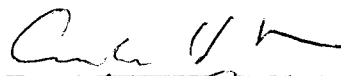


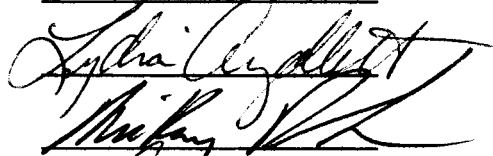
DIFFERENCES IN BODY IMAGE, SELF-ESTEEM, AND RESPONSE  
TO TEASING BASED ON GENDER

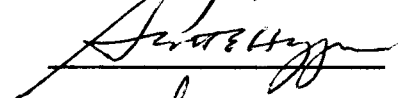
By

Jacqueline Horne  
A Thesis  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School  
of  
Western Carolina University  
in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree  
of  
Master of Arts

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Date:   
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Summer, 2005  
Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, North Carolina

**DIFFERENCES IN BODY IMAGE, SELF-ESTEEM, AND RESPONSE  
TO TEASING BASED ON GENDER**

A thesis presented to the faculty of the Graduate School of Western Carolina University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

**By**

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## Abstract

### DIFFERENCES IN BODY IMAGE, SELF-ESTEEM, AND RESPONSE TO TEASING BASED ON GENDER

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Western Carolina University, August 2005

Director: Candace H. Boan, Ph.D.

The current study investigated the differences in body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender in a predominantly African American sample. Participants included 50 college age students from South Carolina State University. Participants were group administered a demographics information sheet, the Multidimensional Body Self-Relation Questionnaire-Appearance Scale (MBSRQ-AS; Cash, 2000), the Multidimensional Self Esteem Inventory (MSEI; O'Brien & Epstein, 1988), a Negative Verbal Commentary Scenario, and the Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS; Thompson, Fabian, Moulton, Dunn, & Altabe, 1991). Three separate Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVAs) was conducted. Results indicated no significant difference on the Appearance Evaluation and Appearance Orientation Scales. However, there was a significant difference for the Body Areas Satisfaction and Overweight Preoccupation Scale, with the males scoring higher than females. Also there was a significant difference on the Self-Classified Weight Scales, with females scoring

higher than males. The results indicated that the females scored higher than the males on the Global Self Esteem Scale, Competence, Personal Power, Body Appearance, Body Functioning, and Identity Formation. Females scored lower than males on Defensive Self-enhancement. There were no significant differences found on measures of the impact of teasing. Exploratory analyses, limitations, and implications for future research will be discussed in the paper.



## Introduction

Attractiveness is an important concept for social scientists. The determinants of attractiveness have been explained by two opposing views: biological determinism and cultural determinism (Furnham & Baguma, 1994). The biological determinist view suggests that culture amplifies the division of labor within nature. Males develop bodies for hunting and protection while women develop bodies that are more appropriate for food gathering and child-rearing. The belief of biological determinists is that our bodies were shaped based on the functions that we were put here on earth to do. As we all adapted to our roles, natural selection resulted in bodies that are most efficiently able to help us perform our functions based on our sex (Fallon, 1990). According to this model, the attractiveness of a woman is determined by her ability to produce and give birth to a child not by her thinness. This model does not account for high ratings of attractiveness that focus on body types (e.g., extremely thin) that are not conducive to roles of females (e.g., child-bearer).

Cultural explanations of attractiveness suggest that natural selection is not the determining factor in what is considered beautiful. These explanations propose that social and cultural factors alone account for differences in definitions of attractiveness (Furnham & Baguma, 1994). Essentially, it is suggested that culture dictates what is considered attractive (Fallon, 1990).

Idealized beliefs about attraction are completely defined by the culture in which a person lives. This model also suggests that while one culture may think that being thin is beautiful another culture may feel that being fat signifies beauty. The cultural model for understanding attractiveness will be used in this paper.

Culture is the system of categories, rules, and values that governs a society (Sobal, 1995). This system may define moral reasoning or recreational activities. It also may define the norms for attractiveness. Ethnicity is the cultural identity of individuals within a larger society, which is an important influence on weight (Sobal). Various ethnic groups within a culture value their weight being heavier or lighter (Sobal). In addition, ethnic groups are not always a homogeneous population (Harris, 1994). Differences in family and background characteristics (e.g., social class), understanding of minority cultural norms of attractiveness, individual characteristics (e.g., self-confidence), and individual experiences can influence the extent to which an individual identifies with the minority cultural norms. These variables can impact the degree to which European American standards of body are internalized. Although there is some individual variation, Harris indicated that identification with a cultural group is also a significant determinant in the standard for body size that is accepted.

It is believed that culture is probably the most powerful determinant of body weight. Culture sets the context for eating and activity and also assigns moral and social meanings to weight. This cultural determinant of body weight translates into an idealized body type or image. Although America is comprised

of varied subcultures, the European American physical characteristics are often used to define the standard for physical appearance (Mazur, 1986). This idealized European American body type is currently one that is associated with extreme thinness in women and muscularity in men.

As the American standard of beauty becomes more stringent, many women develop distorted body images and become frustrated at not being able to obtain the "ideal figure" (Molloy & Herzberger, 1998). The ideal of female beauty in Western society has undergone a dramatic shift with regards to being thin. In recent decades females have had to meet an even stricter ideal weight standard (Hesse-Biber, Clayton-Mathews, & Downey, 1987). Women often identify themselves as attractive based solely on their weight or body shape. Drive for thinness has been described as a key motivational variable underlying dieting effort (Striegel-Moore, Schreiber, Pike, Wilfley, & Rodin, 1995). For most women, dieting is a function of wanting to be attractive rather than trying to maintain a healthy body weight. Some women become so dissatisfied with their perceived body size that they are driven to become thin and maintain their thinness (Molloy & Herzberger). Moreover, body-image disturbances are the key factor in individual's drastic weight-reducing behaviors and bingeing behaviors (Rosen, 1992).

Body image disturbances are important because they are core components in eating disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa. These disorders have seen dramatic increases in prevalence rates over the past 20

years, particularly among women between the ages of 15 and 25 (Wilfley & Rodin, 1995). These disorders are characterized by a persistent disturbance in eating or eating-related behaviors (Fairburn & Walsh, 1995). Eating disorders result in the altered consumption or absorption of food and significantly impair physical health or psychosocial functioning. Traits of an eating disorder include binge eating, excessive restraint, fear of fatness, and dissatisfaction with body image (Wilfley & Rodin). Women with eating disorders have low self-esteem, concerns about being bad, and concerns about being rejected or abandoned (Rosen, 1990). The connection between body image and eating disorders is particularly important, as eating disorders are associated with the highest mortality rate of any psychological disorder.

While numerous studies have been done on European American females with body image disturbances and eating disorders, few studies have focused on the experiences of European American males. The eating disorder ratio in European American females and males is approximately ten to one (Wilfley & Rodin, 1995). Males with eating disorders have been ignored, neglected, and dismissed because of statistical infrequency (Andersen, 1995). Additionally, most of the research has neglected to study body image and eating disorders among other ethnic groups. Some research has suggested that binge-eating disorder is as common among African American females as it is for European American females (Wilfley & Rodin), however there is a considerable discrepancy in the amount of attention being focused on European Americans and the amount of

attention being focused on other ethnic groups. The purpose of this paper is to examine the body perceptions of individuals based on ethnicity and gender. The next sections will define the following variables a) body image, b) self esteem, and c) response to teasing.

