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**Can you Pinch More Than an Inch:
Understanding Representation of the Healthy Woman in Special K. Advertisements**

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Can You Pinch More Than An Inch:
Understanding Representations of the Healthy Woman in Special K Advertisements
M.A. Thesis

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Abstract

Stereotypical representations of women provide a critical concern to scholars in the realm of communication and women's studies, pertaining particularly to the naturalized and perpetual mass media demand for women's slimness. However the question remains as to *why* women's attainment and maintenance of the thin ideal is continuously necessitated within North American media culture. An ethnographic content analysis of Special K television advertisements from the past ten years reveals the latent cultural values that necessitate all women's perpetual pursuit of the thin ideal. While Special K is marketed as a dieting aid to be used in the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, the lenses of feminist and objectification theories reveal a stereotypical equating of health with slimness for women within Special K advertisements, emphasizing the aesthetic pleasure that women's bodies provide for others rather than the benefits that women may reap from their own bodies; a sentiment that arguably encourages self-objectifying and self-monitoring behaviours among women. The naturalness of these mass media paradigms, as well as the latent cultural values that necessitate them, is a critical communication and feminist issue for which this study suggests possible constructive remedies.

Chapter 1: Introduction

“Somehow, somewhere, someone must have figured out that [women] will buy more things if they are kept in the self-hating, ever-failing, hungry and sexually insecure state of being aspiring ‘beauties’.”

- Naomi Wolf (1990). *The Beauty Myth* p. 49

The potential for harmful ramifications rendered by mass media representations of stereotypical gender normative behaviour is not new a new topic to women’s studies or the study of communication (Faludi, 1991; Kilbourne, 1999; Wolf, 1990). Against such a backdrop, much research has been dedicated to the exploration of mass media representations of women which, time and again, necessitate a narrow standard of beauty which almost always emphasizes a slim figure as the central defining indicator of feminine attractiveness (Basden & Dorin, 2007; Bower, 2001; Cash & Levin, 2000; Germov & Willams, 1999). Although eating disorders continually materialize in academia as apparent results of such repetitive and narrow representations of desirable femininity, it seems that fewer scholars have addressed *why* slimness, apart from excessive thinness, is necessary at all in order for women to be deemed as feminine and desirable in the context of white, North American culture. It is the opinion of the researcher that this critical and revealing question can be addressed through an examination of recent marketing strategies taken by companies who choose to advertise foods that are coincidentally low in calories and in fat as dieting aids exclusively to women; one of the most prominent being Kellogg's Special K cereal, which will serve as the focus of this study.

Special K has always taken an arguably innovative approach to its advertisement campaigns, ever since its “Time to get back into things” (Special K commercial 1, n.d.) and

“Pinch more than an inch” (Special K commercial 2, n.d.; Special K commercial 3, n.d.) television marketing campaigns throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Simply put, Special K is a breakfast cereal that has always been marketed as a weight loss aid, and has always been marketed almost exclusively to women. However, even within this marketing realm, the company's advertising approach has taken a new direction in the past ten or so years that is arguably more detrimental in terms of how it represents women and communicates the centrality of slimness to desirable femininity. This is due to the fact that, in Special K's earlier campaigns, television advertisements were arguably intended to interpellate (a term that is defined and contextualized in the next chapter) middle-aged women who were deemed to be overweight and in need of a lifestyle and dietary change (Special K commercial 1, n.d.; Special K commercial 2, n.d.). Within these advertisements, while the marketing discourses naturalize women's bodily insecurities and re-enforce the social rewards that come with perpetuating the idealized, slim female form, there was an arguably constructive emphasis on the nutritional value that the cereal offers to women's bodies as it has vitamins and protein to provide physical energy (Special K commercial 2, n.d.; Special K commercial 3, n.d.). In addition, some of these advertisements also interpellated men by featuring them as potential Special K consumers, so that the burden of dieting discourses did not fall upon women alone (Special K commercial 2, n.d.; Special K commercial 3, n.d.).

In the late 1990s Special K's advertising approach took an interesting turn with its progressive “Look good on your own terms” campaign, which manipulated and challenged the very gender norms that it had used to sell its product in the past. Goodman (1998) describes the witty advertisements, where men are shown to complain about having their “mother's thighs,” and the voiceover suggests to the female audience that “men don't obsess

about these things, [so] why do we?” (p. 8). He also explains how this progressive marketing strategy was a result of consumer research focus groups, as well as a result of women writing to the company and expressing the alienation that they felt from the product’s previous marketing approaches; he identifies this shift as an attempt to appease an ageing baby boomer population, which was Special K’s target demographic at the time.

Recently, however, a product line expansion (including new cereal varieties, snack bars and even protein water), in accordance with the “Special K Challenge” and the “Feeling good never looked better” campaign (see Appendices B and E), has been accompanied by what the researcher considers to be a detrimental regression in the discourses offered by Special K’s advertisements, specifically in its television commercials, which will serve as the focus for this study. Even though Special K has and continues to offer a variety of print advertisements in magazines for its various products and campaigns, Special K’s television advertisements were selected for this study because it is the opinion of the researcher that they offer a richer, more detailed text to work with. In 2002, Kellogg launched its television marketing campaign suggesting that (specifically women) consumers eat two bowls of Special K cereal a day for two weeks in order to lose up to six pounds (Thompson, 2003; also see Appendices B and E). This regimen requires consumers to eat three boxes of cereal over the period of the diet, certainly more than the average consumer would normally eat, and this has ultimately been reflected in what Thompson identifies as increased product sales.

This change in the type of women featured in Special K advertisements represents not only a shift in the target demographic (moving from ageing women to younger women who could be more likely to develop brand loyalty) but also a problematic shift in the cultural

values that these advertisements perpetuate. Instead of encouraging women to eat Special K “sensibly” rather than obsessing over their bodies, as the product’s “Look good on your own terms” campaign encouraged in the 1990s (Goodman, 1998), Special K advertisements from the past ten years largely invite women to consume Special K, once again, as a dieting aid because of the cereal’s low calorie content and fat content (while the nutritional aspects of the product, like the vitamins and protein that it contains, are largely glazed over). The focus of these advertisements, then, becomes less about women’s health in spite of the campaign’s inherent claims, and more about the necessity of women’s pursuit of the thin ideal (Germov & Williams, 1999) which Special K, thankfully, can help women attain and maintain thereafter. This is the key problem that this study sets out to address, explore, and hopefully suggest thoughtful and constructive approaches to remedy.

Overview of the Thesis

To begin addressing the problem of stereotypical representations of women’s health in Special K television advertisements, a background of the issue at hand will be provided from a feminist and communication academic perspective in the literature review in chapter two. This section will discuss the social factors that comprise gender-normative behaviour in a white, European and North American cultural context. In so doing, it begins with a discussion of the sex differences that are so central to this culture’s understanding of gender; it then considers the Christian demands for feminine purity and control, as well as capitalistic requirements for anxious and inadequate women consumers. It then discusses the need for men, as cultural superiors, to maintain their superiority by controlling women’s bodies, both in their appearance and conduct. All of these elements lead to the conclusion that the thin ideal becomes the culture’s guiding principle for desirable femininity, and this is achieved by

women through self-monitoring in accordance with objectification theory. This section ends with the formal posing of this study's guiding research questions.

Next, chapter three provides a discussion of this study's selected methodological approach. A description of ethnographic content analysis, as it is developed by Altheide (1987), is provided along with a justification as to why this method is most appropriate for the subject matter at hand as opposed to quantitative content analysis, semiotic analysis or grounded theory. The data collection and coding procedures taken in the study are then discussed in detail.

Chapter four then considers the coded data that are extracted from the selected Special K advertisements through the application of ethnographic content analysis, which is explained in chapter three. This process begins by determining the manifest reasons for purchasing Special K as they are marketed within the selected Special K advertisements, and coding each reason as an individual theme. These themes are then examined critically from a feminist perspective to determine what sort of implications they have for women's health in terms of the representations that accompany them and the paradigms that they perpetuate. Whether or not these represented themes qualify as self-objectifying and self-monitoring behaviours, as they are defined by Stevens-Aubrey (2007) and Wolf (1990), respectively, is then explored and discussed in detail.

Lastly, chapter five concludes this study by directly addressing the previously posed research questions in conjunction with the analysis and literature review, respectively, in chapters four and two. It then suggests possibilities for positive change that could be incorporated within Special K's marketing approaches to eliminate the need for feminist criticisms of the product's advertising strategies. Lastly, the limitations of this study are

considered, followed by closing remarks from the researcher in regards to the study more generally and the culturally and historically contextual standards of desirable femininity, epitomized by the thin ideal, that establish the necessity of this study in the first place.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has introduced the subject matter that will serve as the focus of this study; that is, Special K television advertisements from the past ten years and the implications that their representations and paradigms have for women's health. It then provided a brief summary of Special K's advertising history, establishing a contextual backdrop as to why Special K's advertising discourses are possibly more problematic now than they were in the past three decades. Lastly, it outlined and summarized each subsequent chapter of this study.

Next, the literature review will provide a background for the hegemonic standards of desirable femininity that drive this study. Central to this study are the self-objectifying and self-monitoring behaviours in which women engage as a result of culturally-enforced standards of beauty, epitomized by the thin ideal, that will now be explained in further detail.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review will examine the socially embedded issues of gender inequality, particularly pertaining to cultural bodily expectations which enacted through gender normative behaviour. These issues have been addressed in-depth by a number of communication and feminist scholars (Butler, 1990; 1993; de Beauvoir, 1971; Faludi, 1991; Friedan, 1963; Kilbourne, 1999; Orbach, 1978; Wolf, 1990) whose insights and contributions are invaluable to the understanding and critique of mass media representations of gender normative behaviour; namely the rules that govern the construction and enactment of femininity.

The inherent link between femininity as a social construction and the maintenance of the thin ideal can be explained by four encompassing areas of cultural governance, the first being the cultural demand for gender differentiation. The differences that exist between the sexes, rather than materializing as a natural divergence, were (and continue to be) socially constructed by men in order to gain superiority and inevitably keep women as their imminently inferior counterparts. Secondly, Christianity's demand for feminine purity demands perpetual self-control and self-denial on behalf of women, where sexual and physical appetites become metaphorically and inextricably linked together. Thirdly, the body image industry, which demands anxious and inadequate female consumers, achieves this by equating grossly unnatural and even impossible beauty standards with desirable femininity. And fourthly, the male demand for control over women's bodies and psyches brings increasingly oppressive standards of desirable femininity at times of greater liberation for women, which ultimately leads to a discussion of objectification theory. When taken together, these cultural norms exercise a stifling control over femininity as a principle and a

performance, as well as over the women who are compelled to enact it. It is hence pertinent to explore the possibility of their existence within the context of Special K advertisements through a systematic and thoughtful analysis.

Woman as Other

As Faludi (1991) maintains, examining and acknowledging gender differences can open an enlightening discourse on power relations, but more often than not it is used to justify the status quo, which inevitably leads to justifying male cultural superiority. Gender differences, which invariably originate as sex differences, are examined by de Beauvoir (1971) in a historical context. Beginning with the Stone Age, men differentiated themselves from women by their ability to engage in intensive labour and hunt animals for food. Women, in contrast, were restrained to the domestic sphere by their maternal obligations. Although women were active in economic life, the physical advantage held by men allowed them to exert social control over women and declare themselves to be superior. She maintains that women have never established female values as separate from, or in opposition to, male values. Rather, men invented this divergence for the sake of establishing their superiority; in this sense, men created a distinct feminine domain for the purpose of locking women up therein.

In the context of gender difference, women have inevitably assumed the role of Other (de Beauvoir, 1971). Where men are essential beings and taught from birth to find pride in their masculinity and their bodies, particularly in the Freudian phallus, women are taught to be ashamed of their femininity and their status as incomplete beings (a sentiment echoed by Aristotle who regarded the female body as inherently defective). Because men are essential and complete and masculinity is culturally defined as desirable simply because it *is*

masculine, women are culturally identified by men, invariably being defined by what they are *not*. Representations and understandings of the world are therefore established by men; they describe it from their own point of view, which ultimately becomes absolute truth for both men *and* women. It is from this foundation that men are culturally constructed as subjects and women as objects, and femininity is socially undesirable when compared to masculinity. Interestingly femininity and this status as object is also what grants women their desirability in the eyes of men.

De Beauvoir (1971) summarizes this sexual arrangement when she states that “what man desires to possess is that which he is *not*, he seeks union with what appears to be *Other* than himself” (p. 74). Women are Othered when men compel them to assume the social role of sexual object. In this sense, the fact that men are, on the whole, the object of women’s sexual desire is not culturally prevalent because it does not coincide with masculine discourse; men socialize other men with the understanding that they are the subjects and women are the objects to be desired and pursued. De Beauvoir expands upon this notion further:

It is indeed to preserve this mystery that men have long begged women not to give up long skirts, petticoats, veils, long gloves, high-heeled shoes: everything that accentuates difference in the Other makes her more desirable, since what man wants to take possession of is the Other as such (p. 192).

While it is difference that makes women inferior to men, it is also this difference that gives women their mystery and sexual appeal; therefore men rely upon the social entrenchment of difference to maintain their superior status and derive pleasure from women’s existence.

Women must remain the objectified Other in order to provide enticement and be a worthy

conquest for men to pursue; in other words, difference is the key to women attaining and retaining their social worth.

In this regard, difference from men is what grants women sexual legitimacy and what Butler (1990; 1993) identifies as cultural intelligibility via signification. Because the genders are assembled as a binary, opposed to each other, women are recognizable only in a frame of reference which poses femininity to lack what masculinity possesses. According to Butler, bodies are recognizable first and foremost by their distinguished sex, which is invariably defined by sex *difference*. And it is the repetitive enactment of these differences that grants the current cultural definitions of the genders their seeming inevitability (1993). In this sense gender is continually *created* as it is enacted, since gender, according to Butler, is not a fact but an abstraction that can never be realized in its entirety. In order to maintain the delicate balance of gender difference, it is important to deter individuals from straying from the pre-established gender norms:

The body which fails to submit to the law or occupies that law in a mode contrary to its dictate, thus loses its sure footing—its cultural gravity—in the symbolic and reappears in its imaginary tenuousness, its fictional direction. Such bodies contest the norms that govern the intelligibility of sex (p. 139).

This concept of cultural intelligibility through gender difference, thereby keeping women as the objectified Other, assumes a curious significance when taken in the context of the thin ideal. This applies to the tireless efforts that are contributed to enforcing the thin ideal upon women, but also to the importance of socially punishing women who fail to adhere to its demands.

Germov and Williams (1999), as well as Gustafson, Popovich and Thomsen (1999) identify the thin ideal as the current social norm for women to adhere to in terms of bodily

appearance. They suggest that the pressure to conform to the thin ideal has a structured basis that is perpetuated by social institutions like the media, the fashion and cosmetic industries, and even the health sector, which often equates health with slimness for women. The pressure to conform to the thin ideal is not equally borne by both genders: Studies conducted throughout the 1980s and 1990s by Germov and Williams (1999) indicate that, even though more men than women are overweight, more women than men submit to dieting regimens. It becomes evident, then, that the thin ideal is one aspect of gender difference that is crucial to enforcing the binary of gender difference. As Kilbourne (1999) notes, women are socially scrutinized for being overweight (overweight as opposed to obese, which is a health rather than aesthetic issue) whereas men, on the whole, are not.

The need for gendered bodily differentiation through the thin ideal begins with the enactment of appropriate food practices, which overwhelmingly mirror the values that are held by the cultural gender binary. As Parkin (2002) suggests, the kitchen as a site of political significance was and is the woman's traditional domain, where women are compelled to engage in food preparation; however, the food that men and women *eat* is also stratified along lines of gender difference. Dusselier (2002) examines this phenomenon beginning in the late 19th century with the production and marketing of candy. American print advertisements at the time depicted women to naturally crave candy due to their female endorphins and estrogen. Candy consumption, then, began to represent weakness and indulgence and testified to the belief that women, unlike men, are unable to control their impulses and think rationally.

Candy became strongly gendered in the sense that it was also advertised to embody the traits that women were expected to exude. It was marketed as pure, sweet, delicate and

luscious (Dusselier, 2002). It was not until the 1910s that candy eating became publicly legitimized for men; advertisements began to address men with messages that mirrored the supposedly inherent masculine traits of strength and adventurousness, featuring images of mountains and skyscrapers. More significant was the shift in physical form that the products assumed, as candies marketed to women were sold as bite-sized, breast-shaped bonbons and lemon drops. This stood in contrast to the full-sized chocolate ‘bars’ that were eventually produced and marketed to men.

Candy bars were also said to benefit the male body by providing energy and endurance, unlike the superfluous pleasure that the diminutive candies were promised to offer women (Dusselier, 2002). This attests to the broader values that define food consumption between the two genders, as is illustrated by the copy in 1930s Campbell’s advertisements. Campbell’s soups provide energy and stamina for boys to play, but provide girls with “rosy cheeks and winning looks” (Parkin, 2002, p. 56). And the instilling of these values, not surprisingly, begins with childhood socialization. Inness’s (2002) examination of 1950s children’s cookbooks exposes revealing trends: Boys (like men) are expected to prefer substantial and hearty foods, and girls (like women) are expected to prefer sweet, delicate foods. Similarly, girls are expected to concern themselves with the presentation and appearance of food, while boys are not. Of course this is a testament to the cultural norms that indicate that women should be concerned with appearances in all aspects of their lives, as innately defined by their femininity. It also implies that they do not require food energy in the same way as men because they do not rely on bodily strength and endurance to accomplish the important tasks that are reserved for their physically superior male counterparts.

This double standard relates to Wolf's (1990) claim that whom a culture values, it feeds well. Because men are not only different but more valuable than women, it is important for them to eat hearty meals (that women must obediently prepare) that will provide nourishment and growth. Women, on the other hand, do not engage in challenging male activities and should therefore be content with eating smaller portions and less substantial foods. As Inness (2002) so eloquently states it:

When a woman orders a salad for lunch at a restaurant and a man orders pork chops and potatoes, they are doing much more than satisfying their hunger; they are also expressing their gender (p. 124).

And it is this belief that women do not require food for sustenance in the same way as men that provides a core justification for the obligation that women bear to pursue and attain the thin ideal.

Collectively, the gender system is structured around a binary where the genders, as cultural abstractions, exist in opposition to one another. Women, as objectified Others, are defined by their femininity, which is in turn defined by lacking what masculinity is able to boast. It is imperative that women continually re-create gender difference by enacting it every day. This is a perpetual performance which materializes most vividly in the maintenance of the female body as a site of male conquest and desire, and, interestingly, can be as menial as the foods that women choose to eat and serve to others. Desirability in women is currently attained through the perpetuation of the thin ideal which is a site of contrast to male superiority and strength. While the thin ideal *begins* as a symptom of gender difference, it assumes a more abstract significance in the broader cultural context. The thin

ideal stems from the virtues of chastity and self-control that are contextualized as natural female traits from the Christian perspective.

The Thin Ideal as Purity

In the realm of advertising, which reflects the broader cultural expectations for women, the physical appetites that are associated with food consumption are often metaphorically linked with sexual appetites and corresponding Christian discourses (Wolf, 1990). This symbolic relationship invariably raises questions not only about women's required control over their bodily appearance and hunger, but also about men's control over women. As Wolf explains, this need for women's physical chastity is a power mechanism that men exert over women, which originates in Biblical text. Because men are closer to God they have the right to pass judgement over any woman's beauty, currently one of the last God-given powers that men still exert over women.

The requirement for female beauty and control is explained by the doctrine which maintains women's existence not to be an end in itself, but a complement to the essential male existence (de Beauvoir, 1971). According to the Biblical discourse, God created man out of necessity but created women only as a source for male enjoyment, which is why the impetus for women to maintain a male-defined bodily ideal is central to their achievement of any sort of social value. This arrangement works to the male advantage since God has proclaimed them to be masters of the universe (and masters over women) by divine right. In addition, women are also historically culpable for the spiritual destruction of mankind since Genesis's Eve committed the first sin and tempted Adam to follow suit. Therefore a woman's ability to satisfy her cultural purpose is not only the key to providing male satisfaction and gaining recognition, it is also her path to redemption. In this sense, the indoctrinated flaw of

women's existence is not limited to Christian beliefs: The mythical Pandora is credited with causing all of humanity's sufferings due to her disobedience and lack of self control, and Islamic and Buddhist beliefs treat the female body as a site of disreputable temptation and impurity, which is invariably (and intentionally) harmful to men.

