whom they could readily identify or even relate (Table 16, page 193). They were particularly put off by subjects who were “passive” and “sexualized”, as well as “pampered” as an end unto itself – yet these comprised the majority of the ads, as judged in content analysis, and as determined by the participants. The smaller destinations’ ads indicated better attunement to what these participants reported appealing (e.g. female gaze, beautiful scenery). A separate issue, however, is whether these suggested forms of more effective “appeal” would tangibly translate into dollars and cents.

To summarize in specific terms, female travel consumers expressed wishes to see more of the following:

1. More “normal-looking” women in ads, in terms of age (older than 35), body type (more “average” than model-like), and with greater racial diversity. Black models, for example, did not appear to put off any participants in the two ads shown depicting “non-white” female subjects, and in fact they had verbally noted appeal to some focus group participants – and not only those who were members of rising minority groups.

2. The avoidance of stereotypical traditional clichés. The perceived sexualization of female subjects, whether by a seemingly gratuitous amount of exposed flesh, a “come hither” stare at the camera (e.g. *Mirage* and *Cayman Islands* ads, Figure 27, page 211 and Figure 36, page 259), or even simply being featured in the kitchen and/or waiting on their children (e.g. *Queen Mary 2* ad, Figure 20, page 161) were clearly disliked, particularly by the older group of women who again spent the most money on travel.
3. Female subjects shown as *actively engaged*. Table 15 suggests some of the activities this sample of female travelers said they enjoyed doing, and to which they related. Those emphasized in the focus group discussions included visiting galleries, going to night markets, interacting with “locals”, and participating in fun sporting events. Some of the participants clearly liked at least imagining themselves as “adventurous” (even though Urry (2002) and Crang (1998) both noted that, while tourism sporting events may be perceived sites of resistance in terms of being “dangerous”, they are actually not). The number of participants who indicated a primary motivation for travel as some sort of “spiritual input” was striking (Table 13), (similar to suggestions made by MacCannell, 1989; Urry, 1990; and Graburn, 1989), and could be better cultivated. This result may also explain the aversion to the Las Vegas ads, which may be perceived as depicting artificial and more (male) fantasy-related phenomena.
4. More identifiable actual destinations as backdrops in the ads. For sophisticated and experienced travelers who can afford these products, the genericism of locale was neither interesting nor compelling. There was also a considerable dearth of urban outdoor settings in the travel advertisement sample, in spite of participants’ expressed interests in sites such as night markets, and in culturally oriented settings more generally. Female participants did not generally like the increasing de-emphasis on specific destinations in ads, replaced by a more idealized generic “placelessness.”

6.3 Reflections on My Participant-related Methodology

Potential pitfalls for personal biases existed in my data collection procedures. In the sampling procedure, I became aware of the need to curb my own desires to influence

participant factors I could not, nor should have been able to control, such as whether participants would sufficiently match the magazines' demographics in terms of age (might they be "too old"?), and income (not "rich enough"?). Having taught in a public high school for a number of years, I was also concerned about the potential of one or two more outspoken participants to overshadow the input of other more reticent participants, whose feedback was equally necessary and valuable.

A further concern was with the potential inherent subjectivity in "filtering" as I recorded the type of data I was collecting: long solitary hours spent scrutinizing and tabulating ads, with my own subjective biases potentially influencing how and what I categorized; fast-moving conversation in focus groups; potentially rushed interviews with ad producers. Qualitative analyses remain prone to accusations of a certain degree of inherent subjectivity, in terms of focal points and inclusions, and I knew that the questions I composed and asked, in a non-accidental specific sequence, were also the result of a highly distinctive personal framework. I was further aware of the need to minimize any "knee-jerk" personal judgments to interpretations made by my participants, as based on my own history and intellect, and as shaped by my own experiences. Finally, I tried to retain awareness that to a certain extent, the participants in my study were not simply responding to disembodied questions: they may, theoretically at least, have been responding to their reactions to *me* – for better or for worse – and in some cases to the other participants. Some further influential factors may have included the presumed familiarity of the setting in which the focus groups were held (my home), how well a participant knew me, and even the time of day.

I learned a great deal conducting the three focus groups, and hope to do so again in future research. For example, in the first focus group, in the interests of having the participant-volunteers “enjoy themselves” sufficiently enough to not, in my mind, regret having given their time to participate, I was not stringent enough in controlling the dialogue to insist we keep moving on with my pre-determined format. As a result, the first focus group had insufficient time for the latter two sections of the worksheet, unlike the participants in the latter two focus groups. In the latter two groups, I also better understood the need to re-direct the (not undesirable) tendency of some participants to linger out of interest too long on some ads and/or topics. It was still difficult to move the discussion along, as sometimes individuals were very intent on being able to express their strong feelings on a particular topic, although I found this much more of an asset in general than an “obstacle”. Unfortunately, I also learned in the first focus group, and had the same lesson reinforced in the latter two, not to trust my recording device, nor to rely on only myself to attend to it. Because of this, and also because some group members were indeed more outspoken than others, I was grateful to have had participants record the more important aspects of their answers, and further appreciated that in terms of having more time to ponder each individual’s answers.

One feature I would alter if I were to repeat this type of research would be to make the focus group worksheet both more user-friendly, and more easily conducive to tabulation. A counterargument to doing so may be that some of the richness in respondents’ open-ended answers – while far more labour-intensive to tabulate – may have been lost. Some degree of option would need to be retained, with some opportunity for exceptional open-ended answers. Although only one participant out of thirty directly voiced a criticism to me

regarding the worksheet format, and I was asked to clarify far less than I had anticipated, I felt that I asked the participants to do a considerable amount of written work. In retrospect, I would make the following revisions:

1. I would design a worksheet that enabled participants to record their answers directly onto the worksheet itself, preferably with a clipboard underneath, rather than “free-style” in their notebooks.
2. I would create a chart format for multi-faceted questions (such as those in Section IV of the focus group worksheet), with spaces inserted directly onto the sheet for participants to slot their answers to all questions.

In spite of the tedium and considerable amount of time required to accurately tabulate responses, I believe the findings were well worth pursuing. And in spite of the work involved in going through notebooks, I found it very useful to be left with a written record of all participants’ answers to the more pertinent questions, for the reasons noted above.

6.4 Acknowledgment of Potential Shortcomings Related to This Data

One potential criticism of much of my finding-related discussion, as referenced earlier, is potential discrepancy between my participant sample, several of whom were self-proclaimed “adventure travelers”, and the ostensibly luxury-seeking female readers of the three higher-end travel magazines used for advertisement-depiction samples. The difficulties and limitations in securing a sufficiently expansive sample of images by which to analyse the contemporary construction of the female traveler was discussed in Section 3.2.1. One typology differentiation between these two entities may be stated as “travelers” versus “mass

tourists”, the former manifesting a superior attitude toward the latter. While this potential gap must be acknowledged, it may not in fact be a discrediting factor. While I have noted that their ultimate compatibility can neither be confirmed nor disputed unequivocally, participant demographics were quite similar to magazines’ reported readership demographics in terms of age, household incomes and levels of education (Table 1 on page 82, and in Table 7, on page 180). One possible variant factor is that my participant sample may have had higher levels of education overall, but that can not be determined without more detailed readership statistics. As well, although featured travel articles on particular destinations are highly selective in their focus, and may bear non-coincidental relationships to major advertising sponsors, I noted that their topical matter nonetheless included what may be characterized as “adventure travel” subject matter (if “higher-end”) – for example, extended sailing voyages, diving in the Maldives, and visiting the Bedouins. It also came up in focus group discussions that at least five participants claimed to regularly read at least one of the three travel magazine publications.

My findings nonetheless suggest that a large pool of female travel consumers could be profitably targeted by advertisers portraying what participants have stated better appeals to them – for example, interacting with local people and, more generally, active intellectual engagement taking place in specific destinations. More frequently mentioned activity examples included night markets, galleries, and cooking classes. Furthermore, as also noted by some participants and the one creative agency representative interviewed, these magazines are not the only venues in which these ads are appearing. Others mentioned by Mr. Nardini

included the *New York Times*, airline magazines, and a gourmet food magazine. One participant further believed she had seen an ad from the sample on a billboard.

One final potential critique of my study would be the absence of comparable data regarding how males are portrayed in travel ads, and focus groups of male tourists. I decided early on in this work that to address my original research question on representations of the contemporary female traveler, it should not be necessary to frame this research in relation to males. My rationale was that surely similar examination of male traveler ads would not require the same contextualization of their relationships with females. However, all information obtained in this study regarding female traveler depictions may be relative to how similarly or differently male travelers are being portrayed, in spite of the lesser numbers of ads for the latter.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

The results of this inquiry are complex, and not unequivocal. Rose's (2001:194-201) point is noted that image interpretation is subject to different viewers' tastes and experiences, and thus is never entirely straightforward. An image is also an inherently unstable carrier of meaning, since it is not possible for a single image to represent a heterogeneous identity or entity such as, in this case, "female travelers" (Cusack and Breathnack, 2003; Chan, 2003). Few depictions represent anything as they are, but rather offer value-laden portrayals by those with the power to represent. As well, the viewer retains power to interpret an image, often in ways unintended by the image's creator.

