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New findings for contemporary marketing to Black men: A Content analysis of alcoholic beverage ad appeals from Ebony and GQ magazines

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Running Head: MARKETING TO BLACK MEN

Rochester Institute of Technology

Department of Communication

College of Liberal Arts

New Findings for Contemporary Marketing to Black Men:

A Content Analysis of Alcoholic Beverage Ad Appeals from Ebony and GQ Magazines

by

Joshua Jedidiah Myers

A Thesis submitted

in partial fulfillment of the Master of Science degree

in Communication & Media Technologies

Degree Awarded:
September 20, 2010

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Dedication

In memory of...

Roosevelt Myers Sr.
(1947-1996)

-&-

Jacqueline Myers
(1955-2002)

“Until Then”

The wind of separation does blow.
And blow.
From where it comes
I know not.

But where it rests
Is between you and I.
Soon, another wind will come for me.
Until then...

~Joshua

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NEW FINDINGS FOR CONTEMPORARY MARKETING TO BLACK MEN:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE AD APPEALS
FROM *EBONY* AND *GQ* MAGAZINES

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Abstract

The present study uses content analysis to investigate differences in alcoholic beverage advertisement appeals, from *Ebony* and *Gentlemen's Quarterly* magazines, aimed at Black men in contrast to the mainstream male demographic. The present study reports that there are no significant statistical differences between ad appeals aimed at Black men and the mainstream male demographic. Consequently, it is suggested that cultural unawareness has displaced racial and ethnic stereotyping in contemporary marketing to Black men. Future research should concern appeals Black media make to their own markets to expose the biases of Black consumer groups who misrepresent the issue of race in contemporary marketing.

Key words: African American; Black men; marketing; advertisement appeals; alcohol

New Findings for Contemporary Marketing to Black Men:

A Content Analysis of Alcoholic Beverage Ad Appeals from Ebony and GQ Magazines

It has long been the task of marketers to persuade consumers to buy their products (Larson, 2004). Although many have succeeded in mastering the craft of persuasion, others experience unsuccessful consumer responses to sales and other promotions because they have failed to use an effective message that fully convinces consumers that they need, or at least desire, the company's products or services. Larson (2004) claims that the first step for persuaders [or marketers] in constructing such a message involves learning about the audience and then shaping the message to fulfill their specific needs. For example, a record company that wants to sell millions of albums for one of its artists develops an image for the artist and concept for the album, which is designed to send a specific message or appeal to the artist's demographic in hopes that the demographic will respond accordingly and purchase the album. Another view on persuasion comes from Potter (1954) who claims that [persuasion] wields an immense social influence, comparable to the influence of religion and learning. It may be the hope of people who preach religious rhetoric that the individuals to whom they minister will be influenced and respond to their messages by incorporating its basic concepts into their daily lives. Potter (1954) agrees that in this same way, marketers send repetitious messages to consumers, hoping that they will eventually purchase and incorporate the use of the product into their daily lives.

Much of what Larson (2004) and Potter (1954) refer to can be summed up by Cultivation Theory, which maintains that consumers' perception of reality are heavily influenced by mediated depictions (Bailey, 2006). Therefore, it must be considered what happens when marketers send mediated messages that are inconsistent with consumers' social reality or perhaps

even stereotypical. When applying Cultivation Theory to marketing, it suggests that marketers must be mindful of the depictions of minorities in media because they have the power to shape people's perception of, attitude towards, and thus interactions with them (Bailey, 2006).

Moreover, it may also influence how minorities view themselves (Bailey, 2006; Westerwick & Coats, 2006). One consumer demographic that has experienced this first hand are Blacks. Black consumers have been underrepresented and negatively portrayed in print media (Larson, 2004). Over the past seven decades, they have been portrayed in the media as unintelligent and lowly servants, entertainers, and athletes (Saffer, 1998). Black male consumers, in particular, are shown as hypersexual, money-hungry, and non-intellectual subjects (Hooks, 2004). Black models appearing in more socially desirable roles did not appear until the late 1900s (Beard, 2008; Seiter & Gass, 2004).

In addition, due to their increasing numbers and income, Black consumers have become an attractive target for several advertisers (Bailey, 2006; Barker & Joiner, 2007; Cui, 2000; Mastin & Campo, 2006). In fact, the Black middle class is growing faster than any other minority's and boasts a buying power of over \$965 billion (Bailey, 2006). Much research on target marketing indicate that marketers have significantly increased their efforts to target Blacks, women, and other minorities with unhealthy and addictive products that contribute to a downward social spiral (Cui, 2000; Kean & Prividera, 2007; Mastin & Campo, 2006).