Since women are impure by nature, beauty gives women's bodies the legitimacy that God withheld; women are not beautiful until they gain men's approval and they are compelled to worry about physical perfection (currently defined by the thin ideal) in a way that men never will because Genesis declares that men were created perfect where women were not (Wolf, 1990). In this regard, Wolf cites the similarities between dieting discourses and religious texts; they both revolve around the cycle of temptation, sin and redemption for women. Of course, although the impetus for a feminine bodily ideal has always existed, the form that this 'perfection' assumes is historically contextual: When food is abundant and accessible, female bodily restraint becomes valuable, which directly relates to Christian morals that focus on purifying the soul and disciplining the body through abstinence, penance, and purging oneself of excess (Germov & Williams, 1999).

The appropriate feminine appearance, currently defined by the thin ideal, is a reflection of a woman's self-control, which is why women are often made to feel guilty. Women's appearance and weight are completely their responsibility and their appetites in this sense become a social embodiment of shame (Wolf, 1990). This historical issue of physical self-control in all respects is inextricably linked to sexual acts, and this remains a prevalent metaphor in today's advertising realm. Particularly within Catholic religious doctrine, it is acceptable for people to engage in sex for procreation, while sex for pleasure is a sin; the same distinction is made today for women who eat to sustain life and women who eat for

pleasure. This double standard that gives men sexual license, but still renders a sexually liberated woman to be a “slut,” has created the double standard in which men also have greater oral license than women; a sexually unchaste woman is seen as “fallen,” just as women fall from their dieting regimens. Tanenbaum (2000) illustrates this reality in cases where women admit to being labelled adolescent “sluts” by their peers simply because they are overweight. This also explains why overweight women are held with greater social contempt than overweight men (Kilbourne, 1999).

This impetus for purity, in regards to both physical and sexual appetites, is what de Beauvoir (1971) identifies as women’s “anatomic destiny” (p. 374): Patriarchal civilization has dedicated women to chastity, restricting their sexual right to a marriage context while men are granted uninhibited sexual freedom. This is why marriage is central to a woman’s future plan but secondary to men’s: Affirmation, redemption and maternity, the goals of the feminine existence, are legitimated only through the bonds of marriage, which is essentially the ultimate acceptance by the divinely appointed male master. In this respect, the sexual act outside of marriage represents a fall for women because it symbolizes the relinquishing of control and virtue, which women must perpetuate in order to redeem themselves of their sinful origins. In terms of the male-defined bodily ideal, sexual purity becomes metaphorically linked to the control that women must exercise over their appetites for food so that they may attain the thin ideal.

Kilbourne (1999) elaborates further upon the link between sexual and eating behaviours, stating that “in the old days, bad girls got pregnant. These days they get fat– and are more scorned, shamed and despised than ever before” (p. 115). She discusses this issue in the context of advertising where food becomes a blatant metaphor for sex. In this regard,

eating becomes a moral issue— and thinness becomes the equivalent of virginity; “the ‘good girl’ today is the thin girl, the one who keeps her appetite for food (and power, sex and equality) under control” (p. 174). In summary, women have been (and are) obligated to control their sexual appetites in the pursuit of purity, which also translates into their ability to redeem themselves by upholding the male-defined feminine bodily ideal. As evolving political and sexual rights bring women closer to cultural liberation throughout the decades, challenging the Christian-indoctrinated “male-as-master-by-divine-right” mentality, the control that women must exercise is internalized and shifted to the *size* of their bodies, and invariably to their appetite for food. Similarly, where men can no longer control (to the same degree) the behaviours of women, it becomes increasingly critical for them to maintain their God-given masculine privilege by exerting control over women’s bodies through the cultural dissemination and enforcement of the thin ideal, most obviously through the commercialization of unnatural and even impossible standards of desirable femininity.

The Thin Ideal as Industry

Friedan (1963) identifies a lack of private image as the heart of North American women’s problems, both currently and historically. They can no longer access a private image to forge an identity; rather they must rely on the hyper-beautified and hyper-sexualized female enigmas that mass media advertisements perpetuate:

Public images that defy reason and have very little to do with women themselves have had the power to shape too much of their lives. These images would not have such power if women were not suffering a crisis of identity (p. 63).

Germov and Williams (1999) identify this trend to correspond with the economic and cultural rise of mass production and consumption, which led the body image industries to

develop a definitive formula for success by promoting a thin ideal of beauty that the majority of women can never attain, thus initiating consumption. Faludi (1971) also attests to this phenomenon, stating that the “feminine” traits that the beauty industry celebrates are grossly unnatural and achieved with increasingly harsh, unhealthy and punitive measures; the beauty industry ultimately relies upon low self-esteem and high anxiety about a “feminine” appearance in order to be profitable. Most critical is the fact that these culturally constructed ideals are marketed as *attainable* to women in beauty and health magazines and advertisements, thus holding women responsible when they do not meet these often impossible standards (Germov & Williams, 1999).

Friedan (1963) explains the oppression that accompanies pre-determined bodily ideals for women to meet, which stand in blatant opposition to what nature allots. In the 1950s, bra manufacturers began marketing brassieres with fake foam bosoms to girls as young as ten years old and three out of ten women dyed their hair blonde. In addition, women ate a type of chalk called Metrecal instead of food to shrink their bodies to the new thin ideal which, according to American department stores, had shrunk by three to four sizes since 1939. Similarly, Faludi (1991) describes the 1980s trends that women submitted to in the name of beauty as anti-wrinkle treatments exposed them to carcinogens, acid face peels burned their skin, silicon injections left painful deformities and liposuction caused complications and infections. Of course, the consequences of such procedures are perceived to be women’s personal ills; the result of vanity and the futility of pursuing a perfected image that nature did not bestow upon them. The larger *entendre*, of course, lies in the fact that in order to meet the standards of the cultural beauty ideal most women *must* physically change themselves, yet they are simultaneously scrutinized for doing so.

Faludi (1991) specifically explores the thin ideal of the 1980s when a prominent mannequin sculptor, Robert Filoso, sculpted his idealized 'New Generation Woman' mannequins as shorter, with an additional three inches on her breasts and an inch less from her waist, ultimately establishing the ideal female measurements of 34-23-36. Such a thin ideal is indeed unnatural given the body shapes and sizes of most women, and the only way to attain such measurements would be through bodily modifications that ultimately begin with dieting. The diet industry, like the larger beauty industry, thrives on its product failures, all the while encouraging obsessive and anxious attitudes toward food consumption. The unsuccessful nature of dieting can lead to "yo-yo dieting" and "weight cycling" which can result in a lifelong tug of war with food. Against such a backdrop, female food consumption can become wrought with guilt, anxiety and deprivation (Germov & Williams, 1999). In this respect, the dieter (even more than the addict) is the ideal consumer, as she will compulsively spend money on food and weight loss products in the pursuit of the thin ideal. The fact that dieting is a biologically unnatural behaviour means that dieting products cannot offer long term solutions to weight issues and compulsive eating, thereby resulting in a profitable consumption cycle (Kilbourne, 1999).

The commercialized, hegemonic standards of desirable femininity, which often stand in an ironic contrast to how the female body naturally looks, ultimately produce a perpetual and profitable consumption cycle *because* of their unnaturalness. Women are simultaneously encouraged and scorned for pursuing the means needed to attain this feminine ideal, which is currently epitomized by the thin ideal and can be achieved by many women only through the unnatural state of dieting. While on the surface it is women themselves who are exerting such rigid control over their bodies in the quest for desirability, what they are pursuing is

desirability in the eyes of *men*. Therefore the question arises as to where the source of control actually resides, since it is men who establish the standards of what constitutes desirable femininity in the first place. In this context, the matter of women's control over their own bodies ultimately becomes a matter of men's control over women.

The Thin Ideal as Control

The thin ideal is an overarching cultural value that women are expected to demonstrate through perpetual self-control and self-negation; in this respect, a good woman is a thin woman (Arnold & Doran, 2007). As Bordo (1993) illustrates, this is a historical trend that dates back to the Victorian era, at which point there were conduct manuals that warned elite women of the dangers of indulgent and over-stimulating eating and advised women how to eat in a feminine way. It was the common belief that women should be “frugal and plain” in their tastes, and it was vulgar for women to “load their plates” (p. 111). Faludi (1991) dates the first dieting mania back to this time and Dusselier (2002) explains how this era saw the satisfaction of physical appetites as inherently sexual and indulgent for women, and it was considered unrefined for women to eat in public.

Aside from restrictive dieting, control was exercised over women's bodies externally as well as through popular fashions which defined the female bodily ideal. Faludi (1991) cites a male testimonial to the corset in the late Victorian press that claims “[i]f you want a woman to grow up gentle and womanly in her ways and her feelings, lace her tight” (p. 173), which translates into the belief that controlling a woman's body will ultimately allow for male control over her demeanor and behaviour as well. De Beauvoir (1971) explores this trend across cultures and time, suggesting that cultural standards of feminine beauty and fashions are devoted to cutting off the female body from any possible transcendence. Chinese

women who would historically bind their feet in the name of beauty could scarcely walk, and in the Western context longer finger nails impede the function of the hands while high heels, corsets, panniers and crinolines accentuate curves but augment the body's incapacity.

Wolf (1990) and Faludi (1991) both expand upon this trend, offering political correlations that imply the control over women's bodies by their broader culture to increase in times of greater women's liberation: The 1920s introduced the thin "Flapper girl," the 1950s saw a rejuvenated appreciation of the full-figured female, and in the 1960s the impossibly thin and appropriately nicknamed "Twiggy" re-defined what was desirable in fashion and invariably in all women (Wolf, 1990. pp 150-151). Wolf illustrates how all of these stages correlate with respective cultural and political movements. The 1920s saw the introduction of women's suffrage, the 1950s brought women back into the post-war domestic sphere, and the 1960s issued feminism's second wave.

Faludi (1991) identifies this phenomenon as "backlash" and focuses on its prevalence in the 1980s as a response to the progress that the women's movement achieved during the 1970s. In terms of feminine appearance, she identifies the centre of control to be the fashion industry, which is ultimately controlled by men. She states that, during every period of backlash against women, increasingly restrictive or exploitative clothing is brought into the cultural discourse as desirable and women are demanded to wear them. Throughout the 1970s the popularity of women's tailored suits soared among working women, and by the 1980s the fashion backlash insinuated that this had caused women to lose their femininity. The remedy for this dilemma included the mass marketing of Victorian styled luxury lingerie that featured crinoline and garter belts (which was purchased, on the whole, by *men* for women), mini-skirts and infantilizing babydoll dresses. Faludi quotes fashion designer

Calvin Klein who, regarding the mini-skirt that he promoted for working women, stated that women want to be appreciated by men *firstly* because of their appearance, thus affirming their femininity, and secondly for the contributions that they can make in the workplace. In this regard, femininity is affirmed through the receptive male gaze and desire, and the impetus for women to continually keep their bodies on display to appease the male gaze is a statement of perpetual male control.

Orbach (1978) conducts an in-depth exploration of the current social requirements for women's pursuit of the thin ideal, also considering these implications to be political in nature. When thinness is a symbol of self-control and self-negation, which are central attributes of desirable femininity, fat ultimately becomes a symbol of the reprehensible woman. She explains how being overweight is seen as a social deviance and is interpreted to be "anti-men" (p. 22). And the explanation for this is clear: When women are expected to be decorative for the purpose of men's judgement and approval, neglecting to exercise the perpetual self-control that maintains the ideally feminine, slim body, implies that they do not care about men's approval and are thereby being socially rebellious.

This is why cultural attitudes towards fat women are considerably more hostile than those towards fat men (Kilbourne, 1999). This social double standard coincides with Wolf's (1990) argument that the obsession with women's thinness is not really about beauty; it is about their willingness to allow others (particularly men) to tell them what they can and cannot have. Women are not under constant surveillance so that it ensures their good behaviour; it is to ensure that they are perpetually aware of the surveillance. And when women internalize this knowledge of being monitored, it results in constant self-objectification.

According to objectification theory, women are trained to see themselves as objects, whose only bodily value is based on the pleasure that it gives to others; a woman's body is defined only by how it appears to others as opposed to what it can do or how it feels for her (Stevens-Aubrey, 2007). Self-objectifying women, then, are constantly aware that their bodies are on display, and are thereby constantly monitoring their bodily appearance. As Berger (1972) so eloquently states it, "Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only the relations between men and women, but also the relation of women to themselves" (p. 41). And this self-objectification is indeed perpetual; once a woman has lost excessive weight, she must continue to monitor her weight to ensure that her bodily appearance remains acceptable within the cultural definition of femininity. Unfortunately, this sort of compulsive behaviour is exactly what the diet industry encourages women to engage in.

Wolf (1990) defines dieting as "self-inflicted semi-starvation" (p. 158) and claims it to be at the centre of contemporary femininity, as a woman denying herself food is seen as a positive trait (where the same attribute would be seen as undesirably 'feminine' in a man). Orbach (1978) maintains that dieting reinforces compulsive eating behaviours and an emphasis on the cultural stereotypes of thinness and fatness. Diets promote unhealthy psychological discourses around food because they perpetuate the principle that food is dangerous, and they inevitably cause an obsession to develop concerning the proper enactment of diet restrictions, which Wolf (1990) identifies as self-monitoring. Orbach (1978) ultimately identifies dieting to be detrimental to women's health; it stands in opposition to how women should engage with food, as eating should be a pleasurable experience where hunger pangs are a signal for a time to eat and enjoy oneself. She also

explains how the body is a self-regulating system when it is allowed to be; it will notify the mind and trigger an active appetite when it is hungry and let the mind know exactly what it wants to eat. Wolf (1990) expands upon this further, stating that hunger is a natural urge and for women to deny their hunger when food is available to them is “more bizarre than cannibalism” (p. 164).

The historical and cultural values that define appropriate feminine behaviour are intimately connected and painstakingly evident when taken together. Women must control and negate their physical appetites where the consumption of food becomes inextricably linked with the consumption of a person through a sexual act. Women who do not engage in this rigid self-control are socially punished because they do not fulfil their decorative purpose for the male gaze and approval, which includes upholding standards of sex difference. Women who do meet these cultural demands can only maintain their idealized bodies through perpetual self-monitoring, and dieting encompasses perpetual self-monitoring, ultimately resulting in compulsive attitudes towards eating practices and a fear of food and hunger. Although Kellogg's Special K is a breakfast cereal, it has been, and continues to be, interestingly marketed as a dieting aid. For this reason it is pertinent to examine the discourses that Special K marketing campaigns (television advertisements in this particular context) offer to women and evaluate how “healthy” a lifestyle they encourage their demographic to pursue.

The Special K Context

This analysis of Special K television advertisements is ultimately rooted in the reviewed literature on the topics of women's representations and the meanings that they create, but more importantly the values that they reflect, which are already inextricably part

of North American and European social discourses on gender normative behaviour. These reviewed publications serve as a guide to explain why and how meaning is created through Special K advertisements, why the images and messages that they disseminate are potentially problematic, the already existent (and equally problematic) cultural values that they reflect, and how this dilemma can ultimately move towards a viable resolution.

A reason why Special K advertisements have the potential to be harmful is because the images and values that they perpetuate are effective in reaching their target demographic; otherwise, as Kilbourne (1999) notes, the research and preparation that go into creating advertisements would not result in a multi-billion dollar industry. And, as Bordo (1993) contends, continual use is made of the knowledge that the advertising industry has of consumers' lives when constructing marketing images. Advertisements continually manipulate problems that psychology and the popular media have targeted as characteristic dilemmas of the "contemporary woman" (p. 104). In this regard Special K, along with all other dieting products, have advertisements that potentially work to create and intensify anxieties about weight in women because it is profitable. Ultimately, however, these messages reflect cultural concerns about women's *power*, which is the deeper issue at hand (Kilbourne, 1999).

A three-step model explaining the transfer of cultural meanings to consumer goods, as developed by McCracken (1986), can be adapted to explain how meaning is created within Special K advertisements (Brannen, Burroughs, Hetzel, & Mick, 2004). In the first stage, marketing gatekeepers, such as advertisers, begin by selecting key meanings that reside in cultural categories (like gender) and cultural principles (like femininity). Secondly, the meaning is transferred to consumer goods through advertisement images and discourses. In

the third stage consumers appropriate these meanings into their lives by engaging with, and even literally consuming, the product. So in the case of Special K advertisements, healthiness is possibly the cultural principle being promoted by advertisers since Special K is marketed as a dieting product. This meaning is transferred to the actual product as the women featured in the advertisements eat Special K, which is proclaimed (both by omniscient voice-overs and character testimonies) to be a healthy behaviour, and the implicit connection is made that these women are healthy because of it. Women, then, purchase and consume Special K, internalizing the cultural value of healthiness and all of the attributes that are inextricably linked to it: Beauty, femininity and social approval, and of course, the thin ideal, as are depicted in the product's early advertisements (Special K commercial 1, n.d.; Special K commercial 2, n.d.; Special K commercial 3, n.d.). It should be noted that Special K advertisements potentially interpellate women who are similar to those featured in the product's advertisements, a likelihood that will be explained by social cognitive theory and the selective accessibility model.

Firstly, it is important to define “interpellation” in this context. Butler (1993) explains the concept, originally developed by Althusser, in the context of one who is hailed. When a police officer hails someone on the street, the officer is binding the law to him or her; it imparts recognition and also imparts a place in the social order to them. Butler emphasizes that this act is unilateral as power is imparted from one party onto another. Advertisements have the potential to function in a similar manner; they have the power to communicate to an audience without the audience having the opportunity to contest or respond. They also possess the ability to dictate to an audience who they are and how they should be. In this sense, Special K advertisements have the potential to communicate certain values to women,

telling them what they should eat and how they should look, positioning them in the social order as women who need to exercise self-control and maintain a bodily appearance that is receptive to the male gaze. Advertisements can bind this obligation to them, thus having the power to interpellate.

According to social cognitive theory, most social behaviours are learned by watching how others behave and observing the consequences that are rendered by certain behaviours (Goodman, Morris, & Sutherland, 2008). Because the media (and their advertisements) are major socializing agents, the behaviours that they present as desirable, and those that will ultimately result in social rewards and recognition, are perpetuated with the intention of being adapted and imitated by the target demographic. According to the selective accessibility model, as proposed by Mussweiler (2003), when individuals are exposed to images that they will inevitably compare themselves to, they can choose to either contrast themselves to the image or assimilate to it. When one encounters an image, an instant comparison will be made, using “the self” as the standard for comparison; perceived similarities will suggest that the subject of the image resembles the self, and the opposite is true with perceived dissimilarities. In the final stage of the comparison, one will evaluate his or her own attributes and abilities and will assimilate his or herself to the suggested image in the case of similarities. He or she will only attempt to imitate the image if it is perceived to resemble the self enough so that assimilation is an achievable goal (Mandel & Smeesters, 2006).

Special K, like any other dieting product, has the potential to promote unhealthy behaviours to its women consumers; a possibility that needs to be addressed, negotiated and critiqued. By applying the reviewed literature to identify the current values that characterize

femininity, which are perpetually enacted via gender normative behaviour, it will be possible to locate their potential presence within Special K advertisements and to analyze whether their presence is constructive or harmful for women to adapt. In addition, a comprehensive examination of the gender norms that construct femininity will help to mend gaps that reside in the current literature since countless publications cite statistics for eating disorders that plague women of all ages, and it has been established that control is the key issue that motivates the development of these diseases (Crews, Mehler & Weiner, 2004; Godfrey, 2004; Krantz & Philip, 2003). But the question remains as to where this need for control originates and why it is so significantly more important for women to attain than it is for men. Because it is promoted as a dieting aid almost exclusively to women, Special K's advertisements provide a relevant outlet to explore this issue.

Research Questions

The literature review has helped to identify some of the harmful and healthy eating behaviours that women engage in, and provides a frame of reference for identifying similar behaviours in Special K advertisements. Considering the concepts of women's self-negation and self-monitoring, as well as the social rewards that accompany them, as are identified in the literature, the following research questions have been posed:

RQ 1: How do Special K television advertisements represent the *healthy* behaviours of women?

RQ 2: Are these represented *healthy* behaviours *essentially* physically and psychologically healthy for women to engage in?

Chapter Summary

This literature review has examined in-depth the principles of gender normative behaviour that currently define desirable femininity in a white North American cultural context, beginning with a survey of the sex differences that reside at the heart of cultural definitions of gender, and then considering Christian discourses of feminine purity and control, economical demands for insecure and inadequate female consumers, as well as the need for men to maintain their control over women's bodies and psyches. All of these elements ultimately lead to the cultural enforcement of the thin ideal as a guiding expectation of desirable femininity, whose internalization and enactment can be explained through objectification theory and self-monitoring. Because self-objectification and self-monitoring are central to the diet industry, it is pertinent to understand how these harmful practices are represented and possibly encouraged through Kellogg's Special K television advertisements.