Some level of ambiguity may be argued as to whether sexual and passive stereotypes of the female traveler continue to prevail, as was suggested by Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), Pritchard (2001), Morgan and Pritchard (1998), Pritchard and Morgan (2000a) (2000b), Westwood et al. (2000), Ridgeway and Correll (2004) and Harris and Ateljvic (2003) or whether, more in keeping with post-feminist precepts, female subjects are simply being shown exercising their rights to sexual expression, to relax completely by disengaging mentally, and to be massaged or "spa-ed" to their level of content. I have discussed this latter post-feminist perspective on the empowerment aspect of sexual expression in particular, in comparison to scholars who suggest that tourism marketing limitedly portrays women as sexualized and passive stereotypes. I have also noted the ongoing struggle manifested in popular culture media with respect to these disparate views (Howell, 2005; Moses, 2005;

McLaren, 2005). Webber (2005), Dowd (2005), Kingston (2004) and Wolf (1997) have argued that historical gender imbalances continue – both in academia and in popular, post-feminist culture. The exposed female body has been used to sell products for decades as a pleasing referential feature for males in particular but also for females, as acknowledged by Williamson (1978), Goffman (1979), Tellis (2004), Frith (1995), Goldman (1992) and Fowles (1996).

Female-featuring travel ads did reflect expanding awareness of female power and autonomy, however, as indicated by the content analysis undertaken and as substantiated by the one creative agency representative who offered input. More recent ads included an increasingly notable “female gaze”, as well as a marked increase in depictions of women participating more actively and thus less “decoratively” in athletic pursuits while on vacation. Subjects’ looks were increasingly becoming more realistic-looking in appearance (as opposed to model-like), and more older-looking women were featured than in the initial period of ad analysis thirteen years prior. These observations were further substantiated by the creative agency executive interviewed, in terms of the industry striving for greater awareness as to how it may better appeal to the female contingent of its audience base. That participants strikingly indicated their travel interests in being active while on vacation well into their mature years – culturally, athletically, and sexually – was a significant finding of this study. This study’s findings may be interpreted both in terms of their contributions to various academic disciplines, and in terms of more personally experienced impacts.

This thesis makes valuable contributions to four disciplinary areas in particular. To gender studies, a noteworthy finding of this study was that the women who participated continue to perceive their representations as reductionistic and stereotypical: that being, passive, sexualized and too traditional. Also notable, however, is a potential shift in terms of how some younger women may now view some ads previously deemed “too sexualizing” as sites of resistance and autonomy, as suggested by Marshment (1997) and Bowen (2002). Age-based research may be illuminating in this regard. Significant to tourism studies, hotel chains and credit card companies presently dominate the discourse in tourism advertising in terms of the contemporary construction of the female traveler, possibly contributing to the current abundance of passive, self-indulgent, skin-exposing female traveler depictions. The narrative in higher-end travel publications remains predominantly white, heterosexual, young and able-bodied.

This research has strong implications for the fields of advertising and marketing. Advertisers may economically benefit from better testing the reactions of a desired female consumer-base, and by asking more open-ended questions in market research sessions regarding what may or may not actually appeal to an intended and/or more profitable audience. The finding is not insignificant to travel advertising that “older” women spend more money, imagine themselves as interested in a variety of vacation activities – and are particularly put off by the status quo. What has also emerged in these findings, however, is that it is difficult to ascertain whether a consumer will actually respond to a presumably more resonant type of advertisement by purchasing the product in accordance with her stated preference, or will just simply “feel better” about the advertisement. Several advertising

principles cited in this research may benefit from greater scrutiny – for example, whether repeating an ad found initially displeasing to a female consumer will indeed increase her level of comfort and familiarity in a positive way, or further ignite contempt for what may be perceived as an inherent mischaracterization.

Finally, this work makes substantial contributions to the field of geography. Coleman and Crang (2002) stated that the notion of place is in a constant state of re-configuration. This study illuminates a decrease in the highlighting of distinctions regarding “place” and mobility, in favour of an increasing emphasis on generic and static “placelessness”; this evolution is further contemporarily affiliated with strong connotations of “consumption as identity”. Within the context of the cultural turn, this work highlights the shifting focus in geography from production to consumption as a driving force of identity in contemporary society. If higher-end travel magazines may be considered any sort of authoritative source, it would appear that globalization and multi-nationalization are resulting in the diminishing of specific place-identifying characteristics, in favour of an interchangeable image depicting the idyllic, with continuing emphases on the infamous “4 Ss” (i.e., sun, surf, sand and sex). This work further illustrates Johnson et al.’s (2000: 356) point with respect to the power of discourse within the context of the cultural turn. The loudest narrative voice at present with respect to what female travelers supposedly “are like” and what they enjoy is that of large multinational conglomerates, such as hotel chains and credit card companies.

From a more personal standpoint, I began this research with less pronounced and more optimistic views regarding female depictions in travel ads, despite an implied marginalization

of female tourists indicated in the difficulty I had in finding a usable sample of female traveler depictions. My final conclusions regarding how females are being popularly depicted in travel ads, however, have admittedly become less sanguine. The first turning point in this regard, after the initial lengthy tabulation of female-related travel ads for both periods, resulted from undertaking the actual content analysis-related counting. It had not been my expectation that a large proportion of women were being shown displaying what seemed to be a considerable amount of gratuitous flesh, nor that they would appear to be asleep or close to it. I was more influenced, however, by the degree of negative outrage expressed by many of my participants in reaction to the sample of more prominent ads they were shown. Their responses were considerably stronger than my own; nevertheless, the intensity and relatively broad commonality of their reactions communicated to me that there was indisputable dissonance between the self-perceptions of these female travel consumers, and their offended perceptions of how female travelers were being portrayed in popular travel media. Despite any potential ambiguity regarding compatibility between the study's participant sample and magazine readership, the fact remained that the majority of active female travel consumers in highly similar demographic categories to those stated by the magazines in which these advertisements were found were notably put off by many of the widely shown depictions. As highlighted in the introduction, travel consumption may be more inextricably and personally tied into one's own self-definition than many other types of consumption, and related phenomena may therefore be experienced more sensitively; nonetheless, the magnitude of their reactions was unexpected and striking. Furthermore, these ads employed a "soft-sell"

approach (Tellis, 2004), yet still were experienced as negatively provocative to some participant-viewers.

On a broader scale, my findings may indicate a female viewer perception regarding some degree of toxicity in media portrayals of females in general. Shari Graydon (2004), as one example, noted the consequences of contemporary women being encouraged to think of themselves as sexually provocative, advocating that it normalizes explicitly sexual conduct, and encourages “people already disturbed” to view women more exclusively as sexual playthings and objects. She further argued the predominant perception of my more put-off focus group participants, that “this very limited form of power is not actually about ‘girl power’: it is about making money for the manufacturers” (*CBC Television “Marketplace”* interview with Wendy Mesley, January 27, 2004). Such ambivalence was also apparent in works by Milkie (2002), McRobbie (1997) and Dworkin and Wachs (2004). Mellinger (1994) more simply and more bluntly concluded that to sell, producers will frequently resort to “the lowest common denominator” in photographic portrayals. Goldman (1992), Shields (2006) and Frith (1995), in discussing basic advertising principles, were similarly direct in asserting that advertising has historically signified the commodity self by the visual abstraction of body parts.

Suggested Directions for Future Research

Directions suggested for future research would be to replicate this study with larger numbers of female participants, in distinct age brackets, and to conduct a larger survey with increased validity. It may also be interesting, and useful to marketers to better determine

what more specifically attracts wealthier female travelers to particular destinations. As travel Internet services continue to proliferate, it may be illuminating to check in again in a couple of years, to see what if any images of female travelers may be more prevalent and present then. I believe there will be a significant increase in ads featuring the “female gaze” – i.e., a relatively ‘unseen’ female able to gaze upon her surroundings in her vacation setting. It is difficult to predict how soon the industry may catch on to the other varied interests of female travel consumers expressed in this study – such as athletic and cultural activities. As noted by Tellis (2004), however, if the “female gaze” as a more original and effective advertising strategy were to become successful, it may soon be copied and thus arguably diluted in potency by competitors. Such copying however would disseminate a considerably different impression as to the present construction of female travelers than did the ads used as my data set.

More destination-related data for my study on female travelers would have provided an interesting perspective on what emphasized features were found appealing; however, the employment of “placelessness” at this point seems to be only on the increase. As a substitute for more destination-specific information, it may be interesting at a later time, assuming more data becomes available, to compare travel section portrayals and/or accounts of female travelers with those of male travelers, particularly in terms of a more textual analysis. As previously indicated, the integration into this work of the perspectives of male travelers, as well as male-featuring ads, may be of value. As Rosaldo (1980) argued, “We will never understand the lives that women lead without relating them to men” (in Apostolopoulos and Gayle, 2002: 27). Her point may still be valid. Some of the conclusions of my work would

have been far more definitive if the same parallel work, particularly the content analysis segment, had been done with similar data featuring male travelers. Only then could the two really be compared and judged in relative terms to one another.