For instance, a great deal of marketing and advertising research has been reported on and linked to Black women's health issues. The large amount of snack food ads in women's print media has been linked to the obesity of Black women (Kean & Prividera, 2007). Oddly, not enough has been reported on Black men's health issues in relation to advertising (Kean &

Prividera, 2007; Mastin & Campo, 2006; Stevenson, 2007). Most of the research on Black men in media focuses on their portrayal (Bailey, 2006). Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to investigate ad appeals marketers make in alcoholic beverage ads aimed toward Black men in Black and mainstream male print media. The present study achieves this objective by examining: (a) appeals that alcoholic beverage ads make in relation to the Cultivation Theory, (b) the frequency with which Black men appear in alcoholic beverage ads, as compared with other races and ethnicities, and (c) the differences between appeals aimed at Black men, as compared with appeals to other races and ethnicities.

Project Rationale

The present study maintains the path of previous studies about contemporary marketing to Blacks yet expands its findings to the social and stereotypical association of alcoholic beverage advertising with Black men. The reason the present study concentrates on Black men and not women is that men are more likely to drink alcohol than women in any culture (Kessler, McGonagle, Zhao, Nelson, Hughes, Eshelman, Wittchen, & Kendler, 1994). Further, it remains imperative that the present study examine the Black male demographic because they are a numeric minority in society and the media. Hence, they, and Blacks in general, are more aware of their race in personal and mediated situations than the majority. Other races, such as White, may not view their racial identity as an integral part of their self-concept and it is thus unlikely to grow in importance until they are no longer in the majority in specific settings (Westerwick & Coats, 2006).

Moreover, because ethnicity is an important aspect of Black consumers' identity and because racial prejudice remains in society, it is necessary that marketers test the evaluations of

race and ethnicity associated with their products among intended markets by examining the messages their ads send (Barker & Joiner, 2007). By improving their understanding of Blacks as a whole and the Black experience, marketers will understand them as consumers and then be better able to create and sell products that reinforce their positive representation in media.

Additionally, the present study served to dismiss certain stereotypes and conventional beliefs about Black men and their alcohol consumption. Hoffman & Heald (2000) reported that alcohol consumption and misuse is higher among Blacks compared to Whites and other races and ethnicities, which augments concern for their overall health and physical wellbeing. However, Hoffman & Heald (2000) claim this may be largely due to the fact that Blacks are targeted by alcohol marketers more than any other minority or demographic. The present study helps alcoholic beverage marketers and marketing research scholars understand Black consumers and uncover information about them that could affect a product's sales success or provide a missing link in marketing research. Furthermore, alcoholic beverage ads affect the manner, style, and meaning of drinking in society (Cui, 2000). This phenomenon may have the power to cause Black consumers, and others who receive the same message, to develop an idea of alcohol consumption that is not safe, leading to several social and family issues and poor health. One major concern is alcohol abuse, which causes dangerous health complications, such as heart disease, stroke, liver cirrhosis, and cancer, all of which Black men suffer disproportionately (The American National Red Cross, 2007).

Ultimately, the present study serves to encourage social and scholarly discourse about and examinations of the claims from some Black consumer groups who believe they are

vehemently victimized by the media. Further, it seeks to assist in evaluating the claims of those who others say victimize themselves by assuming that certain events in their lives were caused solely because they are a minority.

Review of Literature

The following is a review of studies about contemporary marketing and advertising to the Black consumer demographic. The predominant research method for these studies is content analysis. The studies center on messages or ad appeals marketers use to sell alcoholic beverages to Blacks through print media, i.e. magazines and billboards.

Advertising & Race: The Case

Pollay (1986) states that advertising has been thought to propagate and perpetuate negative racial stereotypes and can replicate social inequalities. The relative absence of Blacks from earlier advertising suggests that their position as American consumers did not matter; unequivocally, it appeared that businesses only wanted money from White consumers. Previous ads featured Blacks, but only in small servant type roles with products and services that were marketed to White consumers (Barker & Joiner, 2007). With respect to Cultivation Theory, the message such stereotypical ads send to consumers who are not Black is that Blacks are lowly people and typically work in such capacities as maids and servants. Although, this is likely to occur when those being exposed to these types of mediated images have little direct contact with the people portrayed in the images (Signorielli & Morgan, 1990).