### *Body Image*

Body image is the perception an individual has about his or her body. It includes personal evaluations and affective experiences regarding one's physical attributes such as size, shape, and physical attractiveness (Braitman & Ramanaiah, 1999). Body image also includes attitudes, emotions, and reactions an individual experiences in relation to his or her body (Denniston, Roth, & Gilroy, 1991). Generally, researchers and clinicians subdivide the physical appearance construct into three areas: a perceptual component, a subjective component, and a behavioral component (Thompson, 1990). The perceptual component is commonly referred to as size perception accuracy or estimation of body size. The subjective component deals with facets such as satisfaction, concern, cognitive evaluation, and anxiety. The behavioral component focuses on avoidance of situations that cause the individual to experience physical appearance-related discomfort. For example, a person may avoid going to a certain place because they are scared someone will make fun of them. All of these components are used to understand the body image of individuals. They tell us about an individual's accuracy in evaluating his or her body, an individual's

feelings about his or her body, and how an individual functions in the world based on self-perceptions and feelings about his or her body.

From the cultural standpoint, body image is shaped by several socializing agents such as the media, magazines, family, with socioeconomic status (SES) being a key factor (Caldwell, Brownell, & Wilfley, 1997). Individuals with a higher SES have better access to these agents. These socializing agents are believed to influence how a person feels about his or her body. Research has suggested that over the past 30 years, American women have become increasingly dissatisfied with their physical appearance (Hoyt & Kogan, 2001). The researchers have suggested that during this time period images in magazines and film have depicted increasingly thinner women. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of diet articles published in women's magazines (Connor-Greene, 1988).

Another powerful influence on body image is the role models that the media defines as attractive (Nichter & Vuckovic, 1994). Television programs present slender women as the dominant image of popularity, success, and happiness. Television shows include female characters that are funny, successful, and most importantly, thin. The idealized body image becomes easily associated with popular models from television, film, and magazines.

Family is also believed to have strong influence on the development of body image disturbances and eating problems (Smolak & Levine, 2001; Steinberg & Phares, 2001). Families provide food systems, structured activities,

and social values about appropriate weight of family members (Sobal, 1995). Both male and female adolescents report that family members are the primary source of weight control and appearance-related information (Steinberg & Phares, 2001). Comments from family members, especially from parents, have an early effect on self-esteem and perception of body. According to Sanford and Donovan (1984) the women that they interviewed reported that they liked their bodies until puberty when their fathers' rejection of them or teasing of their developing bodies translated into self-disgust. In addition to direct comments, parental modeling of weight concerns may also contribute to body esteem problems in children (Smolak & Levine). A parent that is very focused on their weight may model for their children the importance of body image. This may translate into a concern about weight even when an individual is in a healthy weight range.

In summary, body image is the perception that an individual has about his or her body. It includes perceptions, attitudes and emotions about size, shape and physical attractiveness. It includes a perceptual component, a subjective component, and a behavioral component. Socializing agents such as the media, magazines, and family shape body image. The perception (whether high or low) that an individual has towards their own body image also determines their level of self-esteem.

### *Self-esteem*

*Self-esteem is how an individual feels globally about himself or herself.*

Rosenberg and Simmons (1971) identified self-esteem as including beliefs, attitudes, values, and feelings about the self. Self-esteem is believed to be a single global feeling. A person with low self-esteem is an individual who lacks respect for themselves, considers themselves as lacking worth, and views themselves as inadequate. Individuals with low self-esteem continuously rehearse negative and distorted self-statements. These statements often relate to their appearance, and as a result may have an impact on body image. Klein (1994) indicated that body image is often created by low self-esteem. However, Sanford and Donovan (1984) stated that:

The relationship between self-esteem and body image is a complicated one, and the specific dynamics will vary from person to person. For some women, low self-esteem follows in part from a negative body image. But for other women it is the low self-esteem that comes first and the negative body image that follows it (p. 370).

Research indicates that people who evaluate their bodies more favorably have higher self-esteem than people who evaluate their bodies less favorably (e.g., Jackson, Sullivan, & Rostker, 1988). These findings suggest that self-esteem and body image are often related. Self-esteem and body image are also related by the degree that socialization impacts their development. Studies of young children show that parents' style of child rearing during the first three or four



years determines the amount of self-esteem that a child starts with (McKay & Fanning, 1987). Parents that praise their children about beauty and intelligence have children that usually have a high self-esteem. In contrast, children who are consistently degraded by their parents display low self-esteem.

### *Response to Teasing*

Several studies have examined body image, self-esteem, ethnicity, and gender, but little research has been done on how teasing about appearance relates to these variables. Teasing can be used as a way to establish friendly or romantic relations with another (Furman, 1994). It can also be misinterpreted or intentionally used to insult another person. Teasing seems to be a common childhood behavior (Shapiro, Baumeister, & Kessler, 1987), but many adults continue to use the behavior. Several studies have shown that individuals who were exposed at a young age to teasing comments about their appearance and/or weight has been associated with body dissatisfaction, eating disturbance, and general psychological functioning (Jackson, Grilo, Masheb, 2000; Stormer & Thompson, 1995). According to Grilo, Wilfley, Brownell, and Rodin (1994), the teasing may have a negative impact when the teasing is directed to a sensitive feature, such as weight or shape.

Cash, Winstead, and Janda (1986) studied whether individuals remembered their experiences of being teased about their appearance when they were either a child or an adult. There were nearly 30,000 people (ages ranged from 15-74) who responded to the body image survey in *Psychology*

Today. After doing a detailed analysis of the adult population 2,000 participants were used. Ninety percent of the respondents were Caucasians, while African Americans and the other minority groups were under represented. The respondents completed an abbreviated 54-item version of the Body Self-Relations Questionnaire (BSRQ). Their results indicated that individuals who were teased by their peers as children were more likely to have a negative view of their appearance than those who were not teased by their peers. Therefore, those who were teased as children, the teasing had a negative impact on how they viewed themselves. However, individuals who were teased as teenagers still rated their appearance in a positive direction as adults.

Cash (1995) conducted a study that included 111 college women volunteers (who were all younger than 40) from psychology classes at Old Dominion University. Of the 111 participants 79% were Caucasians, 9% were African Americans, and the rest were from other minority groups. Each participant's research packet contained the Multidimensional Body Self Relations Questionnaire and the Situational Inventory of Body Image Dysphoria. Cash (1995) found that individuals who were recipients of appearance related teasing and/or criticism reported that the teasing began during their childhood and during early adolescent years (time of puberty). The participants also indicated that 1/3 of teasing came from their friends, but over 1/3 reported that their worst offenders were family members, especially brothers and mothers.

Rieves and Cash's (1996) study included 152 college women at Old Dominion University. The age range of the participants was from 17 to 35. Of the 152 participants, 64% were Caucasians, 23% were African Americans, and 13% were other minority groups. The participants were administered the Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS); Appearance Teasing Inventory (ATI); Sibling Appearance Questionnaire (SAQ); Maternal Attitudes toward Physical Appearance (MATPA); Multidimensional Body Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ); Appearance Schemas Inventory (ASI); and The Situational Inventory of Body Image Dysphoria (SIBID). They found that recipients of appearance related teasing and/or criticism reported that the teasing began during their childhood and during early adolescent years.

## Review of Relevant Literature

The following literature review will focus on research pertaining to body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender in a predominantly African American sample.