The following chapter will discuss the relevant methodological approaches that were considered in the process of conducting this study, ultimately leading to the selection and application of Altheide's (1987) concept of ethnographic content analysis.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Design

This chapter will discuss and support the methodological selection made for this study of representations of women's health in Special K television advertisements. The relevance of ethnographic content analysis to this study will first be considered, which will include an examination of how this method was applied to a previously conducted similar study. The justification for applying ethnographic content analysis will be emphasized by comparing this method to other methodological approaches that could potentially be applied to this particular study. Then the research design for this ethnographic content analysis will be outlined and described. Beginning with an explanation of how the data were collected, the description of the research design will be followed by a discussion of the completed coding procedure. In order to justify the relevance of ethnographic content analysis in the application of this study, along with the relevance of this study's content more generally, it is critical to first understand how ethnographic content analysis as a methodological approach is beneficial to addressing this study's subject matter. It is also pertinent to understand how the application of this methodological approach will consequently allow this study's research goals to be realized.

The Benefits of Ethnographic Content Analysis

This study examines and evaluates the representations of women's health in Special K television advertisements through an ethnographic content analysis. Using the lens of feminist theory, this study aims to deconstruct the manifest and latent cultural meanings that are embedded in Special K advertisements' images and messages, focusing specifically on how they present women to relate to food and to their own bodies in pursuit of the healthy lifestyle that Special K promotes through the consumption of its products.

Developed by Altheide (1987), ethnographic content analysis is rooted in the principles of qualitative research, where both numeric and narrative data can be collected for the purpose of analyzing various media such as film and television, among others. Unlike a quantitative content analysis, the role of the researcher is central to ethnographic content analysis, who seeks meaning rather than theoretical verification through the research. The methodology involved in ethnographic content analysis is systematic and analytic, but not rigid; the ability to understand messages is rooted in the constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant styles, meanings, settings and images that are presented by various media.

As Altheide (1987) contends, ethnography is a description of people in their culture and humans engaging in meaningful behaviour are what guide an ethnographic investigator's mode of enquiry. The fact that the ethnographic researcher is immersed within an examined culture is central to the purpose of this methodology. This cultural immersion is also a justification as to why the more objective and empirical approaches taken by quantitative content analysis and grounded theory, or even the qualitative procedures involved in semiotic analysis, would arguably be less efficient or relevant in the context of this study of Special K television advertisements.

With quantitative content analysis, the numerical data that are collected are meant to provide accuracy and reliability; however, it is this rigidity that limits the breadth of a potential study, as it is used to verify hypothesized relationships rather than discover new or emergent patterns (Altheide, 1987). In this context, reliability produces validity and all collected data are forced into the limits of pre-defined categories. With ethnographic content analysis, however, categories guide the research but other concepts are expected to emerge

throughout the study's progression, including an orientation towards constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, styles, settings, images, meanings and contextual nuances (Altheide, 1987). Data are also conceptually coded so that one item may be relevant for multiple purposes.

The main purpose of ethnographic content analysis is to capture definitions, meanings, processes and types, which can be listed numerically (for example, how many and with what frequency) and interpreted and analyzed qualitatively (Altheide, 1987). These data supplement the understanding and interpretation of other data as well, drawing from text, narratives and descriptions. For this reason the protocol for an ethnographic content analysis tends to be less precise and fairly brief, often with a dozen or so categories as opposed to the usually numerous categories involved in a quantitative content analysis, which are required to ensure exhaustiveness and accuracy. With ethnographic content analysis categories are also most likely to be coded and given refined meaning after the data have been collected.

The goals and procedures of ethnographic content analysis also differ from grounded theory in spite of their similar focus on constant comparison, contrasts and theoretical sampling. According to Altheide (1987) grounded theory stresses systematic coding and testable hypotheses in the pursuit of theory development, which may require certain materials to be excluded. Ethnographic content analysis, on the other hand, is oriented toward concept development, data collection and emergent data analysis.

While the qualitative and analytical foci of ethnographic content analysis are similar to those of semiotic analysis, there are justifications as to why ethnographic content analysis is arguably more appropriate for this study of Special K television advertisements, pertaining particularly to the nature of the researcher's role. Babbie and Baxter (2004) conceptualize

semiotic analysis as a mode of analysis that seeks to understand how signs perform or convey meaning within a given context, aiming to uncover the rules that govern the conventions of signification. Berger (1982) similarly states semiotic analysis to simply be concerned with how meaning is generated and conveyed. According to Chandler (2002), signifiers and signifieds, which are the key units of analysis in semiotics, are contextualized in accordance with cultural conventions. The interaction between denotation (the first order of signification) and connotation (assigned meanings based on culturally constructed beliefs and knowledge) provides the focus for analysis and interpretation.

It is true that this negotiation between manifest and latent meaning is central to the understanding of representations of women's health in Special K television advertisements. This is the case particularly when considering the cultural conventions that provide a meaningful frame of reference for any individuals who will encounter these commercials, thereby projecting onto them meanings that are based on personal cultural experience and knowledge. As already mentioned, central to the objective of ethnographic content analysis is the belief that the researcher should emphasize the fact that he or she is immersed within the examined culture, and that the perspective that is offered is not absolute but a result of cultural experiences. This methodological emphasis does not exist in semiotic analysis. In addition, unlike semiotic analysis, ethnographic content analysis leaves room to include quantitative data, which serve to complement the central narrative elements to the research and analysis.

Labre and Walsh-Childers (2003) apply ethnographic content analysis and break it into five stages: a) document selection, b) protocol development and data collection, c) data coding and organization, d) data analysis and report. They use this method to examine and

understand the common images and messages that are offered by the web sites of several magazines whose key demographic is teenaged girls. For their study the selected documents are the web sites of various teen magazines, and they collected data by developing a coding instrument and protocol which were not designed to fit data into pre-existing categories, but to guide the systematic coding of the web sites' content. They coded data from the web sites over the course of a week and engaged in repeated readings to identify and categorize major themes (for example, beauty is a requirement, beauty is achieved through products, etc.) as well as more specific sub-themes (for example, beauty is the main avenue to success, every part of the body must be perfected, etc.). Next they analyzed the messages in accordance with their reviewed literature that addressed the content and effects of media messages that are aimed at teenaged girls, as well as in the context of the cultural expectations that dictate gender-normative behaviour for teenaged girls.

Collectively, ethnographic content analysis offers a relevant and essential methodology to this study of Special K television advertisements. While quantitative content analysis, grounded theory and semiotic analysis all offer unique and useful possibilities in the realm of academia, ethnographic content analysis combines the key values of a systematic, analytical approach with openness and flexibility that are essential to this examination of representations of women's health in Special K advertisements. The central role of the researcher, who is invariably and necessarily immersed within the examined culture, lends undeniable value to the potential of this study, given its feminist perspective.

Data Collection and Analysis

Special K television advertisements, aired since 2000, provide the data for this study. A convenience sample was taken first, which is described by Babbie and Baxter (2004) to

rely upon unspecified subjects, whether they be research participants or data, simply because of their accessibility. In this study convenience sampling was used because of the limited media outlets that would provide access to Special K television advertisements from the desired time period. As such, this study relied upon the Special K television advertisements that are accessible through the YouTube website. Two separate Boolean searches were performed on the same day on the YouTube website: The first submitted “Special K advertisement” into the website’s search engine, with results being sorted according to relevance of the search terms. This search rendered ‘about 24, 600’ results, which would be impractical to filter through, considering the magnitude of data and the time limits of this study. This search was disregarded and a second search submitted “Special K commercial” into the website’s search engine. Each results page was then examined accordingly. Due to the vast amount of user-generated content that is available on YouTube, of the 279 results only 31 actual Special K commercials resulted from the search (excluding duplicates). These commercials were added to a YouTube ‘favourites’ account.

From this convenience sample a purposive selection was made. As described by Babbie and Baxter (2004), purposive sampling is based on the researcher's knowledge and the nature of the study. Purposive sampling was used in this study because several specific characteristics were required from the reviewed Special K advertisements in order to contribute to the research goals. In order to qualify for this study the advertisements had to meet the following criteria: a) be broadcast in English, b) have decipherable audio content, and c) be aired after 2000. In total, six commercials were rejected because they were not broadcast in English even though they were aired after 2000 with decipherable audio content; two commercials were rejected due to their indecipherable audio content, even though they

were broadcast in English after 2000; and seven commercials were rejected because they were aired before 2000, even though they were broadcast in English with decipherable audio content. As a result, sixteen Special K advertisements, which satisfied all three criteria, were chosen to work with.

Next, the selected Special K advertisements were transcribed (see Appendix E). Over the course of one week, each advertisement was viewed a minimum of five times in its entirety throughout the transcription process. The transcriptions account for four main elements of the media documents: a) Aesthetic visuals (for example, describing what the featured actors in the commercials look like, what they are doing, how the setting appears, shot composition), b) print visuals (for example, the content of any fine print, logos or copyrights), c) diegetic sound (any speech performed by the actors in the context of the commercial) and d) non-diegetic sound (for example, voiceover narration and music). All of these elements were broken down on a shot by shot basis, requiring multiple viewings of each selected Special K advertisement. After the transcriptions were completed, it was decided that the infamously obligatory “fine print” would not be considered during the coding process (save for one exception that will be elaborated upon in the next chapter). This is due to the fact that any individual viewing these commercials on television would likely be unable to adequately decipher this text, both due to the text’s size and the inadequate amount of time that the text appears on-screen. Therefore this content is essentially irrelevant when considering the grander narrative that Special K television advertisements are trying to convey.

The transcriptions were completed with the intention of being merely descriptive and as objective as possible to aid in the impending coding and analysis. These transcriptions are

also important due to the highly fluid nature of YouTube as a medium, where users are frequently adding and removing content on an almost daily basis which would obviously interfere with the thoroughness and progression of this study. It should be noted that, towards the end of the coding process, “What’s the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?” (see Appendices A and B) was in fact removed from YouTube. The fifth and final reading of this commercial relied solely on the transcription.

Coding

Next a coding protocol was developed, whose categories remained in flux as the coding and organization of data proceeded (Labre & Walsh-Childers, 2003). This protocol was not designed to fit data into pre-existing categories, but to guide the systematic coding of the Special K advertisements’ content. The coding categories, developed in accordance with the reviewed literature, were developed to identify the major thematic units that are perpetuated by the selected commercials, drawing from their narrative, visual and audio elements. Repeated readings of the selected advertisements allowed for the development of more specific sub-themes thereafter. This approach is taken by Labre and Walsh-Childers (2003), who used repeated readings to ensure better reliability and exhaustiveness in their ethnographic content analysis of online teen magazines.

The coding process began with providing each selected Special K advertisement with a working title to identify it within the context of this study (see Appendix A). The user-assigned titles on YouTube tended to be too similar or even arbitrary in many instances, so the advertisements were titled according to their main narrative or slogan. All but two selected advertisements have their own unique narratives, so two of the selected

commercials, both advertising Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal, share the same title (see Appendices A and B).

In terms of developing the thematic units for coding, it was pertinent to consider the main purpose of all Special K advertisements, which is, quite simply, to tell women why they should purchase Special K products. This consideration resulted in the development of two major themes: 1) Special K provides women with desirable elements, and 2) Special K withholds from women undesirable elements (see Appendix C). Repeated readings of the selected advertisements over the course of two weeks resulted in the development of 17 specific sub-themes, which were eventually condensed into 13 sub-themes.

Within the realm of the first major theme, the desirable elements that Special K provides for women are: 1) “Deliciousness” or “tastiness,” 2) slimness, 3) satiety, 4) nutrition, 5) looking “good” or “special,” 6) feeling “good” or “special,” 7) convenience, 8) a free gift, 9) admiration from men, and 10) a variety of products to choose from. Within the realm of the second major theme, the undesirable elements that Special K withholds from women are: 1) calories, and 2) fat (see Appendix C).

In the final analysis stage of this ethnographic content analysis, feminist theory is the central lens in determining if the represented behaviours in Special K advertisements are essentially *healthy* for women to emulate. This evaluation is based on whether or not the observed behaviours that are perpetuated in the selected Special K television advertisements qualify as self-monitoring and self-objectifying, as are explored in the reviewed literature (see Appendix D). If these advertisements are deemed to largely depict women to engage in unhealthy behaviours that are associated with oppressive, traditional expectations of femininity, as they are identified in the literature, then this issue needs to be addressed. This

is when the alternatives to such toxic advertising messages, which are also rooted in the literature, can be proposed and discussed.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the goals and application of ethnographic content analysis in conjunction with this study of representations of women's health in Special K television advertisements. In so doing the selection of this methodological approach was justified by comparing it to other approaches; as such it was concluded that quantitative content analysis, grounded theory and semiotic analysis arguably lack the use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, as well as an emphasis on the researcher's cultural presence, that is central to ethnographic content analysis. A previous application of ethnographic content analysis in a study that is similar to this current study was also considered.

This chapter then outlined the research design taken by this study of representations of women's health in Special K television advertisements. It discussed the data collection and analysis, as well as the coding procedures that were used to conceptualize the thematic units that serve as the subject of this study's analysis.

Using the lens of feminist theory the following chapter will analyze and discuss the thematic units that were identified within the selected Special K television advertisements. These portrayals of women's health will be contextualized against a backdrop that is provided by the relevant literature previously reviewed in chapter two.

Chapter Four: Results and Analysis

The objective of this study is to evaluate the content of Special K television advertisements from the past ten years, considering whether the behaviours represented therein are essentially healthy or unhealthy for women to emulate. As already discussed in the previous chapter, the thematic coding of the 16 selected Special K advertisements was broken down into two main components: First, the manifest content of the selected advertisements was accounted for. On the surface it was determined that the content of the selected Special K advertisements quite simply conveys to consumers why they should purchase Special K products. In order to address this matter, a very basic reflection was made from a marketing perspective. Quite simply, this reflection addressed what sort of benefits a consumer would gain by purchasing the featured Special K product in the context of each individual advertisement. This reflection was addressed by identifying the benefits that Special K consumption promises to provide for its consumers in each advertisement, as well as the undesirable elements that Special K consumption promises to withhold from its consumers (see Appendix C). Each benefit that is posed within the selected advertisements was then unitized and analyzed as an individual theme.

Secondly, the latent content of each selected Special K advertisement was evaluated and analyzed. While the surface benefits of purchasing Special K, as are conveyed in the selected advertisements, are clearly expressed, it was essential to determine if the representation of any of these Special K perks perpetuate unhealthy self-monitoring and self-objectifying behaviours. Identifying these behaviours within the selected advertisements, of course, requires a deeper analysis; one that is ultimately rooted in the previously discussed relevant reviewed literature. Again, Wolf (1990) and Stevens-Aubrey (2007) identify

unhealthy, self-objectifying behaviours to be linked to a woman's perpetual awareness that her body is on display, and she therefore continuously monitors her appearance because she is more concerned with how others view her body than with how her body feels and functions for herself. Dieting is inherently linked to self-monitoring because it naturalizes a paradigm which establishes food, body size and weight to be sites of anxiety and fear for dieters as they proceed down an endless path that will never quite allow them to achieve the enigmatic perfection of the thin ideal (Orbach, 1978). Each self-monitoring behaviour, as it is defined in the reviewed literature, was unitized and analyzed as an individual theme in the analysis of the selected Special K advertisements (see Appendix D).

Before delving into the analysis it is first pertinent to understand the reasons behind the various marketing approaches for Special K products. This reasoning ultimately begins with an understanding of the various products that are offered by the cereal company, which are invariably marketed for different purposes in accordance with their unique consumer benefits.

Featured Special K Products/Campaigns

It is important to note that the 16 selected Special K advertisements, on the whole, offer unique approaches to promoting the sale of Special K products, which accounts for why such a variety of different benefits are attributed to the consumption of Special K (see Appendix C). A main reason for this variation is due to the fact that Special K offers a variety of products in their cereal line. Below is a breakdown of the products that are featured in the selected Special K television advertisements, as well as the number of advertisements that feature this particular product (also see Appendix B).

Special K Cereal: Special K cereal, Kellogg's original Special K product, is the subject of the majority of advertisements used in this study. It is collectively marketed as a delicious low fat, low calorie breakfast. It is featured in 6 out of 16 advertisements, or 37.5 percent of all selected Special K advertisements.

The Special K Challenge: Although not a product per se, the Special Challenge encourages consumers to eat (and ultimately purchase) a specified amount of Special K products in a specified amount of time in order to reach a particular weight loss goal. This campaign is featured in 3 out of 16 advertisements, or 18.75 percent of all selected Special K advertisements.

Special K Sustain Cereal: Special K Sustain cereal is a unique product in the Special K line, offering a formula that differs from the original Special K cereal that is higher in protein and fibre for the specific marketed purpose of providing satiety “until lunch.” This product is featured in 2 out of 16 advertisements, or 12.5 percent of all selected Special K advertisements.

Special K Chocolatey Delight Cereal: Special K Chocolatey Delight is a cereal that boasts Special K's original formula with the addition of chocolate pieces in the box. It is marketed as a delicious low calorie, low fat snack option. This product is featured in 2 out of 16 advertisements, or 12.5 percent of all selected Special K advertisements.

Special K Red Berries Cereal: Special K Red Berries is a cereal that boasts Special K's original formula with the addition of dried strawberries, raspberries and cherries in the box. It is marketed as a delicious low calorie, low fat breakfast option or as a convenient breakfast option since the work of adding fruit to the cereal is already done for the consumer.

This product is featured in 2 out of 16 advertisements, or 12.5 percent of all selected Special K advertisements.

Special K Crispy Bites: Special K Crispy Bites are unique within the Special K product line. Unlike traditional cereals, Special K Crispy Bites are bite sized pieces that are made from Special K cereal and packaged in 100 calorie portions. They are marketed as a delicious low calorie, low fat snack option. This product is featured in 1 out of 16 advertisements, or 6.3 percent of all selected Special K advertisements.

Now that the various products that are promoted within the Special K line have been outlined and discussed, the benefits of purchasing these products will be examined in greater depth.

As has already briefly discussed, the manifest content of the selected Special K advertisements aims to convey to women why they will benefit from purchasing and consuming Special K. The claim that these advertisements arguably interpellate women, as opposed to consumers more generally, is justified by the fact that only women are featured in the advertisements as consumers of the product. Even though the surface benefits of consuming Special K are represented manifestly in the selected advertisements, they still have implications for the culturally imbedded norms and expectations of women's health. These benefits will now be examined individually as thematic units.

Special K Provides Women with Desirable Elements

“Deliciousness” or “Tastiness”: Perhaps the most obvious reason to purchase Special K within the context of the selected advertisements is the product's delicious taste; taste is also an important functional value of the product (Hestroni, 2003). Special K is promoted for this value within the selected advertisements when the product is verbally proclaimed by an

omniscient narrator or character to be “delicious” or “tasty.” There is nothing compromising for women's health or well being in the manner through which this product benefit is conveyed. In fact, as Orbach (1978) contends, it is important for women to view eating as an enjoyable experience. This value is promoted in 7 of 16 advertisements, or 43.75 percent of all the selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Slimness: Since Special K products are largely marketed as dieting aids, “slimness” in this case becomes a hedonistic benefit of Special K consumption (an ultimate result of the calories and fat that are withheld through the consumption of Special K, which will be subsequently discussed) (Hestroni, 2003). Slimness as a value is conveyed in a number of different ways throughout the selected advertisements. For instance, in “Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim” and “What’s the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?” women are encouraged to eat Special K for breakfast, as opposed to skipping breakfast all together, because the low calorie and fat content will still allow them to stay slim.

From a feminist perspective it is constructive that women are being encouraged to eat breakfast, as it provides them with important nutrition and energy for the rest of the day. However, it is problematic that women are not being encouraged to eat Special K for breakfast because of these benefits; rather, it is insinuated in these advertisements that it is *only* beneficial to eat Special K for breakfast because of its low calorie and fat content. For instance, in “Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim,” the omniscient voiceover interpellates women by first stating that “some people believe that skipping breakfast makes them slimmer” while conveying images of slim women going to great lengths to evade eating breakfast. This representation inevitably naturalizes women's fear of food and hunger,

which is central to self-monitoring and all of its detrimental implications for women's health (Orbach, 1978; Wolf, 1990). It is true that this Special K advertisement is not overtly encouraging women to skip breakfast, but it naturalizes this practice by showing repeated images of different women, all slim, engaging in it. Rather than encouraging women to satisfy their hunger for the sake of their own health, Special K is presented as a redemptive compromise: "In fact, research shows that people who eat a low fat breakfast, like Special K, are more likely to be slimmer than those who skip breakfast all together." The emphasis, therefore, is less about women caring for their bodies by eating breakfast and more about maintaining the thin ideal. Eating is excusable, it seems, only if it allows for the maintenance of the thin ideal.