Nonetheless, the presence and portrayal of Blacks grew in advertising. With the boom of the Black middle class hosting a buying power of over \$965 billion (Bailey, 2006), they have become a key target for alcohol marketers. In fact, because alcohol marketers have increased

their efforts to target minorities (Cui, 2000), they have come under a lot of criticism. Consumer groups, such as Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, have faulted the alcohol industry, claiming that they have increased alcohol consumption by singling out minorities, women, heavy drinkers, and young people (Franke & Wilcox, 1987). Although alcohol manufacturers contend that advertising only leads to brand switching and not overall consumption (Pomeroy, Castellano, Becker, Johnson, & Brown, 1992), research on the relationship between advertising and alcohol consumption has produced mixed results (Saffer, 1998). Kessler, et al. (1994) reports that there are marked differences across cultures concerning the use of alcohol and alcohol-related problems. Yet, when it comes to Blacks and alcohol advertising, the results are controversial.

Targeting Minorities with Unhealthy Products

In their content analysis of billboard alcohol ads in urban and suburban areas, Stoddard, Johnson, Sussman, Dent, & Boley-Cruz, (1998) reported that urban areas, predominantly populated by Blacks and Latinos, had more than double the billboard ads for alcohol, as compared with suburban neighborhoods preoccupied by Whites. Hoffman & Heald (2000) also reported that billboard advertisers heavily target low income neighborhoods and Blacks. Contrarily, Cui (2000) contends that despite numerous charges, there is little empirical evidence to support the claim that alcohol marketers have targeted minorities disproportionately. However, Cui (2000) also reported that alcohol has been made more affordable, potent, and accessible in Black communities than in others.

Kean & Prividera (2007) reported that Black consumers tend to be the advertising targets of unhealthy individual food items, non-alcoholic beverages, and fast food. In its comparison of Black women's magazine, *Essence*, and a general women's magazine, *Cosmopolitan*, the study

found that unlike *Essence*, *Cosmopolitan* integrated nourishing and health-related products, including weight loss merchandise as one of its most frequent advertisements; whereas in *Essence*, individual snack food items were the most advertised products (Kean & Prividera, 2007).

Additionally, Hoffman & Heald (2000) reported that tobacco consumption is higher among Blacks than Whites, largely due to more advertising in urban than suburban neighborhoods. A report for the Centers for Disease Control (1998) reported that smoking is more common with Black men (31%) than with White men (28%). The three percent difference is hardly significant, but still reiterates the effect of heavy advertising in urban areas. These reports clearly infer that there are differences in terms of the type of products advertised toward Blacks.

On the other hand, products that are not generally targeted toward Black men are personal grooming items because of the perceptions they have toward the type men who do use these items. In a lab study, Pompper, Soto, & Piel (2007) researched the perceptions Black and Latino men hold toward men's fashion and style magazines, which are inundated with personal grooming product ads. The study reported that Black subjects were deeply critical of the magazines, calling the appeals "unrealistic" and said that the type of men who read those magazines are "metrosexuals" and try too hard to be pretty; likewise White subjects reported wanting an ideal body that resembled major Black athletes, for example, Terrell Owens and Kobe Bryant (Pompper, Soto, & Piel, 2007). Black subjects reported that their ideal Black man regularly subscribed to sports, urban, and hip hop themed magazines, but was not preoccupied with pruning (Pompper, Soto, & Piel, 2007). Latino subjects were very judgmental of the

magazines because of their lack of frequent Latino images, saying that they felt pressured from family and friends to “look good” and the lack of Latino images in the magazines made them self-conscious about their image (Pompper, Soto, & Piel, 2007).

Black Response to Target Marketing

Much research on marketing to Blacks has documented that they respond better to ads featuring models that resemble themselves (Barker & Joiner, 2007; Cui, 2000; Hoffman & Heald, 2000). Peterson (2007) reported that because Black models are principally featured in urban neighborhood ads and in Black magazines, they have responded to the ad message more quickly than they would have an ad featuring White models. Furthermore, Peterson (2007) reported that Blacks respond better, have greater recall of content, and view more favorably ads featuring minorities as compared to Whites who when viewing the same ads, yielded neutral or positive responses.

Marketers have been greatly compensated by Black consumers’ response to their targeting and persuasion tactics (Hoffman & Heald, 2000). Consequently, the consumption of these products has contributed to severe health problems for the overall Black community (Kean & Prividera, 2007). In 2006, more Blacks died (982,000) than Whites (764,400); yet, Whites make up almost 200 million Americans and Blacks, 39 million (Heron, et al., 2009). The leading causes of death for Black men, excluding HIV/AIDS and violence, are heart disease, cancer, and stroke, all of which have been linked to excessive alcohol consumption (Heron, et al. 2009). The high death rate of Black men and the causes of their deaths provide compelling evidence that the targeting efforts of alcohol advertisers and effects on Black men are inextricably linked.

