



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR  
2007 PROJECT SUMMARY**

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| <b>Name(s)</b><br><b>Katherine J. Ohrbom</b>   | <b>Project Number</b><br><b>J0320</b> |
| <b>Project Title</b><br><b>The Media's Effect on Body Image and Eating Disorders</b>   |                                       |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abstract</b></p> <p><b>Objectives/Goals</b><br/>The purpose of my experiment is to determine what effect the media has on body image and whether or not it influences eating disorders in teens. If adults and parents were to know the cause of these diseases, they might be able to prevent them. The most common eating disorders, as well as the ones that I surveyed people on, are anorexia, bulimia, and bingeing-and-purging. By conducting this experiment, I hope to find out how big of an impact the media actually has on teenagers's body image. My hypothesis is that magazines and television play a gigantic role in the deterioration of good body image.</p> <p><b>Results</b><br/>In the boys that I polled, half of the ones who watch MTV and similar channels wanted to change how their body looked. None of the boys who did not watch MTV wanted to change how they looked. Of all the girls I surveyed, 75% of the ones who did not watch MTV and the like, wanted to change how they looked. The number was slightly less for girls who did watch MTV and other channels. This shows that most teens who watched MTV are dissatisfied with their body. Only two people that I polled admitted to having an eating disorder: they were girls who watched MTV. Of all the boys I polled, over 50% of those who did not read fashion magazines wanted to change their appearance. All of the girls polled who read fashion magazines wanted to change how they looked, and over 50% of those who did not wanted to change, as well. This shows that teenagers who read fashion magazines are more likely to want to change their appearance, but it is not the main cause.</p> <p><b>Conclusions/Discussion</b><br/>The purpose of the experiment that I conducted was to find out how big of a negative impact the media had on body image. I hypothesized that the media would play a big role in the deterioration of good body image. Judging from the data I collected, my hypothesis is inconclusive. To determine whether it is true or not, I would need to survey a larger group of people.</p> |                                       |
| <b>Summary Statement</b><br>To evaluate the effect mass media has on the deterioration of good body image in teenagers and pre-teens.  |                                       |
| <b>Help Received</b><br>Classmates and friends took surveys.   |                                       |