It would also be interesting to determine, in terms of advertisers' conversion studies – i.e., on dollar-to-dollar yielding value of particular advertisements (- none of which were available for this study), how male travel consumers in reality would react to increased use of less attractive and older female travel subjects featured in more “gender-generic” activities such as vacation sports. For example, would the depiction of an average-sized, middle-aged woman bungy-jumping negatively “feminize” the product to a significant number of male consumers? Are women as well as men ready to embrace (in economic terms) more unisexual images? Furthermore, if male viewers are more inclined to dismiss ads with female subjects, but the reverse is not the case, perhaps factors as to why this is so ought to be examined.

Although I am unable to fully explain why, this dissertation implies advertisers' depictions are out of step with preferences of active female travel consumers. The passive and sexualized depictions of female travelers do not so much indicate some insidious hegemonic, patriarchal, commercial plot to silence or exploit women but, as alluded to earlier, are more indicative of outdated, possibly patriarchal, notions about what women like, and what will convince them to buy products. One critical issue worth further examining in relation to my study results would be how similar they are to how female ad subjects are portrayed in other forms of advertising in popular magazines, and how these depictions are received by related

consumer markets. If, for example, there was parallel evidence in recent years in such comparable venues of increasingly mature, more realistic-looking female subjects in ads, interspersed among a numerically greater number of passive and sexualized female ad subjects, such data may potentially diminish the potency of my suggesting that these results indicate the ways in which female travelers are contemporarily represented.

The findings of this study nevertheless suggest that discourses exercise power through representations. As Ann Stoler (2004) noted: “Being an ambiguous empire is one way of being an unaccountable one.” Jackson (1989) pointed out that power relations are always ongoing in the formation of culture as ideology. Raymond Williams suggested that culture was one of the three most difficult words to define in the English language (noted in Coleman and Crang, 2002). Arguably, one role of communications media is to reconfigure contemporary cultural identities. As Crang (2003: 255) noted, in the act of creating meanings, one is not just dealing with representations, but also “repress”-entations, where some cultural elements are actively silenced. What is presented in ad media is very much an idealized image, often bearing little relation to reality. The changing roles of women and the emergence of new markets are leading to a reconfiguration of the cultural meanings currently informing tourism imagery (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998: 19). The configuration of identities can be a vast source of both power and profit to those who are able to manipulate them. Tellis (2004), O’Barr (1994), Fowles (1996), Kotler (2002), Goldman (1992), Williamson (1978), and Goffman (1979) each argued that advertising offers a highly selective and edited view of society, which serves to “assist” the consumer in “understanding” social realities that the advertiser wishes the consumer to accept. One of the few effective means by which these

images may be altered would be if women were to express their feelings about advertisements, first vocally and then with their wallets.

Biggs and Downe (2005: 22) suggested that, “Power is the ability to take one’s place in whatever discourse is essential to action and the right to have one’s part matter.” Ramazanoglu with Holland (2004: 147) noted that gender relations are difficult to separate from power relations. Gender roles may be cultural constructions; however, the specific processes of tourism are developed out of gendered societies, in which language and culture constantly and continuously interact, and gender is reinforced into collective consciousness in many ways.

The conclusion of Lutz and Collins (1993) that popular “authoritative” travel magazines such as *National Geographic* shape collective perceptions is relevant to this discussion. As noted by Momsen (2002: 198), tourism may either reinforce or undermine gender roles. Ridgeway and Correll (2004: 517) argued that when hegemonic gender beliefs are essentially salient in a situation, hierarchal assumptions about men’s greater status and competence become salient for participants, along with assumptions about men’s and women’s different traits and skills, while all components of gender beliefs shape behaviour and serve to differentiate men and women, “the hierarchal dimension does so in a way that is particularly consequential for gender inequality.” Subtle meanings projected in the ads – embedded in visual messages (for example, as noted by Sirakaya and Sonmez, 2000: 361) – may indeed perpetuate gender stereotypes.

Using minimally clothed female bodies to sell products is by no means novel. Nonetheless, the analyses of the contemporary ads featuring female travelers indicate a distinct constructedness of the gender category of “female”, in the context of travel. Sirakaya and Sonmez (2000), Pritchard (2001), Westwood et al. (2000), Dworkin and Wachs (2004), Milkie (2002), McRobbie (1997), Goffman (1978), Williamson (1978), Paisley-Butler and Butler-Paisley (1974), Vavrus (2002), Biggs and Downe (2005) as well as the majority of female subjects who participated in this study confirmed an ultimate oppressiveness of its application. As Milkie (2002: 839) argued, “a central way women’s disadvantage is created and maintained is through cultural beliefs and stereotypes that provide narrower, more distorted or more harmful images about women than about men. These ideals about what women should do, be like, or look like are powerful yet subtle vehicles through which women are controlled.” She further suggested, as did Morgan and Pritchard (2001, 1998), Dworkin and Wachs (2004), and McRobbie (1997), that advertisers directly influence the promotion of an unrealistic feminine ideal through the purchase of approximately half the pages of magazines, and that in selecting models for the photographs, advertisers intentionally or unintentionally produce a very unrealistic definition of “normal femininity” (Milkie, 2004: 848). Certainly, this dissertation issues a call for wider recognition of potentially complex gender dimensions in the production and consumption of tourism advertising.

Appendix A

Worksheet for Content Analysis Tabulations

PORTRAYALS OF FEMALE SUBJECTS: BREAKDOWNS

Part I: Subject's Appearance

1. HIGH SKIN QUOTIENT

- i. In bathing suit
 - a) BIKINI
 - b) ONE-PIECE
 - c) CAN'T TELL WHICH:
- ii. Nude/nearly nude (e.g. getting a massage treatment)
- iii. Cleavage prominently featured
- iv. Other body parts prominently featured:
 - a) Bare shoulders and arms:
 - b) Throat plate, cleavage and face:
 - c) Other:
- v. N/A: Fully clothed
- vi. Face only shown

2. FACIAL EXPRESSION

- i. Smiling
- ii. Gazing into the distance (or staring into space)
 - a) Wistfully
- iii. Looking at a specific object (or something specific up close)
- iv. Eyes closed, as though sleeping
- v. Looking directly at camera
 - a) Coyly/ 'seductively'
 - b) Smiling
 - c) Cool appraisal ('Haughty?')

vi. Face not fully visible

3. BODY POSTURE

i. Sleeping:

a) Lying down

b) Upright (Either sleeping or in deep state of relaxation)

ii. Reclining/Lounging, but (presumably) conscious

iii. Sitting upright (passively)

iv. Standing passively

a) In a room

b) Outside

c) In or by the ocean

d) In a pool

e) Hot tub

f) Other:

v. Actively engaged in physical activity:

a) Sport

i. Swimming

ii. Snorkelling

iii. Scuba

iv. Other

b) Walking (with purpose)

c) Strolling (e.g. along a beach)

d) Applying sunscreen to a child (always a son)

e) Yoga

f) Other:

vi. Ambiguous but PASSIVE

4. OVERALL GROOMING – i.e., use of make-up and clothing

i. “Model-like” appearance (Subject appears to be professional model. Made-up carefully; hair clearly coiffed.)

- ii. 'Deliberately average'-looking
 - iii. Combination of the above two (Could be either model or 'civilian.' Believable as a non-model – e.g. just a really good-looking person.)
 - iv. Can't see enough to say definitively:
5. AGE (Highly subjective category: 'Best guess'.)
- i. Likely under 35
 - ii. Possibly/could be around 35
 - iii. Could be over 35
 - iv. Appears to be over 45
 - v. Speculation hampered: either figure too small, too partial, or face not shown.
6. BODY TYPE
- i. Notably slim
 - ii. Notably curvaceous/fuller breast-size apparent
 - iii. Body shape either not obvious, not particularly noteworthy, or 'average'-looking
 - iv. Heavier set
 - v. Can't see (Female subject too small or obscured)
7. IF only part of the female subject on display (- less than one third), what is shown?:
- i. Face only
 - ii. Head and shoulders (Arms may or may not be (partially) present.)
 - iii. iii. No head: body below the neck only
 - iv. Waist up
 - v. Other:
 - vi. Not applicable
8. HAIR
- 1a) Not prominent/not distinguishable.
 - 1b) BUN: Hair up:
 - 2) Prominent:
 - i) Shoulder-length or longer

ii) Shorter than shoulder-length

PART II: BACKDROP/SETTING OF AD

(‘+’ indicates more than one setting in the ad)