Other Special K advertisements like "Lose up to 6 pounds in two weeks" and "It's easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks" promote the consumption of Special K products in the context of the Special K Challenge campaign, which encourages women to replace two meals a day with Special K in order to reach a specific weight loss goal (see Appendix E). Since Special K is marketed as a dieting aid, there is nothing manifestly problematic about this promotional approach. However the principles that comprise dieting, like fear of body size and fear of hunger, are central to the promotion of any diet and are therefore innately problematic. For instance, in "It's easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks," women are interpellated by a paradigm of naturalized bodily fear: "Afraid they won't fit?" is the question that is posed as a slim woman is depicted to apprehensively put on a pair of jeans in a clothing store dressing room. A woman's fear of her own body, no matter how slim she may be, is ultimately naturalized through this approach. Of course in this instance it is implied that this woman does not *need* to be afraid of her body size because she

has accomplished a weight loss goal through the Special K Challenge; but the insinuation remains that, prior to this woman's engagement with her Special K dieting regimen, this woman most likely *did* have a reason to be afraid of her body size since she is shown to be apprehensive while slowly zipping up the pair of jeans (before triumphantly discarding them for a pair of “skinny” jeans when it becomes apparent that the jeans in question are surprisingly too big for her).

Slimness as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 7 of 16 advertisements, or 43.75 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Satiety: Satiety is a functional value of any food product and it is especially important for a product like Special K that is marketed as a dieting aid (Hestroni, 2003). Satiety is promoted as the specific benefit of Special K Sustain products, which are marketed in “See if it can keep you satisfied for longer” and “See if it can sustain you ‘til lunch.” It is constructive that Special K accounts for the fact that eating low calorie and low fat foods in the maintenance of the thin ideal can ultimately leave women with hunger pangs; as Wolf (1990) contends, it is unnatural and of course unhealthy for women to engage in self-induced hunger when food is available to them.

This constructive approach is epitomized in “See if it can keep you satisfied for longer” where a woman is distracted from her daily activities because of her incessant hunger. The fact that Special K Sustain is promoted as a breakfast option that will keep a woman sustained, energetic and focused throughout her day has positive implications with women's health being the key priority. However, in “See if it can sustain you 'til lunch” the images that are used to interpellate women become problematic. It is true that Special K Sustain is promoted in this instance to keep women satisfied until lunch because it “contains

fibre and protein,” but the advertisement arguably depicts various women to resist eating the foods that they obviously desire. In addition, these women resist foods that are not normally eaten for sustenance, unlike the sandwich that the woman in “See if it can sustain you ‘til lunch” fantasizes about. Instead these women resist the urge to eat pastries and cookies which are predominantly eaten for pleasure rather than for a hunger remedy. The ability of Special K Sustain to satisfy a woman's hunger is obviously important, but in this instance that value is overshadowed by the product's ability to help women resist temptation by rejecting the sweet foods that they would like to eat for enjoyment (since cookies and pastries are not usually eaten to satisfy hunger but to provide an enjoyable eating experience).

Similarly, in “Keep looking special” original Special K is marketed for its protein that “helps you feel fuller for longer.” However, the images conveyed in this instance depict a woman staring longingly after the cakes and tarts that are brought into her bakery. The omniscient voiceover proclaims that the protein in Special K can “help you resist temptation.” The emphasis of this advertisement, then, is not on the health implications of a woman eating a satisfying breakfast, but on a woman's ability to resist eating the foods that one would normally eat for enjoyment rather than to satisfy one's hunger. Again in this case any nutritional value of eating Special K for breakfast is obscured by the paradigm of a woman managing to suspend her desire to eat for pleasure; the woman might feel satiated in this instance, but she clearly desires to eat the bakery sweets being passed around her. The emphasis of this advertisement, then, is not about the woman feeling satiated from her Special K breakfast, but on her ability to resist the temptations posed by decadent foods.

Satiety as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 5 of 16 advertisements, or 31.25 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Nutrition: Nutrition, promoted as a functional value of Special K products, is ultimately a benefit with constructive implications for women's health (Hestroni, 2003). Nutrition, in the context of Special K advertisements, is promoted when a specific Special K product is proclaimed to offer something advantageous to the body like protein, fibre or vitamins. While it is already mentioned that the nutritional benefits of Special K consumption tend to be obscured by values that encourage self-monitoring, the promotion of nutrition in itself is ultimately constructive.

Nutrition as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 3 of 16 advertisements, or 18.75 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Looking "Good" or "Special": Looking "good" or "special" is a hedonistic value of Special K consumption (Hestroni, 2003). While in advertisements like "Keep looking special," the notion of looking or feeling "good" is obviously linked to slimness, other advertisements attribute a nondescript and mysterious ability to Special K consumption to provide a noticeable beauty and vitality for women. While these insinuations of self-monitoring are less explicit, problematic implications for women's health still exist.

The advertisement "A girl needs variety to look good" implies that a woman must remain decorative by consistently changing her appearance (Wolf, 1990). While this particular advertisement promotes Special K consumption because of the variety of flavours that it offers, the featured woman's appearance becomes the central and largely irrelevant focus of the advertisement. The woman is first shown in neutral-coloured pajamas until she

retrieves a box of Special K from her kitchen cupboard, at which point she is instantly transformed, suddenly wearing a vibrant red dress and stiletto high heel shoes. Her attire and hair styles continue to change throughout the advertisement as the woman cavorts around her kitchen. After Special K is proclaimed to offer ten varieties to its patrons, wordplay is evident when the omniscient voiceover states that “a girl needs variety to look good.” Since Special K is first stated to offer variety in this advertisement, it is implicit that a woman needs the variety that is *provided by Special K* in order to look good. The connection is arguably made, then, that a woman needs Special K (a low fat breakfast) in order to look good (and maintain the thin ideal).

Looking “good” or “special” as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 3 of 16 advertisements or 18.75 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Feeling “Good” or “Special”: A vague approach to the promotion of feeling “good” or “special,” another hedonistic value of Special K marketing, is taken in “Feeling good never looked better,” similar to the previously discussed “A girl needs variety to look good” (Hestroni, 2003). The advertisement “Feeling good never looked better” first establishes Special K Crispy Bites as a low calorie snack alternative that allows women (and conspicuously effeminate men in this instance) to resist “that voice of temptation.” Wordplay is evident in this advertisement's manifest content; the featured man and women enthusiastically establish that Special K Crispy bites have “90 calories,” indicating that this is a diminutive (and desirable) amount of calories. It is then implied that the low calorie content in Special K Crispy Bites (as opposed to the snack itself) keeps the women “feeling good.”

If “feeling good” were to be defined in the context of “Feeling good never looked better” as something that contributes to women's health and well being, like feeling energetic or satiated, it could be affirmed as a positive promotional paradigm. Unfortunately this is not the case; “feeling good” is equated with “looking good” in the advertisement's principal slogan that “feeling good never looked better.” Therefore the emphasis is less on a woman's ability to feel good for her own sake and more about feeling good *because* she looks good in the eyes of others, which is accomplished by resisting “temptation” and eating low calorie snacks in the maintenance of the thin ideal. This association of feeling good by looking good is central to Wolf's (1990) definition of self-monitoring and Stevens-Aubrey's (2007) definition of self-objectification.

In contrast, the promotion of feeling “special” through the consumption of Special K is conveyed with a straightforward yet playful candour in “Feel special.” This particular advertisement for Special K Red Berries cereal promotes the cereal solely because of the functionality of having delicious fruit already provided in the cereal box. Indeed, it would seem that the featured woman in this instance feels more “special” by having Special K provide the fruit for her in her cereal than having a man pick the fruit for her from an orchard each morning. The realism of this implication is up for debate, but in terms of a feminist concern for the naturalization of self-monitoring, it would seem that the woman's appearance (although she is attractive and slim) has nothing to do with her feeling “special”; rather she feels special because she is eating a delicious breakfast that is not noted to be low in calories or fat. As Orbach (1978) suggests, this representation has positive implications for women's health because the featured woman does not eat Special K Red Berries cereal because it promises to help her maintain the thin ideal, but because it is breakfast time and

eating this particular cereal is an enjoyable experience for her.

Feeling “good” or “special” as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 2 of 16 advertisements or 12.5 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Convenience: The convenience that Special K provides as a breakfast option is a key functional value of the product (Hestroni, 2003). Curiously this benefit is only conveyed in “Feel special,” where the featured woman enjoys the convenience of having dried strawberries, raspberries and cherries already included in her box of Special K Red Berries cereal. The approach to promoting this benefit of Special K consumption has no negative implications for a feminist understanding of women's health.

Convenience as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 1 of 16 advertisements or 6.25 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Free Gift: A free gift being included with the purchase of a box of Special K is promoted in “Get one free wrist or ankle weight now in specially marked Kellogg’s boxes.” This is a functional value of Special K consumption that in itself has no negative implications for women's health (Hestroni, 2003). However the manner in which the gift is promoted has troublesome connotations.

While “Get one free wrist or ankle weight now in specially marked Kellogg’s boxes” is likely meant to be humorous, this advertisement perhaps epitomizes the perpetual nature of self-monitoring and how it affects the relationships that women have with their bodies. A number of different women, all slim, are shown to use their wrist or ankle weight while they engage in a conversation over the telephone, shop at a shoe store, and even go on a date. Emphasized by each woman's “counter” system that appears on the screen which is keeping track of how many times they lift their limbs up and down, these representations illustrate

how the pursuit of the thin ideal is an all-encompassing endeavour that plagues women during every moment of every day; they feel compelled to monitor their bodily appearance by making feeble attempts to exercise even while engaging in unrelated, otherwise enjoyable activities. These representations also naturalize the never ending pursuit of the thin ideal since a number of different women, all slim, are shown to engage in this same, arguably compulsive, behaviour.

A free gift as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 1 of 16 advertisements or 6.25 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Admiration from Men: Admiration from men, conveyed as a benefit of Special K consumption in “Keep looking special,” is a hedonistic value of the product (Hestroni, 2003). Of course the connection is not so simplistic as to suggest that a woman who eats Special K will automatically receive (or be deserving of) attention from men. Rather, eating Special K for breakfast, which is high in protein, can help a woman to “resist temptation” and avoid eating sweet and ultimately fattening foods that are normally eaten for pleasure rather than to satisfy hunger. Ultimately it is the featured woman's ability in this particular advertisement to “resist temptation” and ultimately engage in self-monitoring behaviours that allows her to maintain the thin ideal, thereby making her deserving of male attention and admiration. As Faludi (1991) and de Beauvoir (1971) contend, it is a woman's willingness to submit herself to male-defined standards of female beauty that qualifies her for male approval. Similarly, as Butler (1993) suggests, this is what makes women recognizable as attractive and desirable within their cultural frame of reference in the first place.

Admiration from men as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 1 of 16 advertisements or 6.25 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

A Variety of Products: A variety of products to choose from within the Special K product line is a functional value in the promotion of the cereal (Hestroni, 2003). It has already been discussed how the functionality of Special K's variations is obscured by the promotion of a woman's need to "look good" through enacting the concept of variety in her day to day appearance in "A girl needs variety to look good." In addition, the variety of Special K products that is available is promoted with the pursuit of the thin ideal through the Special K Challenge.

In "Lose up to 6 pounds in two weeks" and "It's easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks" women are encouraged to pursue a dieting regimen by substituting two meals and snacks each day with one of Special K's low calorie options, whether it be cereal, protein bars, snack bars or protein water. The irony of this marketing approach lies in the fact that, even though Special K is available in a variety of forms and flavours, women are in actuality *not* encouraged to pursue a balanced, healthy diet with a variety of foods; they are only encouraged to eat a variety of Special K products which do *not* in themselves provide balanced nutrition from the four food groups that is critical to achieving a healthy lifestyle (Orbach, 1978). Indeed, in this context Special K is marketed as "healthy" *only* because of its low calorie content. A diet that consists principally of Special K consumption from day to day, whether it be in cereal or bar form, cannot possibly provide all of the vitamins and nutrients that keep a woman's body healthy. This is indeed problematic as women's health, in the context of these advertisements, is reduced to a matter of calorie counting and weight loss as opposed to a balanced diet and lifestyle that are, in actuality, crucial to a healthy body. The reality of women's health is obscured by an obsession with body size, which is not necessarily an indicator of actual healthiness.

A variety of products as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 3 of 16 advertisements, or 18.75 of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

On the surface, these benefits of Special K consumption provide women with elements that are ultimately desirable in the realm of North American culture. Now the ways that Special K can benefit its consumers through what it *withholds* from them will be examined.

Special K Withholds from Women Undesirable Elements

Calories: The fact that calories are undesirable for women in the context of the selected Special K advertisements becomes evident each time a product's low calorie content is mentioned as a benefit of Special K consumption. For instance, Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal is a “lower calorie snack that won't undo your whole day,” a pouch of Special K Crispy Bites is “90 calories,” and the Special K breakfast with fruit and coffee is “less than 250 calories” (see Appendix E). Every time the calorie content of a Special K product is mentioned, it is first indicated to be low, also indicating this to be a reason to purchase and consume Special K.

Because Special K products are largely marketed as dieting aids, it could be argued that their low calorie content is a functional rather than hedonistic marketing value (Hestroni, 2003). However, in accordance with the broader values that are associated with Special K products, it is likely that a low calorie content is indeed hedonistic because it contributes to an all encompassing lifestyle that is promoted through the selected Special K advertisements; that is, the promotion of a diet that focuses on calorie counting rather than overall nutrition in order to pursue and maintain the thin ideal. Rather than encouraging a balanced, healthy lifestyle that encompasses a variety of foods, as Orbach (1978) encourages, Special K

encourages women to eat its products because of the calories that it withholds from their bodies, not because of what it offers their bodies. Even in the instances where the fibre and protein that Special K provides is mentioned in advertisements like “Keep looking special” and “See if it can keep you satisfied for longer,” the promotional emphasis arguably lies less in the products' abilities to satisfy hunger and provide energy, and more in the glorification of a woman's ability to suspend her desires to eat for pleasure.

The withholding of calories as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 4 of 16 advertisements, or 25 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

Fat: Similar to a low calorie content, fat is affirmed as undesirable for women each time it is indicated to be low in content in Special K product advertisements. Special K is proclaimed to be a “low fat breakfast” in “A girl needs variety to look good” and “Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim.”

Also similar to the low calorie content, Special K's low fat content could be interpreted as a functional marketing value as opposed to a hedonistic value since Special K is largely marketed as a dieting aid (Hestroni, 2003). However, once again, because a low fat diet is part of the larger lifestyle that Special K promotes, Special K's low fat content is perhaps more appropriately deemed to be a hedonistic value. Special K encourages women to eat foods that are low in calories and in fat in order to pursue and maintain the thin ideal, promoting a stringent, minimalistic diet as an all encompassing lifestyle.

The withholding of fat as a benefit of Special K consumption is promoted in 2 of 16 advertisements, or 12.5 percent of all selected advertisements (also see Appendix C).

This preceding discussion examined the manifest reasons as to why Special K consumption, in the form of various products, is beneficial to women. In the context of the

16 selected Special K television advertisements, various Special K products are deemed to be beneficial because they provide desirable elements to women, including “deliciousness” or “tastiness,” slimness, satiety, nutrition, looking “good” or “special,” feeling “good” or “special,” convenience, a free gift, admiration from men, and a variety of products to choose from. In addition, Special K consumption is promoted as beneficial to women because it withholds undesirable elements from women, which include calories and fat. Some of these values are explicitly disconcerting from a feminist perspective, like the possibilities for slimness and male approval. However, others, like a variety of products to choose from and a promise of feeling “good” or “special” have the potential to be constructive for Special K patrons but are marketed in such a way that they are obscured by values that arguably promote self-monitoring and self-objectification. The unhealthy, self-monitoring behaviours that are identified in the previously reviewed relevant literature, which are apparent in the latent content of the selected Special K advertisements, will be subsequently discussed in further detail.

Represented Self-Monitoring Behaviours

Self-Fulfilment Through Slimming the Body: The fact that Special K products are largely marketed as dieting aids translates into the single goal of slimming the body for women. Promises of low calorie and fat content, looking “special” and gaining admiration from men all encourage women to consume Special K with the intention of pursuing and maintaining the thin ideal through perpetual self-negation and self-objectification (Arnold & Doran, 2007; Stevens-Aubrey, 2007). The manner in which Special K advertisements encourage women to pursue the thin ideal is especially troubling because the featured women are already slim, yet they are shown to still be in pursuit of the thin ideal. It should be noted

that slim in this context does not refer to bodies that are excessively thin: Slim in this case applies to women who maintain a culturally acceptable body size without being overweight or excessively thin. The fact that these women straddle a middle ground of acceptable bodily appearance puts them into a precarious position because they must, in the context of the selected Special K advertisements, engage in perpetual self-monitoring and self-objectification in order to ensure that they maintain their acceptable body size. The inherent message of this campaign, then, becomes clear: Thinner is *always* better, and a woman can *never* be comfortable with her weight because the possibility of becoming overweight will (and should) perpetually haunt her.

For instance, in “Turn your life around” the cultural preference for thinness is illustrated without any featured women. In this advertisement a box of Special K cereal is turned 45 degrees around so that the side panel is facing the camera, declaring this to be the “after” stage, and inevitably the preferable one as the advertisement encourages its audience to “turn your life around.” Similarly, in “It’s easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks,” the featured woman is shown to be happy and confident after she apprehensively slips into a pair of jeans that would have presumably been too small for her before she began the Special K Challenge.

Perhaps even more disconcerting than the paradigm of slimness as the uncompromising bodily preference for women is the emphasis that exists in the selected Special K advertisements on the dangerous psychological aspects of dieting that are identified by Orbach (1978): The perpetual, cyclical nature of dieting, which is epitomized by the fact that once a particular weight loss goal has been reached (especially if it has been attained through the unnatural state of dieting) women must work tirelessly and endlessly to

ensure that their new body size is *maintained*. Therefore, even though women may already be slim, it is important for them to continuously engage in a low calorie diet in order to ensure that their bodies remain slim and, ultimately, culturally acceptable and desirable.

For instance, in “Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim,” a number of already slim women are shown to avoid eating breakfast for fear of gaining weight. In the end Special K encourages women to eat breakfast but manages to naturalize the fact that women do and perhaps should skip breakfast for fear of compromising their slimness, since a number of different slim women are shown to engage in the same behaviour (and seem oddly pleased with themselves once they have successfully evaded the waiter who would otherwise serve them breakfast). Special K does encourage women to eat breakfast, but only presents Special K as a breakfast option *because* it is low in fat, and encourages women to eat Special K because “people who eat a low fat breakfast, like Special K, are more likely to be slimmer than those who skip breakfast all together.” Therefore women are not encouraged to eat breakfast because of the nutritional benefits that it provides for their bodies, but because the Special K breakfast option does not compromise their slimness. At no point does this advertisement debunk the belief that preserving slimness is more important than eating breakfast. An identical message is conveyed in “What’s the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?” where it is naturalized by the omniscient voiceover that two slim women intend to skip breakfast “to lose weight.” The voiceover encourages its audience to eat breakfast because “women who eat breakfast, like the Special K breakfast, actually weigh less.” Again, this advertisement does encourage women to eat breakfast, but no mention is made of the nutritional benefits of eating breakfast

for women; the only benefit that is mentioned attests to the fact that eating breakfast will help women stay slim.

Since these reviewed Special K advertisements naturalize the fact that slimness does and hence should take priority over health and nutrition for women, these representations qualify as self-monitoring. The featured women in these advertisements, aware that their bodies are on display, are more concerned with how their bodies appear to others than with how their bodies feel for themselves. These advertisements arguably encourage women to pursue and find satisfaction through the pursuit of the thin ideal.

The naturalization of women finding self-fulfilment through slimming the body is represented in 9 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 56.25 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

Self-Fulfilment Through “Resisting Temptation” or Denying the Desire to Eat for Pleasure: As has already been explored in several contexts, the selected Special K advertisements convey to women time and again that the desire to eat for pleasure is undesirable because it compromises their ability to pursue the thin ideal. To recap, in “Keep looking special,” and “See if it can sustain you 'til lunch,” Special K is manifestly marketed because of its ability to satisfy hunger due to the protein and fibre that it provides. However, the images that accompany this paradigm show women to resist the temptation of sweet foods like cookies and pastries that are largely eaten for enjoyment rather than to satisfy hunger. Similarly, in “See if it can keep you satisfied for longer” the emphasis is placed on the featured woman's inability to focus on her daily activities as her mind is clouded by hunger, but at the end of the advertisement she is shown to push a tray of pastries away, making a paradoxical statement about actual hunger and a mere desire to eat for enjoyment.

