

The Framing of Feminism in *Cosmopolitan* Magazine During Second-Wave Feminism

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Abstract

Helen Gurley Brown turned Cosmopolitan magazine into a successful and profitable publication, and it was influential throughout the second-wave feminist movement. This research explored how Brown, as editor-in-chief of Cosmopolitan, framed feminism and how those messages aligned with the second-wave feminist movement using a qualitative content analysis of 24 issues of the magazine from 1966 to 1989. Findings suggest that the dialogue in Cosmopolitan fluctuated between negative and positive framing of feminist ideas and that these messages mostly did not align with the movement.

I. Introduction

The first full-scale women's rights convention in 1848 is widely recognized as the start of American feminism appearing in waves (Kinser, 2004). At this time, in the mid-1800s, activists publicly campaigned for guardianship of their children, equal rights to education, and the right to vote (Kinser, 2004). Since women gained the right to vote in 1920, the feminist movement has continued through today.

The first wave of feminism was said to have ended in the 1920s and the second wave began in the 1960s (Kinser, 2004). The "first-wave" and "second-wave" movements helped the women in the 1960s develop new ideas while staying connected to the established ground that was created during the earlier movement (Kinser, 2004).

The prevalence of the feminist movement led it to be depicted throughout mass media. As Terkildsen and Schnell wrote (1997), the media have power over society to not only tell the public what issues to think about but also how to think about those issues. The way in which media frames a topic can impact the way the public thinks about that topic. Mass media holds this power no matter how citizens access it through television, print, radio, etc.

Cosmopolitan magazine is one of the oldest mass circulation magazines in print in America. By the 1950s, the magazine was declining in circulation and advertising revenue until Helen Gurley Brown became editor-in-chief in 1965 and revived *Cosmopolitan*, which became widely read by women (McMahon, 1990). Around this same time, second-wave feminism started to appear. With so many women reading *Cosmopolitan* during the movement, and knowing how influential the framing of issues in mass media can be on the public,

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it is important to understand how *Cosmopolitan* was framing feminist ideas during this time.

This study focused on identifying how *Cosmopolitan* magazine was framing feminism during the second-wave feminist movement. Through a qualitative content analysis, this study analyzed *Cosmopolitan* articles that focused on feminist themes from 1966 to 1989. The purpose of this study is to understand how the magazine framed feminist ideas during second-wave feminism and how its dialogue fit into the movement.

II. Literature Review

The following literature review demonstrates how women's magazines and Brown's works fit into the second-wave feminist movement.

Second-wave feminism

Dorer and Hipfl (2013) defined the term feminism as a mindset that is not limited only to women or gender, but to a piece of a bigger social project that aligned with movements against racism, imperialism, homophobia, and class differences. The beginning of second-wave feminism was characterized by a perspective that was against the state-organized capitalism of the postwar period. This movement was fundamentally about protesting androcentrism (Dorer & Hipfl, 2013), which was the political culture that imagined as the model citizen an ethnic majority male worker who was the principal, if not sole, economic support for his family (Fraser, 2009). According to Fraser (2009), this was known as the "family wage" construct that was the basis for state policy for matters of employment, welfare, and development; and the feminist movement sought to challenge this male domination.

Fraser (2012) stated that the feminist movement "exposed the deep androcentrism of capitalist society;" the movement extended the bounds of justice to include matters that were previously considered private while reexamining social inequalities that had been merely tolerated, rationalized, or overlooked in the past.

In its attempt to overcome male dominance in society, the feminist movement claimed the importance of the pleasures of sex for women, but also explored the dangers of sex. Many second wave feminists celebrated discovering the pleasures and liberation of female sexuality; however, other feminists made heterosexual sex, in particular, seem incompatible with the feminist movement, and radical feminists presented lesbianism as a political choice instead of a sexually pleasurable identity. Some feminists also found it antifeminist to embrace feminine fashion and caused much of the movement to avoid the issue of fashion or consider it part of their oppression (Scanlon, 2009b).