Frequency & Portrayal of Blacks in Print Media

Bailey's (2006) content analysis examined the frequency with which Black men appeared in print media. The study reported that in comparing and contrasting seven popular magazines, the main occupations for Black men were entertainers or athletes; they were featured in 75.2% of clothing, shoes, and accessory advertisements, 8.6% of food and drink advertisements, and 7.3% of entertainment advertisements (Bailey, 2006). Bailey's (2006) study infers that racial stereotyping is an active element in the frequency and portrayal of Black men.

Furthermore, Blacks are often compared with Hispanics and Asians in marketing research. In Westerwick & Coats' (2006) content analysis of the frequency of minorities in magazine ads, it was discovered that even though Hispanics are the largest minority in the U.S., they were virtually nonexistent in media until the 1990s and still hold [one of] the smallest percentage[s] of frequency in media (Westerwick & Coats, 2006). Palumbo & Teich (2005) reported that there are 40 million Hispanics in the U.S. and that their buying power has increased steadily.

On the other hand, Peterson's (2007) longitudinal content analysis of magazines examined the rise of advertising and minorities in print media compared to Whites and concluded that minorities are better represented in today's media than they were decades ago. The study reported that Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics appeared in more ads that featured them in more socially favorable and dominant positions than Whites (Peterson, 2007). For instance, one financial services ad featured an Black man sitting in a lofty office adjacent to a White man, wherein it was evident that he was instructing him about personal financial management. Peterson's (2007) study mirrors the efforts of past researchers in their attempts to increase the

representation and portrayal of Blacks in advertising. It should be noted, however, that Peterson's (2007) study also reported that Whites were still featured in more ads than minorities.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

The present study focused on appeals made by alcoholic beverage marketers in *Ebony* and *GQ* magazines. The inconclusive reports from previous research (Kessler, et al. 1994; Saffer, 1998; Cui, 2000; Hoffman & Heald, 2000) on alcoholic beverage marketers' efforts to target Blacks suggests the following hypothesis:

H1: *Ebony* and *GQ* will differ significantly with regard to alcoholic beverage ad appeals.

Hypothesis One justifies an examination of the type of ad appeals *Ebony* and *GQ* use to market to their readers and suggests the following research question:

RQ1: How do alcoholic beverage ad appeals aimed at *Ebony* and *GQ* readers differ?

As Peterson (2007) reported, Blacks respond better, have greater recall of content, and view more favorably ads featuring minorities, hence, it is vital to examine ad appeals that feature Black men. Therefore, the following research questions are suggested:

RQ2: What is the frequency with which Black male models appear in alcoholic beverage ads, as compared with White, Latino, and Asian models?

RQ3: What appeals do alcoholic beverage ads with Black male models make?

RQ4: How do alcoholic beverage ad appeals differ with Black male models, as compared with White, Latino, and Asian models?

The present study also submits hypotheses regarding alcoholic beverage ad appeals in relation to Cultivation Theory, which maintains that consumers' perception of reality are heavily influenced by mediated depictions (Bailey, 2006):

- H2: Quality will be the most frequent appeal in *Ebony*.
- H3: Sophistication will be an equally frequent appeal in *Ebony* and *GQ*.
- H4: Information will be the most frequent appeal in *GQ*.

Method

The Sample

The present study content analyzed two monthly magazines, *Ebony* and *Gentlemen's Quarterly*. A total of 141 issues of *Ebony* (72) and *GQ* (69) dated between January 2004 through December 2009 provided the sample consisting of 549 individual, full-page ads from *Ebony* (72) and *GQ* (477). This six-year time period was chosen to: (a) avoid bias, (b) represent the contemporary period, and (c) ensure a diverse range of alcoholic beverage ads. Both magazines' editorial content belongs to the fashion/lifestyle category, which makes them comparable for research. Each was chosen based on their positioning statements. *Ebony* is positioned for Black male and female readers and was specifically selected because it is among the highest mass-circulated magazines directed towards Blacks (Clark, McLellan, & Hoffman-Goetz, 2006). Thus, *Ebony's* ads reflect what products and services interest Black consumers. *Ebony* has a circulation of 10.7 million monthly readers (Ebony Media Kit). *Ebony's* demographics are composed of 45% male, 55% female, a median age of 36.5, 64% college degree holders, and 66% are employed with a median annual household income of \$55,000 (www.ebonyjet.com). The racial and ethnic makeup of *Ebony's* readers was not reported.

