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## Easing The Teasing The Effects Of Appearance-related Feedback On Body Image Disturbance, Eating Pathology, Body Change Behaviors, And Self-objectification

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EASING THE TEASING: THE EFFECTS OF APPEARANCE-RELATED FEEDBACK ON  
BODY IMAGE DISTURBANCE, EATING PATHOLOGY, BODY CHANGE BEHAVIORS,  
AND SELF-OBJECTIFICATION

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Appearance-related commentary can be positive or negative. Such commentary has been shown to negatively affect the mental health and well-being of women in a well-documented body of research. There is limited research on this topic pertaining to males. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of appearance-related commentary in men. Results indicate that men who receive more negative commentary are more likely to experience eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, distress from commentary, and participate in compulsive exercising and appearance-change behaviors. However, men that receive positive commentary are likely to experience more positive outcomes, reporting less dissatisfaction and pathology but more appearance-change behaviors. It appears that men are affected by negative, appearance-related commentary in the same ways that women are, but that they experience positive commentary in a more direct and appropriate manner. Additionally, self-objectification, a covariate found to interact in similar relations with women, was not found to account for any of the variance between appearance-related feedback and outcomes.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

The effects of social and interpersonal factors on body image have been a popular area of study over the past two decades. Studies have found that appearance-related commentary and feedback have negative effects on individuals' body image, eating behavior, and psychological well-being (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999; Schwartz, Phares, Tantleff-Dunn, & Thompson, 1999; Calgero & Herbozo, 2009; Thompson & Smolak, 2001). The findings of such research reveal that appearance-related commentary is highly related to disturbances in both body image and eating pathology, as well as overall psychological functioning. The goal of this study is to investigate the effects of appearance-related commentary and teasing on self-objectification, body change behaviors, body image, and eating behaviors in men. This study's focus is on men because men are increasingly being diagnosed with body image disturbances and eating disorders (Carlat, Camargo & Herzog, 1997); they also increasingly participate in beauty regimens and receive cosmetic alterations that were previously considered mostly for women. As a result, investigating the way that men experience and internalize appearance commentary and teasing may facilitate our understanding of this phenomenon and our ability to intervene in ways that are more relevant to them.

It is important to appropriately define the construct of "appearance-related commentary" as researchers have investigated different topics under the same heading. The majority of the literature pertaining to this construct separates appearance-related commentary into appearance-related/weight-related teasing and appearance-related feedback. The main difference between the two phenomena is that teasing is usually a negative experience in which the teaser is directly and

negatively commenting on and/or criticizing some aspect of an individual's appearance. The second phenomena, appearance-related feedback, can be either positive or negative. Appearance-related feedback may not involve the direct teasing of an individual's physical appearance, rather, it involves statements, opinions, attitudes, and even gestures related to ones' physical appearance. There is a wealth of evidence to suggest that parents and peers can both directly and indirectly promote standards of physical attractiveness through negative commentary. A smaller but increasing body of literature also suggests that even positive feedback can lead to negative consequences in terms of body image, eating behaviors, and self-esteem. For the purposes of this research, I will focus on positive and negative, appearance-related commentary as well as teasing that includes more direct, pejorative statements, feedback, messages, or suggestions made about an individuals' physical appearance given the evidence of its potentially harmful effects on individuals.

### *Appearance-Related Commentary*

Comments and feedback about appearance are prevalent in our society. Cash (1995) found that commentary about women's physical appearance is a fairly common occurrence, with 46% of participants in this study reporting being teased moderately often and 71% indicating that these experiences shaped their body image. Similarly, Garner (1997) found that 44% of women and 35% of men reported that teasing shaped their body image when they were younger. Additionally, Fabian and Thompson (1989) found such appearance feedback to be linked to other clinically relevant factors such as eating disturbances, decreased psychological well-being, and depression. In a study on developmental factors related to body image development, Rieves and Cash (1996) found that 38% of participants believed that teasing had a negative effect on their

body image development. Moreover, adult participants who experienced negative appearance-related teasing were more likely to form maladaptive assumptions about their appearance, have negative body image views, and be preoccupied with weight.

The relation between appearance-related feedback and negative body image consequences also has been found to exist in children. Phares, Steinberg, and Thompson (2004) found that appearance-related commentary from parents was predictive of increased levels of psychological disturbance in male and female preadolescent children. Additionally, negative verbal feedback from peers was found to correlate positively with body image dissatisfaction and weight-related issues. The same study also found that both preadolescent girls' and boys' body dissatisfaction was related significantly to family and peer influences on eating and body shape as well as perceptions of this feedback. As such, the impact of negative appearance-related commentary during childhood likely plays a central role in young children's construction of maladaptive attitudes and feelings concerning their body image, eating habits, and physical appearance, the effects of which have been found to continue into adulthood (Garner, 1997 & Schwartz et al. 1999).

It is important to note that the frequency of appearance-related messages may be less significant in the development of negative consequences than the effects the commentaries may have on individuals. Perceptions of the impact of appearance teasing have been linked to body image disturbance and dissatisfaction beyond the actual frequency of the feedback (Cash, 1995; Cash, 1996; Fabian & Thompson, 1989; & Thompson & Psaltis, 1988). Thus, it is essential to assess the perceived influence and impact of appearance-related commentary in addition to the frequency of such events.