The concept of fashion was also considered as it related to the workplace, where many feminists believed the sexualized secretary role showed what was wrong in the white-collar world. During the second-wave feminist movement, society's understanding of sexuality in the office changed, especially when the term "sexual harassment" came about in 1975 (Hunt, 2012). It was second-wave feminism that made violence against women a central concern for the first time (Scanlon, 2009b) and advocated the right for women to say no to sex (Reviere & Byerly, 2013).

Overall, the main goals of second-wave feminism, according to Busby and Leichty (1993), were to (1) open all job categories to women, (2) tie compensation to job description, not gender, (3) have "more equal division of labor within the home, (4) less emphasis on the female as an 'object' whose primary function is attracting the opposite sex, and (5) the right for each individual to develop to her full potential."

Some of these objectives were accomplished, according to Hunt (2012), who stated that the percentage of women in the workforce climbed from 34 percent in 1950, to 38 percent in 1960, and to 43 percent in 1970. The percentage of women attending college also increased from 35 percent from 1959-60 to 43 percent in 1969-70.

Women's magazines during the feminist movement

During the second-wave feminist movement, women's magazines attempted to attract and keep an audience whose ambitions and expectations were changing quickly. Articles on childrearing and homemaking, once the norm, were starting to be perceived as inadequate and condescending to women (Hunt, 2012). Print

publishing became an important form of activism that contributed to the women's liberation cause. Feminist magazines enabled women to participate in the feminist movement while discovering the feminist politics to which they most related (Forster, 2016). Feminist magazines also worked on changing the tone of women's magazines altogether. Multiple studies show how the topics and advertising present in women's magazine began to change with the growth of the feminist movement.

Based on analysis of advertising images, Busby and Leichty (1993) showed that the nontraditional magazines *Ms.* and *Working Woman* were less likely to portray women in family roles than the traditional magazines *McCall's* and *Redbook*, and were about three times more likely than the traditional magazines to portray women in employment roles. In line with these new themes in women's magazines, studies of *Ladies Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping* magazines between 1954 and 1982, showed a decline in the presentation of traditional roles for women while increasing articles with feminist themes (Reviere & Byerly, 2013). These findings align with the study from Busby and Leichty (1993) that found the number of family roles for women decreasing and the number of employment roles increasing in traditional magazines. There was also a significant decline in the number of women shown in the home and an increase in women shown outside the home in traditional magazines like *McCall's* and *Redbook* from 1959 to 1969.

Reviere and Byerly (2013) used a discourse analysis to examine columns in the magazine *Essence*. They found that *Essence* encouraged readers to define their sexual pleasure and also set limits on it as they choose. *Essence* also was definitive in encouraging women to challenge men's behavior they did not like and assured readers that they are allowed to be themselves. They emphasized that it is acceptable to be single and that women do not have to put up with men's bad behavior. These themes were in line with the thinking of the second-wave feminist movement.

Newkirk (1977) further showed how the feminist movement impacted women's magazines examining the portrayals of women's roles in the magazines *Mademoiselle*, *Redbook*, and *Ms.* from 1966-74. She found that *Ms.* presented no mother, wife, or homemaker roles from 1972-74 while *Mademoiselle* had slightly decreased domestic roles, and *Redbook* significantly decreased domestic roles. She stated that the findings showed that change was occurring in women's roles during the early 1970s and that magazines were reflecting this change.

Helen Gurley Brown

Brown is widely known as one of the founders of second-wave feminism, bringing feminist messages to a mainstream audience (Scanlon, 2009a). Brown argued that single women were able to exist on their own (Scanlon, 2009a) and could also be sexual and respectable at the same time, concepts that were contrary to previous advice (Berebitsky, 2006). Two of her key accomplishments were the turn-around of *Cosmopolitan* magazine and her first book *Sex and the Single Girl* (Scanlon, 2009a). In addition, Brown wrote the newspaper column *Women Alone* from 1963-65, gave advice on Canadian radio in 1964, and wrote a second book titled *Sex and the Office* in 1964 (Berebitsky, 2006). All her messages maintained that women should pursue professional success and sexual pleasure (Berebitsky, 2006).