Furthermore, *Ebony* was also selected for the present study's sample because there was a small collection of general interest magazines oriented toward Black men. The majority of magazines designed for them were adult-related. As a result, there were a limited number of

magazines that published political, social, cultural, religious, fashion or style, or business content for Black men.

Gentlemen's Quarterly is positioned for a mainstream male audience, meaning that it appeals to all races and ethnicities and has a paid circulation of 6.4 million monthly readers (Conde Nast Media Kit). *Gentlemen's Quarterly's* web site boasts in its mission statement that it is "the authority on men... providing definitive coverage of men's style and culture" (Paragraph 1, Conde Nast Media Kit). As a result, the ads in *GQ* reflect what advertisers believe appeals to men in general. Its reader demographic consists of 77% men, 23% female, a median age of 35.2, 72% college degree holders, 79% employed with a median annual household income of \$75,103, 57% White, 28% Black, 15% Hispanic, and 15% Asian/other (Conde Nast Media Kit).

Ebony and *GQ* were comparable to examine because they both have high circulations for their target markets. *Ebony*, though it may be positioned for both Black men and women, has the highest circulation for Black men with content similar to *GQ*, which made it the most accurate choice to contrast with *GQ*. In order to gauge the effectiveness of the ads targeting men in *Ebony* and *GQ*, the present study considered the percentage of men within each magazine's total audience market. *Ebony's* male readership is 45% of its total market, which is 4.8 million and *GQ* (77%), which is 4.9 million. Therefore, the present study's sample in terms of accuracy for the male audience market is highly compatible.

Coding

After the magazines were selected, the coding procedure was created. The present study only coded individual, full-page alcoholic beverage ads. The coding procedure consists of 23 variables. The first five were designed to indicate the ad number within the scope of the coding,

ad page number, magazine (e.g. *Ebony* or *GQ*), publishing date, and beverage type. The next set of 15 variables coded the following appeals being present or not present: relaxation, conformity, camaraderie, popularity with women, popularity with men, humor, sex, romance, sophistication, money, tradition, information, quality, power, and other. Ads containing more than one appeal were coded as such. Because there was no metric with which to define the type of appeals in alcoholic beverage ads, the present study defined its own.

Relaxation was present when ads depict models who appear to enjoy being in a non-work related setting. Conformity was present when ads showed all the models performing the same function. Camaraderie was present when ads indicated that models enjoyed being with friends. Popularity with women was present when two or more women were romantically or sexually attracted to the same man. Contrarily, popularity with men was present when two or more men were romantically or sexually attracted to one woman. Humor was present when ads showcased models with extravagant smiles and who were laughing. Sex was present when ads showed models posing in a sexually suggestive ways or partially or fully nude. Romance was present when an ad showed a fanciful event relating to couples. Sophistication was present when ads depicted the idea that consuming alcohol makes one classy and showed models dressed professionally or in an elegant setting. Money was present when wealth was inferred. Tradition was present when ads conveyed a sense of history and ceremony. Information was present when ads disclosed uncommon facts about the product. Quality was present when ads promoted the product's features. Power was present when ads implied that the reader would obtain some form of supremacy or influence. Other was present when ads contained any other miscellaneous appeal that could not be confined to another category.

In terms of the models in the ads, the present study coded the remaining three variables for the models' race/ethnicity, age, and sex. Race/ethnicity was coded as Black, White, Latino, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern, unknown, or not applicable. Age was coded in groups as 21 – 30, 31 – 40, 41 – 50, 51+, or not applicable. Sex was coded as male, female, or not applicable. In terms of ads with more than one model, the present study considered the first five models with the most prominent positioning within the ad.

Coder Training

The present study employed two individuals with experience in content analysis to act as coders for the data set. After practice coding a series of advertisements, the coders first met with the principal investigator and discussed the coding design. The coders then coded 10% of the ads from the sample. The present study aimed to attain .85+ intercoder reliability using Cohen's *kappa* and successfully attained .93.

Results

To answer Hypothesis One and Research Question One, a Student *t* test for mean differences was performed. Hypothesis One predicted *Ebony* and *GQ* will differ significantly with regard to alcoholic beverage ad appeals. Results do not support Hypothesis One as there was no statistical difference to support this claim. Research Question One examined, how do alcoholic beverage ad appeals aimed at *Ebony* and *GQ* readers differ? Results indicate that ad appeals did not differ significantly (relaxation $t = .03$, $df = 68$, $p = .98$; camaraderie $t = .00$, $df = 68$, $p = 1.00$; humor $t = .00$, $df = 68$, $p = 1.00$; sophistication $t = .30$, $df = 68$, $p = .80$; information $t = .40$, $df = 68$, $p = .69$; quality $t = .30$, $df = 68$, $p = .76$; power $t = .00$, $df = 68$, $p = .99$). For the

most part, ad appeals were generally identical in terms of ad proportion for each magazine. Table One shows the statistical relationship between ad appeals.

