

## **“Keeping it Real”: Media Literacy Matters**

- **Association for Media Literacy Resources**  
(<http://www.aml.ca/resources/index.php>)

“The Association for Media Literacy is made up of teachers, librarians, consultants, parents, cultural workers, and media professionals concerned about the impact of the mass media on contemporary culture. AML is concerned with helping students develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the mass media, the techniques used by media industries, and the impact of these techniques.”

- Media Awareness Network – Body Image ([http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/body\\_image.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/body_image.cfm))

Whether through fashion, music videos, movies, magazines, video games or TV, today’s youth are bombarded daily with images of impossibly thin, fit, beautiful young people. The underlying marketing message is that there is a link between physical beauty and popularity, success, and happiness. Pressure to meet manufactured – and unattainable – standards of attractiveness can have real consequences that include low self-esteem, depression, bullying, eating disorders and body dissatisfaction.

Media Awareness Network offers several resources that help young people become more aware of the impact of media on their own self-esteem and body image.

- Images of Women in General Interest and Fashion Magazine Advertisements from 1955 to 2002  
(<http://www.springerlink.com/content/l84005700355q163/>)

This study was designed to examine the portrayal of women in advertisements in a general interest magazine (i.e. Time) and a women’s fashion magazine (i.e., Vogue) over the last 50 years. The coding scheme used for this analysis was based on the one developed by sociologist Erving Goffman in the 1970s, which focuses primarily on the subtle and underlying clues in the picture content of advertisements that contain messages in terms of (stereotypical) gender roles.

- Video Game Characters and the Socialization of Gender Roles: Young People’s Perceptions Mirror Sexist Media Depictions  
(<http://www.springerlink.com/content/d7667776258nt866/>)

Video game characters are icons in youth popular culture, but research on their role in gender socialization is rare. A content analysis of images of video

game characters from top-selling American gaming magazines showed male characters are more likely than female characters to be portrayed as aggressive. Female characters are more likely than male characters to be portrayed as sexualized, scantily clad and as showing a mix of sex and aggression. A survey of teens confirmed that stereotypes of male characters as aggressive and female characters as sexually objectified physical specimens are held even by non-gamers. Studies are discussed in terms of the role media plays in socializing sexism.

- Teaching Tolerance: Reshaping Body Image (<http://www.tolerance.org/activity/reshaping-body-image>)

In this lesson, students consider where we get our ideas about body image and investigate various influences, including culture, family and media. Using images from different historical periods and cultures, students are then challenged to understand and move beyond current social norms about physical size and appearance. The lesson concludes with a reflection on the impact of size bias on all people, and ways to emphasize the internal rather than external qualities of others.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6wJl37N9C0>

Katie Makkai, a veteran poetry slammer - defining the word "pretty".

Transcript can be found here: <http://dianasmanylifetimes.blogspot.com/2010/11/katie-makkai-pretty.html>

- **Self-Esteem Theme Page** ([http://www.cln.org/themes/self\\_esteem.html](http://www.cln.org/themes/self_esteem.html))

This "Theme Page" has links to two types of resources related to the study of Self-Esteem. Students and teachers will find curricular resources (information, content...) to help them learn about self-esteem and community-building. In addition, there are also links to instructional materials (lesson plans) which will help teachers provide instruction in this theme.