### *Body Image and Gender*

There is a tendency to think that women are the only ones concerned about their body image. Men demonstrate concerns about their body image as well. However, there is a difference in how each gender is concerned about their body image. Females often wish to be thinner, while males desire to be muscular (Cash & Brown, 1989). The research suggests that women are more concerned with losing weight than men. Also, women have a higher level of dissatisfaction with their body image than men. Most females see slenderness as the single most important determinant of physical attractiveness (Connor-Greene, 1988). Comparisons between men and women suggest that women evaluate their bodies less favorably, express more dissatisfaction with their bodies, view physical appearance as more important, perceive a greater discrepancy between body image and body ideal, and are more likely to suffer from eating disorders than men (Cash & Brown, 1989; Jackson et al., 1988). Many studies have found that females are much more likely to overestimate their weight (Connor-Greene, 1988) even at average weight (Cash, Ancis, & Strachan, 1997).

Men and women in their teens and twenties were found to be most concerned with their appearance, with young women being the most dissatisfied of all with their bodies (Furman, 1994). In this study 147 female and male undergraduate students completed a packet of questionnaires. The packet included the following: The *Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios*, which consisted of 16 scenarios based on appearance and abilities (each contained 6 negative scenarios and 2 positive ones), the *Visual Analogue Scales*, the *Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale*, the *Eating Disorders Inventory-Drive for Thinness Subscale* and the *Eating Disorders Inventory-Bulimia Subscale*, and the *Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire*. The results indicated a significant discrepancy in body dissatisfaction between the men and women. Women evaluated their appearance more negatively than the men. Results also indicated that individuals who stated that they have been teased by their peers about their appearance were more likely to have a negative appearance evaluation than those who had not been teased by their peers when they were children.

Cash and Brown (1989) studied 36 male and 36 female undergraduate students. Participants filled out the *Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire* and the *Body Areas Satisfaction Scale* to measure how they perceived their body image. They found that females hold consistently more negative body-image attitudes than do males. They also found that the females

had a greater cognitive, affective, and behavioral concern with weight and weight loss than the males.

Demarest and Allen (2000) conducted a study that included 120 African American, Hispanic, and European American college students. Each ethnic group included 20 males and 20 females. Each participant was tested individually and was given two sets of nine figure drawings ranging from very thin to very heavy. Participants were then given the figure drawings that were of their same sex. They rated this figure drawing on a scale of 10 to 90 based on their current figure (how they view their weight now), their ideal figure (what they want to be), and what they believed the opposite sex would find attractive. The participants were also asked to look at the figure rating scale of the opposite sex and pick out the figure they felt was most attractive. Results of their study suggested that men typically had a more positive body image than women.

While much less attention has been paid to the subject of men and body image, reports suggests that cultural attitudes about the male body have also undergone a change (Davis, Dionne, & Lazarus, 1996). Men are less concerned with being or becoming fat. Men are more likely to gain weight rather than lose it (Connor-Greene, 1988); and they tend to want to appear big and strong (Sobal, 1995). For males, any discrepancy which does occur between real and "ideal" physique is more likely to result in trying to gain weight rather than lose weight (Connor-Greene, 1988).

### *Self-esteem and Gender*

Research on self-esteem and gender has produced contradictory findings. Block and Robins (1993) conducted a longitudinal study of consistency and changes in self-esteem in individuals from ages 14 to 23. Forty-four males and 47 females were used. Participants were assessed in their first year of high school (14 years old), last year of high school (18 years old), and 5 years after high school (23 years old). The participants completed the 43 items on the Self-Descriptive Q-Set that was to measure self-esteem. Block and Robins found that the males had a higher self-esteem score at every age level. The males' self-esteem scores increased at each age (14, 18, 23) and became significantly higher than their initial score by the age of 23.

In Crain and Bracken's study (1994) of age, gender, and ethnicity on self concept, 2,501 children and adolescents were used. One thousand and ten European American, 239 African American, 110 Hispanic American, 27 Asian American, 24 Native American, 91 "Others" completed the *Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale*. They found that there was no significant difference between the males and females.

Although the research on self-esteem and gender has produced mixed findings, there is some indication that body image may interact with self-esteem based on gender. For males and females, a negative attitude towards one's body correlates with lower levels of self-esteem, but this relationship is significantly stronger for females than for males (Connor-Greene, 1988), Males and females

who wish to lose weight share a negative view of their body and dissatisfaction with body weight (Thompson, 1990).

### *Response to Teasing and Gender*

It has been suggested that a history of negative teasing in adolescents may contribute to the development of low self-esteem, eating disturbance, body dissatisfaction, and empathy in adults (Furman, 1994). Women who have been teased about their appearance as children had a greater likelihood of being dissatisfied with their appearance during adulthood (Thompson et al., 1991). In addition, Thompson (as cited in Thompson et al.) found that college women with high levels of eating disturbance had a greater history of being teased about their appearance than women with low levels of eating dysfunction. A woman will tolerate negative comments about her appearance because they fit her view of her body. For example, if there is a specific part of her body that she is dissatisfied with and someone comes along and make a negative comment about that part of her body she will accept the comment because of how she already feels about that area. The negative body image is maintained for women even in the face of contradictory evidence (Kearney-Cooke & Striegel-Moore, 1997).

Grilo et al. (1994) included 40 overweight females who were receiving outpatient treatment from the Yale Center for Eating and Weight Disorders in a study. The participants in this study completed two scales of the *Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire* (Appearance Evaluation and Appearance



Orientation), the *Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale* (PARTS), and the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale*. The researchers found that being teased about one's weight and size while growing up is associated with the degree of body image concerns during adulthood. For this sample of participants the more they were teased while growing up the more dissatisfied they were about their bodies as adults.

Teasing during the development stages of childhood and adolescence may negatively effect how one develops their own perception of their appearance and overall body image (O'Mell, 1999). The main focus of this study was to determine if there is a relationship with teasing in the development of body image. Research showed that there was a relationship between the two variables. The frequency of teasing during childhood and adolescence was related to overall body image. According to the scales of the *Multidimensional Body Self-Relations Questionnaire* MBSRQ participants who reported higher levels of teasing also reported higher levels of dissatisfaction with components of body image. The results also indicated that teasing in childhood and adolescence could have long lasting implications for one's body image. These findings indicated that source of teasing was directly related to two dimensions of body image; Appearance Orientation and Self-Classified Weight.

## Statement of the Problem

Research has shown comparisons between men and women suggest that women evaluate their bodies less favorably, express more dissatisfaction with their bodies, view physical appearance as more important, perceive a greater discrepancy between body image and body ideal, and are more likely to suffer from eating disorders than males (Cash & Brown, 1989; Jackson et al., 1988). Many studies have found that females are much more likely to overestimate their weight (Connor-Greene, 1988) even at average weight (Cash et al., 1997). Males are more likely to gain weight because they want to look more muscular. In various studies when the participants had to choose a silhouette that closely resembled them, the women would choose a body figure that was slightly larger than their weight, overestimating their current figure (Demarest & Allen, 2000; Jackson et al., 1988), while the males would choose a figure that was closest to their own actual figure.

Research has also shown that women's self-esteem level is lower than males (Connor-Greene, 1988). Usually a history of being teased by their peers or a negative comment from a family member would linger throughout life making them to think and feel negatively about their bodies. Most females who were

teased as children or received negative comments from their mothers or fathers had not only a low self-esteem level as adults, but they also felt that they were fat.

