ABSTRACT

THESIS: Presentations of Sexuality, Romance, and the Opposite Sex in Female-Oriented Magazines

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DATE: July 2009

PAGES: 39

This study is a content analysis of female-oriented magazines aimed at three different age groups: women, teen, and preteen. Magazine content from Girls’ Life, J-14, Seventeen, Cosmo Girl!, Cosmopolitan, and Glamour was examined for themes of sexuality, romance, and the opposite sex. The evidence suggests that topics are presented to women in a progressive manner in which preteen girls are first learning about the opposite sex, teens are learning how to behave in order to attract the opposite sex, and women are being told how to please the opposite sex erotically. While the idea is never overtly stated, it appears that women are still sexual objects for men’s pleasing. However, they are also in charge of “taming” the man and making him knowledgeable on topics of sexuality and romance.