A similar paradigm is used in “Feeling good never looked better” where the featured women are able to feel good by looking good, which is achieved through opting for low calorie Special K snacks instead of the sweet desserts that they actually desire to eat. It is clear in all of these advertisements that the desire to eat for pleasure, which is collectively equated with “temptation,” is undesirable for women, no matter their body size, if they are to attain the ever important thin ideal. In accordance with Wolf’s (1990) definition of self-monitoring and Stevens-Aubrey’s (2007) definition of self-objectification, these advertisements arguably encourage women to find satisfaction in *denying* their bodily desires in order to maintain a male-defined standard of beauty, finding value not in the enjoyment that women derive from their own bodies but from the enjoyment that their bodies provide for others.

A similar approach is incorporated in “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (a)” and “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (b).” In these advertisements, which both promote Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal, the featured product is presented as a low calorie snack alternative to the chocolate “temptations” that the featured women actually desire to eat. Interestingly, Special K in this instance is actually declared to be an indulgence, as the omniscient voiceover in “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (a)” interpellates the viewer by asking “what’s the difference between indulging and over indulging?” Again in this instance Special K is presented as a redemptive entity that allows women to satisfy their snack cravings (as opposed to actual hunger). It could be seen as constructive that these Special K advertisements acknowledge the featured women’s desires to eat for pleasure, and even provide them with an outlet to do so. However, it is ever implicit that it is *only* acceptable to eat for pleasure if the snack is low calorie, thus not compromising the women’s ability to maintain the thin ideal; eating

anything else would qualify as “over indulging.” The fact that both featured women in these advertisements are slim has troubling implications, especially when “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (b)” implies it to be inappropriate for its featured woman to lick a dime-sized amount of chocolate icing off of her finger (regardless of the fact that it arguably has less calories and would be more satisfying than a bowl of Special K). This advertisement epitomizes the naturalization of self-monitoring as it becomes clear that *any* indulgence is inappropriate for women who wish to maintain the thin ideal. The fact that the slogan for Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal promises that the product “won’t undo your whole day” implicitly states that a meticulous diet with a special care not to eat for pleasure is (and should be) a natural and central part of women's day to day lives.

The use of “temptation” in these Special K advertisements is particularly important when considered in the context of the religious subtext that is often applied to dieting discourses. As Wolf (1990) explains, like religious texts, dieting discourses revolve around cycles of temptation, sin and redemption for women. Similarly, in the context of these Special K advertisements eating for pleasure is prohibited for women, which can be likened to sex that is pursued outside of marriage for an enjoyable experience (which is also prohibited for women in Christian paradigms). According to the selected Special K advertisements, then, women should learn to resist temptation and deny themselves pleasurable experiences that are not required for bodily sustenance. Because these advertisements encourage women to deny their bodily desires for the benefit of keeping their bodies slim for the aesthetic enjoyment of others, these representations qualify as self-monitoring.

The naturalization of women finding self-fulfilment through “resisting temptation” and denying their desires to eat for pleasure is represented in 6 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 37.5 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

Denying the Desire to Eat for Sustenance: As has already been mentioned, the selected Special K advertisements do not directly encourage women to deny their desires to eat for sustenance, or put simply, they do not directly encourage women to abstain from eating when they are hungry. However, in perpetuating representations of women engaging in these very behaviours, the selected Special K advertisements have a tendency to *naturalize* the fact that women do (and arguably should) frequently suppress their appetites in the pursuit of the thin ideal.

Again, in “Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim” and “What’s the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?” women are encouraged to eat breakfast. However, the implication remains that eating breakfast is *only* encouraged because a low fat bowl of Special K in the morning will not compromise a woman's ability to attain the thin ideal. The fact that “people who eat a low fat breakfast, like Special K, are more likely to be slimmer than those who skip breakfast all together” is the emphasis of these advertisements; that eating breakfast is permitted because it does not have to compromise a woman's slimness, not because breakfast is beneficial to women and to their bodies. As was previously stated, these advertisements do not at any point debunk the myth that maintaining a slim figure is (and should be) more important than women eating breakfast each day.

Once again, these reviewed Special K advertisements arguably naturalize the fact that women engage in self-objectifying behaviours by placing more concern on how their bodies appear to others than how their bodies feel for themselves, since a number of slim women are shown to deny their desires to eat for sustenance for the sake of maintaining their slim bodies. As such, these representations qualify as self-monitoring.

The naturalization of women denying their desire to eat for sustenance is represented in 2 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 12.5 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

Fear of Body Size: A woman's fear of her body size relates directly to her ability to attain the thin ideal in accordance with culturally defined standards of feminine beauty (Arnold & Doran, 2007). Because a woman's slimness is perceived as an explicit indicator of her ability to exercise self-negation and self-control over her body and appetite, it is obvious as to why body size will evoke anxiety among women. However, this cultural expectation does not make this self-monitoring behaviour healthy or justifiable, and the selected Special K advertisements work to naturalize women's bodily anxieties on several levels.

In “Relax, exercise gently and of course, eat sensibly,” for instance, a slim woman is shown to be mortified at her weight result as she steps onto a scale. This Special K advertisement is meant to be humorous as the woman removes her clothing, jewelry and eyeglasses in a vain attempt to change her weight result, but in actuality this advertisement works to perpetuate the belief that all women, no matter how slim they may be, are (and should be) anxious and unsatisfied (and even a bit neurotic) about their weight. The fact that the omniscient voiceover in this advertisement addresses the featured woman's plight by advising the audience to “relax, exercise gently and, of course, eat sensibly” implies that a

healthy, balanced lifestyle is the ultimate solution to an unsatisfactory bodily weight. This approach is indeed constructive; however, as this advice is imparted the images in the advertisement simultaneously naturalize the fact that this woman is terrified of her weight and body size, in spite of the fact that she is obviously slim. Any constructive advice is unfortunately obscured by the fact that this advertisement naturalizes the fact that no women, not even slim women, should be satisfied with their weight.

Similarly, in “Lose up to 6 pounds in two weeks,” another humorous advertisement, a woman becomes disconcerted when her child mistakes her for Santa Clause while she bends over to tend the fireplace, dressed in a red and white robe. The omniscient voiceover lends no consolation, as it states that “now is when you regret all those holiday cookies.” Once again, even though the featured woman is slim, the advertisement implies that she should rightfully be anxious and fearful about her weight because she failed to exercise the proper self-control and self-negation over her eating behaviours over the holidays. Luckily Special K's product line allows women to redeem themselves by losing “up to six pounds in two weeks” by substituting meals with Special K. In this advertisement it is apparent that women who lose sight of the thin ideal *deserve* to be anxious and fearful about their weight, and should remedy the situation by immediately subjecting themselves to a strict diet of low calorie meals that promote slimness above anything else.

A similar sentiment is echoed in “Eat 2 bowls for 2 meals for 2 weeks [to lose up to one inch off your waist].” In this advertisement a bikini bathing suit takes on the form of an evil glare as the omniscient voiceover asks “Do summer clothes scare you?” Of course, the real question is not whether summer clothes are scary, but if a woman is scared of how her body will appear to others in a bikini. This advertisement brings self-objectification to the

forefront as it indirectly asks women to evaluate whether or not they should be afraid of revealing their bodies to other people, placing the focus on whether other people will approve of how their bodies look. This question is answered with the fact that summer clothes “don't have to” be scary, and the audience is encouraged to try and lose one inch off their waist by substituting two meals a day for two weeks with Special K. The implicit condition that is missing here is that women do not need to be afraid of revealing their bodies in summer clothes *if* they have managed to shed an inch off of their waist; otherwise the anxiety and fear are reasonable and even necessary. This is illustrated by the fact that the bikini transforms from a glare to a smile as the voiceover states that summer clothes “don't have to” be scary because following the recommended Special K regimen will allow women to lose up to one inch off of their waists.

The real clincher of “Eat 2 bowls for 2 meals for 2 weeks [to lose up to one inch off your waist]” occurs in the advertisement's fine print at the bottom of the screen. Here, it is plainly stated that, to partake in the Special K Challenge, one's “BMI must be 25 or over.” Although it is not indicated in the previously discussed relevant reviewed literature, according to the World Health Organization a body mass index of 25 or over qualifies as “overweight” (World Health Organization global database on body mass index, 2009). This means that the Special K diet is *only* appropriate for women who are overweight. It is true that no women are actually featured in this particular advertisement, and it is also true that only two other selected advertisements (see Appendix E for “Lose up to 6 pounds in two weeks” and “It's easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks”) encourage women to substitute their meals with Special K in order to reach a specific weight loss goal. However, even within these two advertisements the women who are featured are *slim*. This paradox

also has implications for all of the other Special K advertisements that feature slim women and encourage them to substitute the foods that they want for low calorie Special K options, even if a specific diet is not being promoted. If the fine print and the World Health Organization indicate that *only* people with a body mass index of 25 or over are overweight and are thus in need of losing weight, what implications do these Special K advertisements have for women's health when slim women are featured as the ones who are (and should be) anxious and fearful about their weight?

The answer lies clearly in the fact that women's health is not the issue here; rather, women's willingness and ability to submit themselves to a strict regimen of self-control and self-negation in order to attain the thin ideal is the key and arguably *only* concern presented in these Special K advertisements. Because these advertisements appear to encourage women to concern themselves with whether or not other people will approve of their body size, rather than focusing on how they feel about their own bodies, these representations qualify as self-monitoring.

The naturalization of women fearing their body size is represented in 4 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 25 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

Fear of Food/Hunger: The naturalization of women's fear of food and hunger has already been touched upon in examinations of “Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim,” where a number of women are shown to avoid speaking with a waiter for fear of being served breakfast. This tendency is heightened in advertisements like “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (a)” where the concept of fear is simultaneously explicit and metaphoric.

In “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (a)” a woman is watching a horror film on television, obviously frightened by what she is seeing. The omniscient voiceover then proclaims it to be that “dangerous time of night where you fall victim to chocolate temptations lurking in the kitchen.” The very use of words like “dangerous,” “victim,” and “lurking” make it obvious enough that a woman's craving for chocolate and chocolate itself are somehow dangerous to her, in addition to the fact that it is up to women not to allow themselves to fall “victim” to their desires. This paradigm coincides with other reviewed Special K advertisements which collectively imply that a woman's desire to eat for pleasure is not only destructive to her ability to attain the thin ideal, but it is downright dangerous because of the cultural ramifications that could accompany a woman's inability to maintain a slim body. Self-objectification is present when women must perpetually control their appearance, desires and appetites in order to maintain a body that is pleasing to others, since that is women's principal role in life (de Beauvoir, 1971). As Germov and Williams (1999) contend, the discourses that encompass dieting, which are aptly applied in this advertisement, encourage women to engage in a lifelong tug of war with food that results in guilt, anxiety and deprivation. Lucky for women that “lower calorie” Special K Chocolatey Delight is a nighttime snack that they “don't have to be afraid of.”

Because these representations encourage women to fear and suppress their desires in order to maintain a slim body that is pleasing to others, they qualify as self-monitoring. The naturalization of women demonstrating fear of food and hunger is represented in 3 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 18.75 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

Serve Others Rather than Self: The fact that women are culturally encouraged to be self-sacrificing creatures who suppress their own desires while acting as servants to others, especially in a maternal context, is explored by Arnold and Doran (2007). The maternal context of this tendency occurs twice in the selected Special K advertisements. In “See if it can sustain you ‘til lunch,” a woman is shown to remove a cookie from a jar in a kitchen cupboard. It is assumed that the woman is going to eat the cookie until the camera cleverly trucks to the right, revealing a young boy to whom the woman happily hands the cookie. Similarly, in “It’s a nighttime snack that won’t undo your whole day (b)” a woman resists her desire to lick some chocolate icing off of her finger while her young son playfully spreads chocolate icing all over a cake on the kitchen table. It is true that the boy is not eating the icing or the cake, but the implication exists that this woman is preparing a cake that she has no intention of partaking in (since she is so self-controlled that a single lick of icing off of her finger is unacceptable). In both of these instances, it is insinuated that the featured women desire the treats that they are serving to their children (who are, incidentally, both boys) but are able to suppress their cravings due to their admirable self-control and obligation to maintain the thin ideal.

While “Keep looking special” does not feature a woman in the maternal role, the bakery setting presents a similar circumstance. The featured woman who presumably runs the bakery in which she is working shows clear indications of desire for the colourful cakes and pastries that pass by her as she stares longingly at them from behind her counter. The fact that she is situated as the bakery's owner implies that her entire job revolves around serving to others the very foods that she clearly desires (it also implies that her authoritative position would most likely allow her to indulge in them if she so chose). But of course, because she is

self-controlled and aware that her body is on display, the featured woman happily refuses a busboy's offer when he lifts a box of desserts up for her reach. She is invariably rewarded for her self-negation, which is the reason for her slim, desirable body, as the busboy gazes back at her with desire as he exits the bakery.

In all of these reviewed Special K advertisements there exists a collective message that, in order to attain the thin ideal, perpetual self-control and self-negation must be exercised over physical desires and appetites. However, because of the cultural role that has been prescribed to women, it is still necessary that they happily provide service to other people (namely to boys and men in this instance) and find satisfaction in doing so. As de Beauvoir (1971) speculates, this culturally prescribed role assigns women the purpose of providing enjoyment for others, whether it be by serving them food or maintaining a desirably slim body for their viewing pleasure.

Because these representations naturalize the fact that women should provide enjoyment to others through acts of service and through the maintenance of their slim bodies, all while denying their own bodily desires, they qualify as self-monitoring. The naturalization of women serving others rather than themselves is represented in 3 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 18.75 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

Consistently Makeover One's Appearance: As has already been explored, the notion that a woman should perpetually change her appearance in order to “look good” to the people around her is evident in “A girl needs variety to look good.” It is naturalized that women should eat a “low fat” breakfast and enact the concept of variety in their lives by wearing different clothes, hairstyles and stiletto high heel shoes each day. Central to this belief is the

need for women to constantly monitor their appearances; not only in terms of the slimness of their bodies, but also in terms of the material items that they use to decorate their bodies for the viewing enjoyment of other people. This also relates to de Beauvoir's (1971) recognition that women have a culturally prescribed role to bring pleasure to others (namely men), and in order to do so it is necessary for women to be perpetually aware of the male gaze and engage in constant self-objectification (Faludi, 1991; Stevens-Aubrey, 2007).

Because these representations naturalize the fact that women should perpetually change their appearances in order to bring pleasure to others rather than themselves, they qualify as self-monitoring. The naturalization of women consistently making over their appearances is represented in 1 of 16 Special K advertisements, or 6.25 percent of all selected Special K advertisements (also see Appendix D).

This section has explored how representations of women's self-monitoring behaviours have manifested themselves in the selected Special K television advertisements for this study. Self-monitoring behaviours, on the whole, situate women so that their own needs and desires are dismissed and the pleasure that their bodies can provide to others becomes the priority (Wolf, 1990). The fact that women should find self-fulfilment through slimming their bodies, denying their appetites to eat for sustenance and their desires to eat for pleasure implies that women should not only perpetually sacrifice in order to maintain the thin ideal, but that they should *enjoy* making these sacrifices. A similar paradigm is issued by the Special K advertisements that show women serving others rather than themselves and enacting variety into their daily appearances. Other advertisements that exhibit women demonstrating a fear of food, hunger and the sizes of their bodies implies that the maintenance of the thin ideal is so central to women's cultural affirmation that anything

which inhibits this endeavour should be feared and avoided at all costs. It is true that these behaviours are not so much directly encouraged through the discourses offered by the advertisements as much as they are *naturalized* by them; they are perpetuated to be behaviours that all women engage in rather than being problematized by the advertisements. This is the underlying issue that needs to be addressed in the broader question of the implications that Special K advertisements have for the representations and reality of women's health.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four has addressed this study's research questions by analyzing the manner in which women's health is represented in the selected Special K advertisements. This analysis was approached by first determining the manifest reasons for purchasing Special K products as they are presented in the selected advertisements, and then determining whether or not the represented behaviours and discourses naturalize and encourage self-monitoring behaviours amongst women, as they are identified in the previously discussed relevant reviewed literature.

In the next chapter, the findings that were inspired by this study's research questions will be directly addressed and discussed in further detail. This discussion will be followed by suggestions for future change that can help to remedy the problems that have been identified to reside within the representations and discourses conveyed by the reviewed Special K advertisements, along with a critical discussion of the limitations of this study.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Limitations and Future Directions, and Conclusion

As stated in the previous chapter, this ethnographic content analysis of Special K television advertisements reveals consistently perpetuated discourses that necessitate women's slimness to be the key defining factor of women's health. The critical implications that these messages have for North American women will now be discussed.

Discussion

To review, below are the research questions that were posed when this study began:

RQ 1: How do Special K television advertisements represent the *healthy* behaviours of women?

RQ 2: Are these represented *healthy* behaviours *essentially* physically and psychologically healthy for women to engage in?

To answer the first question, the selected Special K television advertisements, on the whole, represent the healthy behaviours of women to consist of self-monitoring behaviours that are defined in the reviewed literature as largely *unhealthy*. In the context of the reviewed Special K advertisements, health becomes equated with slimness for women, and healthy foods are defined solely as those that have minimal calorie and fat contents; being defined by what they *withhold* from women's bodies, rather than what they offer to them.

Orbach (1978) states that healthy women allow their bodies to be self-regulating systems, alerting the mind when it is hungry and letting it know exactly what it wants to eat. The reviewed Special K advertisements naturalize the fact that women regularly deny their physical appetites and cravings, allowing hunger pangs to be a sacrifice in the name of the thin ideal. This represented self-denial inherently implies self-objectification on behalf of the featured women, who prioritize the way that their bodies appear to others as more important

than how their bodies feel and function for themselves (Calogero, Davis & Thompson, 2005; Hill & Tylka, 2004). Orbach (1978) also contends that healthy women see meal time, or any physical signal of hunger or desire for food, as a time to eat and enjoy oneself; the reviewed Special K advertisements make it appear natural that women fear their own appetites and cravings, in light of the fact that satisfying them will compromise their ability to maintain the thin ideal (Germov & Williams, 1999). Hill and Tylka (2004) maintain that this sort of self-objectification is physically and psychologically unhealthy for women to engage in as it provides the possibility for eating disorders to develop by fostering self-monitoring behaviours and bodily shame within women. Similarly, Orbach (1978) states that a healthy woman, within reason, will feed her body what it wants when it wants it; the selected Special K advertisements, on the other hand, arguably give women permission to eat but *only* if they are eating the lowest calorie option available. This sort of behaviour coincides with what Wolf (1990) as well as Hill and Tylka (2004) identify as self-monitoring and what the latter identify as body surveillance.

To answer the second question, Orbach (1978) states that women should eat a balanced diet that consists of a variety of foods, not all of which will be low in fat and calories. The selected Special K advertisements only encourage women to eat a variety of Special K products, especially in the context of the Special K Challenge (see Appendix B). As has already been mentioned, substituting two meals a day for a bowl of Special K cereal or a Special K snack bar does *not* provide the range of vitamins and other nutrients that are required to sustain a healthy, balanced lifestyle and body which are recommended by the World Health Organization (2009). The Special K Challenge epitomizes the fact that the reviewed Special K advertisements do *not* encourage women to engage in healthy behaviours

by pursuing a balanced lifestyle; instead, by representing women to constantly monitor what they eat for the sake of maintaining a slim body, these advertisements arguably encourage self-objectifying and self-monitoring behaviours (Calogero, Davis & Thompson, 2005; Hill & Tylka, 2004; Wolf, 1990). In this regard Bessenoff (2006) as well as Granley, Hawkins, Richards and Stein (2004) identify thin ideal imagery in mass media representations to have potential negative impacts by fostering feelings of increased bodily dissatisfaction and anxiety amongst women.

Dieting, according to Orbach (1978) and Wolf (1990), is an unnatural state of being and is ultimately an unhealthy mode of living for any woman. In addition, dieting discourses are intimately linked with the social imperative for women to attain and maintain the thin ideal as they provide women with an outlet to do so (Dittmar & Howard, 2004). Against such a backdrop the selected Special K advertisements encourage women to engage with harmful dieting discourses that perpetuate cycles of fear, temptation, sin and redemption with food and body weight, which create feelings of bodily anxiety and insecurity amongst women (Bessenoff, 2006). Rather than presenting women who see eating as a relaxed, enjoyable and less-than-all-encompassing life choice, the reviewed Special K advertisements arguably present women who fear, avoid, and resist all foods except for Special K. These behaviours, as stated in the reviewed literature, are *not* physically or psychologically healthy for women to engage in. Women's health, in this instance, becomes equated with slimness, which in the context of these advertisements becomes a direct reflection of a woman's ability to engage in self-control and self-negation via self-monitoring (Calogero, Davis & Thompson, 2005; Hill & Tylka, 2004; Wolf, 1990).