Although there is some research suggesting differences in body image, self-esteem and response to teasing based on gender, this research has been plagued by limitations. The limitations have included small samples of males, small samples of African Americans, use of predominantly European American campuses for samples, and samples of upper middle class to upper class individuals with little representation of other socioeconomic classes. The present study will attempt to correct these limitations by including equal numbers of males and females from a state founded university that is predominantly African American. The purpose of the present investigation is to compare scores on measures of body image, self-esteem and response to teasing based on gender in a predominantly African American sample. Based on previous research on European Americans, the following hypotheses were formulated about African American women and men:

Hypothesis One: Previous research has suggested that females have a lower body image perception than the males. Based on studies by Furman (1994), Demarest and Allen (2000), and Molloy and Herzberger (1998) it is hypothesized that females will have a lower score on body image perception than the males. This hypothesis suggests that females will score significantly lower on a measure of body image than males.

Hypothesis Two: Previous research has shown that females have a lower self-esteem level than males. Based on the study by Connor-Greene (1988), it is hypothesized that females will have a lower self-esteem level than the males. This hypothesis suggests that females will score significantly lower on a measure of global self-esteem than males.

Hypothesis Three: Previous research has shown that females are affected more by being teased by others than males. Based on the study by Thompson et al. (1991), it is hypothesized that females will be affected by the teasing. This hypothesis suggests that females will score significantly higher on a measure of physical appearance related teasing and a measure of reaction to negative verbal comments than males.

## Methods

### *Participants*

Participants included fifty college students from South Carolina State University (25 females and 25 males). Eighty-eight percent of the participants were African American, 4% were European American, 4% were Latin American, and 4% were other minority group. The students' ages ranged from 19 through 48 years with the mean age of 23.93 ( $SD= 7.04$ ). The mean ages for the females and males were 24.78 ( $SD= 8.24$ ) and 23.04 ( $SD= 5.59$ ), respectively. The participants' year in college ranged from Freshman in college to Graduate Students with 74% of the students being a Junior or Senior in college. Ninety-four percent of the students reported they were single, 4% married, and 2% separated or divorced.

The students' weight ranged from 115 to 540 pounds with the mean weight of 195.41 pounds ( $SD= 72.28$ ). The mean weight for the females and males were 188.04 ( $SD= 63.55$ ) and 202.78 ( $SD= 80.83$ ), respectively. The students' height ranged from 59 inches to 77 inches with the mean height of 67.91 inches ( $SD=4.03$ ). The mean height for the females and males were 65 inches ( $SD= 2.52$ ) and 70 inches ( $SD= 3.19$ ), respectively. See Table 1 for means and standard deviations for weight and height based on gender.

Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviation of Weight and Height based on Gender*

Gender	N	Weight	Height
		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Females	25	188.04 (63.55)	65 (2.52)
Males	25	202.78 (80.83)	70 (3.19)

With regard to rating their body type (extra small, small, medium, large, and extra large) the students reported, 14% small, 46% medium, 32% large, and 8% extra large. Ninety percent of the students reported no history of an eating disorder.

Four percent of the students spent most of their life living on a farm, 20% in a town under 5,000, 24% in a town between 5,000 to 25,000, 20% in a town between 25,000 and 100,000, 16% in a town between 100,000 and 200,000, and 16% in a town larger than 500,000. See Table 2 for frequencies and percentages of geographic population.

Table 2

*Frequencies and Percentages of Geographic Population*

Geographic Population	Frequency	Percentage
A farm	2	4
A town under 5,000	10	20
A town between 5,000 and 25,000	12	24
A town between 25,000 and 100,000	10	20
A town between 100,000 and 200,000	8	16
A town larger than 500,000	8	16

The participants reported the occupation of both fathers and mothers. With regard to the father's occupation, the students reported: 26% Semiskilled or unskilled (truck driver, factory worker), 18% Skilled worker or foreman, 2% Farmer, 2% Clerical or sales, 6% Proprietor (owner of business), 24% Professional (architect, teacher, physician, lawyer), 2% no occupation outside the home, and 6% were unknown about their father's occupation. With regard to the mother's occupation, the students reported: 10% Semiskilled or unskilled, 16% Skilled worker or foreman, 4% Farmer, 22% Clerical or sales, 2% Proprietor, 30% Professional, 10% no occupation outside the home, and 2% were unknown about their mother's occupation. See Table 3 for frequencies and percentages of parents' occupation.

Table 3

*Frequencies and Percentages of Parents Occupation*

Occupation	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Semiskilled or unskilled	13	26	5	10
Skilled worker or Foreman	9	18	8	16
Farmer	1	2	2	4
Clerical or sales	1	2	11	22
Proprietor	3	6	1	2
Professional	12	24	15	30
No occupation	1	2	5	10
Don't Know	3	6	1	2

The participants reported the education level of both fathers and mothers.

With regard to the father's level of education, the students' reported: 2%

completed grade school, 8% completed some high school, 30% completed high school, 6% completed high school and some training but not college, 8% some college, 14% completed college, 4% complete some graduate work, and 14%

had a graduate degree. With regard to the mother's level of education, the

students' reported: 2% completed some high school, 24% completed high

school, 16% completed high school and some training but not college, 14% some college, 22% completed college, 8% some graduate work, and 12% has a

graduate degree. See Table 4 for frequencies and percentages of the parents' education level.



Table 4

*Frequencies and Percentages of the Parents' Education Level*

Education Level	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Completed grade school	1	2		
Some high school	4	8	1	2
Completed high school	15	30	12	24
High school and some training but no college	3	6	8	16
Some college	4	8	7	14
Completed college	7	14	11	22
Some graduate work	2	4	4	8
Graduate degree	7	14	6	12

*Materials*

The following measures were administered to each participant: a demographic form, the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire-Appearance Scale (MBSRQ-AS; Cash, 2000), Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory (MSEI; O'Brien & Epstein, 1988), Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios (developed by Furman, 1994), Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS; Thompson et al., 1991). Specific information about these materials will be discussed in this section.

*Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire-Appearance Scale (MBSRQ-AS).* The Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire-Appearance Scale (MBSRQ-AS; Cash, 2000) is a self-inventory for the assessment of self-attitudinal aspects of the body-image construct. The questionnaire includes the following subscales: 1. Appearance Evaluation,

measures feelings of physical attractiveness or unattractiveness; 2. Appearance Orientation, assesses the extent of investment in one's appearance; 3. Overweight Preoccupation, assesses a construct reflecting fat anxiety, weight vigilance, and eating restraint; 4. Self-Classified Weight, assesses how one perceives and labels one's weight, from very underweight to very overweight; and 5. Body Areas Satisfaction Scales (BASS), which assesses that person's satisfaction with their appearance. It includes 34 items that a person rates on a Likert scale. The person reads a statement and then rates their agreement with the statement on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1=definitely disagree to 5=definitely agree). Sample items include "I like the way I look without my clothes on," "I dislike my physique," and "It is important that I always look good." Items are worded both positively and negatively. A high score indicates a more positive body image while a low score indicates a more negative body image. See Appendix B for a copy of the MBSRQ.

The MBSRQ-AS was normed on 996 males and 1070 females. The sampled participants were 18 years of age and older. Research investigating the psychometric properties of this instrument has demonstrated that the MBSRQ has adequate construct validity (Rieves & Cash, 1996; Yuen & Hanson, 2002). Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates range from .73 to .95. Test-retest reliability has been demonstrated.

*Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory (MSEI).* The

*Multidimensional Self-Esteem Inventory* (MSEI; O'Brien & Epstein, 1988) is designed to measure a person's self-esteem. It includes 116 items that a person rates on a scale. The MSEI provides eleven scales of measurement which are: Global Self Esteem (GSE), Competence (CMP), Lovability (LVE), Likability (LKE), Self-Control (SFC), Personal Power (PWR), Moral Self-Approval (MOR), Body Appearance (BAP), Body Functioning (BFN), Identity Integration (IDN), and Defensive Self-enhancement (DEF). The Global Self-Esteem is a measure of the highest level of self-evaluation and evaluates one's feelings of worthiness. The Global Self-Esteem was used in this investigation.

The person reads a statement and then rates their agreement with the statement on a 5-point scale. The instrument provides a T score (mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10). T score ranges of 40-59 on any scale are in the normal range. T score range of 30-39 suggests areas of low self-esteem. The MSEI must be purchased from a test company and is not attached to this paper.

The MSEI was normed on 785 college students. Research investigating the psychometric properties of this instrument supports the convergent and discriminant validity of the MSEI (Hillmann & Brooks, 1991). Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates of .90 and higher have been demonstrated, and a test-retest reliability coefficient of .87 has been also demonstrated (Washington, 2001).

*Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios.* Three different scenarios were modified from six negative scenarios (developed by Furman, 1994) that comment on an individual's physical appearance. All three of the scenarios were

administered to each of the participants. The scenarios dealt with the opposite sex commenting on the individual and saying things related to the person's weight and attractiveness. See Appendix C for a copy of the scenarios. After reading the paragraph the participants rated how much the negative comments affected them on a 5-point scale (1=not at all affected to 5=extremely affected). Total scores for perceived impact of negative verbal commentary were calculated. High scores suggest high perceived impact, while low scores reflect low perceived impact. No psychometric information is available on this instrument. See Appendix C for a copy of the rating scale.

*Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS).* The *Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS; Thompson et al., 1991)* is designed to measure a history of being teased as a child. The PARTS is made up of two subscales: Weight/Size Teasing (WST), which consists of 12 items that deals with teasing related to weight and size; and General Appearance Teasing (GAT), which consist of 6 items that deal with teasing about nonweight/size related issues. It includes 18 items that a person rates on a Likert scale. The person reads a statement and then rates their agreement with the statement on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1=never to 5=frequently). Sample items include "Were you ridiculed as a child about being overweight," and "Were you the brunt of family jokes because of your weight." A high score indicates greater frequency of teasing experiences while a low score indicates less frequency of being teased. See Appendix D for a copy of the PARTS.

The PARTS has good psychometric properties, including high internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and convergent validity (Grilo et al., 1994; Jackson et al., 2000). Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for the WST is .91 and a two-week test-retest reliability coefficient is .86 (Furman, 1994; Grilo et al.; Jackson et al., 2000; Thompson et al., 1991). The Cronbach's alpha reliability for the GAT is .71 and a test-retest reliability coefficient is .87 (Furman; Grilo et al.; Jackson et al.; Thompson et al.).

*Demographic Data Sheet.* The Demographics Data Sheet (Appendix E) was used to obtain information related to racial identification, gender, age, academic classification, major, and weight. This information was not used to test any hypotheses. It was used to monitor systematic differences in the sample and for exploratory analyses.

### *Procedure*

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Western Carolina University. Permission was also obtained from Dr. Ayers, a professor at South Carolina State University, to use students from his undergraduate classes. This study examined the differences of body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender of African American students. The participants were told that this is a study pertaining to body image. They then reviewed and signed the consent form (See Appendix A). Participants in the study were assigned a participant number to protect their confidentiality. Information about the gender of participant was included as part of

the coding system for participant numbers. Participants were administered all instruments in groups. The participants at SCSU had time allotted to them to fill out the surveys at the beginning of class. The packets provided to participants included a consent form followed by the different questionnaires. The packets were assembled such that the order of the questionnaires varied across packets (counterbalancing) to minimize possible order effects.

### *Data Analysis*

The independent variable for this study was gender. The dependent variables for this study were body image, self-esteem, and perceived impact of body teasing. To test the hypotheses in the Statement of the Problem, three separate Multivariate Analyses of Variance (MANOVAs) were used to assess differences in body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender. These analyses were used to examine main effects of the independent variable on the dependent variables. Exploratory analyses were utilized as needed. A Multivariate Analyses of Variance were used to determine if any differences on the Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and Body Dissatisfaction questionnaire based on gender. Also a Pearson Correlation were used to determine if there was a relationship between weight, height, and variables from the MSEI, the PARTS, and the MBSRQ.

## Results

### *Hypothesis One*

It was hypothesized that females would score significantly lower on a measure of body image than males. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to assess difference in body image based on gender.

Results of the MANOVA revealed that the females scored lower than the males on the Body Areas Satisfaction. The results indicated a significant difference on the Body Areas Satisfaction Scale,  $F(1,49) = 5.47, p < .023, \eta^2 = .102$ . The results indicated a significant difference on the Overweight Preoccupation Scale,  $F(1,49) = 4.03, p < .050, \eta^2 = .078$ . On the Overweight Preoccupation Scale, females reported lower scores than males. Finally the results indicated a significant difference on the Self-Classified Weight Scale,  $F(1,49) = 11.60, p < .001, \eta^2 = .195$ . On the Self-Classified Weight Scale, females reported higher scores than males. There were no statistically significant differences between the females and males on the Appearance Evaluation Scale or on the Appearance Orientation Scale. See Table 5 for means and standard deviations on the MBSRQ-AS based on gender.

Table 5

*Means and Standard Deviations for the MBSRQ-AS Based on Gender*

MBSRQ Scales	Females	Males
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Appearance Evaluation	5.46 (.853)	5.54 (.969)
Appearance Orientation	5.75 (.594)	5.45 (.538)
Body Areas Satisfaction	3.76 (.769)*	4.56 (1.52)*
Overweight Preoccupation	2.28 (.771)*	2.74 (.846)*
Self-Classified Weight	3.48 (.822)*	2.76 (.663)*

Note: \* indicates a statistically significant difference in means between groups.

*Hypothesis Two*

It was hypothesized that the females would score significantly lower on a measure of global self-esteem than males. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to assess difference in self esteem based on gender. Results indicated a significant difference on the Global Self Esteem Scale (GSE),  $F(1, 49) = 11.435, p < .001, \eta^2 = .192$ . The females scored higher on the Global Self-Esteem Scale than the males, lending no support to hypothesis two.

Further analysis of the domains of self-esteem showed several other significant findings. There was a significant difference between males and females on the Competence Scale (CMP),  $F(1, 49) = 10.697, p < .002, \eta^2 = .182$  with females scoring higher than males. The results indicated a significant



difference on the Personal Power Scale (PWR),  $F(1, 49) = 10.842, p < .002, \eta^2 = .184$ , with females scoring higher than males. The results indicated a significant difference on the Body Appearance Scale (BAP),  $F(1, 49) = 10.587, p < .002, \eta^2 = .181$ , with females scoring higher than males. The results indicated a significant difference on the Body Functioning Scale (BFN),  $F(1, 49) = 23.691, p < .000, \eta^2 = .330$ , with females scoring higher than males. The results indicated a significant difference on the Identity Integration Scale (IDN),  $F(1, 49) = 5.550, p < .023, \eta^2 = .104$ , with females scoring higher than males. The results indicated a significant difference on the Defensive Self-Enhancement Scale (DEF),  $F(1, 49) = 14.576, p < .000, \eta^2 = .233$ , with males scoring higher than females.

