

## Constructing Masculinity through Images: Content Analysis of Lifestyle Magazines in Croatia

**Authors :** Marija Lončar, Zorana Šuljug Vučica, Magdalena Nigoević

**Abstract :** Diverse social, cultural and economic trends and changes in contemporary societies influence the ways masculinity is represented in a variety of media. Masculinity is constructed within media images as a dynamic process that changes slowly over time and is shaped by various social factors. In many societies, dominant masculinity is still associated with authority, heterosexuality, marriage, professional and financial success, ethnic dominance and physical strength. But contemporary media depict men in ways that suggest a change in the approach to media images. The number of media images of men, which promote men's identity through their body, have increased. With the male body more scrutinized and commodified, it is necessary to highlight how the body is represented and which visual elements are crucial since the body has an important role in the construction of masculinities. The study includes content analysis of male body images in the advertisements of different men's and women's lifestyle magazines available in Croatia. The main aim was to explore how masculinities are currently being portrayed through body regarding age, physical appearance, fashion, touch and gaze. The findings are also discussed in relation to female images since women are central in many of the processes constructing masculinities and according to the recent conceptualization of masculinity. Although the construction of male images varies through body features, almost all of them convey the message that men's identity could be managed through manipulation and by enhancing the appearance. Furthermore, they suggest that men should engage in "bodywork" through advertised products, activities and/or practices, in order to achieve their preferred social image.

**Keywords :** body images, content analysis, lifestyle magazines, masculinity

**Conference Title :** ICSSH 2016 : International Conference on Social Science and Humanity

**Conference Location :** Prague, Czechia

**Conference Dates :** October 06-07, 2016