1. Private hotel/cruise room OR private veranda or terrace
 - 1b) Private cruise balcony
2. Beach
3. Hotel/resort pool
4. Hot tub in specific destination/hotel-resort setting
5. Massage table in specific destination/hotel-resort/cruise ship setting
 - 5b) Other spa setting:
6. Nature-oriented setting in actual destination
7. Urban outdoor setting [in destination]
8. a) Hotel/resort lobby/bar/casino/ ‘public’ area of hotel
 - 8b) Outdoor/ simulated ‘natural’ setting at hotel/resort (Prominent in several Las Vegas ads)
 - 8c) Spa-meditation area
9. Other (e.g. ‘Ambiguous’; ‘Surreal’; etc.):
10. Cultural setting
11. AT HOME (pre- or post-trip)

PART III: PRESENCE OF PROMINENT SIGNIFYING PROP

(Should be deemed significant enough to direct the meaning of the ad)

1. High level of service/pampering/luxury indicated (e.g. waiter with silver tray, wading through water to procure refreshments)
 - i. Spa area
 - ii. Massage
 - iii. Luxury resort
 - iv. Opulent surroundings

- v. Silver service breakfast
 - vi. Spectacular view
 - vii. Other:
2. Peace/serenity-invoking indicators:
 - i. Aroma therapy candles
 - ii. Petals
 - iii. Massage stones
 - iv. Calm water with palms
 - v. Other:
 3. Items to indicate multi-identities/interests:
 4. Children
 5. Props that may indicate “competence”
 - i. Athletic competence: snorkeling gear; diving equipment; rock climbing gear
 - ii. Artistic: paints, sketching pad and pencils
 - iii. Other:
 6. Props to indicate (arguably) stereotypical feminine proclivities (e.g. grooming, shopping):
 - i. Sarong “shedding”/ “unveiling”
 - ii. Shopping-related items:
 - iii. Jewelry
 - iv. Presence of flower(s)
 - v. Obvious wedding ring (Note: Usually not apparent)
 - vi. Other:
 - a) Dress-up (in glamorous clothing and/or highly ‘feminized’ clothing)
(Ideas: Princess fantasy. Transformation from mundane.)
 - b) Broad sun hat
 - c) ‘Sexualizing’/sexual allure prop (e.g. sexually provocative wear):
 7. ‘Idyllic’ natural setting
 8. Social (e.g. interacting with friendly locals; girlfriends bonding)
 9. Regular-Person’ indicators

10. Non-white subject featured (- specify):

- i. Black
- ii. East Asian
- iii. Could be (at least partially) racially indigenous to destination advertised
 - a) Indian
 - b) Hawaiian-American
 - c) Maori-Caucasian

11. Cultural indicators:

- i. Famous landmarks
- ii. Historical-looking buildings
- iii. Evidence of local arts/artistry
- iv. Others

PART IV: (Highly subjective)

I. Woman as DECORATIVE/ornamental (i.e., passive. Female subject could have been ‘constructed’/calculated more for hetero-normative male viewer consumption. Hetero-normative cliché of ‘attractive’ female.)

II. Woman as AUTONOMOUS/ACTIVELY ENGAGED individual (-i.e., with distinct interests and thoughts of her own)

III. Combination of the above two (NOT transgressive. Female subject still calculated to be attractive to hetero males.)

IV. Spa treatment

V. Ambiguous/can’t say

PART V (If applicable)

1. Subject animated/cartoon drawing

2. Subject or setting surreal

Appendix B

Attempted Contacts with Creative Agencies

All attempted telephone calls and email contacts were made during the first three weeks of October, 2005, in the hopes of obtaining the information sought prior to my first focus group on October 26. The names listed below are those of people I understood as the appropriate contact person for an interview. These contacts were ultimately obtained after searching on-line, in *LexisNexis Redbooks of Advertisers*, and then through self-initiated email and telephone enquiries. (Telephone records may be made available upon request.)

Creative Agency	Advertiser Represented	Contact Representative	Comments
Arnold Worldwide	Celebrity Cruises	Trevor Nardini (Referral came through Celebrity marketing representative Jennifer Rose)	Sent email and he replied Left 3 telephone messages He called back for pre-arranged interview on Oct.18, 2005.
DDB Seattle	Holland America	Shannon Schmidt	Spoke by phone; then emailed her as invited. No reply.
Dotcom Marketing	Mirage; Bellagio; Renaissance Hotels; Visa Marriott	1. Paul Holcomb 2. Shawn – Operations Manager	1. Referred me to “Shawn” 2. Left two messages to call
Hamon & Associates	Singapore Airlines	“Urs” was the contact given.	Left two messages to call
Kirshenbaum, Bond & Partners	Wyndham International	Brian Barrett	Left two messages to call
M&C Saatchi	British Airways	Kristy Reynolds	Sent fax three times – didn’t work Spoke live to her; she said to send an email. Neither of two email attempts received responses.
M&C Saatchi	Crystal Cruises	Hugh	Spoke to Hugh; said someone would call back.
McCann- Erickson Worldwide, N.Y.	Visa-Marriott	Elizabeth	Left a message to call
McLaren, McCann Canada Inc.	Expedia.com	Adrienne Gafney, Executive in Charge	Left a message to call

Creative Agency	Advertiser Represented	Contact Representative	Comments
M. Silver Associates Inc. (no longer represents Cunard)	Queen Mary 2 Cunard Line	Gary Gerbino (from M. Silver Associates)	Redirected to Linda Schultes, former Manager of Cunard and knows who creative person at Shyatt is Left a message for Schultes to call
Ogilvey & Mather Worldwide Inc.	American Express: Delta Air Miles	Amanda Gifford	Ad company just won account (was marketed by Digitas Inc.) and thus have no access to old material; redirected to Leslie Aitkins at Delta Airlines and left message to call
R&R Partners	Hilton/Park & Place Entertainment/ Caesars	Christy Drew redirected my call to Stephanie Grimes	Left a message to call My call was not returned
	Hilton	Eileen, Caribbean Marketing Manager	Left a message to call
	Intercontinental	Quang Li	Left a message to call
	Westin Hotels	Marie Torres, Westin Marketing Manager	Left a message to call
Shyatt	Cunard: Queen Mary 2	No representative specified	Two messages left, neither of which was returned.

Advertising Companies Contacted to Obtain Appropriate Creative Agency Information

No conclusive reply was forthcoming from any of the following.

Company	Contact
Bellagio	Lanta Sytsinger, of the "Bellagio Team Marketing". 2 phone messages were left.
Crystal Cruises	Hugh promised he would have someone return my call.
Expedia.com	Two phone messages were left for Anne Kerna.
Hilton	Two phone messages were left for Eileen, Carribean Marketing Manager.
Holland America	I spoke to Shannon Schmidt, who invited me to email her more details, so that she could reply in writing. I did so, but heard nothing back.
InterContinental Hotels	I left two phone messages for Quang Li. My calls were not returned.
Le Meridien Hotels (of Nikko Hotels)	I was referred to the Chicago Sales office. No representative was specified. Neither of two telephone messages was returned.
Sheraton Hotels (- also Four Points by Sheraton)	I left two telephone messages for Maria Torres. Neither was returned.
Starwood/Westin Hotels	I left two messages in the "Marketing Manager's" voice mailbox, and was referred to the "Westin Marketing Manager's" voicemail. My two messages were not returned.

Appendix C

Participant Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE _____ Assigned Participant #: _____

Part I: General Travel Experience and Ad Perception

1. Have you traveled within the past 2 years for more than one week?

a) If yes, please indicate to where below. (You may check as many as appropriate, and indicate more specific locales in the space provided.)

Within Canada _____

United States _____

Mexico, Central America or the Caribbean _____

South America _____

Europe _____

Asia _____

Africa _____

Cruise (Please state the cruise line, and general itinerary): _____

Other _____

b) If you have *not* traveled within the past 2 years, when did you last travel, and to where?

2. Please state with whom, if anyone, you most frequently travel.

(e.g. alone; partner; friend; husband; relative; tour group; etc.)

3. Are there any magazines you read regularly? If yes, please specify which ones.

Are there any particular sources from which you receive the travel information that especially influences where you will take your next trip? If so, please also indicate *how* important each of these sources is, in terms of influencing your decision. (*Some examples: on-line travel deals; friend or partner's choice; magazine - please be specific as to which, and whether an ad or article; books.*)

LEVEL OF INFLUENCE THIS SOURCE HAS ON YOUR TRAVEL DECISIONS

LOW 1 2 3 4 HIGH

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

b) What if any travel-related products have you purchased within the past two years? (*e.g. luggage; travel-related medications; clothing, etc.*)

c) Has any particular source of information influenced your purchase of this/these products?

4. Can you recall any advertising that has previously influenced any of your travel decisions? _____

If the answer is "yes", please briefly describe the type of advertisement, where you noticed it, and any other details you believe may be relevant.

5. Do you recall any travel ads you may have seen previously, featuring a female, which you found to be particularly effective and/or memorable in an appealing way?

If 'yes', please provide the following information, as best you are able:

Product: _____ (*For example: cruise; flight; resort; destination*)

Advertising Company: _____

Where you saw the ad: _____

What the woman in the ad was doing, and/or where she was

situated _____

What was it about this ad that stood out to you, or that you liked?