Brown's first major success was with her book *Sex and the Single Girl* that advised readers to embrace single living, sex outside of marriage, and enjoy domesticity based on self-interest rather than family (Scanlon, 2009a). This outlook was popular among readers, which was shown in the sales of the book: More than two million copies were sold within the first three weeks (Ouellette, 1999). Her second book, *Sex and the Office*, focused on showing women that working was "the best of all possible worlds," even better than motherhood and domesticity (Berebitsky, 2006). Brown presented a strategy for using sexuality in the workplace to help women overcome obstacles to advance in their professions and escape gender restrictions (Berebitsky, 2006).

After writing these two books, Brown took on her next title in 1965 as top editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine (Hunt, 2012). Brown transformed *Cosmopolitan* from a magazine that was struggling to find an audience (Hunt, 2012), and declining in circulation and advertising revenue (McMahon, 1990), to a hugely successful magazine that worked as a guide for readers who sought liberation from the outdated views of womanhood (Scanlon, 2009b).

She renovated the magazine almost overnight by putting sex front and center (Scanlon, 2009a), giving advice on sex and careers for young single and working women, and filling a gap in the magazine industry. Brown remained the editor of *Cosmopolitan* for almost 32 years and made it an incredibly profitable publication (Hunt, 2012).

During her life, Brown showed that sex sells to a female mass market with her successful books and her transformation of *Cosmopolitan* (McMahon, 1990). Brown has been credited with revolutionizing women's magazines by introducing sexuality (McMahon, 1990). She was one of the first to acknowledge that women can work outside of the home and enjoy sex outside of marriage, and carried these ideas throughout all of her works (McMahon, 1990).

Past research

Previous research on *Cosmopolitan* magazine examined how the magazine portrayed women and their sexuality in editorial content and cover images. Reviere and Byerly (2013) found that readers of *Cosmopolitan* were told to pursue their sexual needs but that the man's needs were given a higher priority. *Cosmopolitan* readers were told that they had freedom to choose partners, get what they want in the bedroom, and enjoy the pleasures of sex, but also to try harder with men by exciting them or being naughtier to solve relationship problems.

McMahon (1990) found that the largest number of articles promoted on the covers of *Cosmopolitan* were about sex and relationships with men, and *Cosmopolitan* is a "strategy manual" whose text illustrates how women's sexuality can be used to dominate and control men. A study by Maslow (2015) showed how the covers of *Cosmo* had changed over time. She indicated that the woman on the cover of *Cosmopolitan* during the 1960s would most likely be Caucasian, in her 30s with short brunette hair, brown eyes, and no visible imperfections. Over time models were dressed more sexually and the women on the covers were not necessarily the American beauty norm but were a sexualized version of it. This research showed that *Cosmopolitan* did want to liberate women; however, it was done in a more sexual way than many feminists agreed with.

For this study, three research questions were asked based on the literature review:

RQ1: How did Helen Gurley Brown, as editor-in-chief of Cosmopolitan, discuss feminist ideas?

RQ2: How did the dialogue in Cosmopolitan frame feminist ideas?

RQ3: How did the messages in Cosmopolitan align with the second-wave feminist movement?

III. Methods

This study analyzed the way that Brown used *Cosmopolitan* magazine to define feminism during the second-wave feminist movement. Among articles published in *Cosmopolitan* magazine during the period when Brown was the editor-in-chief (1965-1997), this study only highlighted the years of 1966-1989. 1966 is the first full year that Brown was editor-in-chief, and 1989 is when the second-wave feminist movement came to a close (Kinser, 2004; Mack-Canty, 2004).

To test the framing of feminist ideas in *Cosmopolitan* magazine during second-wave feminism, the researcher made a composite-year sample of all issues that were published during the timeframe. The issues studied were February 1966, March 1967, April 1968, May 1969 etc. until January 1989. In total, this study looked at 24 issues of *Cosmopolitan* magazine over a 24-year time span.

Articles from the 24 issues were selected when they contained three main feminist topics of sex/dating, working, and motherhood/marriage. The researcher went through the table of contents of each selected issue and analyzed the articles that mentioned these three categories. The editor's letter of each issue was also analyzed to see Brown's voice within the magazine.