This study maintains that the reviewed Special K advertisements present discourses and representations that are *largely* unhealthy for women to engage in. It cannot be definitively stated that the represented behaviours in question are *wholly* unhealthy because some of the selected advertisements do in fact offer discourses that are beneficial to women's health, although they tend to be overshadowed with other representations that are, in fact, unhealthy. This is why it is critical to credit the positive aspects of these advertisements and discuss how the harmful ones can be remedied. As Gallagher (2001) argues, it is important to move beyond complaining and into constructive dialogues that can help improve the social conditions that shape women's lives. Similarly, as Christy (2006) suggests, it is important for advertisers to move beyond the sweeping generalizations about gender that largely constitute advertising content, such as the content in the reviewed Special K advertisements, if they wish to find favour with women consumers. It seems necessary then, for both advertisers and potential women patrons, that a critical re-evaluation be made of the discourses that currently comprise Special K marketing so that constructive changes may benefit all parties involved.

This study concludes that the problems that exist within the reviewed Special K advertisements are due to a number of interacting factors. For instance, it is not a feminist concern that the women who are featured in these advertisements are slim or that they eat Special K products. Nor is it a concern that Special K products are low in calories and fat (as many breakfast cereals tend to be). The conflict of interest lies in the fact that the featured slim women in these advertisements eat Special K specifically *because* it is low in calories and fat in order to ensure their uncompromising slimness. If one of these factors were to be re-considered and re-negotiated, the possibility for positive changes within the advertisements' discourses is opened up.

For instance, the one reviewed Special K advertisement that did *not* exhibit any represented self-monitoring behaviours is “Feel special.” In this advertisement the featured woman (who happens to be slim) eats Special K Red Berries cereal because it *tastes good*. There is no mention of the fact that it is low in calories or in fat, and there is certainly no implication that she would prefer to eat something else but must eat Special K because it will not compromise her slimness. She eats Special K Red Berries cereal for breakfast because she *enjoys* it, and she especially enjoys the fact that the berries she usually eats with the cereal are now included in the box.

If this principle were to be not only applied but emphasized in other Special K advertisements, the need for critique would arguably no longer exist. For instance, the fact that Special K products are “delicious” or “tasty” is a positive, functional value that is mentioned in 43.75 percent of all reviewed advertisements (see Appendix C) (Hestroni, 2003). However, in all of these advertisements, save for “Feel special,” the tastiness factor is obscured by the fact that the featured Special K product is low in calories and/or fat, able to provide slimness, or will allow a woman to “look special.” Also important is the fact that, in several of these advertisements, it is apparent that the featured women actually desire to eat something other than Special K, but in the end decide on Special K *as a result of their self-control and self-negation*, not because they really want to eat it or because it provides an enjoyable eating experience. Rather than presenting Special K as the low-calorie, low-fat alternative to whatever it is that women actually want to eat, it would be potentially constructive for advertisements to show their featured women to eat Special K because they *like* to eat it.

Similarly, several advertisements promote Special K for its nutritional value and ability to provide satiety (see Appendix C). Again, this tends to materialize as a passing mention of the fibre and protein that the products contain, which is inevitably obscured by the fact that the featured “satiated” women go about their business “resisting temptation” against all the cookies and pastries that they wish to eat for pleasure, arguably making their satiated state completely irrelevant. Rather, it would be beneficial to assume a focus taken in “See if it can keep you satisfied for longer,” where the featured woman's daily activities are inhibited by the physical discomfort that is caused by her hunger. This advertisement illustrates that food is necessary for women and is not something that should be perpetually resisted. Likewise, this advertisement also illustrates that there are health benefits that accompany breakfast, in contrast to the selected Special K advertisements that only advocate eating breakfast if the meal does not compromise a woman's slimness.

In terms of visual representation, it is perhaps even possible to create a positive advertising discourse around Special K products for their low calorie and fat content by featuring women *and* men who actually need to lose weight for health reasons. Including men in this discourse alleviates the sexist weight loss imperative that Special K advertising, within the realm of this study, has placed exclusively upon women (and stereotypically effeminate men). This approach, however, cannot simply be comprised of encouraging a regimen that invites consumers to eat two bowls of Special K a day to reach a specific weight loss goal; the emphasis *must* be on achieving a collectively healthy lifestyle that includes low-fat Special K as *one* part of a balanced diet that provides adequate nutrition from all of the food groups advocated by Health Canada's Food Guide (2009) in addition to a regular

exercise routine. Health, as opposed to slimness, needs to be the focus of such a marketing approach if its discourses are to no longer be problematic.

Limitations and Future Directions

As is the case with qualitative research in general, this study of representations of women's health in Special K television advertisements is ultimately limited in making generalizations by the lack of reliability that is provided by numerical data and pre-defined coding categories, which are central to the principles of quantitative research (Altheide, 1987). In addition, this study was conducted by a single researcher and lacks the validity that can be provided by inter-coder reliability, in spite of the repeated readings that were conducted (Babbie & Baxter, 2004). As such, the results of this study are a product of the opinions, experiences and education of a single individual with a single perception, which in this case happens to be of the feminist persuasion. Because of this, it cannot be said that the results of this study are definitive or unarguable; rather, they are the outcome of cultural experiences that have been applied to the observation and analysis of a specific selection of data. It is the opinion of this researcher that individuals with different cultural experiences may observe the very same selection of cultural artifacts and draw a very different analysis.

In addition, this study has consulted what might be considered by some academics (particularly in the women's studies field) to be a narrow range of literature to provide the basis for its analysis. It is true that several principal works that were applied in this study, particularly those by de Beauvoir (1971) and Friedan (1963), are inspired by feminism's second wave and are thereby limited in their scope. Firstly, intersectionality is not a key consideration since these works (and this study more generally) tend to address the problems experienced by North American and European white women of the middle class, who are

predominantly granted representation in the selected Special K advertisements. A future feminist area of study, then, could address the implications that arise for the women of races and classes who are not granted representation in media venues such as the selected Special K advertisements. Or, from a marketing standpoint, subsequent studies could consider *why* these women are not featured since slimness, as explored by Bordo (1993), may not be as much of a cultural priority for these women as it is for white, middle class women. On this note, future studies could also examine Special K advertisements that are broadcast in different countries; a wealth of knowledge could result from a comparative study of the types of women who are featured in Special K advertisements from Central and South American countries, for instance (several of which were encountered during this study's data collection process), as well as an examination of the different (or similar) marketing discourses that arise. For all of these reasons, future research expanding upon this topic by other academics is encouraged and welcomed by the researcher.

Conclusion

In summary, it cannot be said that Special K advertisements solely promote unhealthy eating behaviours for women to emulate. Special K products are low in calories and fat, as are many other breakfast cereals, but that does not have to be the basis from which they are promoted. It is the conclusion of this study that, even if these products were to be marketed as part of a weight loss regimen, it is important that they be overtly suggested as part of a larger balanced lifestyle where health, not just slimness, is the principal emphasis. It is not enough for health disclaimers to materialize in an advertisement's fine print; they must be the central focus in order for the foundations of these feminist criticisms to be erased. While the selected Special K advertisements cannot be said to wholly perpetuate unhealthy behaviours

for women to emulate, the results of this study indicate that their representations are largely unhealthy and in need of a thoughtful re-evaluation and re-negotiation of marketing values, some suggestions for which have been made.

It is the opinion of the researcher that these reviewed Special K advertisements comprise only one reflection of a larger media culture that perpetuates women's slimness as central to desirable and normal femininity. Indeed, while Special K advertisements were selected for this specific study, the selected advertisements could very well be interchangeable with those produced by other companies that use low calorie and fat contents to market items such as yogurt and chewing gum exclusively to women (which invariably provide possibilities for future research). But it is also crucial to understand that the narratives that advertisements share with their audiences are symptomatic of a society's wider cultural beliefs, as they largely reflect back to their audience what that audience already holds to be true in its collective consciousness (Calogero, Davis & Thompson, 2005; Kilbourne, 1999; Wah, 2005). Therefore, it is the cultural foundation that holds women's bodies (and the ability of these bodies to emulate a culturally and historically contextual, hegemonically imposed standard of beauty) as the key indicators of their social worth that needs to be decisively overhauled. Where this task begins is difficult to pin point outside the realm of mass media influence since North American culture is arguably nothing short of immersed in mass media authority. Therefore it is the conclusion of this study that it is essential for women to be portrayed in mass media representations as multi-dimensional individuals who are valuable for all of the elements that make them human: their intelligence, ideas, humour, faith, traditional and professional roles, and so on. In reducing women's worth to be comprised principally of their bodily appearance, women are deprived

of the respect that grants men greater cultural freedom to still be deemed as valuable even though their appearance (and body size) deviates from a specific cultural standard of attractiveness. Slimness is only one aspect of this conundrum and because a woman's slimness has become culturally indicative of her willingness to submit herself to external cultural control, it is a relevant if not crucial paradigm to start with because it is the necessity of this control that needs to be painstakingly questioned and, eventually, thoroughly addressed and remedied.

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Appendix A

Advertisement Working Titles

- 1) "Turn your life around"
- 2) "Get one free wrist or ankle weight now in specially marked Kellogg's boxes"
- 3) "A girl needs variety to look good"
- 4) "Keep looking special"
- 5) "Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim"
- 6) "Relax, exercise gently and of course, eat sensibly"
- 7) "Eat 2 bowls for 2 meals for 2 weeks [to lose up to one inch off your waist]"
- 8) "Lose up to 6 pounds in two weeks"
- 9) "It's easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks"
- 10) "See if it can keep you satisfied for longer"
- 11) "See if it can sustain you 'til lunch"
- 12) "It's a nighttime snack that won't undo your whole day (a)"
- 13) "Feel special"
- 14) "What's the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?"
- 15) "Feeling good never looked better"
- 16) "It's a nighttime snack that won't undo your whole day (b)"

Appendix B

Featured Special K Products/Campaigns

Featured Special K Product/Campaign	Commercials Featuring Special K Product/Campaign	Percentage (%) of Commercials Featuring Special K Product/Campaign (out of 16)
Special K cereal	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	37.5
Special K Challenge	7, 8, 9	18.75
Special K Sustain cereal	10, 11	12.5
Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal	12, 16	12.5
Special K Red Berries cereal	13, 14	12.5
Special K Crispy Bites	15	6.25

Appendix C

Reasons to Purchase Special K Products

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Commercials Containing Sub-Theme	Percentage (%) of Commercials Containing Sub-Theme (out of 16)
Special K provides women with desirable elements	“Deliciousness” or “tastiness”	4, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16	43.75
	Slimness	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14	43.75
	Satiety	9, 10, 11, 13, 14	31.25
	Nutrition	10, 11, 13	18.75
	Looking “good” or “special”	3, 4, 15	18.75
	Feeling “good” or “special”	13, 15	12.5
	Convenience	13	6.25
	Free gift	2	6.25
	Admiration from men	4	6.25
	A variety of products	3, 8, 9	18.75
Special K withholds from women undesirable elements	Calories	12, 14, 15, 16	25
	Fat	3, 5	12.5

Appendix D

Represented Self-Monitoring Behaviours

Self-Monitoring Behaviour	Commercials Representing Self-Monitoring Behaviour	Percentage (%) of Commercials Representing Self-Monitoring Behaviour (out of 16)
Self-fulfilment through slimming the body	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15	56.25
Self-fulfilment through “resisting temptation” or denying desire to eat for pleasure	4, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16	37.5
Denying the desire to eat for sustenance	5, 14	12.5
Fear of body size	6, 7, 8, 9	25
Fear of food/hunger	5, 12, 15	18.75
Serve others rather than self	4, 11, 16	18.75
Consistently makeover one’s appearance	3	6.25

Appendix E

Advertisement Transcriptions

1) “Turn Your Life Around” (16 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube March 4, 2008

Transcribed June 15, 2009

Shot 1:

A medium close-up shot of a box of Special K cereal. On-screen text appears above the box in white letters, reading “before.” A hand then appears from the top left of the screen and turns the box halfway in a circle, so that the side panel that displays the product’s nutritional information is facing the camera. The hand leaves the shot and on-screen text appears above the box in white letters, reading “after.”

Shot 2:

A white backdrop against which on-screen text appears in bold black letters in the centre, reading “Turn your life around.” The Kellogg’s Special K logo is then superimposed onto the shot, replacing the text.

2) “Get one free wrist or ankle weight now in specially marked Kellogg's boxes” (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube May 7, 2007

Transcribed June 12, 2009

Shot 1:

A medium shot of a slim, white woman with shoulder length brown hair. She appears to be in her mid-twenties. She is in a white t-shirt and three-quarter length pajama pants, talking on the phone while lounging on her bed. She is wearing a red wrist weight on her arm (the one that is holding the phone) and she lifts the arm up and down between bouts of speech. A superimposed, computer generated image appears in the top right of the shot. It is presumed to be the counter on her wrist weight. Above it are the words “Catch-Ups” and it moves from “24” to “25” and then to “26” as the featured woman moves her arm up and down.

Woman: “Seriously...[chuckles] I can’t believe it...that is so embarrassing.”

Shot 2:

A medium long shot of a slim, white woman with long red hair sitting in what appears to be a shoe store. She appears to be in her mid-thirties. She is smiling and seated with several open shoe boxes on the floor in front of her and she is wearing a black spike-heeled shoe. She is also wearing a red ankle weight and is continually lifting her leg up and down. Behind her is a white man, presumably a salesman, with short dark hair who is dressed in a suit with dark-rimmed eyeglasses. He appears to be in his early forties. He is standing somewhat awkwardly, glancing away from her and scratching his forehead. A superimposed, computer

generated image appears in the top right of the screen. It is presumed to be the counter on her ankle weight. Above it are the words “Designer Pumps” and it moves from “14” to “15” and then to “16” as the featured woman moves her leg up and down.

Background music (lyrics sung by a woman): “Do it again”

Shot 3:

A close-up shot of a woman’s legs and a man’s legs, positioned to indicate that the woman and man are facing each other. Her legs are covered in white pantyhose and she is wearing white pumps, and the man is wearing black pants and dress shoes. The woman is also wearing a red ankle weight and is continually lifting her leg up and down. A superimposed, computer generated image appears at the bottom right of the shot. It is presumed to be the counter on her ankle weight. Above it is the word “Butterflies” and it moves from “03” to “04” and then to “05” as she continually lifts her leg up and down.

Shot 4:

A long shot that reveals the full bodies of both the man and woman. Their faces are not visible but it is clear that they are kissing and are standing outside, in front of an apartment complex. The woman continues to lift her leg up and down.

Shot 5:

A medium shot of three boxes of Kellogg's Special K cereal and one box of Kellogg's Vector cereal against a white backdrop. Red and blue wrist/ankle weights drop in front of them.

On-screen text reads “Keep it simple” in bold, red print near the bottom of the shot. At the bottom of the shot is very fine black print that is indecipherable.

Voiceover (a woman): “Get one free wrist or ankle weight now in specially marked Kellogg’s boxes.”

Shot 6:

A medium long shot of the second featured woman shows her sitting in the shoe store with the salesman sitting next to her. They are both wearing ankle weights and are continuously lifting their legs up and down.

3) “A girl needs variety to look good” (29 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube May 1, 2009

Transcribed June 16, 2009

Shot 1:

A medium close-up shot of a slim, white woman with brown hair that is pulled back. She appears to be in her early twenties and she is sitting at a table in a home kitchen whose décor is predominantly white. She is wearing a grey, loose-fitting sweatshirt. In front of her on the table is a white bowl with a spoon handle sticking out of it. She stands up and walks to the

right, exiting the shot. The camera maintains its position and as she walks; only her midriff is visible.

Voiceover (a woman with an English accent): “Eating the same low fat breakfast every day can be hard work.”

Shot 2:

A medium close-up shot of the woman’s head, facing away from the camera, as she approaches a kitchen cupboard and opens it.

Shot 3:

A medium close-up shot of the woman’s face, sharing the foreground with a box of Special K that is inside the cupboard, to the far right of the shot (the camera assumes the perspective of being inside the cupboard). The Special K box, though remaining in place, transitions between seven different flavours (most likely courtesy of CGI as opposed to seven separate jump-shots). The woman smiles as her hand reaches in and retrieves the box which is now the “Special K Bliss” flavour.

Voiceover: “That’s why Special K now has ten varieties.”

Shots 4 and 5:

A medium close-up shot of the woman holding the cereal box as she turns away from the cupboard and towards the camera. She is now wearing a $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeved red dress and her long hair is worn down in big ringlets. She begins to walk to the left. Next is a medium shot of the woman as she is walking to the right of the shot. A blurred but slightly transparent glass flower vase is situated in the middle foreground of the shot, and as the woman walks past it (her image becoming obscured) she emerges to the right of the screen in a pink skirt with a short-sleeved purple jacket, with her hair tied back.

Voiceover: “And as we all know a girl needs variety to look good.”

Shot 6:

A close-up shot of the woman’s feet as she walks to the right of the shot. She is in black stiletto high-heeled shoes. In the middle of the shot is a white table leg, and as she walks past it the image of her foot is obscured but then emerges to the right of the shot in a red, high-heeled strappy shoe.

Shots 7, 8 and 9:

A medium close-up shot of the woman’s head and shoulders (she is facing away from the camera). Her hair is pulled back in a long, curly ponytail and she is wearing a long-sleeved red dress with a plunging neckline. She spins around, and in the next shot she is facing the camera and smiling. This is followed by a close-up shot of the woman’s midriff as she appears to slightly lift the dress and spin around again.

Shot 10:

A medium long shot of the woman who is now in a long-sleeved red blouse with form-fitted blue jeans, her hair worn down in loose waves. She is standing with one foot resting up on a chair, and she is eating a spoonful of cereal from the bowl that she is holding. In front of her is a table, upon which there is a box of Special K, a vase of flowers, a glass of orange juice and a pitcher of milk. The Special K box, remaining in place, transitions one at a time into four different flavours.

Shot 11:

A close-up shot of a Special K box as, remaining in place, it transitions one at a time into seven different flavours. It is sitting on a white table next to a vase of flowers, a white bowl filled with cereal, a white coffee cup, a glass of orange juice and a pitcher of milk.

On-screen text reads “10 Varieties” in bold red print at the left of the shot.

Voiceover: “Special K. Now with ten varieties.”

4)“Keep looking special” (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube February 5, 2009

Transcribed June 17, 2009

Shot 1:

A long shot of a slim white woman with brown hair that is pulled back. She appears to be in her mid-thirties or early forties. She is wearing a knee-length red coat over a knee-length black skirt with black stiletto high-heeled shoes. She is walking toward the camera on a dark grey sidewalk; the sky is greyish and it appears to be very early morning. It also looks as though it has just finished raining, as the sidewalk is wet and her reflection can barely be seen in the bottom right of the shot. She is approaching a door to an old, rustic building that frames the left of the shot. The instrumental to the iconic song ‘Brass in Pocket,’ as performed by The Pretenders, is playing in the background.

Shots 2 and 3:

A close-up shot of the woman’s hands as she holds a brass padlock in one, and unlocks it with a key that is held in the other. Next is a medium long shot of the woman as she fully extends her body and reaches upward, possibly to open a window. As she does this, she extends her left leg out behind her, making her legs the central focus of the shot. A number of tables with white tablecloths and umbrellas, as well as chairs, are revealed to the left of the building. In the background, a white man with short dark hair who is dressed in black and white is walking to the right of the shot, toward the tables.

Shot 4:

A medium shot of the man, who appears to be in his mid twenties. He is wearing a black vest and tie over a white dress shirt with black pants. He has a white cloth draped over his right arm and is walking toward one of the tables, implying that he is a server. Although facing the

camera, his face is turned slightly to the left, implying that he is watching the woman. This causes him to bump into the nearby table and knock over a chair.

Shot 5:

A close-up shot of the woman's face as she glances to the right of the screen, presumably towards the man. She is smiling.

Shot 6:

A long shot of the woman as she opens the door and enters a building that appears to be a bakery. It is dimly lit, with brown wood cabinets and a long counter with a glass display case. It is empty of any people.

Shot 7:

A medium close-up shot of the woman, who is no longer wearing her jacket but is in a long-sleeved red sweater. She leans on the counter and grabs a box of Special K cereal with her hand, making it visible in the dimly lit setting. Sitting on the counter next to her is a white bowl and milk pitcher. She smiles and begins to pour the cereal into the bowl.