Table 1

Statistical Differences of Ad Appeals from Ebony and GQ

Variable	<i>t</i>	P
Relaxation	.03	.98
Camaraderie	.00	1.00
Humor	.00	1.00
Sophistication	.30	.80
Information	.40	.69
Quality	.30	.76
Power	.00	.99

A chi-square test was implemented to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four and Hypotheses Two, Three, and Four. Research Question Two examined what is the frequency with which Black male models appear in alcoholic beverage ads, as compared with White, Latino, and Asian models. Results indicated that 19 Black, 5 White, and 3 Indian male models appeared in *Ebony* making Black men the largest represented subject. Latino, Asian, and Middle Eastern models were not present in *Ebony* ads. Fifty-two Black, 59 White, 5 Latino, 7 Asian, and 5 Indian male models appeared in *GQ* rendering White men the largest represented subject. Similarly to *Ebony*, Middle Easterners were not present in any *GQ* ads.

Research Question Three investigated what appeals do alcoholic beverage ads with Black male models make? Results (*Ebony*, 90% and *GQ*, 79%) showed the most popular appeal for ads featuring Black male models was power. Research Question Four examined how do alcoholic beverage ad appeals differ with Black male models, as compared with White, Latino, and Asian models? Results indicated that *Ebony* ad appeals differed between Black, White, Latino, and Asian male models. Ninety percent of ads featuring Black male models referenced power, 85% of ads featuring White male models referenced quality and information, and 100% of ads featuring Indian male models referenced relaxation and sophistication. Results for *GQ* indicated 79% of ads featuring Black male models referenced power, 70% of ads featuring White male models referenced relaxation, 100% of ads featuring Latino male models referenced relaxation, and 100% of ads featuring Asian or Indian male models referenced relaxation and quality.

Hypothesis Two predicted quality would be the most frequent appeals in *Ebony*. Results confirm this to be true. Of *Ebony*'s total alcoholic beverage ad appeals, quality accounted for 25%. Hypothesis Three expected that sophistication would be equally frequent in *Ebony* and *GQ*.

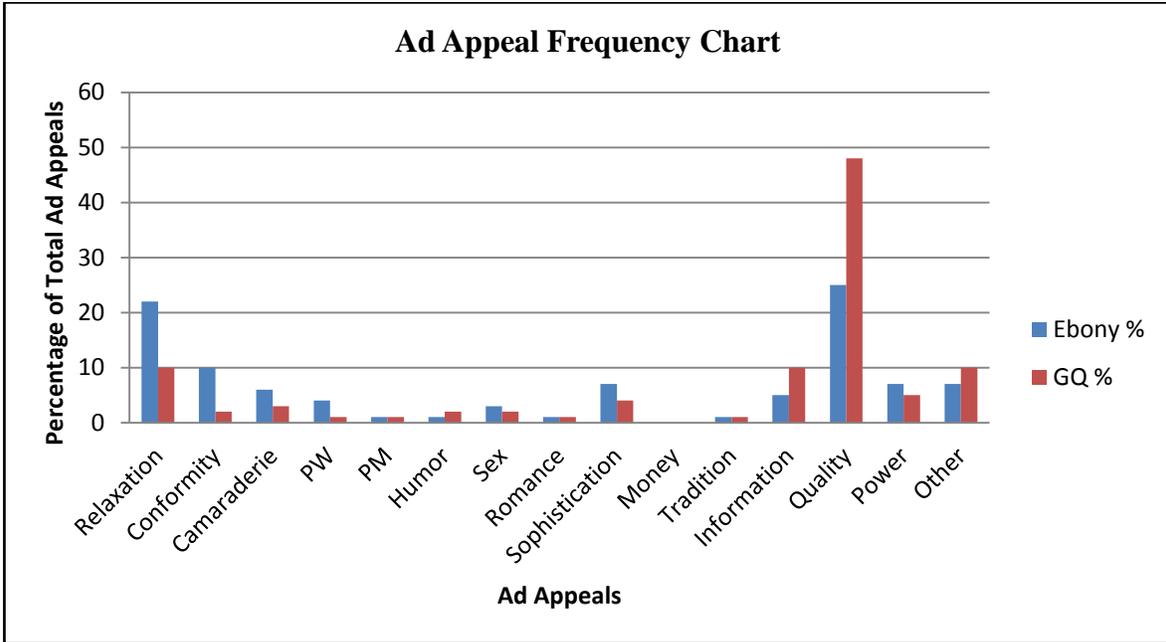
Results confirm that sophistication was equally frequent in both magazines. *Ebony* responded with 7% and *GQ*, 4% of total ad appeals referencing sophistication. Hypothesis Four predicted that information would be the most frequent appeals in *GQ*. Results confirm this assumption. Information accounted for 10% of *GQ* alcoholic beverage ad appeals. Table Two shows the frequency of distribution amongst ad appeals and Figure One shows the frequency, in percentages, of ad appeals for *Ebony* and *GQ*.