A qualitative content analysis was employed to analyze the articles and the editor's letters. The author tried to identify the major themes through this analysis, in particular, whether these conversations aligned with the goals of the second-wave feminist movement.

She examined whether each article framed its topic positively, negatively, or neutrally; then compared its findings with the way the second-wave feminist movement framed the same topic. This study also focused on the way the discussion of these themes changed throughout each decade of the second-wave feminist movement throughout 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

IV. Findings

The following findings were categorized first by the three feminist themes studied (sex/dating, motherhood/marriage, and work) to show how the discussion of these topics changed throughout the decades that comprised the second-wave feminist movement (1960s, 1970s, 1980s). Then the findings from the analysis of the editor's letter of each issue were presented.

Sex/Dating

This study analyzed 10 articles on sex/dating from four selected issues in the sixties. These articles broadly covered how to get a man, how to keep a man, when to date a man, and how to get over a man. Advice for getting a man all mentioned doing things to improve a woman's looks or gain attention, such as getting a motorcycle because it seems "vital and alive" and will make men at least stop to whistle. A woman could also "be slow about learning" how to drive it if the man teaching her is attractive. Other advice included fixing up one's appearance by getting a haircut, makeup consultation, losing weight, switching jobs to meet eligible men, look fantastic at all times even when going to the mailbox, and diet, but do not talk about dieting. Advice for keeping a man included not confusing him with fashion choices. For example, "don't flip him as a gamine and then startle him at the wrong time as a sultry siren." It also mentioned to "think helpless whenever you're with a man" and wear clothes that "help convey femininity and helplessness." Advice on when to date a man included knowing what he earns so a woman will know "how much you can expect to live on" and because a man's "earning potential is part of his whole package, just like what kind of mother and hostess you'll make is part of yours." It was also noted to know when a man is "remarriageable" because their reactions to a woman as a future wife "will be determined not only by [her] charms but largely by the experiences they had as husbands."

There were 16 articles on this topic from 10 in the seventies. They covered casual sex, affairs, office romance, keeping a man around, and how money affects the relationship. Some advice on how to keep a man included "never stop telling him how attractive he is," "never mention your backache or your headache after 7:30 p.m.," "learn to make a bed with him in it," "rearrange the lighting to flatter you," "learn his favorite sport," "bake fresh bread," "launder his shirts," and "move closer to where he lives." Most of the advice focused on boosting a man's ego and doing typically feminine activities—cooking and cleaning—to keep a man.

On the topic of money and relationships, the articles suggested that being a woman who makes more money in a relationship can lead to problems. One article mentioned that being a woman that financially supported a man can lead to many anxieties and stresses because the customary roles of "woman as dependent and men as wage earner are reversed." However, the article also mentioned that "surprising" problems could emerge if the man is the affluent one in a relationship.

Office romance was discussed in only one of the articles: "Office sex is sometimes booby-trapped with tears ... But the working world is where the men are!" The article regarded office sex as positive and a good source of love and adventure. It even said, "If your company forbids intraoffice dating, it's the wrong office for you."

The subject of adultery, which was mentioned throughout the issues, was regarded both positively and negatively. One article, which was about a woman having an affair with her best friend's husband, was regarded as a negative experience. Another article mentioned how "society is amused and tolerant with the wayward husband. But the persisting double standard is not quite so permissive with the unfaithful wife." However, this article did not advise against adultery, but to use discretion and lie if caught. One article even mentioned that there is no reason not to try to get a married man to leave his wife since the divorce rate is increasing.

Regarding casual sex, it was discussed as something that was becoming more prevalent. One article wrote, "Women have always had flings, just as we've always been involved in one-nighters. But the sexual freedom of the 1970s has made it possible for us to have more of them than ever before and to discuss them more openly." It was also said that women are more often taking the initiative when it comes to seduction. However, it was also discussed that women are not able to have "sufficient distance" from emotions and often still "go to bed with a man hoping the affair will lead to permanency."