Shots 8, 9 and 10:

A close-up shot of the white bowl as cereal is poured into it. The bowl is seated on the brown wood counter with a metal spoon resting to the left of it. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's face as she eats a spoonful of the cereal. This is followed by a medium close-up shot of the woman as she removes the spoon from her mouth and brings it back down toward the bowl. The bowl and box of Special K cereal are visible, seated to the right of the woman on the brown wood counter. She then glances upward and smiles.

On-screen text reads "Special K contains 23% of your RDI of protein" in fine white print in the top left, as well as "Based on a 30g serve with half a cup of skim milk. Based on a female recommended daily intake" at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover (a woman with an Australian accent): "A bowl of Special K with milk gives you 23% of your recommended daily intake of protein."

Shot 11:

A long shot of a navy blue van pulling up and parking next to the bakery building. The outdoor shot is slightly more lit than the opening shot, implying that the sun is rising.

Shot 12:

A medium shot of the woman as she slides the box of Special K to the far left side of the counter, behind a black cupboard and out of the shot.

Shot 13:

A long shot as a white, overweight man enters the bakery in blue coveralls. His face is barely visible, but he appears to have thinning, dirty-blonde hair and be in his late fifties. He is

carrying a large tray of desserts. The woman turns to the left, standing behind the glass display case, facing the man.

Shots 14, 15 and 16:

A close-up shot of the woman's face as a tray of colourful desserts passes by at chin level. She folds her hands together and raises them to her chin, and her eyes and head turn to the left as she watches the tray pass by. Her mouth is open. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's face as another tray of colourful desserts passes by at chin level, this time going from the left to the right of the shot. She raises her forefinger and rests it on her lip as her eyes and face turn to watch the tray pass by. This is followed by a close-up shot of the woman's face as her eyes, facing downward, slowly move from left to right and her forefinger rubs her lower lip.

Voiceover: "And the thing about protein is that it helps you feel fuller for longer."

Shot 17:

A medium close-up, point of view shot pans over the colourful desserts in the glass display case.

Shot 18:

A long shot of the server entering the bakery. The woman is standing in the right of the shot, behind the counter and display case, facing the man.

Background music (lyrics sung by a woman): "I'm special, so special."

Shots 19 and 20:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's face and shoulders as she lifts a large white box up over the counter, handing it to the man, whose profile is slightly visible in the far left of the shot. She is smiling. Next is a long shot, with both subjects facing each other, as the man takes the box from the woman.

Voiceover: "Which will help you resist temptation."

Shots 21 and 22:

A close-up, reverse angle shot of the box which is now open, revealing an array of colourful desserts. The man's shoulder is visible in the far left of the shot, behind the box. It is implied that he is holding it out to the woman, offering a dessert to her, as this shot is followed by a medium close-up shot of the woman with her hands outstretched, shaking her hands back and forth, as well as shaking her head. She is still smiling.

Background music: "I gotta have some of your attention."

Shots 23, 24 and 25:

A long shot of the man as he approaches the door to exit the bakery, the camera slightly panning to the left as it follows him. He then turns to face the right of the shot. Next is a

medium shot of the man as he leans to the right, wide-eyed with an open mouth. It is implied that he is looking at the woman; next is a medium, reverse-angle shot of the woman who is standing with one foot elevated onto a stool, projecting her posterior into the air and stretching out her legs. Her right arm is fully outstretched, implying that she is reaching for something in a high cupboard.

Voiceover: "So keep looking special; start your day with Special K."

Shot 26:

A close-up shot of the Special K logo against a white backdrop.

On-screen text reads "Stay special" in bold black print at the center of the shot.

5) "Now you can eat breakfast and stay slim" (29 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube November 18, 2007

Transcribed on June 12, 2009

Shots 1 and 2:

A medium shot pans over a woman on a deck, presumably at a hotel. The woman is fully clothed in white. She is white and slim with long brown hair and she is lounging in a chair on what appears to be a hotel resort patio. She is presumably in her late twenties or early thirties. A white, dark-haired man who appears to be in his mid-twenties enters the shot, approaching from the left. He is wearing a white dress shirt with black pants and is presumably a server with a white cloth draped over his arm. She sees him and picks up her cell phone, pretending to be engaged in a conversation, presumably so that he does not approach her. Next is a medium close-up shot of the woman as the server turns to leave. She is smiling.

Voiceover (a woman with an English accent): "Some people believe that skipping breakfast makes them slimmer."

Background music (lyrics sung by a woman): "Save me, somebody save me."

Shots 3 and 4:

A medium shot of a white, slim woman with shoulder-length blonde hair. She is sitting at a table with two other women, one white and one black, who are facing away from the camera. She appears to be in her late thirties and is wearing a snug, low cut cream-coloured halter top. Next is a medium close-up shot of an empty plate on the table which the woman pulls in front of her, and the camera pans up her breasts to her face. Seeing the waiter approach, she points down to the plate, presumably to make it appear as though she has already eaten.

On-screen text reads "Can help slimming as part of a calorie controlled diet. 30g Special K with 125 ml semi-skimmed milk provides 171 Cal and 2.5 g fat" in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Background music: “Save me, somebody save me.”

Shot 5:

A medium close-up shot of the server as he makes a confused expression and walks away from the table.

Shots 6 and 7:

A medium long shot of a woman who is presumably walking up from the beach onto the hotel resort patio. She is white, slim, has long brown hair and is wearing a modest one-piece red bathing suit with a matching surrong. Next is a medium close-up shot of the woman as she smiles and places her hand under a running shower.

Voiceover: “In fact, research shows that people who eat a low fat breakfast, like Special K, are more likely to be slimmer than those who skip breakfast all together.”

Shot 8:

A medium shot of the woman as she sits at a table with two other women, one white and one black, who are facing away from the camera.

Shots 9 and 10:

The camera moves to a medium close-up shot of the woman pouring Special K into a bowl, which only shows her breasts and midriff. Next is a close-up shot of milk being poured over the bowl of cereal.

On-screen text reads “Many factors affect weight management. Enjoy Special K as part of a varied and balanced diet and active lifestyle” in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Shot 11:

A medium close-up shot of the woman as she smiles and eats a spoonful of the cereal.

Voiceover: “So now you can eat breakfast and stay slim with Special K.”

Shot 12:

A long shot of the server walking past three tables filled with people who are barely visible, from the left to the right of the shot, as the camera slightly pans out.

Shots 13 and 14:

A medium shot of the woman walking back into the shower. She is no longer wearing a surrong and her bathing suit is high cut to accentuate her posterior and her thighs. A computer generated red ‘K’ from the Special K logo is superimposed onto the shot and replaces the woman’s red bathing suit, and as it moves into the foreground the woman fades.

Background music: “Oh yeah, save me. Oh yeah, save me.”

Shots 15 and 16:

The woman is replaced with a box of Special K cereal in a medium long shot, which is superimposed onto an extreme long shot of the hotel resort patio.

On-screen text reads “It’s called SPECIAL for a reason” in red and blue text at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover: “It’s called special for a reason.”

6) “Relax, exercise gently and of course, eat sensibly” (35 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube April 2, 2008

Transcribed June 12, 2009

Shot 1:

A close-up shot of a woman’s calves as she drops a red robe onto the white floor and steps onto a scale. The calves are slim and shapely.

Background music (lyrics sung by a man): “Shake what your mama gave ya, shake what your mama gave ya.”

Shot 2:

A close-up shot of the scale, with the woman’s toes at the bottom left and right corners of the screen. The scale counter comes to a halt, although no numbers are shown to indicate the actual weight result.

Shot 3:

A medium close-up shot of the woman reveals a slim, white woman with shoulder-length blonde hair and brown-rimmed eyeglasses who appears to be in her late twenties or early thirties. Her mouth is open widely, her eyes are wide and she is scowling, implying that she is shocked and dismayed by her weight.

Background music: “That’s right get back, get back. Shake what your mama gave ya, shake what your mama gave ya.”

Shot 4:

A medium long shot reveals the woman, dressed in a white camisole and boy-short underwear, trying to balance on one foot on the scale. She has a tall, slender frame.

Shots 5, 6 and 7:

The camera moves through three close-up shots of the woman’s face as she continues to balance on one foot, each time descending to the bottom of the shot and presumably falling off of the scale. She projects frustrated and dismayed facial expressions.

Background music: “Shake what your mama gave ya, shake what your mama gave ya.”

Shots 8 and 9:

A medium close-up shot followed quickly by a medium long shot which shows the woman picking up the scale and shaking it.

Background music: "Shake what your mama gave ya, shake what your mama gave ya."

Shot 10:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's face and shoulders shows her removing a watch from her wrist.

Shot 11:

A close-up shot of the woman's calves as she stands on the scale; her watch hits the floor, followed by two rings.

Background music: "Shake what your mama gave ya, shake what your mama gave ya."

Shot 12:

The camera moves to a medium close-up shot of the woman's face and shoulders as she pulls her camisole up over her head.

On-screen text reads "30g Special K125 ml 100 ml glass of orange juice, black coffee. Can help slimming as part of a calorie controlled diet" in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover (a woman with an English accent): "The figure you want; surely there's a simpler way."

Shots 13 and 14:

A close-up shot of the scale is followed by a medium close-up shot of the woman's face and shoulders as she removes her eyeglasses.

Shot 15:

A close-up shot of the woman's calves as she stands on the scale. Her eyeglasses fall to the floor.

Background music: "Shake what your mama gave ya, shake what your mama gave ya."

Shots 16 and 17:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's face and shoulders shows her looking down and squinting at the scale, followed by a close-up point-of-view shot of the scale that becomes blurry.

Voiceover: "Relax, exercise gently, and, of course, eat sensibly."

Shot 18:

A close-up shot of a bowl of Special K cereal with milk being poured over it.

Shot 19:

A medium long shot shows the woman, now in a red pullover sweater, sitting at a kitchen table and eating a bowl of Special K cereal. The cereal box is standing next to her on the table and is facing the camera. A glass of orange juice and a coffee cup are set next to the box.

On-screen text reads “A. Relax, B. Exercise gently, K. Eat sensibly” in bold white print at the left of the shot.

Voiceover: “Special K: It’s as simple as ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘K’.”

7) “Eat 2 bowls for 2 meals for 2 weeks [to lose up to one inch off your waist]” (41 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube November 7, 2007

Transcribed June 15, 2009

Shot 1:

A close-up shot of a white door as it opens, and the camera dollies into a bedroom with white walls and a large window that is framed with red curtains. The camera then dollies up to a double bed with white bedding, upon which a red bikini is spread out. It zooms in on the bikini, and then pans out again as the computer-generated bikini suddenly shifts to resemble an evil facial expression: The ties form scowling eyebrows over the bathing suit top, whose cups resemble eyes that are pushed together in a glare. The bottom of the suit curves upward like a smiling mouth. The room darkens as the camera dollies in and then out again. The camera then pans over to a box of Special K cereal that is standing next to a bowl that is filled with cereal on a bedroom dresser.

On-screen text reads “BMI must be 25 or over. Not suitable for under 18s” as well as “In a scientific study, in tests from a leading university, 5 body parts were significantly reduced, with greatest reduction from the waist” in fine white print at the bottom of the shot. After this fades from the shot, on-screen text reads “Can help slimming or weight control only as part of a calorie controlled diet. Third meal must be well balanced” in fine white print at the bottom of the shot, as well as “2 bowls, 2 meals, 2 weeks” in bold red print at the left of the shot.

Voiceover (a woman with an Irish accent): “Do summer clothes scare you? They don’t have to. Try our two week summer challenge. Have Special K for breakfast and again for lunch or dinner. Two bowls, two meals, two weeks. And see if you can lose up to one inch off your waist.”

Shot 2:

A medium close-up shot of the computer generated bikini, which is now animated to resemble a happy facial expression: The ties are haphazardly spread out, no longer forming eyebrows; the bathing suit's eyes are no longer glaring, and the bottom is curved up like a smiling mouth. Next to it is a computer-generated Kellogg's Special K logo, superimposed onto the shot against the white backdrop (presumably the bedding from an earlier shot).

8) "Lose up to 6 pounds in two weeks" (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube February 25, 2007

Transcribed June 13, 2009

Shot 1:

A medium long shot of a living room that is decorated for Christmas with a tree, stockings and garland. A woman enters the shot from the left; her entire body is visible but she is facing away from the camera. She has shoulder-length brown hair and is wearing a red and white robe over top of pajama pants. She is walking towards the Christmas tree.

Shot 2:

A medium long shot of a white girl with long brown hair, presumably eight to ten years old, walking down a white staircase that is lined with garland and Christmas lights.

Shot 3:

A close-up shot of the woman's backside; she is bent over, presumably picking something up off the floor in front of the fireplace.

Shot 4:

A medium close-up shot of the girl's shoulders and smiling face.

Girl: "Santa!"

Shot 5:

A close-up shot of the woman's face. She is white, slim, and appears to be in her late thirties or early forties. At first she is smiling but her eyes grow wide and she clenches her jaw in reaction to the girl's remark as she looks into the camera.

Voiceover (a woman): "Now is when you regret all of those holiday cookies."

Shots 6 and 7:

A medium close-up shot of the girl, still smiling on the stairway. Next is a medium close-up, reverse angle shot of the woman, who is again smiling and presumably looking back at the girl.

On-screen text reads “Consult your physician before starting any diet or exercise program. Average weight loss when replacing meals with two cereal meals is 5 pounds. Weight loss may vary” in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover: “Good thing you know losing up to six pounds in two weeks just got easier.”

Shots 8, 9 and 10:

A medium long shot of the woman from behind as she opens up two kitchen cupboards. Next is a medium close-up shot of the cupboards, revealing an array of Special K products inside. The back of the woman’s head is visible in the bottom right of the shot. Next is a close-up shot that pans, left to right, over the Special K products.

Voiceover: “Introducing new Special K protein meal bars, snack bars and K2O protein water, plus our delicious cereals.”

Shot 11:

A medium shot of the woman sitting next to the Christmas tree in an arm chair, eating what is presumed to be a bowl of Special K. On the floor in front of her are the girl and a white, dark-haired man who appears to be in his early 40s. Although there is no diegetic sound, the man and the girl appear to be laughing together, and the woman also laughs before eating a spoonful of Special K.

Voiceover: “What’s the difference between making a resolution and keeping one?”

Shots 12 and 13:

A medium shot of various Special K products against a red backdrop. The Special K products are then replaced with a computer-generated Yahoo logo that is superimposed onto the shot in bold, white text against a red backdrop.

On-screen text reads “The difference is K” in bold red print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover: “Now you know the difference is K. Lose up to six pounds in two weeks. Go to Yahoo and search Special K.”

9) “It’s easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks” (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube January 2, 2008

Transcribed June 15, 2009

Shots 1, 2 and 3:

A medium long shot of a slim, black woman with short dark hair who appears to be in her mid-thirties. She is wearing an orange tank top, black boy short panties and is bent over, putting on a pair of jeans while looking in a full-length mirror. She appears to be in a clothing store fitting room. Next is a medium close-up shot of the woman’s face as she watches herself in the mirror and wiggles around, followed by a medium close-up shot of the

woman's midriff as she pulls the jeans up over her waist (attached to them is what appears to be a price tag).

Shots 4 and 5:

A close-up shot of the woman's face, looking at herself in the mirror, as she begins to smile. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's midriff as she zips the jeans up and pulls out the waist band, indicating that there is ample room.

On-screen text reads "When part of the Special K Challenge. Consult your physician before starting any diet or exercise program. Average waist circumference reduction when replacing meals with two cereal meals is 1.3 inches" in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover (a woman): "Afraid they won't zip? Don't be."

Shot 6:

A medium long shot of the woman as she continues to hold out the waist band and smile at herself in the mirror. Her reflection in the mirror then freezes still as the woman takes off the jeans.

Voiceover: "It's easier to drop up to a jean size in just two weeks when you take the Special K challenge."

Shot 7:

A medium shot of the woman walking through a clothing store, still in her tank top and panties. The camera dollies backward as she walks towards it. There are piles of jeans on shelves and two people in the foreground, who are both frozen still. One is a slim woman who appears to be of Southeast Asian ethnicity with short dark hair, wearing a white tank top. Behind the featured woman is a man who is facing away from the camera; he has brown hair and is wearing a long-sleeved maroon shirt.

Shot 8:

A close-up shot of the woman's hands retrieving a pair of jeans from a shelf. Labelling the shelf is a sign that reads "SKINNY CUT."

Shots 9 and 10:

A medium close-up shot of the woman in a home kitchen with predominantly white décor. She is wearing a pink and white layered tank top. She opens a cupboard and the camera pans in to reveal an array of Special K products inside of it. Next is a close-up shot of the products inside the cupboard as the woman reaches in and grabs one of the cereal boxes.

On-screen text reads "Weight loss may vary" in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover: "Enjoy a greater variety of delicious cereals, protein bars and protein waters that keep you satisfied throughout your day."

Shots 11 and 12:

A close-up shot of a box of Special K, whose contents is being poured into a bowl. Next is a medium close-up shot of the woman, standing in the kitchen, smiling and eating a spoonful of cereal.

Shots 13 and 14:

A medium shot of the woman wearing an orange tank top and a pair of jeans, looking at herself from the backside in a full-length mirror and smiling. She appears to be in a shoe store, with shelves of boots in the background. To her right is a white man who appears to be in his late forties, with a thinning hairline and wearing a blue dress shirt with khaki pants. Walking away from him is a white boy who appears to be eleven to thirteen years of age, wearing a blue dress shirt and khakis. The man and the boy are frozen still, and then the shot transitions out of a freeze-frame and they begin to move. At this point a slim, white woman with long brown hair dressed in a white and brown halter dress walks across the foreground of the shot. Her face is not visible.

On-screen text reads “For more information on the Special K Challenge go to Yahoo and search Special K” in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover: “What’s the difference between the size you wear and the size you want?”

Shots 15, 16 and 17:

A close-up shot of the woman’s smiling face as she exits the shot. This transitions to a medium close-up shot of various Special K products, set against a red backdrop. On-screen text at the bottom right of the screen reads “The difference is K” in bold red letters. Next a computer-generated Yahoo logo is superimposed onto the shot, replacing the text.

Voiceover: “Now you know the difference is K. Go to Yahoo and search Special K to design your plan.”

10) “See if it can keep you satisfied for longer” (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube March 27, 2008

Transcribed June 15, 2008

Shots 1 and 2:

A long shot of a slim, white woman with shoulder-length brown hair. She is wearing a red t-shirt and khaki pants. She appears to be in her mid-thirties. She is standing at the head of a long, rectangular glass table, and to her right is a chart with a pie graph. There are two people seated at each side of the table; to the left is a white man with a shaved head, dressed in a grey jacket, and next to him is a white woman with short blonde hair in a yellow short-sleeved blouse; to the right is a white man in a grey dress shirt, and next to him is a black woman with her hair pulled back. None of their faces are completely visible, as they are turned away from the camera and watching the featured woman. The camera dollies toward the woman. Next is a medium close-up shot of the woman as she is speaking (the dialogue is

slightly drowned out by the background music) and pointing to the pie graph next to her.

Woman: “So with these figures we see that...”

Shots 3, 4 and 5:

A close-up shot of the woman’s face; her eyebrows go up, indicating that she is confused. This is followed by a close-up shot of the chart, which now has a picture of a pie instead of the pie graph. Next is a medium close-up, reverse angle shot of the woman as she turns back to her audience and smiles awkwardly. This shot-reverse-shot indicates that she looked at the chart and saw the pie; but when she turns back to the audience the chart once again has the image of a pie graph.

Background music (lyrics sung by a man): “The more I see you the more I want you.”

Shot 6:

A medium close-up shot of the woman. She is sitting and typing on a white laptop computer. The camera pans toward her as her eyes look to the left of the screen.

On-screen text reads “Protein and fibre have been shown to have an important role in satiety” in fine white lettering at the bottom of the shot.

Shots 7, 8 and 9:

A close-up shot of a white man with short dark hair. He is wearing a blue dress shirt and appears to be in his mid-twenties. He is holding a submarine sandwich next to his head and appears to be talking into it. A curly phone cord hangs from the bottom of the sandwich. Next is a close-up shot of the woman who is looking to the left of the screen and anxiously biting her lip. This is followed by a medium close-up, reverse angle shot of the man, who is now holding a black telephone against his ear. His eyes glance back and forth uneasily. This shot-reverse-shot indicates that the woman saw the man with a sandwich against his ear, and the man noticed that the woman was staring at him and his perspective indicates that he was actually talking into a telephone.