6. Can you recall any particular travel ads, or types of travel ads, featuring females that you found off-putting, or that may have left you with a negative impression? _____

If so, please briefly describe what it is you remember about the ad. _____

7. What are 3 of your preferred vacation activities?

8. What sorts of landscape and/or backdrop settings particularly appeal to you in your selection of travel destinations? (You may write out your preferred choice(s) below or, if you prefer, circle selection(s) from the following examples: *urban setting with historic buildings; snow-covered mountains; beach/ocean front; excellent food in unique/upscale dining setting; anticipation of highly attentive personal service; solitude in nature; cruise ship setting; a well-known 'wonder of the world'; night markets; trails through woods; lake setting; open meadows; etc.*)

Part II: Travel Motivations

1. What would you say are the most important factors which motivate *you* to travel? (*For example: intellectual stimulation; need for relaxation; to experience a new culture; to escape from day-to-day pressures; meeting new people; inner sense of fulfillment; quality time with loved ones.*)

i.

ii.

iii.

iv.

v.

2. Please rate the importance of each of the following factors in making your travel decisions, by placing an 'x' or checkmark in the appropriate part of the dotted line for each. (It is alright for your checkmarks to overlap into the words, as necessary.)

Scale:

UNIMPORTANT *Very* *Fairly* *Neutral* *Fairly* *Very* *IMPORTANT*

- i. Being in a natural outdoors setting.....
- ii. Rest and relaxation
- iii. Lying around in the sun
- iv. Athletic/sporting pursuits.....
- v. "Bonding" with girlfriends.....
- vi. Being "pampered" and/or waited on
- vii. Being physically "worked on" (e.g. spa treatments).....
- viii. Spending quality time with your child(ren).....
- ix. Spending quality time with your partner
- x. Opportunity for sexual intimacy.....
- xi. Having attained significant financial success.....
- xii. Acquiring a greater sense of inner peace/serenity
- xiii. Inner growth/'spiritual' input
- xiv. A sense of bliss.....

3. Which of the following do you most look forward to before going on a vacation? Please rank your top 3 – 5 in order of importance, with '1' being the most important.

- a) __Relaxation
- b) __Athletic pursuits (Please specify any favourites. _____)
- c) __Visiting cultural attractions
- d) __Viewing outdoor scenery
- e) __Shopping
- f) __Being waited upon by service
- g) __Sleeping
- h) __Lying on a beach

- i) __Spa treatments
- j) __Meditation
- k) __‘Bonding’ with girlfriends/female relatives
- l) __Romantic time with partner
- m) __Spending quality time with children

Other suggestions not listed:

- n) __
- o) __
- p) __

4. Women in travel ads are depicted in a variety of ways by advertisers trying to sell their products. Please indicate which of the following ways of portraying a female in a travel ad you believe that you as a female travel consumer would find most compelling in terms of wanting a product advertised. *Please note: There are no right or wrong responses, and your frankness is very helpful to the overall validity of this study.*

Please place an ‘x’ on the most suitable spot on the continuum line.

Ordinary / “Normal” Looking 1 2 ... 9 10 .Glamorous

Casually dressed or in office attire.....Highly stylish/fashionable

Active/athletic.....Relaxing, passive

In bathing suit/partially clothed.....Fully clothed

Friendly, approachable.....Aloof/prestige-conscious

Engaged with other person(s).....Independent, autonomous

Meditative, reflective.....Fun-loving, outgoing

Sexuality not a factor.....Sexually provocative

Receiving attention or service.....Being left alone

Youthful-looking.....Closer to your actual age

Any additional suggestions you may have:

_____

_____

_____

Part III. Demographic Information to be Matched with Magazine Statistics

As with all of the above, the following information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is requested for the sole purpose of ensuring validity regarding the overall demographics of my focus group participants matching with the target audience intended by the advertisements under study.

1. Occupation: _____ (If retired, please indicate previous occupation.)
2. Highest level of education completed: _____
3. Marital status: _____ (Please list one: single; married; divorced; separated; widowed; living with partner. If you believe it may be relevant, you are also welcome to state sexual orientation.)

4. *Only if* your marital status has had significant impact on your traveling, please comment as to how. (For example: Did you begin to travel much more upon becoming single again? Does your partner now instigate more/fewer travel decisions?)

5. Approximately how much of your own discretionary funds have you spent on travel/vacationing over the past 2 years?

- Less than \$2000
- \$2000 – 3000
- \$3000 – 4000
- \$4000 - \$6000
- Over \$6000

5. Please indicate the most applicable annual income bracket for your household*:

- Less than \$35,000
- \$35,000 – 50,000
- \$51,000 – 60,000
- \$61,000 – 70,000
- \$71,000 – 80,000
- \$81,000 – 100,000
- Over \$100,000

*If you would prefer not to specify a bracket, please simply indicate whether your annual income is either: above \$60,000 or below \$60,000

6. If you are comfortable stating your age, please do so._____.

Otherwise, please circle the most appropriate age bracket into which you would fall.

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-44
- 45-49

50-54

55-59

60-69

70-79

80+

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR TIME. PLEASE RETURN A.S.A.P.

Appendix D

Focus Group Worksheet

Please record your short answers to the following questions in the workbook provided.

Section I

To be done before examining the ads:

Prior to participating in this study, did you have any particular impressions as to how female travelers are being portrayed in popular media?

(Brief points may be written in notebook.)

Section II

A. Please use the sticky dots provided for selecting ads in the following way:

- *Use the GREEN dots for up to 4 ads that best appeal to you.*
- *Use the RED dots for up to 4 ads that least appeal to you, or for ads that you may find off-putting.*
- *Use the YELLOW dots for up to 4 ads that you don't particularly like or dislike, but that you may find interesting to discuss.*

B. Once you have completed placing your dots, please choose at least 2 of the ads you especially liked, and at least 2 of the ads you especially disliked. For each of these ads, please provide short answers in your notebook for each of the following questions.

Advertisement for: _____

1. How much does this ad appeal to you on a scale of 1 – 10? ___

Points of Appeal

Off-putting Aspects

2. What would you say is the more obvious intentional message of this ad to its targeted audience? (i.e. explicit message)
3. Do you feel there is also an intended *implicit* (i.e. more subtle but highly intentional) message present in this ad? If so, what would you say that is?
4. What, if any, lasting impression do you have regarding this ad and/or its product?
5. Please give this ad a score out of 10 for each of the following:
 - i. How effective it is in making you want the product advertised. _____
 - ii. How favourable an impression you are left with regarding the product and/or company advertising. _____

Comments: _____.

6. Which one of the following statements would *best* describe your reaction to this ad? (If you wish, you may briefly explain your answer.)
 - i. “I somehow project myself into being the female subject in this ad, and want to be experiencing something similar to the situation/role in which she is shown.”
 - ii. “I identify with the female character depicted in this ad, and trust/want the product more as a result.”
 - iii. “I see this ad’s depiction of the female subject as catering more to male viewer preferences.”

Result: _____

- iv. “I see this ad as depicting a female I can not relate to.”

Result: _____

(e.g. “Makes no difference.” “Puts me off.” “I want it more.”)

- v. Other statement which better reflects your predominant reaction to this ad: _____

7. Please indicate the audience to which you believe this ad is intended to *predominantly* appeal:
 - i. More to females.
 - ii. More to males.

- iii. Both genders relatively equally.
 - iv. Unsure.
8. Would this ad still work and be considered acceptable to most people if the *female* subject were to simply be replaced by a *male* subject? _____
(Comment, if you wish.)
9. Under which of the following headings do you think this ad would best fit?
- I. Women with authority over men
 - II. Women portrayed as autonomous individuals
 - III. Women in non-traditional roles (e.g. sport, authority, etc.)
 - IV. Women in traditional roles (e.g. passive or beauty-related activities; child-care)
 - V. Women as a one-dimensional sexual objects or ‘decorations’.