The results indicated no significant differences on the Lovability (LVE), the Likability Scale (LKE), the Self-Control Scale (SFC), or the Moral Self-Approval Scale (MOR) based on gender. See Table 6 for means and standard deviations on MSEI based on gender.

### *Hypothesis Three*

It was hypothesized that females would score significantly higher on a measure of physical appearance related teasing and a measure of reaction to negative verbal comments than males. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to assess difference in teasing based on gender. The results showed no significant difference on the Weight/Size Teasing Scale,  $F(1, 49) = .169, p > .682$ . The results also showed no significant difference on the

General Appearance Teasing Scale,  $F(1, 49) = .130, p > .720$ . See Table 7 for means and standard deviations for the PARTS.

Table 6

*Means and Standard Deviation on the MSEI Based on Gender*

MSEI Scales	Females	Males
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Global Self Esteem	49.44 (8.48)*	42.84 (4.81)*
Competence	45.12 (7.66)*	39.64 (3.38)*
Lovability	43.92 (6.24)	41.84 (2.89)
Likability	43.20 (9.50)	41.52 (4.00)
Self-Control	45.04 (8.37)	43.36 (5.54)
Personal Power	48.96 (7.08)*	43.32 (4.81)*
Moral Self-Approval	39.12 (7.25)	37.40 (6.03)
Body Appearance	51.48 (8.18)*	45.24 (5.00)*
Body Functioning	48.60 (5.85)*	41.84 (3.72)*
Identity Integration	48.80 (8.46)*	44.28 (4.86)*
Defensive Self-enhancement	48.88 (3.66)*	54.80 (6.83)*

Note: \* indicates a statistically significant difference in means between groups.

Table 7

*Means and Standard Deviations for the PARTS*

		PARTS			
		Weight/Size Teasing		General Appearance Teasing	
Gender	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Females	24	19.12	12.37	9.12	5.81
Males	24	17.79	9.93	9.66	4.52

*Exploratory Analysis*

Exploratory analyses were conducted to determine if any differences on the Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and Body Dissatisfaction questionnaire based on gender. Analyses were also conducted to determine if there was a relationship between height, weight, and variables from the MSEI, the PARTS, and the MBSRQ.

*Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and Body Dissatisfaction.* A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to assess difference in Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and Body Dissatisfaction. The results indicated no significant difference for the Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios based on gender,  $F(1, 48) = 1.654, p > .205$ . The results also indicated no significant difference for Body Dissatisfaction based on gender,  $F(1, 48) = .105, p > .748$ . See Table 8 for the mean and standard deviations for Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and Body Dissatisfaction.

Table 8

*Means and Standard Deviations for Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and Body Dissatisfaction*

Negative Verbal Commentary and Body Dissatisfaction						
Gender	N	Neg. Verbal		Body Dissatisfaction		
		M	SD	M	SD	
Female	25	9.08	3.34	7.20	2.59	
Male	23	7.91	2.90	7.43	2.40	

*Height, weight, and variables from the MSEI, the PARTS, and the MBSRQ.* A Pearson Correlation was used to assess difference in weight, height, and the variables from the MSEI, the PARTS, and the MBSRQ. The results indicated a significant relationship among the following: Weight and Moral Self-Approval ( $r^2 = -.303, p < .041$ ), Weight and Body Appearance ( $r^2 = -.331, p < .025$ ), Height and Body Appearance ( $r^2 = -.345, p < .019$ ), Weight and Body Functioning ( $r^2 = -.410, p < .005$ ), Height and Body Functioning ( $r^2 = -.427, p < .003$ ), Weight and Defensive Self-enhancement ( $r^2 = -.350, p < .017$ ), Height and Defensive Self-enhancement ( $r^2 = .491, p < .001$ ), Weight and Weight/Size Teasing ( $r^2 = .555, p < .000$ ), Weight and General Appearance Teasing ( $r^2 = .341, p < .023$ ), Weight and Appearance Evaluation ( $r^2 = -.583, p < .000$ ), Height and Body Areas Satisfaction ( $r^2 = .384, p < .008$ ), Weight and Overweight

Preoccupation ( $r^2 = .319, p < .031$ ), and Weight and Self Classified Weight ( $r^2 = .629, p < .000$ ).

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the differences in body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender in a predominantly African American sample. The Multidimensional Body Self-Relation Questionnaire-Appearance Scale (MBSRQ-AS; Cash, 2000), the Multidimensional Self-esteem Inventory (MSEI; O'Brien & Epstein, 1988) were used to measure body image and self esteem. It was expected that the females would score significantly lower on the measures for body image and self-esteem. The Negative Verbal Commentary Scenario and the Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS; Thompson et al., 1991) were used to assess the amount of teasing that has occurred in the participants' past. It was expected that the females would score significantly higher than the males.

### *Hypothesis One*

Previous research has suggested that females have a lower body image perception than the males (Demarest & Allen, 2000; Molloy & Herzberger, 1998). It was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in the mean scores on body image based on gender, with females scoring lower. Results of the multivariate analysis of variance revealed that the females scored significantly lower than the males on the Body Areas Satisfaction and Overweight Preoccupation Scales. The females scored significantly higher on the Self-

Classified Weight Scale than the males. There were no significant differences between males and females on the Appearance Evaluation and Appearance Orientation Scales. This finding lends some support to past research that found females are more dissatisfied with their body image compared to males. In this study, the African American females rated themselves lower on the scale designed to measure a person's satisfaction with their appearance and on the scale designed to measure fat anxiety, weight vigilance, and eating restraint. The females scored higher than males on the scale designed to assess how one perceives and labels their weight. The differences found on these scales do suggest that African American women, to some degree, demonstrate lower body images than their male counterparts in a similar way to European American females and males.

However, it is important to note that the African American females did not differ when compared to males on the scale designed to measure feelings of physical attractiveness or unattractiveness or the scale designed to measure the extent of investment in one's appearance. This finding suggests that although body image is lower for African American females than males, body image is not necessarily defining for African American females' attractiveness. It is also possible that African American females place less emphasis on the importance of their overall appearance than other variables when assessing their worth compared with females from other ethnic groups.

### *Hypothesis Two*

Previous research has suggested that females have a lower self-esteem level than males (Connor-Greene, 1988). It was hypothesized that females would score significantly lower on a measure of global self-esteem than males. Results of the multivariate analysis of variance revealed that the females actually scored higher than the males on Global Self-Esteem. This finding does not support the hypothesis. Interestingly, females also showed higher scores on several specific domains of self-concept (Competence, Personal Power, Body Appearance, Body Functioning, and Identity Integration). Females scored significantly lower than males on the Defensive Self-enhancement scale. There were no differences between males and females on lovability, likability, self-control, or moral self-approval.

The findings suggest that females displayed overall greater levels of self-evaluation and evaluation of their feelings of worthiness than the males. The results also suggested that females positively evaluated their ability to master new tasks and learn quickly (Competence); their ability to seek position of leadership and influence new people (Personal Power); their physical attractiveness (Body Appearance); their physical conditioning and comfort with physical activity/movement (Body Functioning); and their sense of identity and goal-directedness (Identity Integration) more positively than males. The females evaluated themselves lower than males on a scale designed to assess the tendency to over inflate views of self-worth (Defensive Self-enhancement).