Fourteen articles in 10 issues dealt with sex/dating in the eighties. They covered seducing a man, office sex, whom to date, and sexually experienced women. Advice on seducing a man included good lighting, dressing well, cooking for him, giving him a massage, being friendly, not being shy and being graceful. On the topic of office sex, an article said, "Today's women find that the office is a perfect place to seek romance." The article stressed the importance of discretion about office sex, especially if the man is your boss, but overall promoted at office sex positively.

Regarding whom to date, articles said that traditionally women dated men who were better educated and earned more money than them; however, now that women have begun to earn good money and get more education they have limited the number of "traditionally suitable men." Arguing that the media said that "singlehood is a bad thing and that women should quit their foolish efforts to make husbands and corporations more egalitarian," the writer of one article gave opposite advice. When asked what it is worth to have any husband, the author wrote "Perhaps they will decide that a bad marriage is better than none, but I hope not." Another article discussed dating single fathers saying that it can come with many complications, but "if you're looking for a man who can give you a family while taking much of the responsibility for it himself then a single father may be for you."

On the topic of sexually experienced women, it said that while it is okay to go to bed with many men, a woman should not "brag or cry" about her exploits. It said that while men want women who know what they are doing in bed, men do not want a woman to talk about her previous sexual experiences because it could make him feel insecure. It also indicated that while more women are having casual sex, they are not able to keep a certain distance or be detached the way that men can. With a more progressive tone, one article said that "sex isn't a competition and so long as a woman feels comfortable with the frequency of her relations, she is perfectly normal."

Motherhood/Marriage

Only one article out of the four issues in the sixties pertained to the "marriage/motherhood" category. The article, titled "An Unmarried Girl Can Keep Her Baby," suggested that while an increasing number of white middle-class unwed girls have decided to keep their children, it is grounds for ostracism and many have emotional problems due to no marital status.

Five of the articles from the 10 issues studied during the seventies were related to marriage or motherhood. These articles mentioned topics related to keeping your marriage together, getting a divorce, having a child, and marrying again. Advice about keeping your marriage together included communicating on both sides, understanding your husband's desires, and using "shock tactics to gain his attention." The advice ranged from saying that both parties must put forth an effort to advice indicating that the wife should be making an effort in the relationship. Having a child was mostly regarded in negative terms because it leads to obsession, fatigue, loss of sensuality, loss of privacy, economic pressures, illness, loss of spontaneity, and causes many couples to divorce. It was also mentioned that many couples were starting to choose not to have children.

About divorce, it was said that it had become a fact of life, so no longer a scandal, but an exercise of rights. Articles said that only a bad divorce should be considered a failure, and gave advice on how to have a good divorce that included therapy, not focusing on revenge, "beware of going to bed with your estranged husband, be doubly careful not to go to bed with your lawyer," and not to speak badly of your soon to be ex-husband to your children. Remarrying was not regarded as the best option for divorced women. They said that a growing number of women were choosing not immediately to pursue a new husband, and they "are neither man-haters nor lesbians nor losers nor unattractive." Not remarrying was beginning to become a viable and maybe even preferable option and advised women to enjoy the freedom because the "single woman of the seventies has more sensational options at her fingertips than women have ever had before."

Twelve articles from the 10 issues in the eighties discussed marriage or motherhood. They covered making a marriage work, when or if you should have children, waiting to marry and how to get a husband. Advice on making your marriage work was more progressive during the eighties. Advice included both people giving, supporting each other, knowing how to communicate, and being playful.

Regarding motherhood, the articles talked about how more women are choosing to wait longer before having children or not having children at all. One article said, "Motherhood is no longer regarded as a woman's primary role in life, or her only route to fulfillment." Articles also included information regarding a positive outlook on waiting longer to marry. They said that more women were postponing marriage to pursue

their careers or just to have a good time. They mentioned that it is harder to find a husband after thirty; however, those that marry later are “happier, less likely to divorce, more satisfied with their lives in general and fairly unanimous in their view that waiting is the better choice.”