Section III

NAME: _____

This section is to be completed *after* you have answered the above questions for at least 4 of the ads you selected. *These questions may be answered directly onto this page, or in your workbook.*

1. Please circle the adjectives that you would say best describe the female subjects in the travel-related ads you particularly liked. *You are welcome to add any others if you would like.*

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|
| Regular, “normal”-looking | Sexy, particularly attractive | |
| Believable, Someone you could relate to | Very fit, model-like appearance | |
| Active, sporty | Passive, relaxed, pampered | |
| Youthful | Same age as me | Older |
| Elite, superior | Friendly | |

Please check off what you liked best:

Style of clothing:

- Not so striking
- Deliberately ordinary
- Stylish
- Revealing
- Expensive
- Bathing suit or towel only worn

Facial expressions:

- Peaceful, content
- Pensive, thoughtful
- Happy
- Focussed
- Wistful
- Sensual
- Aloof, superior
- Other(s):* _____
- Expression not relevant/apparent

2. Please now list any adjectives that would better describe the type of women you would *prefer* to see in travel ads.
3. Have any of these ads (or their advertising companies) made what you would consider a relatively lasting impression on you, either favorable or unfavorable? If so, please specify.
4. Comments as to what you believe makes some travel ads directed toward women more effective/appealing than others?
5. It has frequently been suggested that women tend to make the bulk of travel decisions. To what extent would you say this is true?
6. Normally when noticing a full-paged magazine advertisement, which of the following would you say has generally made a more lasting impact upon you:

Image ___

Text ___

Product itself ___

SECTION IV

Name: _____

For each ad, please indicate your answers to the following 3 questions in the space provided beside each ad:

1. Which of the following audiences would you say this ad is intended to *predominantly* court?:
 - i. Female consumers ___
 - ii. Could appeal to either male or female consumers ___
 - iii. Male consumers ___
 - iv. Can't say ___
2. Could the female subject in this ad *unproblematically* be replaced by a male, with no corresponding alterations needing to be made to the ad?
Yes ___ No ___ Can't say ___
(If you wish, comments may be made on the back of this page.)
3. Under which of the following headings would this ad most appropriately fit?:
 - I. Women with authority over men
 - II. Women portrayed as autonomous individuals
 - III. Women in non-traditional roles (e.g. sport, authority, etc.)
 - IV. Women in traditional roles (e.g. passive or beauty-related activities; child-care)
 - V. Women as a one-dimensional sexual objects or 'decorations'

SELECTED ADS

Q#1

Q#2

Q#3

1. American Express: Delta Sky Miles
2. Bellagio

3. Bermuda
4. British Airways
5. Cayman Islands
6. Celebrity Cruises (Galapagos)
7. Celebrity Cruises (“...once was a queen.)
8. Crystal Cruises
9. Expedia.com
10. Hilton (beach massage)
11. Holland America
12. Honduras
13. InterContinental
14. Jamaica
15. Le Meridien
16. MasterCard: Park Hyatt Paris
17. Mirage “Explore”
18. Queen Mary 2
19. Renaissance (Painter)
20. Renaissance (Multi-identities)
21. Singapore Airlines
22. Visa (sleeping woman)
23. Westin (‘good mom’)
24. Wyndham

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF WITH EXTRA TIME, and have had enough refreshments, here are some final discussion questions, in case you have any thoughts about them you may wish to jot down.

Final Discussion Questions to be asked in the Focus Groups:

If you had the opportunity as a Toronto-based woman who travels independently to address travel-related advertisers with some pragmatic advice on how to (better) lure you and your consumer dollars toward their product(s), what would you say, generally and/or specifically, with regard to each of the following:

1. What is presently working?
2. What is presently *not* working?
3. What *would* better appeal to you?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR INPUT.

Appendix E

Magazine Issue Tabulations : Proportional Breakdowns

Travel+Leisure 1989-1990

Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs ads	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
T+L																		
1989	January	172	0	37	1	4	1	0	0	2	2	6	0	3	0	0	12	6
	February	208	32	54	3	3	1	0	4	1	4	0	2	0	0	0	20	14
	March	250	36	55	3	3	0	1	3	3	1	7	1	0	0	1	21	11
	April	262	44	70	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	7	0	6	2	2	20	12
	May	242	40	67	1	0	0	4	2	2	2	2	2	8	3	0	30	11
	June	196	0	51	3	0	1	3	2	2	5	1	0	2	2	1	19	10
	July	156	0	50	4	2	0	2	0	0	4	5	0	2	2	1	20	8
	August	148	0	0	2	3	1	4	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	13	5
	September	294	52	64	6	2	1	6	2	2	3	6	1	2	0	1	22	10
	October	322	28	93	7	1	1	4	2	1	5	13	0	6	2	4	32	15
	November	266	68	92	7	3	0	5	1	3	3	11	1	3	5	3	33	13
	December	262	28	87	3	1	0	9	0	1	8	3	1	1	5	5	42	9
		2778	328	720	43	25	8	41	18	21	38	68	6	35	21	18	284	124
T+L																		
1990	January	204	0	46	2	1	0	2	0	1	2	6	0	5	1	2	17	8
	February	220	0	50	2	4	1	1	0	1	2	9	1	4	1	0	13	11
	March	248	38	67	3	2	1	2	3	3	2	6	0	3	1	3	25	12
	April	272	60	75	5	4	1	5	2	1	1	7	0	6	0	3	25	14
	May	238	22	68	3	3	0	4	0	2	2	11	2	5	2	3	20	11
	June	216	0	59	5	2	0	5	1	1	1	3	1	3	4	4	20	8
	July	158	0	38	2	1	0	3	3	0	0	3	0	2	1	1	14	8
	August	170	0	46	3	2	0	5	2	1	0	5	0	2	1	0	17	8
	September	244	60	66	8	3	1	3	1	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	20	15
	October	282	0	83	6	3	0	7	3	2	0	13	0	2	1	2	27	17
	November	282	76	88	5	3	2	5	1	3	3	6	1	4	3	5	33	14
	December	250	0	75	4	4	1	1	3	0	2	2	2	4	4	2	36	10
		2784	256	761	48	32	7	43	19	19	17	73	8	42	21	27	267	136

Travel+Leisure 2003-2004

Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs ads	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
T+L																		
2003	January	157	0	41	1	2	0	4	1	1	2	5	0	3	1	1	12	8
	February	163	0	37	1	5	0	1	2	1	1	7	0	1	2	0	11	5
	March	251	0	56	6	4	0	3	3	0	5	6	0	2	1	1	17	8
	April	259	0	63	5	4	2	8	4	0	5	2	0	3	1	1	18	10
	May	209	0	51	8	3	1	3	1	1	3	2	0	2	1	0	15	12
	June	227	0	67	8	8	0	2	2	0	2	6	0	3	0	0	24	12
	July	157	0	34	8	2	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	2	0	11	4
	August	215	0	56	2	4	0	3	1	0	2	6	0	2	1	0	23	12
	September	257	0	63	7	7	0	7	2	1	3	3	1	1	3	0	17	11
	October	271	0	80	10	4	1	7	2	0	6	10	2	2	4	2	22	9
	November	323	0	67	6	6	1	8	4	0	1	3	1	0	5	2	19	11
	December	221	0	65	4	3	0	5	2	0	5	6	1	2	2	2	25	8
		2710		680	66	52	5	53	24	4	38	58	5	21	23	9	214	110
T+L																		
2004	January	184	0	45	3	5	0	3	1	1	1	5	0	2	0	2	12	10
	February	194	0	48	5	2	0	3	1	0	2	10	1	2	0	2	11	9
	March	227	0	59	4	5	0	3	2	1	4	5	1	4	3	1	17	9
	April	285	7	82	8	9	0	4	4	0	2	8	2	1	1	2	23	18
	May	248	0	71	7	7	0	1	6	0	2	12	0	0	3	2	21	10
	June	224	0	75	6	6	0	2	1	0	8	13	0	0	2	4	23	10
	July	168	0	58	4	7	0	4	3	0	4	5	0	0	1	2	22	6
	August	222	0	77	2	14	0	0	2	0	0	15	0	0	2	3	27	12
	September	270	0	69	5	6	2	4	3	0	4	12	0	0	1	2	22	8
	October	308	0	100	6	7	1	3	3	0	11	18	0	0	1	1	29	20
	November	320	0	93	5	14	0	4	2	0	4	11	0	0	1	1	31	20
	December	222	0	68	6	5	0	5	0	0	2	5	1	0	1	4	24	15
		2872	7	845	61	87	3	36	28	2	44	119	5	9	16	26	262	147

Condé Nast Traveler 1989-1990, 2003-204

Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs ads	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
CNT																		
1989	January	152	0	29	3	2	1	0	0	4	3	0	3	0	0	5	8	
	February	170	0	35	3	1	1	2	0	2	2	6	1	3	0	1	6	7
	March	212	0	52	6	2	2	3	1	2	3	5	0	1	0	1	10	15
	April	208	0	61	9	2	2	4	2	3	2	7	0	3	3	2	8	14
	May	184	0	43	4	2	1	0	0	0	3	4	1	3	0	0	15	10
	June	178	0	43	2	0	2	5	2	2	0	4	1	0	1	1	14	9
	July	134	0	22	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	6	4
	August	154	0	28	5	1	1	2	0	0	3	2	0	2	1	0	6	5
	September	200	0	39	6	1	1	3	2	1	3	2	0	3	0	1	12	4
	October	250	0	76	7	4	1	5	1	2	5	7	0	2	2	3	22	14
	November	244	0	74	9	2	0	5	1	3	3	8	0	1	2	2	25	13
	December	210	0	62	7	1	0	5	1	2	1	8	1	0	1	3	25	7
		2296	0	564	63	19	14	35	11	17	30	58	4	21	10	16	154	110

Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs ads	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
CNT																		
1990	January	156	0	27	3	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	1	0	2	9	6	
	February	198	0	48	4	0	0	1	3	1	1	7	0	6	1	2	14	8
	March	240	0	63	10	5	0	6	1	3	0	5	3	3	0	1	10	16
	April	222	0	62	9	0	1	1	7	0	6	10	0	0	0	2	14	12
	May	202	0	53	7	2	0	2	2	4	9	0	0	1	1	11	11	
	June	194	0	54	5	0	2	4	2	1	8	6	0	0	0	2	9	15
	July	144	0	22	6	1	0	1	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	1	5	2
	August	166	0	39	7	0	0	3	0	1	4	5	0	0	0	0	9	10
	September	228	0	68	8	2	0	4	3	3	11	7	0	0	1	4	13	12
	October	250	0	75	10	2	1	9	3	1	4	10	0	0	2	2	19	12
	November	296	0	99	10	0	3	4	6	0	3	12	0	0	4	2	28	27
	December	190	0	55	10	2	0	2	2	2	1	7	0	0	1	1	22	5
		2486		665	89	14	7	37	25	15	47	82	3	10	10	20	163	136

Condé Nast Traveler 2003-2004

Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs acts	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
CNT																		
2003	January	232	0	51	3	4	0	3	1	1	2	4	1	2	4	1	13	12
	February	144	0	36	2	6	0	7	0	0	2	2	3	1	0	11	2	
	March	194	0	50	8	5	1	3	1	0	2	5	1	4	0	15	6	
	April	172	0	39	2	5	0	5	1	0	2	3	2	1	0	14	3	
	May	281	0	71	4	5	1	6	2	1	7	10	0	0	1	24	9	
	June	171	0	47	4	3	0	4	2	0	2	7	0	0	2	17	6	
	July	163	0	36	4	3	0	3	3	0	4	3	0	0	1	15	0	
	August	139	0	35	1	2	0	3	1	0	2	5	0	0	0	16	5	
	September	227	0	69	7	6	0	3	3	0	7	1	0	0	1	24	8	
	October	237	0	72	8	8	0	10	1	1	5	9	0	0	2	21	6	
	November	363	0	111	9	6	0	10	6	1	8	12	0	0	3	38	16	
	December	195	0	55	6	4	0	5	1	0	5	4	0	0	1	19	10	
		2518		671	58	57	2	62	22	4	46	74	6	10	16	6	227	83
Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs acts	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
CNT																		
2004	January	239	0	54	5	9	0	4	2	0	4	7	0	0	1	0	10	12
	February	183	0	42	2	2	0	2	1	1	2	11	0	0	0	13	8	
	March	157	0	42	8	2	0	3	1	0	2	7	0	0	2	9	8	
	April	237	0	54	5	4	0	2	1	0	5	8	0	0	0	21	8	
	May	323	0	95	12	8	2	8	2	2	6	13	0	0	1	23	18	
	June	197	0	55	3	2	1	1	3	0	8	9	0	0	2	18	8	
	July	173	0	49	4	3	0	3	2	0	3	10	0	0	0	19	5	
	August	167	0	45	4	3	0	3	3	0	3	6	0	0	2	16	4	
	September	265	0	83	14	8	0	7	4	0	6	13	0	0	1	24	6	
	October	239	0	67	4	4	1	1	6	0	6	9	0	0	1	24	9	
	November	349	0	104	8	12	0	5	2	1	9	15	0	0	2	31	18	
	December	197	0	54	8	4	0	2	3	0	5	2	0	0	1	24	5	
		2726		654	77	61	4	41	26	4	59	110	0	0	9	8	232	104

National Geographic Traveler 1989-1990, 2003-2004

Year	Month	# pgs in issue	Ad supplements	# full Pgs ads	Females only	Female Tourists	Other T-R Females	Males only	Male Tourists	Other T-R Males	Couples	Tourist Couples	Mixed Grps	T-R Mixed Grps	Families	Tourist Families	Personless	T-R Personless
NGT																		
1989	Jan / Feb	126	0	11	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	3
	Mar / Apr	146	0	26	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	2	16
	May / June	142	0	23	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	4	7
	July / Aug	118	0	7	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Sept / Oct	134	0	19	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	3	4
	Nov/Dec	138	0	12	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	4	12
	Total	804		110	0	4	4	7	5	1	0	21	0	1	1	5	15	46
NGT																		
1990	Jan / Feb	122	0	12	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	7
	Mar / Apr	170	0	33	0	2	0	1	2	2	0	6	0	1	0	4	3	12
	May / June	150	0	30	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	2	0	1	6	12
	July / Aug	122	0	18	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	3	6
	Sept / Oct	134	0	24	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	5	0	2	0	1	2	8
	Nov / Dec	130	0	20	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	5	8
	Total	828		137	0	12	0	3	6	4	0	20	0	6	1	10	21	53
NGT																		
2003	Jan / Feb	104	0	17	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	4	0	0	2	0	3	2
	March	125	0	23	2	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	9	3
	April	103	0	18	1	1	0	2	3	0	2	5	0	0	0	2	2	3
	May / June	119	4	32	2	3	0	3	0	1	1	3	0	0	5	2	6	6
	July / Aug	107	0	36	4	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	9	5
	September	121	0	26	4	5	0	1	1	2	4	1	1	1	0	1	3	4
	October	143	0	36	3	2	0	3	2	0	1	2	0	3	1	0	11	7
	Nov / Dec	161	0	45	1	3	0	6	5	1	1	3	0	2	2	0	13	8
	Total	983		233	18	21	1	19	16	6	13	21	2	7	13	7	56	38
NGT																		
2004	Jan / Feb	95	0	20	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	4	1	1	0	0	6	3
	March	129	0	29	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	1	4	0	1	7	9
	April	129	0	32	2	7	1	3	4	1	0	1	0	2	1	4	2	4
	May / June	135	0	32	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	5	1	2	2	2	9	7
	July / Aug	115	0	34	1	1	0	2	4	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	12	3
	September	103	0	28	2	2	1	2	3	0	0	4	0	0	6	1	11	2
	October	163	0	40	1	5	0	3	4	1	0	7	1	1	0	0	12	5
	Nov / Dec	119	0	34	1	5	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	14	6
	Total	988		248	8	25	2	17	17	2	2	26	5	12	10	8	73	39

Appendix F

Content Analysis Tabulations: Comparisons of Female Travel Ad Subjects for the Periods of 2003-2004, & 1989 - 1990

Part I: Appearance of Subjects

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
1. HIGH SKIN QUOTIENT														
i. IN BATHING SUIT														
a. Bikini	6	1	11	1	1				4				22	2
b. One piece	4	5	9	5		2				1		1	13	14
c. Can't tell which	3		5		1				1	1			10	1
ii. NUDE/Nearly nude (e.g. getting a massage treatment)	10		7	1	2						1		20	1
iii. Cleavage prominently featured	4								1+				5	0
iv. Other body parts prominently featured														
a. Bare shoulders and arms	5		2		1								8	
b. Throat plate, cleavage and face	1	1	1										2	1
c. Other	9								1				10	
v. N/A -- Fully clothed	14	4	21	8	13		2	1	5	2	4	1	59	16
vi. Face-only shown	1	1	1										2	1
2. FACIAL EXPRESSION														
i)Smiling	8	1	8	4	5		1		3		1		26	5
ii) Gazing into the distance (or staring in to space)	5	5	11	2					4		1		21	7
iii) Looking at a specific object (or something specific up close)	6	1	2	2					1	1			9	4
iv) Eyes closed, as though sleeping	11	3	12	4	1	2	2		3		1		30	9
v). Looking directly at camera														

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
a) Coyly/ 'seductively'	4		1	1									5	1
b) Smiling	9	1	5	1	3			1		1	1		18	4
c) Cool appraisal ('Haughty?')	2	1											2	1
vi) Face not fully visible	9	1	19	2	6				5	2	1	2	40	7
3. BODY POSTURE														
i. Sleeping														
a) Lying down	2		1					2		1			6	
b) Upright (Either sleeping or in deep state of relaxation)	1												1	
ii) Reclining/Lounging, but (presumably) conscious	14	3	13	4		2			2	1	1		30	10
iii) Sitting upright (passively)	6	3	5	3					2				13	6
iv) Standing passively														
a) In a room	4		3								1		8	
b) Outside	4		5	1				1	3	2	1		13	4
c) In or by the ocean	2	1	5	1									7	2
d) In/by a pool	3	2											3	2
e) In a hot tub	1								1				2	
f) Other	2		1										3	
v. Actively engaged in physical activity														
a) Sport														
i. Swimming	1		2										3	
ii. Snorkelling			1										1	
iii. Scuba			1										1	
iv. Other		1	5	3								1	5	5
b) Walking (with purpose)	2		3		1	1						1	6	2
c) Strolling (e.g. along a beach)			2		1				1			1	4	1
d) Applying sunscreen to a child (always a son)	1		1										2	
e) Yoga	1		4										5	
f) Other	3		4		3				1	1	1		12	1
vi Ambiguous but PASSIVE	3	3	3		3								9	3