One possible explanation for these findings is that African American females may have a better sense of identity or defined self than African American males. They may not evaluate their self-esteem to as large a degree as European American females (Molloy & Herzberger, 1998) based on their body image. This explanation has some support given the higher scores on physical attractiveness and body functioning while demonstrating lower overall body image scores. It may be that African American females evaluate their body less favorably; however this facet of their "self" is not as important as other things such as personal power or competence. It also seems likely that African American females can separate to some degree, their body image from the attractiveness that other people feel to their body.

### *Hypothesis Three*

Previous research has suggested that females are affected more by being teased by others than males (Thompson et al., 1991). It was hypothesized that females will score significantly higher on a measure of physical appearance related teasing and a measure of reaction to negative verbal comments than males. Results of the multivariate analysis of variance revealed there was no significant difference between females and males.

This finding suggests that both African American males and females appear to be impacted by teasing about their bodies to a comparable degree. When looking at the actual scores, both appeared to respond in the average range for both negative verbal comments and body dissatisfaction related to

teasing. This suggests that neither African American males or females report being impacted to a large extent by body-related teasing. It is possible that the individuals were able to objectively read the scenarios but rated them with no real regard for how the situation would impact them. In other words, they may not have been able to put themselves in the situation enough to imagine what was happening or were not comfortable reporting how they would have been impacted by the teasing.

### *Exploratory Analysis*

One interesting finding from the exploratory analysis was that weight and height were significantly related to several variables. The results suggested that as weight increased, scores on Moral Self-Approval (pleased with moral values and behavior), Body Appearance (perceived physical attractiveness), Defensive Self-enhancement (over-inflated view of self-worth), and Appearance Evaluation (physical attractiveness or unattractiveness) decreased. Regardless of gender, there appears to be a negative relationship between weight and these variables, suggesting that as weight increases for both males and females we see a decrease in positive self-evaluation on these domains. Interestingly, as weight increased it was found that so did positive evaluation of Body Functioning (evaluation of physical conditioning). This suggests that individuals, regardless of gender, evaluated their overall physical conditioning and ability to move more positively as weight increased.

Weight was found to be positively related to weight size teasing, general appearance teasing, overweight preoccupation, and self-classified weight. This suggests that as weight increases, their responses on the teasing scale (weight specific and general), preoccupation with one's weight scale, and of course, self-evaluation of one's weight as being small, medium, large, or very large increased as well.

Findings suggested that as height increased, scores on Body Appearance decreased. This suggests that self-perceived physical attractiveness, for males and females was rated lower as individuals got taller. Findings also suggested that as height increased, so did Body Functioning (perceptions about physical conditioning), Defensive Self-enhancement (overly inflated self-worth), and Body Areas Satisfaction (overall satisfaction with their appearance). It is interesting to note, that although individuals in the sample perceived their physical attractiveness as lower as they got taller, they reported more self-satisfaction with their body.

### *Limitations of the Study*

Although major findings resulted from this study, there were several limitations suggesting areas for future research. The sample size was small. More participants could have been used. Some of the participants would not complete a section of the surveys that were used for the exploratory analysis. For example, on the Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios and the Likert Scale-Body Dissatisfaction two of the male participants did not complete this survey.

Also a few of the participants did not fill in vital information on the demographics form such as their height, weight, age, or geographic population. The missing data from the incomplete surveys may have produced different results.

An additional limitation is that as with any study involving self-report, it is possible that participants attempted to present themselves in a socially desirable manner. The individuals in this study may have presented themselves more self-assured and happy with their body image because of the face validity of all the instruments.

A final limitation of this study is that almost all of the participants reported scores in the average range on all scales. This suggests that although there were statistically significant differences, the results have few clinical implications. The participants were all individuals who have average self-esteem and average ratings of body image. This is important, because although the African American females reported lower body image than African American males, both were still in the average range. It can not be generalized that African American females are at greater risk for eating disorders or other body image related disorders from these findings.

#### *Implications and Areas for Future Research*

This study offers some evidence that African American females do not differ on many variables relative to previous research on African American females. The variables that were selected were based on previous research that had included a predominantly European American sample. The next stage of

this project will be to include European American students from a comparable university. The expectation is that African American females will be more similar to European American males than European American females. This phase will be beyond the scope of this project; however, the following hypotheses are being made:

**Hypothesis One:** Previous studies have shown that African Americans have a better body image than European Americans. Based on studies by Demarest and Allen (2000) and Molloy and Herzberger (1998), it is hypothesized that African Americans will have a higher score on body image than European Americans. This hypothesis suggests that African Americans will score significantly higher on a measure of body image than European Americans.

**Hypothesis Two:** Previous research has shown that African Americans demonstrate higher levels of self-esteem than European American. Based on studies by Akan and Grilo, 1995, Altabe, 1998, Crain and Bracken, 1994, Molloy and Herzberger, 1998, and Rosenberg and Simmons, 1971, it is hypothesized that African Americans will have higher self-esteem than European Americans. This hypothesis suggests that African Americans will score significantly higher on a measure of global self-esteem than European Americans.

**Hypothesis Three:** Previous research has shown that European Americans are affected more by being teased by others than African Americans. Based on the studies by Akan and Grilo (1995), it is hypothesized that European Americans will be affected more by the teasing than African Americans. This

hypothesis suggests that European Americans will score significantly higher on a measure of physical appearance related teasing and a measure of reaction to negative verbal comments than African Americans.

Additional studies are needed to replicate the findings of the current study using a larger sample size. Studies also should examine the role of ethnic culture as impacting things such as self-esteem and attractiveness. This study offers interesting findings in that African American females report higher self-esteem in almost all facets when compared with African American males. A study that provides a cultural explanation for this finding would be useful and interesting.

Studies examining the variance in self-concept that can be accounted for by things such as body image might also be useful. The results from the current study suggest that for African American females, body image may be less important for self-evaluation. It would be interesting to actually factor analyze data on self-concept across different ethnic groups to determine how salient different characteristics are with regard to self-concept.

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## Appendices

**Appendix A  
Participant Consent Form**

The researcher working on this project is interested in investigating the differences in body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender and ethnicity. You will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire, the Multidimensional Body Self Relation Questionnaire-Appearance Scale (MBSRQ-AS), the Multidimensional Self Esteem Inventory (MSEI), a Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios, Likert Scale-Body Dissatisfaction and the Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS). Instructions are provided on each of these questionnaires. Please read the instructions carefully. The entire packet takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Once you have carefully read and signed this consent form, please return it to the test administrator. Your responses will be completely confidential and identified only by the participant number in the top right hand corner of the tests. Your participation is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw consent at any time without penalty.

Thank you so much for your cooperation, time, effort and willingness to participate in this research project. You may contact Jacqueline Horne at (404) 372-6462 or email me at [jhorne70@hotmail.com](mailto:jhorne70@hotmail.com). or Dr. Candace Boan, Assistant Professor at (828) 227-3451 or [cboan@email.wcu.edu](mailto:cboan@email.wcu.edu), or the Institutional Review Board at (828) 227-7398, if you have any questions after you leave.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the above and agree to participate in this project. I understand that my participation will contribute to the understanding of the differences in body image, self-esteem, and response to teasing based on gender and ethnicity among college students. I also understand that my participation in this project is voluntary, my responses will remain confidential and that I may withdraw at any time without penalty.