Only one article in the eighties gave advice on how to gain a husband. That advice included trying to fulfill his deepest desires and wildest wishes, being passionate, being creative and being his dream girl. On being his dream girl, the article said to “adapt yes but don’t twist yourself totally out of shape” and “don’t become your worst nightmare.”

Work

Four articles from the four issues in the sixties fell into the “work” category. These articles all touched on different topics regarding the “career girl.” They covered dressing for work, “nonboring” jobs, job hunting for “the negro girl” and drinking for the career girl. These articles focused on different topics, but they all mentioned men. They mentioned that a boss could come back to the office “slightly shellacked” and be endearing; however, if the boss is a woman it is no longer endearing at all. The article about job hunting for the “negro girl” mentioned dating white men. On the topic of “nonboring” jobs, it stated that it is hard to meet a decent man in New York. When discussing how career girls should dress, it mentioned that fashion is pointless if you are not thin and that one should not be a “sexpot” or “overdone:” and she should play a different role at the office than when she is “at home with the man in her life.”

Only two articles were directly related to women working of the 10 issues analyzed from the seventies: “Four Right Jobs for Four Bright Girls” and “How I Chose my Career.” Neither of these articles gave the writers’ opinion on women working. Both were only filled with quotes from successful people in different fields talking about what their careers are and how they got there.

Five articles out of the 10 issues from the eighties were related to women in the workforce. They discussed moonlighting, high paying careers, succeeding on the job, and where to start. On moonlighting, they said that “if a lucrative career change or pay boost” is not in the near future, you should consider moonlighting as an option and then gave many examples of jobs that you could take. Another article gave a list of 10 high paying careers for women to consider if they wanted to “rise to the top where the cream is.”

For succeeding in your career, an article discussed not acting the way women are often expected to act, i.e., emotionally. Some other advice included relying on others, being confident, and taking action. Another article spoke about how the secretarial job is still a good place to start if you work for the right boss because it could lead to something bigger faster than other entry-level jobs.

Editor’s Letters

The editor’s letters from the four issues analyzed in the sixties did not contain much of Brown’s voice. But when they did, her voice spoke about men. In March 1966, she mentioned that she decided to devote the entire issue to the subject of men and also mentioned how the reader should keep an open mind while most think that men are supposed to collect women. In the other issues, she had even less of her voice; however, some mentioned attractive football players, and others mentioned that women think many people would like adultery for themselves, but they just do not want their mate messing around.

The editor’s letters from the 10 issues in the seventies contained more of Brown’s voice, especially a June 1970 article. In the letter, she spoke a lot about the women’s liberation movement. She stated that she thought that it was wonderful, though she did not come to that perspective until late in the day. She spoke about how it is okay that some women do not want the system changed, but that those that do are just looking for options “hopefully with the full encouragement and cooperation of our men.” However, she then strayed from agreeing with the women’s liberation movement when she spoke about the girl that *Cosmopolitan* is intended for. She stated that “the girl this magazine is edited for loves men ... doesn’t feel alive unless she’s in love and giving to a man ... and because there’s a shortage ... she works, yes works, at being a living doll.” She then mentioned that this is where she parts from the women’s liberation movement because “cosmo girls” please men because they adore them and love to sleep with them. Brown spoke more about who the “cosmo girl” is in an issue in October 1974. She stated that a “cosmo girl” is sexy and pretty; however, she does not rely on those attributes to get through life.

In the January 1977 issue, Brown wrote how she has “always rather relished being treated as a sex object” because there is something worse about not being treated as a sex object. However, she then stated

that she understands woman who complain that they are only valued for their sexual selves when the rest of them is ignored.

In the 10 issues analyzed from the eighties, Brown wrote mostly about her travels with her husband in her editor's letters. In May 1981, she spoke about how she and her husband went to his alma mater and spoke with current students. She stated that some students spoke about how they were disturbed by the covers of *Cosmopolitan* and how they depicted women. In response to this, Brown said: "But they can ... or come quite close if they apply as much makeup and have the hair styling our models do, et cetera, et cetera."

In another issue, she mentioned how she got irritated at the statistics that suggest that college-educated women would not be able to marry if they waited until thirty and said she did not believe it. She then mentioned how she did not marry until she was 37 and that "if you really want one (and you may not!), he's out there."