Table 2

Distribution Frequency of Ad Appeals from Ebony and GQ

Variable	X	df	P
Relaxation	2.33	2	.00
Conformity	2.90	1	.00
Camaraderie	6.40	1	.01
PW	7.16	1	.01
PM	.74	1	.39
Humor	.52	1	.47
Sex	2.08	1	.15
Romance	.32	1	.57
Sophistication	4.50	1	.03
Money	1.81	1	.18
Tradition	.10	1	.76
Information	3.60	1	.06
Quality	3.47	1	.00
Power	.96	1	.34
Other	1.44	1	.23

Figure 1



Discussion

The present study had as its goal an examination of ad appeals or messages marketers use to sell alcoholic beverages to the Black male consumer demographic. The results of the present study produced three significant outcomes.

First, inconsistent with previous research (Buffington & Fraley, 2008; Cui, 2000; Hoon & Ramaprasad, 2006; Mohring, 1989), the present study found that there was no significant statistical difference in ad appeals aimed at Black men compared with the mainstream male demographic. These findings suggest that the proliferation of racial and ethnic stereotyping in media have changed at a dramatic rate. It also warrants additional research as to why members of Black and other consumer groups still claim to feel oppressed by marketers' efforts to earn the Black dollar.

Second, consistent in the minority reports of previous research (Kessler, et al., 1994; Pomeroy, et al., 1992; Signorielli & Morgan, 1990) the frequency of Black male models appearing in media has increased over the past years. What this infers is that the increasing use of Black male models has become more acceptable in media. In addition, when a popular and reputable magazine like *GQ* uses 52 Black male models paired with 59 White male models, it shows that marketers acknowledge the fact that Black men do read the magazine and that their culture and lifestyle is relevant to and a part of *GQ*'s position as an authority on such items (Paragraph 1, Conde Nast Media Kit).

Finally, also consistent in the minority reports of previous research and in contrast to Bailey (2006), ads portraying Black male models and ad messages have improved meaningfully. These findings indicate that Black male models are no longer popularized in stereotypical

occupations (i.e. athletes, servants, etc.). Power was the most frequent appeal in ads featuring Black male models. This type of appeal shows Black men in a positive way and suggests that they are affluent and professional. With respect to Cultivation Theory, these ads reinforce a positive image of Black men in the public's perception.

Although these findings conclude that alcoholic beverage marketers' efforts to attract Black consumers have improved, the present study submits that a problem still exists. Because marketers' continue to unremittingly target Black consumers with their unhealthy products more than any other demographic (Bailey, 2006; Barker & Joiner, 2007; Cui, 2000; Mastin & Campo, 2006), it is suggested that cultural unawareness has displaced racial and ethnic stereotyping in alcoholic beverage advertising. Much research on social and health issues concerning Blacks link their alcohol consumption with strategically designed target marketing (Cui, 2000; Hoffman & Heald, 2000; Johnson, et al., 1998; Kean & Prividera, 2007). This infers that marketers are unaware of the social and health problems Blacks experience, caused by overconsumption of their products.

Conclusion

Limitations for the present study included: (1) a small selection of Black male oriented magazines for the method, (2) three issues of *GQ* (August 2004, October 2004, and February 2005) were unavailable for coding, and (3) the proportion of ads for *GQ* compared to *Ebony* was an average of five to one. The limited pool of Black, male-oriented magazines was mostly adult themed. More magazines were designed for general male readership than were not. In comparison, the number of men's adult magazines was greater for general male readers than for Blacks. This was a limitation in that the method was originally designed to use general interest

magazines for both Black and mainstream male readers.