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Signature

---

Date



**Appendix B**  
**The Multidimensional Body Self Relations Questionnaire-Appearance Scale**

Please read each statement carefully and decide how much it pertains to you personally. Using the scale below indicate your answer by circling the number of the statement.

✓ 1. Before going out in public, I always notice how I look.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

2. I am careful to buy clothes that will make me look my best.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

✓ 3. My body is sexually appealing.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

4. I constantly worry about being or becoming fat.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

5. I like my looks just the way they are.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

6. I check my appearance in a mirror whenever I can.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

7. Before going out, I usually spend a lot of time getting ready.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

8. I am very conscious of even small changes in my weight.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

9. Most people would consider me good looking.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

10. It is important that I always look good.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

11. I use very few grooming products.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

✓12. I like the way I look without my clothes on.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

13. I am self-conscious if my grooming isn't right.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

14. I usually wear whatever is handy without caring how it looks.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

15. I like the way my clothes fit me.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

✓16. I don't care what people think about my appearance.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

17. I take special care with my hair grooming.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

✓18. I dislike my physique.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

✓ 19. I am physically unattractive.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

20. I never think about my appearance.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

✓ 21. I am always trying to improve my physical appearance.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

22. I am on a weight-loss diet.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

For the remainder of the items use the response scale given with the item, and enter your answer in the space beside the item.

\_\_\_\_\_ 23. I have tried to lose weight by fasting or going on crash diets.

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. Very Often

\_\_\_\_\_ 24. I think I am:

1. Very Underweight
2. Somewhat Underweight
3. Normal Weight
4. Somewhat Overweight
5. Very Overweight

\_\_\_\_\_ 25. From looking at me, most other people think I am:

1. Very Underweight
2. Somewhat Underweight
3. Normal Weight
4. Somewhat Overweight
5. Very Overweight

26-34. Use this 1 to 5 scale to indicate how satisfied you are with each of the following areas or aspects of your body:

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

26. Face (facial features, complexion)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

27. Hair (color, thickness, texture)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

28. Lower torso (buttocks, hips, thighs, legs)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

29. Mid torso (waist, stomach)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

## 30. Upper torso (chest or breasts, shoulders, arms)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

## 31. Muscle tone

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

## 32. Weight

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

## 33. Height

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

## 34. Overall appearance

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

## Appendix C Negative Verbal Commentary Scenarios

For each of the following situations, please rate how much you would be affected by the comments.

You are walking through campus after attending your afternoon class. As you walk by a group of students, you begin to feel a little self-conscious because they are looking at you. Their eyes follow you as you walk by and as you pass them you hear one of the say, "Everything looks good, but your face."

1	2	3	4	5
Not Affected	A little Affected	Moderately Affected	Considerably Affected	Extremely Affected

It's Thursday night and you are in your dorm. You and your roommate are trying to study, but there is a big party going on at the frat house. Your friends from down the hall come by to see if you are going to the party. So you and your roommate push studying to the side and get ready to go to the party. While you are getting ready one of your friends asks, "Have you gained some weight lately?"

1	2	3	4	5
Not Affected	A little Affected	Moderately Affected	Considerably Affected	Extremely Affected

You are riding your bike across campus on your way back home after class. You are wearing a pair of shorts and a T-shirt. You come to a stop at a red light, and you stand hunched over your bike a car pulls up next to you. The windows of the car are rolled up, but you can tell that there are a bunch of attractive individuals in the car. The window of the car rolls down and someone shouts, "nice gut!" As the light gets ready to change, you realize that your stomach is exposed for everyone to see.

1	2	3	4	5
Not Affected	A little Affected	Moderately Affected	Considerably Affected	Extremely Affected

### Likert Scale-Body Dissatisfaction

1. Please circle the number of the statement that best describes how YOU FEEL about your body after reading the above paragraphs.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all satisfied	somewhat satisfied	moderately satisfied	very satisfied	extremely satisfied

2. How would you feel about your body if you heard these comments come from a family member (mom, dad, sibling)?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all satisfied	somewhat satisfied	moderately satisfied	very satisfied	extremely satisfied

3. How would you feel about your body if you heard these comments from your significant other?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all satisfied	somewhat satisfied	moderately satisfied	very satisfied	extremely satisfied

4. After reading the following paragraphs does the comments make you want to:

- a. Start exercising.
- b. Increase your exercising regiments.
- c. Diet.
- d. Change nothing at all.



Appendix D  
Physical Appearance Related Teasing Scale (PARTS)

Directions: Each question pertains to the time period of when you were growing up. Please respond by circling the appropriate number for the following scale: **1=Never, 3=Sometimes, 5=Frequently.**

1. When you were a child, did you feel that your peers were staring at you because you were overweight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

2. When you were a child, did you ever feel like people were making fun of you because of your weight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

3. Were you ridiculed as a child about being overweight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

4. When you were a child, did people use to make jokes about you being too big?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

5. When you were a child, were you laughed at for trying out for sports because you were heavy?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

6. Did your brother(s) or other male relatives call you names like "fatso" when they got angry at you?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

7. Did your father ever make jokes that referred to your weight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

8. Did other kids call you derogatory names that related to your size or weight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

9. Did you ever feel like people were pointing at you because of your size or weight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

10. Were you the brunt of family jokes because of your weight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

11. Did people use to point you out of a crowd because of your weight?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

12. Did you ever hear your classmates snicker when you walked into the classroom alone?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

13. When you were growing up, did people say you dressed funny?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

14. Did people use to say you had funny teeth?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

15. Did kids call you funny looking?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

16. Did other kids tease you about wearing clothes that didn't match or were out of style?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

17. Did other kids ever make jokes about your hair?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

18. When you were a child were you scoffed at for looking like a weakling?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Sometimes		Frequently

Appendix E  
Demographic Questionnaire

Please respond to the following:

1. Your Sex         Female         Male

2. Ethnicity

African American

Caucasian

Native American

Asian American

Latin American

Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Age \_\_\_\_\_

4. Classification

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student

5. Major \_\_\_\_\_

6. Marital status:

Single

Married

Separated or divorced

Widowed

7. What is your actual weight? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is your actual height? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How would you describe your body type?

Extra small

Small

Medium

Large

Extra Large

10. Have you ever been diagnosed as having any of the following problems?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Abdominal pains  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Temporary paralysis  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Epileptic seizures  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Eating disorder  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sleeping disorder

11. In the first 15 years of your life, did you live mostly in (check the one you lived in the longest):

- \_\_\_\_\_ A farm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ A town under 5,000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ A town between 5,000 and 25,000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ A town between 25,000 and 100,000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ A town between 100,000 and 200,000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ A town larger than 500,000

12. What were your parents' occupations?

Father	Mother	
1	1	Semiskilled or unskilled (truck driver, factory worker)
2	2	Skilled worker or foreman (machinist, carpenter, cook)
3	3	Farmer (owner-operator or rental)
4	4	Clerical or sales (but not manager)
5	5	Proprietor, except farm (owner of business)
6	6	Professional (architect, teacher, physician, lawyer)
7	7	No occupation outside home
8	8	Don't know

13. What was the highest level of education attained by your parents?

Father	Mother	
1	1	Some grade school
2	2	Completed grade school
3	3	Some high school
4	4	Completed high school
5	5	High school and some training but not college
6	6	Some College
7	7	Completed college
8	8	Some graduate work
9	9	Graduate degree (MD., Ph.D., MA)