V. Discussion

To understand how Brown framed feminist ideas in *Cosmopolitan* magazine and how her dialogue fit into the second-wave feminist movement, this study presented three research questions.

Regarding RQ1, "How did Brown, as editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan*, discuss feminist ideas?," this study examined Brown's editor's letters and found that her dialogue fluctuated between positively and negatively regarding feminist ideas. She positively framed feminist ideas when she spoke about the benefits of the women's liberation movement and led to people questioning the norm, thereby giving women more options in life. She also mentioned how it is okay to not want a husband and to stay single. These messages were expected from Brown since her first book *Sex and the Single Girl* encouraged readers to embrace single living (Scanlon, 2009a).

However, Brown parted from this positive feminist dialogue when she talked about differing from the Women's Liberation Movement because *Cosmopolitan* is edited for a woman who cannot feel alive without being in love and giving to a man. She mentioned that "cosmo girls" work at being a living doll, are sexy, pretty, and could look like the women on the covers of the magazine by putting in the effort through makeup and hairstyling. Some of these messages were surprising to see from Brown. She was someone who had been known for promoting that single women can exist on their own and should embrace being single; however, she contradicted this message by explaining how a "cosmo girl's" main purpose in life is pleasing men.

Regarding RQ2, "How did the dialogue in *Cosmopolitan* frame feminist ideas?," this study examined articles that directly related to the categories of motherhood or marriage, sex or dating, and women in the workforce. The author found that dialogue concerning marriage or motherhood was framed more positively over time. In the sixties, very little of the dialogue reflected motherhood or marriage, except for one article that framed it negatively, pointing out the problems that unmarried women with children would face in society.

In the seventies, having a child was still discussed negatively, while marriage was not specifically referred to as negative, divorce and choosing not to remarry were framed positively. It was said that divorce could be good and that remarriage does not have to be the only option because single women in the seventies have more options than ever before. When directly discussing the topic of marriage, the article was neutral, only discussing ways to help a marriage.

By the eighties, motherhood was framed more neutrally, discussing how more women are choosing to wait to have children and some choose not to; however, the choice of when to have children is ultimately personal. Marriage was discussed more positively mentioning that women who choose to marry in their thirties are happier and more satisfied, and gave advice on getting a husband, implying that there is something positive about procuring one. It was not surprising to see that the category of motherhood and marriage was not framed entirely positive because Brown was known for encouraging single living and she also believed that there are fulfilling life choices that can be better than motherhood and domesticity (Berebitsky, 2006).

The study found that the framing of discussions about sex or dating fluctuated between being positive and negative throughout the decades studied. In the sixties, sex and dating were regarded in a neutral tone. The articles focused solely on giving advice without regarding any of the experiences as positive or negative.

In the seventies and the eighties, topics about sex and dating had positive and negative treatments as well as neutral ones. Negative framing focused on problems money creates in relationships, being the unfaithful wife, casual sex, and talking about previous sexual experiences with men. Positive framing focused on office sex, being sexually experienced, and getting a married man to leave his wife. It was unexpected that casual sex would be framed negatively considering Brown was known to advise readers to embrace sex outside of marriage (Scanlon, 2009a) and *Cosmopolitan* has been known to acknowledge that women can enjoy the pleasures of sex (Reviere & Byerly, 2013). It was understandable, however, that framing fluctuated from positive to negative in this category because readers of *Cosmopolitan* have been told to pursue their sexual needs; however, the man's needs are given a higher priority (Reviere & Byerly, 2013). This indicates that *Cosmopolitan* would frame sex and dating positively until topics of men's needs were brought up in comparison. This explains why some topics were framed negatively: women having more money than their man; a wife being unfaithful; and women telling their man about their previous sexual experiences. All of these topics discuss women acting in a way that would put their needs over their man's, which is why they were framed negatively, to reinforce that while women can enjoy sex and dating, they cannot do so at the expense of men.