In contrast to the majority of previous research, (Buffington & Fraley, 2008; Cui, 2000; Hoon & Ramaprasad, 2006; Mohring, 1989) which reported that racial stereotyping is still a significant issue in media, a minority have claimed that the majority of previous research reports were inconclusive and one-sided (Kessler, et al., 1994; Pomeroy, et al., 1992; Signorielli & Morgan, 1990). The present study supports that conclusion and suggests that as far as ad appeals in the marketing of alcoholic beverages are concerned, cultural unawareness has displaced racial stereotyping and no longer appears to be of primary concern in contemporary marketing, not only to Blacks but, minorities in general. As a result, future research should focus less on racial stereotyping of Blacks in mainstream media and more towards the messages and appeals that Black media make to their own markets. Very little has been reported on this subject. New research will expose the biases and inconsistencies of the criticism from Black consumer groups towards mainstream contemporary marketing and lead to a well-rounded standard of marketing research for the Black demographic.

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Appendix A: Research Procedure

Sources Searched

The search for literature relating to contemporary marketing and alcohol advertising occurred at the Wallace Library at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York from August 2009 to August 2010; Rundell Memorial Library, Rochester, New York from February 2010 to July 2010; River Campus Libraries at the University of Rochester, Rochester New York in June 2010; and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina from August 2009 to December 2009. Electronic databases were also used during the search method, among them, sources include: *Communication & Mass Media Complete (EBSCO)*, *Compendex (Ei Village 2)*, and *CommAbstracts (CIOS)*. The literature considered for citations for the present study dated from 1954 to 2009. The following list of key search terms was entered: contemporary marketing, African American men, African American demographic, Black males, Black men, magazine ads, advertising to African American men, health communication, health issues, and Black health.

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Appendix B: Content Codebook

	Variable	Description	Value
1	Ad Number	Number of ads containing alcohol	N/A
2	Ad Page Number	Page ad appears	N/A
3	Magazine	<i>GQ</i> or <i>Ebony</i>	0= <i>GQ</i> , 1= <i>Ebony</i>
4	Issue Date	Date magazine was published	mmm yy
5	Beverage Type	Type of drinking alcohol	1=Liquor, 2=Beer/Malt, 3=Champagne, 4=Wine, 5=No alcohol ad present
6	Relaxation	Evoke recreation	1=Present, 2=Not Present
7	Conformity	All/Majority models consume alcohol	1=Present, 2=Not Present
8	Camaraderie	Models play with one another	1=Present, 2=Not Present
9	PW	2 or more females are attracted to 1 male	1=Present, 2=Not Present
10	PM	2 or more males are attracted to 1 female	1=Present, 2=Not Present
11	Humor	Models smile or laugh; humor is expressed in written content	1=Present, 2=Not Present
12	Sex	Models are posed in risqué position and/or partially nude	1=Present, 2=Not Present
13	Romance	Fanciful event relatable to couples	1=Present, 2=Not Present
14	Sophistication	Models are dressed professionally or ad is elegant	1=Present, 2=Not Present
15	Money	Wealth is inferred	1=Present, 2=Not Present
16	Tradition	Promotes tradition of alcohol consumption	1=Present, 2=Not Present
17	Information	Uncommon facts	1=Present, 2=Not Present
18	Quality	Promotes taste and quality	1=Present, 2=Not Present
19	Power	Evokes image of strength and influence	1=Present, 2=Not Present
20	Other	Depicts images not listed	1=Present, 2=Not Present
21	Model Race/Ethnicity	According to racial/ethnic group	1=Black, 2=White, 3=Latino, 4=Asian, 5=Indian, 6=Middle Eastern, 7=Other/Unknown, 8=N/A
22	Model Age	According to age	1=21-30, 2=31-40, 3=41-50, 4=51+, 5=N/A
23	Model Sex	According to sex	1=Male, 2=Female, 3=N/A

Author's Biography

Joshua Jedidiah Myers grew up in Western New York, where the Myers household valued faith, family, and education, which led to Myers' curiosity of media and dramatics. Myers has since developed his interest in communication and drama with continued success.

Myers is the recipient of the 2007 Theatre Associate of New York State Excellence in Acting Award, a nominee for the 2008 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Irene Ryan Acting Award, the recipient of the 2008 Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Program Most Involved Student Award, the 2008 RIT Department of Communication Merit Scholarship, the 2008 RIT ALANA Student Merit Scholarship, and the 2010 University at Buffalo Arthur A. Schomburg Fellowship.

Myers holds a BS with a double major in Communication Studies and Theatre from The College at Brockport, State University of New York. His future plans include earning an MA in Arts Management from the University at Buffalo, The State University of New York and a Ph.D in Management.