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
4. OVERALL GROOMING (e.g.stylized use of make-up and clothing)														
i) "Model-like" appearance (Subject appears to be professional model - i.e., made-up carefully; hair clearly coiffed.; slim body type.)	24	8	12	5	3	2	1		1		2	2	43	19
ii) "Deliberately average" - looking (i.e.,casual grooming; no obvious make-up/hair coiffing)	3		10	8	8			1	4	1	2		27	10
iii) Combination of the above two (could be either model or "regular civilian.") Believable as just a (good-looking) person)	20	5	27	2	6		1		5	2		1	59	10
iv) Can't see enough to say definitively	2		8		1						1		12	
5. AGE (HIGHLY SUBJECTIVE CATEGORY: "BEST GUESS")														
i. Likely under 35	24	7	32	9	3	2	1		5	2	1	1	66	21
ii. Possibly could be around 35	15	3	11	2	6		1	1	4		2	1	39	7
iii. Could be over 35	5	1	1	2	3				1	1			10	4
iv. Appears to be over 45		1	1	1	2						2		5	2
v. Speculation hampered:either figure too small, too partial, or face not shown		1	12	1	4				1	1		1	17	4
6. BODY TYPE														
i. Notably slim	18	3	10	5	5	2			1	2	2	2	36	14
ii. Notably curvaceous/fully breast-size apparent	14	2	9	2	3		1		4				31	4

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
iii. Body shape either not obvious, not particularly noteworthy, or 'average'-looking	9	1	23	7	10		1	2		2	1	46	10	
iv. Heavier set									1				1	
v. Can't see (Female subject too small or obscured)	10	7	15	1	1			2	1	1		29	9	
7. IF ONLY PART OF THE FEMALE SUBJECT ON DISPLAY (- LESS THAN ONE THIRD), WHAT IS SHOWN?														
i. Face only	1	1	3									4	1	
ii. Head and shoulders (Arms may or may not be partially present)	9	3	11	1	4		1	1		1		27	4	
iii. No Head:body below neck only			1									1		
iv. Waist up	5	1	4	1	1		1					10	3	
v. other	8	1	2	1	2			3	1	4	1	19	4	
vi. Not applicable	27	7	36	12	11	2	1		3		2	75	26	
8. HAIR														
1a. Not prominent/not distinguishable	9	7	19	5	3	1	1		4	1	1	37	15	
1b. In a bun/Hair up	10		8		5						2	25		
2 Prominent														
i. Shoulder length or longer	25	5	23	6		1	1		6	1	2	57	14	
Obviously uncoiffed					4							4		
ii. Shorter than shoulder length	5	1	8	4	3		1		1		1	16	8	
Obviously uncoiffed					3							3		

Part II: Backdrop/Setting of Ad

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
1a. Private Hotel/cruise room or private veranda or terrace	7	1	3		1				1				12	1
1b. Private cruise balcony					1								1	
2. Beaches / ocean	5	4	18	6	1	1			4	2		1	28	14
3. Hotel/Resort pool	9	3	4	1									13	4
4. Hot tub in specific destination/ hotel resort setting	4												4	
5a. Massage table in specific destination/hotel resort/cruise ship setting	5		2		1								8	
5b. Other spa setting		1	5						2		1		8	1
6. Nature-oriented setting in actual destination	2	1	22	2	4			1					28	4
7. Urban outdoor setting in destination	2		2	1	2				2	1	1		9	2
8a. Hotel/resort lobby/bar/casino/'public' area of hotel	9	2	1			1							10	3
8b. Simulated "natural" setting at hotel/resort (Prominent in several Las Vegas ads)	4												4	
8c. Spa-mediation area			2										2	
9. Other (e.g. 'Ambiguous', 'surreal', etc.)	2	1	2		4		2	1	3		1	1	14	3
10. Cultural setting			3	6							1		4	6
11. At Home (pre- or post-trip)			1		6				2		1		10	

Part III: Presence of Prominent Signifying Prop

(Should be deemed significant enough to direct the meaning of the ad)

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
1. High level of service / pampering / luxury indicated (e.g. waiter with silver tray, wading through water to procure refreshments; spa area; massage services; opulent/luxurious surroundings; silver breakfast service; particularly spectacular view; etc.)	25	5	8	2	8	1	1		2				44	8
2. Peace/serenity-invoking indicators (generalized impression):	12			1									12	1
i. Aroma therapy candle			2										2	
ii. Petals		1	1										1	1
iii. Massages stones			2										2	
iv. Calm water with palms			2	2									2	2
v. Other			5										5	
3. Items to indicate multi-identities/interest	4		6			1		1	1	1	1		12	3
4. Presence of child(ren)	1		2	2									3	2
5. Props that may indicate "competence"														
i. Athletic competence: e.g. snorkelling gear; diving equipment; rock climbing gear		1		1										2
ii. Artistic: paints, sketching pad and pencils	1												1	
iii. Other			1						1				1	1

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
6. Props to indicate stereotypical feminine proclivities (e.g. grooming, shopping):														
i. Sarong "shedding"/"unveiling"	2		1		2								5	
ii. Shopping-related items:	1		1				1		1		1	1	4	1
iii. Jewelry		1	1		1								2	1
iv. Presence of flower(s)	2		3		1								6	
v. Obvious wedding ring	1												1	
vi. Other				1					1					2
a. Dress-up (in glamorous clothing and/or highly 'feminine' clothing)	1		3		2				1				7	
b. Broad sun hat	2		2										4	
c. 'Sexual allure' prop (e.g. notably sexually provocative wear, a straw in the mouth):	4		2										6	
7. 'Idyllic' natural setting	8	4	19	5	2		4			2			33	11
8. Social (e.g. interacting with friendly locals; girlfriends bonding):	7	2	8	1	3		1		1		2	1	22	3
9. 'Regular-person' indicators	2								4		2		8	
10. Non-Caucasian subject featured (specify):														
i. Black:	2		4		1								7	
ii. East Asian			1										1	
iii. Could be (at least partially) racially indigenous to destination advertised:														
a) Indian			3										3	

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
b)Hawaiian-American			1										1	
c)Maori-Caucasian			1										1	
11.Cultural Indicators (generalized):		1		7						1		1		10
i. Famous landmarks:	1		1										2	
ii. Historical-looking buildings			1		1								2	
iii.Evidence of local arts/artistry	1												1	
iv. Others			4										4	

Part IV: Subjective Overall Interpretation of Individual Ads

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90	'03 - '04	'89 - '90
I Woman as "decorative" or "ornamental" (i.e. passive female subject seemingly more for aesthetic purposes as part of the scenery than as having distinct agenda of her own. Much skin usually showing.)	15	5	14	5	2	2	1		1	1	2	1	35	14
II. Woman as "autonomous" and / or actively engaged	8	1	21	7	10		1	1	5	1	2	1	45	11
III. Combination of the above two categories. (i.e., not transgressive)	17	6	13	3	4				5	1	1	1	39	11
IV. Spa treatment (Unsure of other category in which to place.)	9		8		1						1		19	0
V. Ambiguous/ undecided	1	1	1		1				1	1			4	2

Part V: If Applicable

	Resorts - Hotels		Specific Destination		Cruises		Airlines		Travel Services		Travel Products		Totals	
	'03	'89	'03	'89	'03	'89	'03	'89	'03	'89	'03	'89	'03	'89
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	'04	'90	'04	'90	'04	'90	'04	'90	'04	'90	'04	'90	'04	'90
1 Subject animated/cartoon drawing	2	2											2	0
2. Subject or setting surreal	2												2	0

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- American Express Delta SkyMiles (woman in laundromat). Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Apr. 2004: 19.
- Arizona Grand Canyon State, Grand Canyon. Condé Nast Traveler Nov. 2004: 233
- Arizona Grand Canyon State, Phoenix (meditation wheel). Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Oct.2004: 225
- Arizona Grand Canyon State (Arizona spa). Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Dec. 2003: 339.
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- Bahamas, The Islands of the Bahamas. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Feb. 2004: 75.
- Bellagio Hotel Las Vegas. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler June 2003: 85.
- Bermuda spa. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure July 2004:21.
- Bermuda (woman on polo pony). Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Jan./Feb. 2004: 9.
- British Airways. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Dec. 2003: 201. (4x)
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Le Meridien Hotels. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Nov. 2004: 153.

Little Dix Bay Resort. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure 1990: 39.

Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas (risk analyst). Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Nov 2004: 193.

Mandarin Oriental Hotels. Isabella Rossellini. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Sept 2003: 43.

Mandarin Oriental Hotels (Jerri Hall). Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler May 2004: 99.

MasterCard, Park Hyatt Paris. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Dec 2004: 81.

Mexico (woman on beach with spa inset). Advertisement. Travel+Leisure May 2003: 127.

Mirage, “Explore”. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure Apr. 2004: 169.

Mirage, “Ignite”. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Apr. 2004: 33

Mirage, “Submerge”. Advertisement. Travel+Leisure June 2003: 213

New Zealand. Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Nov.2004: 253

Radisson Seven Seas (sarong-opening woman). Advertisement. Condé Nast Traveler Oct 2004: 33.

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Renaissance Hotels (painter). Advertisement. National Geographic Traveler Apr 2004: 11.

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Silverseas (fjords). Advertisement. Travel+Leisure July 2003: 62.

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