On-screen text reads “Each 40g serving bowl contains 5.6g of protein and 5g of fibre which make a significant contribution. Enjoy as part of your balanced diet and healthy lifestyle” in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Voiceover (woman with an English accent): “If you’ve only got one thing on your mind before lunch, you should try something new for breakfast.”

Shot 10:

A medium close-up shot of the woman smiling and sitting in a home kitchen at a white table. She is wearing a pink robe. On the table are a pitcher of milk and a glass of orange juice and a white bowl. She is holding a box of Special K cereal and she begins to pour it into the bowl.

Voiceover: "Introducing new Special K Sustain. A unique blend of flakes and clusters containing fibre and protein."

Shots 11 and 12:

A close-up shot of milk being poured over a bowl of Special K cereal. Next is a medium close-up shot of the woman eating a spoonful of the cereal.

Shot 13:

A close-up shot of a dessert tray sitting on a steel cart. The camera pans up to a medium shot of the woman who is wearing a form-fitted, knee-length red dress with thick spaghetti straps. She smiles and looks down at the dessert tray.

Shot 14:

A medium long shot of the woman as she pushes her hip out to knock the tray away, and it rolls to the left, and eventually out of the shot.

Voiceover: "See if it can keep you satisfied for longer."

Shot 14:

A close-up shot of a box of Special K, set against a white backdrop.

On-screen text reads "See if it can keep you SATISFIED for longer" in red and blue print at the right of the shot.

Voiceover: "New Special K Sustain."

11) "See if it can sustain you 'til lunch" (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube October 29, 2008

Transcribed June 15, 2009

Shots 1 and 2:

A medium long shot of a slim, white woman entering an elevator. She has long brown hair and is wearing a long-sleeved red blouse, a knee-length white skirt and red stiletto shoes and she appears to be in her early thirties. She is presumably in an office building or hotel whose décor is mostly white. Next is a medium shot of the woman inside the elevator, standing next to what is presumed to be a bellboy; he is white with short brown hair, appears to be in his mid-twenties and is dressed in a long white coat with black pants. In front of him is a cart set up with a coffee pot and mugs, as well as a tray of various desserts. The woman glances down towards the cart.

Background music (lyrics sung by a man): "Eat 'em up, eat em' up."

Shots 3 and 4:

A close-up shot of the dessert tray. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's face as she

appears to be deep in thought. This shot-reverse-shot technique implies that the woman is looking at the desserts, and that the camera has assumed her point of view.

Shots 5 and 6:

A medium shot of the woman standing next to the bellboy and the cart, and she begins to reach downward into the direction that she is looking. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's hand as it reaches down towards the dessert tray, but then reaches past it to hit the elevator button.

Background music: "Eat 'em up, eat 'em up."

Shots 7 and 8:

A medium close-up shot of a slim, black woman with shoulder-length dark hair who appears to be in her late twenties. She is dressed in a short-sleeved red blouse and is walking toward the camera. She appears to be outside in a market-type environment with people in the background walking around her. Next is a medium long, side-profile shot of the woman walking past various vendors.

Shot 9:

A medium long shot of the woman at a vendor's counter that is selling various types of breads and desserts. The camera shoots from behind the vendor in a reverse angle shot. The vendor's face is not visible, but it is a man of presumably Middle Eastern ethnicity with a thinning hairline who appears to be in his late forties or early fifties. The woman glances at the desserts and points upward toward the man.

Background music: "Eat 'em up, eat 'em up."

Shots 10 and 11:

A medium long, reverse angle shot of the woman, whose back is now facing the camera, and of the vendor whose face is now visible. She is still pointing and she lowers her hand as he raises his arm to reveal his watch, smiling. Next is a medium long shot of the woman, smiling and nodding, as she walks away from the vendor. There are two other women in the foreground, both sitting at tables near the vendor and drinking coffee. They are both white and presumably in their late fifties or early sixties with short greying hair, and their faces are not visible.

Background music: "What makes you need so much? Eat 'em up."

Shot 12:

A medium long shot of a slim, white woman with chin-length blonde hair who appears to be in her late thirties. She is wearing a long-sleeved red blouse and white pants, and is standing in a home kitchen. She opens a cupboard.

Shot 13:

A close-up shot of a cookie jar which transitions to focus on the woman's face as she

removes the jar from the cupboard, suggesting the camera to be positioned inside the cupboard.

Shot 14:

A medium long shot that trucks to the side as the woman places the cookie jar on the counter, and reaches her arm out with a cookie in hand. The camera pans slightly to the right of the shot and a white boy with short brown hair is revealed to be sitting on a stool by the counter; he appears to be nine to eleven years old. He smiles and takes the cookie.

Background music: "What makes you want so much? Eat 'em up."

Shot 15:

A medium long shot of what appears to be an outdoor picnic. To the left is a slim, white woman with long dark hair who is wearing a form-fitted red dress with thick spaghetti straps. She is facing away from the camera and leaning over a picnic table. Seated at the table is a white, slim woman with long auburn hair, wearing a yellow t-shirt, who appears to be in her early thirties. She is waving at the dark-haired woman. Seated to the right of her is a slim, white woman with long dirty-blond hair who is wearing a pink dress. Her face is hidden behind the dark-haired woman. To the right of the shot is a slim, dark-skinned woman with thick-rimmed glasses and long curly hair. She is dressed in a baggy purple blouse and is placing a tray of muffins on the table.

Background music: "I wonder who's to blame? Eat 'em up, eat 'em up, eat 'em up."

Shots 16 and 17:

A close-up shot of the dark-haired woman's face as she glances downward, presumably at the muffins, and smiles. Next is a medium close-up shot of the table as the woman reaches across toward the muffins but picks up a pair of sunglasses. Also on the table are two half-full glasses of orange juice, a tea pot and cup, as well as a red juice pitcher.

Shot 18:

Close-up shots of the four featured women sitting and eating a bowl of cereal are superimposed next to each other onto a split-screen.

Voiceover (a woman with an English accent): "Four out of five women agree that Special K Sustain helps them stop feeling hungry 'til lunch."

Shot 19:

A close-up shot of milk being poured over a bowl of Special K cereal.

Voiceover: "It contains fibre and protein."

Shot 20:

A medium close-up shot of a box of Special K, next to a bowl that is filled with cereal on what appears to be a kitchen counter.

Voiceover: "Special K Sustain. See if it can sustain you 'til lunch."

12) "It's a nighttime snack that won't undo your whole day (a)" (29 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube April 29, 2007

Transcribed June 13, 2009

Shot 1:

A close-up shot of *King Kong* playing on a television.

Shot 2:

A medium shot of a slim, white woman sitting on a couch in full coverage pink and white pajamas. She has long brown hair and appears to be in her mid-twenties. The shot then enters a freeze frame.

Voiceover (a woman): "Welcome to now. Now is like a scary movie."

Shots 3 and 4:

A close-up shot of *King Kong* on the television in a freeze-frame, presumably a point-of-view shot. Next is a close-up shot of a dvd player's digital clock in a freeze-frame stating the time to be 9:13 pm.

Voiceover: "Because now is that dangerous time of night when you fall victim to chocolate temptations lurking in the kitchen."

Shots 5 and 6:

A medium close-up shot of the woman on the couch, presumably frightened with wide eyes and fidgety hands. Next is a medium point-of-view shot of a refrigerator.

On-screen text reads "Research shows by replacing your higher calorie evening snack with a bowl of Special K cereal, you may lose weight. A serving of Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal and ½ cup fat free milk contains 160 calories compared to 344 calories in average evening snacks (the remainder of the text is indecipherable)" in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Shots 7 and 8:

A medium close-up shot of the woman as she smiles and leaves the couch. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's hand as she removes a box of Special K cereal from an open cupboard.

Voiceover: "Good thing you know there's a night time snack you don't have to be afraid of."

Shots 9 and 10:

A close-up shot of the Special K box, followed by a medium long shot of the woman pouring the cereal into a white bowl.

Voiceover: “Introducing Special K Chocolatey Delight cereal.”

Shots 11 and 12:

The camera moves through two close-up shots of milk being poured over the cereal and then a spoon being placed into the bowl.

Voiceover: “With ice cold milk it’s a lower calorie snack that won’t undo your whole day.”

Shots 13, 14 and 15:

A medium long shot of the woman sitting down on the couch. Next is a medium close-up shot, and then a close-up shot, of the woman’s smiling face as she eats a spoonful of Special K.

Voiceover: “What’s the difference between indulging and over-indulging?”

Shots 16 and 17:

A close-up shot of a box of Special K set against a red backdrop. On-screen text reads “The difference is K” in the bottom-right of the shot. The box of Special K is then replaced by a computer-generated Yahoo logo that is superimposed onto the shot, appearing in bold white text against a red backdrop.

Voiceover: “Now you know the difference is ‘K’. Go to Yahoo and search Special K for more chocolatey snacks.”

13) “Feel special” (31 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube March 17, 2007

Transcribed June 13, 2009

Shot 1:

A long shot of a white man in a blue shirt and white pants walking through a grassy orchard; he is in the background and only partially visible.

Shot 2:

A long shot of a slim, white woman with shoulder-length brown hair, in a red long-sleeved blouse with white capris pants. She is running through a grassy orchard with a large brown dog.

Shots 4 and 5:

A medium point-of-view shot on a ladder, looking up into a tree. Next is a medium long aerial shot looking down from the top of the tree at the man, whose face is not visible, standing on a ladder and picking berries from the tree.

Voiceover (a woman with an English accent): “He knows I enjoy fruit with my Special K in the morning.”

Shots 6 and 7:

A long shot of the woman running with the dog. Next is a medium long shot of the woman sitting at a white table, still outside, with a box of Special K, a pitcher of milk, a glass of orange juice and a vase of flowers sitting on the table. She picks up the cereal box.

Voiceover: "But now it's all done for me."

Shot 8:

A close-up shot of a bowl of Special K with milk being poured over the cereal.

Voiceover: "Kellogg's Special K Red Berries."

Shot 9:

An aerial close-up shot of the woman eating a spoonful of Special K.

Voiceover: "Delicious whole raspberries, sliced strawberries and cherries."

Shots 10 and 11:

A long shot of the man running through the grass, holding a basket of berries and waving (presumably to the woman). Next is a medium long shot of the dog running towards the man (the woman is seated at the table in the background).

Shot 12:

A medium long aerial shot of the dog running into the man, and the basket of berries flying through the air.

Shot 13:

A medium close-up shot of the woman seated at the table with the box of Special K, eating a spoonful of the cereal. In the background the man is throwing a Frisbee for the dog. The woman is looking directly into the camera.

Woman: "I just don't know how to tell him."

Shot 14:

A medium close-up shot of a box of Special K on the white table, still outside, with strawberries and flowers set next to it.

Voiceover: "Feel special."

14) "What's the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?" (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube June 22, 2007

Transcribed June 13, 2009

Shot 1:

A medium long shot of a slim, white woman in the foreground with shoulder-length brown hair, who appears to be in her late twenties or early thirties. She is wearing a sleeveless red blouse with blue jeans and appears to be in an apartment kitchen. She is holding a white coffee mug and is walking next to a counter. In the background is another woman, also white and slim, with shoulder-length light brown hair in a black coat and green knee-length skirt. She is putting high-heeled shoes on her feet.

Shots 2 and 3:

The shot enters a freeze-frame as a calico cat jumps off of the counter. The woman in the foreground is isolated from the freeze-frame. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's face as she glances downward toward her stomach and smiles.

Voiceover (a woman): "Welcome to now. Right now it's loud and clear: You're skipping breakfast to lose weight."

Shot 4:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's face in the right of the shot as she opens a cupboard door, which is in the left of the shot. She pulls out a box of Special K cereal and begins to walk back toward the kitchen counter.

Voiceover: "Good thing you know that women who eat breakfast, like the Special K breakfast, actually weigh less."

Shots 5 and 6:

A medium shot of the woman's midriff as she walks past the counter; she is in the background. In the foreground is the white coffee mug sitting on the counter. Next is a close-up shot of the woman's hand placing an orange on a wood cutting board.

Shots 7 and 8:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's midriff; she is sitting at a table. On the table is a box of Special K, a bowl filled with the cereal, orange slices and grapes, and a white mug filled with coffee. She then pours milk over the bowl of Special K.

Voiceover: "The Special K breakfast: A bowl of Special K red berries, fruit and coffee, all for less than 250 calories."

Shots 9, 10 and 11:

A close-up shot of the woman's face as she eats a spoonful of Special K. Next is a medium shot of the woman, still sitting and eating the cereal as the freeze-frame ends; the cat lands on the floor and the woman in the background continues to put her shoes on. Next is another close-up of the woman's face as she eats another spoonful of Special K.

Voiceover: "What's the difference between skipping breakfast to weigh less and actually eating breakfast to weigh less?"

Shots 12 and 13:

A close-up shot of the bowl of Special K as the woman's spoon lifts more cereal out of the bowl. Next is a medium shot as the woman from the background enters the foreground, momentarily stands next to the featured woman and places her hand over her stomach as an audible grumbling noise is heard. Her expression conveys embarrassment.

Shot 14:

A medium close-up shot of a box of Special K, as well as a bowl filled with the cereal, sliced oranges and grapes, a pitcher of milk and a mug of coffee, all set against a red backdrop.

On-screen text reads "The Special K Breakfast" in bold white print at the top of the screen, with "the difference is K" appearing in bold red print at the bottom right of the shot.

Voiceover: "Now you know the difference is K."

15) "Feeling good never looked better" (30 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube March 24, 2008

Transcribed June 16, 2009

Shot 1:

A medium long shot of a white man with short brown hair who appears to be in his mid-thirties. He is wearing a cream-coloured business suit and walking towards the camera in the corridor of what is presumably an office complex.

Voiceover (a woman): "You know when you hear that voice of temptation?"

Shot 2:

A medium close-up shot of the man looking through a window into what appears to be a dessert shop. In the background is a man with short dark hair in a brown business suit and a woman with long blonde hair in a beige business suit. They are both facing away from the camera.

Shots 3 and 4:

A close-up shot of a tray of various chocolates and cookies. Next is a close-up shot of the man's face, shot from behind the glass window. This shot-reverse-shot implies that the camera assumes the man's perspective and he is looking at the desserts.

Voiceover: "It always seems loudest in the afternoon."

Shot 5:

A medium long shot of two women walking towards the camera. The woman on the left appears to be of East-Asian ethnicity; she is slim, has long dark hair that is tied back and she is presumably in her mid-thirties. She is wearing khaki pants and a long-sleeved white sweater. The woman on the right is slim and white with long brown hair, and appears to be in

her early thirties. She is wearing a knee-length grey skirt and a long-sleeved red sweater (note that this woman demands the shot's focal point because the vibrant colour of her shirt and her noticeably red lips stands in contrast to the neutral colours worn by the other subjects, as well as the office décor). Both women are holding small bags. The man turns away from the camera and towards the women.

Man: "I'm going in."

Shot 6:

A medium shot of all three subjects, with the man facing away from the camera and the two women facing the camera.

Woman on the left: "Hold on."

Woman on the right: "So been there."

Woman on the left: "Then we found these."

The woman on the left glances down and points to the small bag she is holding.

Shot 7:

A medium close-up shot of the woman on the right. She takes a piece from the bag she is holding and eats it. The man's shoulder is blurred in the bottom-left of the shot.

Woman on the right: "Special K crispy bites."

Shot 8:

A medium close-up shot of the man taking the bag from the woman on the right and reaching his hand into it.

Man: "How cute!"

Shot 9:

A medium close-up shot of the woman on the right.

Woman on the right: "Try fabulous!"

Shots 10 and 11:

A medium close-up shot of the man holding the bag near his face to suggest that he is reading it (the front of the bag with the Special K logo is facing the camera). Next is a close-up shot of the bag, held in the man's hand, which contains the text "Kellogg's Special K Crispy Bites, 90 CALORIES, VANILLA FLAVOUR."

Man: "Mmm tasty. And look, 90 calories."

Shot 12:

A medium long shot of the three subjects with the two women facing the camera and the man facing away from the camera. The two women smile at each other and the woman on the right gives the woman on the left a playful nudge with her elbow. The woman on the right eats another piece from her bag. The man turns to the right so that his profile is visible.

Woman on the right: "Yeah, it keeps us feeling good."

Man: "Well they're doing it for me."

Shot 13:

A medium close-up shot of the woman on the right, with the man's profile, along with the bag he is holding, slightly blurred in the bottom left of the shot. The woman reaches into the bag and retrieves another piece.

Woman on the right: "Join the club."

Shot 14:

A medium long shot of the three subjects. The woman on the right withdraws her hand from the bag that the man is holding. The two women are facing the camera and the man is turned slightly away so that his profile is partially visible.

Man: "Darlin' you started the club."

All three subjects laugh.

Shot 15:

Close-up shot of what appears to be computer generated Special K Crispy Bites falling from the top to the bottom of the shot against a white backdrop.

Voiceover: "Why stick with the delicious goodness of new Special K Crispy Bites?"

Shot 16:

The woman on the right appears in a form-fitted red knee length dress with a plunging neckline and walks from the left to the right of the shot against a white backdrop. She has her hand on her hip and is looking directly into the camera. As she exits the shot a computer-generated red 'K' appears in the centre of the screen.

Voiceover: "Because feeling food never looked better."

Shot 17:

A close-up shot of two boxes of Special K Crispy Bites against a white backdrop.

On-screen text reads "Feeling good never looked better" in bold pink print at the bottom of the shot.

16) "It's a nighttime snack that won't undo your whole day (b)" (32 seconds in length)

Added to YouTube April 30, 2009

Transcribed June 17, 2009

Shot 1:

A long shot of a white boy with short, curly brown hair seated at a long, rectangular, wood kitchen table. The boy appears to be 6-8 years of age. On the table in front of him is a round cake that is iced with chocolate. Scattered around the table are various baking utensils and an open book that is presumably a recipe book. A woman enters the shot, approaching from the left. She is white and slim, with dark hair that is pulled back. She is wearing a long-sleeved red sweater with black pants, and appears to be in her mid-thirties. She is walking towards the boy, holding what is presumably a bag of icing.

Shot 2:

A medium shot of the woman and boy as she crouches down to his height and hands him the icing bag. They are both smiling, and the wedding band on her left hand is prominent in the shot.

Shot 3:

A medium close-up shot of the woman as she stands back up, walks away from the boy and picks up a nearly empty glass bowl of chocolate icing. The boy is still visible in the background. She dips her finger in the bowl and brings it, covered in chocolate, up to her mouth. She opens her mouth and the shot enters a freeze-frame.

Voiceover (a woman): "Right now you want to give that bowl a good lick."

Shot 4:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's face as her eyes move from the left to the right of the shot, although everything in the shot remains frozen still. The camera trucks toward the left of the woman as she removes her hands from the bowl, and it remains suspended in the air. She backs away from the bowl, turns her eyes upward, and places her forefinger on her chin, apparently in a train of thought.

Shot 5:

A close-up shot of the glass bowl. Though obscured, the woman's face is visible through it, and the camera trucks to the left of the bowl to fully reveal the woman's face. She smiles and walks to the right, exiting the shot.

Voiceover: "Good thing you know that there's a night time snack where licking the bowl is perfectly acceptable."

Shot 6:

A medium close-up shot of the woman's head and shoulders as she opens two cupboard doors to reveal a box of Special K and a pile of cereal bowls (the camera is positioned in the cupboard, looking out at the woman).

Voiceover: "Special K chocolatey delight cereal."

Shots 7 and 8:

A close-up shot of Special K cereal being poured into a white cereal bowl. Next is a close-up shot of milk being poured over the bowl of Special K. A metal spoon is resting next to the bowl.

On-screen text reads "Research shows that by reducing your higher calorie evening snack with a lower calorie snack, like a bowl of Special K cereal, you may lose weight. Weight loss may vary" in fine white print at the bottom of the shot.

Shot 9:

A close-up shot of the woman as she eats a spoonful of the cereal, smiling.

Voiceover: "With ice cold milk, it's a delicious lower calorie snack that won't undo your whole day."

Shot 10:

A medium shot of the woman as she removes the spoon from her mouth and outstretches her hand as the freeze-frame ends and the glass bowl falls into her grasp. The boy in the background, no longer frozen, continues to ice the cake.

Shot 11:

A medium shot of the boy who is icing the cake. The woman turns and walks toward him (and the camera), holding her cereal bowl and eating another spoonful. She stands behind the boy and looks down at the cake, places her spoon into her left hand that is holding the cereal bowl, and rubs the boy's head with her right hand.

Voiceover: "Special K Chocolatey Delight."

Shot 12:

A medium close-up shot of a box of Special K set against a white backdrop.

Voiceover: "A smarter way to get that chocolatey fix."