The study found that women in the workforce were framed neutrally throughout the decades studied. Each decade included articles that only outlined different job descriptions of women who work. They also all gave advice neutrally about how to succeed in a job, including not drinking too much, dressing well, and not being emotional. It was surprising that this category was not framed positively or negatively. Brown, in her second book *Sex and the Office*, focused on showing women that working was "the best of all possible worlds" (Berebitsky, 2006) and she was also one of the first to acknowledge that women can work outside of the home (McMahon, 1990). This indicates that *Cosmopolitan* under Brown's editorial guidance would have framed women in the workforce positively rather than neutrally.

Regarding RQ3, "How did the messages in *Cosmopolitan* align with the second-wave feminist movement?," this study found that most messages did not align with the second-wave feminist movement. One goal of the second-wave feminist movement was to have more equal division of labor within the home, and many feminists wanted to see fewer women in traditional roles of a mother or wife. Multiple studies on magazines during this time showed a decline in women presented in family roles (Busby & Leichty, 1993; Newkirk, 1977). However, this study showed that *Cosmopolitan* continually increased the number of articles about motherhood and marriage from 1966 to 1989, from only one article in the 1960s to 12 articles in the 1980s. *Cosmopolitan* also framed this category more positively over this time. This varies from what other publications were doing at this time and also indicates that *Cosmopolitan* did not agree with the second-wave feminist movement on this topic, believing that women should still very much be in motherhood and wife roles. However, throughout these articles *Cosmopolitan* advocated that being in these roles had become more of a choice than a duty for women by stating, "Motherhood is no longer regarded as a woman's primary role in life, or her only route to fulfillment," and discussing divorce as an exercise of rights because women have the right to be happy, and singlehood is a new choice for women.

The number of articles in *Cosmopolitan* that depicted women in careers varied throughout the time, starting with four in the 1960s, down to two in the 1970s, and up to five in the 1980s. This category continued to represent a minority of the topics in the magazine throughout the second-wave feminist movement. One of the major goals of the second-wave feminist movement was to open all job categories to women, and other magazines aligned with this objective by showing an increase of women presented in employment roles (Busby & Leichty, 1993). *Cosmopolitan* did not reflect the second-wave feminist movement in this category and continually increased the amount of articles that reflected women in employment roles. Decreasing in the 1970s when presenting this category, the magazine framed the topic neutrally instead of overtly positive. However, in the articles that did depict women in employment roles, *Cosmopolitan* gave its readers advice on succeeding in the workplace as well as giving them many examples of possible career paths to consider.

The number of articles that discussed sex or dating continued to represent the majority of the topics in *Cosmopolitan* throughout the period. This was expected since putting sex at the forefront was how Brown reinvigorated the magazine (Hunt, 2012). However, making sex the selling point of the magazine went against the philosophy of the second-wave feminist movement. While the movement asserted the importance of the pleasures of sex for women (Scanlon, 2009b), a major goal for second-wave feminists was to put less emphasis on the female whose primary function is to attract the opposite sex (Busby & Leichty, 1993). Further, Brown stated that the woman that *Cosmopolitan* is intended for only feels alive if she is pleasing a man. This indicates *Cosmopolitan* strayed from the intentions of the second-wave feminist movement.

VI. Conclusion

This study examined how Brown discussed feminist ideas within *Cosmopolitan* and how those messages aligned with the second-wave feminist movement. It found that Brown fluctuated in framing feminist ideas as both positive and negative and that her messages in *Cosmopolitan* mostly did not align with the movement. Previous research on other publications during second-wave feminism showed that the feminist movement impacted women's magazines, as these publications attempted to maintain this audience whose expectations were changing (Hunt, 2012; Newkirk, 1977). *Cosmopolitan*, however, did not follow this trend, and did not align its messages to meet the second-wave feminist movement. Considering the success and popularity of *Cosmopolitan* during this time period, this could suggest that many women wanted to read a publication that did not necessarily align with second-wave feminism.

This analysis was limited in terms of time, which forced the author to limit the number of issues and articles that could be examined. This study used a composite-year sample, thereby only looking at one issue per year from 1966 to 1989. This study also focused only on text in the articles, so future research may include image analysis as well.

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