It appears that men and women experience different consequences when exposed to appearance-related feedback. For women, body image and psychological well-being are correlated negatively with appearance-related commentary (Schwartz, et al., 1999; Furman & Thompson, 2001; Keery, Boutelle, Van den Berg, & Thompson, 2005; Barker & Galambos, 2003). Women tend to exhibit more concern about their weight and become more active in their efforts to lose weight in response to negative appearance-related messages relative to men. For example, Neumark-Sztainer et al. (2002) found that women who reported being teased about their weight were at a higher risk for engaging in inappropriate weight control behaviors and demonstrated higher levels of body dissatisfaction, eating disturbance, and drive for/investment in thinness.

In studies on men, the results have been less concrete and less consistent compared to results of similar studies with women. Extant literature on this topic has demonstrated links between negative appearance-related commentary and body image disturbance and poorer mental health outcomes in men. For example, Gleason, Alexander, and Somers (2000) found that negative appearance messages predicted body dissatisfaction, and Barker and Galambos (2003) established teasing as a significant risk factor for body dissatisfaction in adolescent boys. Additionally, Schwartz et al. (1999) found that appearance-related commentary from both parents was a significant predictor of psychological functioning in men.

By contrast, some studies have found no significant correlation between appearance commentary and body satisfaction for men (Schwartz, et al., 1999; Phares, Steinberg, & Thompson, 2004), and one study found that negative appearance-related messages predict a drive for muscularity in men, which is different compared to the drive for thinness in women

(Vartanian, Giant, & Passino, 2001). It is noted here that the drive for muscularity is a concept that has been researched thoroughly and found to be an important component of male body image (e.g., Ricciardelli & McCabe 2003; Smolak, Murnen, & Thompson, 2005).

Although correlational and qualitative research have yielded a wealth of information about the relations between appearance-related commentary and body image, eating pathology, and psychological well-being, experimental studies have expanded our understanding of these phenomena by examining the causal relations between these variables. For example, using vignettes, Furman and Thompson (2002) demonstrated that experiences involving negative appearance teasing can elicit mood disturbance, even after controlling individual empathy and self-esteem. In another experiment, Tantleff-Dunn and Thompson (1998) used videotaped vignettes with embedded appearance-related comments and found differences in anger and ability to recall negative affective responses within the video between groups of women with varying degrees of body image anxiety. They also found that participants with high body image anxiety had a more negative overall reaction to the video relative to participants with low body image anxiety.

The preponderance of results suggests that men may be affected by negative appearance messages differently than women or in ways that may have not been identified by current methodology. Moreover, men have, for the most part, been examined with the same measurements designed for use with women--measures that assess desire for thinness, weight loss, and adherence to westernized female beauty ideals. The outcomes of such investigations with men often have been centered on weight loss and drive for thinness, constructs that have *not* been found to relate closely to males' body image concerns.

### *Self-Objectification Theory*

Objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) posits that Western culture sexually objectifies girls and women, gradually socializing them to internalize others' views of their physical concepts. This eventually leads to the individuals adopting such views, thereby engaging in self-objectification. Constant monitoring of the body's appearance, referred to as body surveillance, is a primary manifestation of self-objectification and is considered to be the main means by which self-objectification leads to negative psychological and physical consequences (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). In regards to appearance-related comments, objectification theory assumes that objectification occurs within social and interpersonal interactions (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), thereby establishing a link between appearance-related commentary and feelings of self-objectification.

Self-objectification has been shown to be a trait that is relatively stable over time (Tiggemann & Boundy, 2008) and is related to a variety of negative consequences for women including body shame, body image disturbance, eating pathology, cognitive skills deficits, and decreased psychological well-being (Noll & Fredrickson, 1998; Tiggemann & Lynch, 2001; Tiggemann & Kuring, 2004; Tiggemann & Slater, 2001). In all likelihood, certain environments and early experiences increase or decrease opportunities for individuals to internalize the objectification they experience. Research addressing potential factors in the development of trait self-objectification is necessary to understand and change the way individuals face and interpret objectified messages. Further, it seems reasonable to assume that certain events in an individual's life may lead to increased levels of momentary or state self-objectification. If these experiences persist over time, they may lead to trait objectification.

In terms of experiences or events that may influence self-objectification, previous research has discovered higher levels of body shame and self-objectification in women who read fashion and beauty magazines as well as those who participate in sports that emphasize the importance of a particular body shape and size (Tiggemann & Boundy, 2008). Similarly, objectifying advertisements in the media, praise, and criticism for certain body types and body parts and the gaze of others also have been found to be related to increased self-objectification in women. More recently, research has found appearance-related commentary to be linked to self-objectification in women (Calogero & Herbozo, 2009). As such, appearance-related commentary in general, and perhaps specifically from parents and guardians, is a possible source of increased state self-objectification. As suggested earlier, this may lead to the development of more stable, trait self-objectification based on the frequency and effect of these comments. To date, no research has examined the relation between self-objectification and feedback on physical appearance in men.

### *Self-Objectification in Males*

Since objectification theory was first posited, men have become increasingly objectified in the media and culture, possibly leading to an increase in male self-objectification (Martins, Tiggemann, & Kirkbride, 2007). A little over a decade ago, Sobieraj (1996) found that fifty percent of commercials aimed at women contained messages about physical attractiveness, whereas none of the commercials targeted men. This has changed dramatically with advertisements now targeting men to buy products and services previously aimed at women. Examples include diet products and plans specifically for men (i.e., NutriSystem for Men), deodorant, body wash, hair products, and body sprays touted specifically to increase male sexual

appeal (i.e., Axe deodorant, Axe Body Shots), and hair restoration services (i.e., Hair Club for Men). Such advertisements promote standards of attractiveness for men and solutions for men who currently fail to meet such standards.

Although objectification theory was discussed originally in terms of women, men's bodies are increasingly "dismembered, packaged, and used to sell everything from chain saws to chewing gum" (Kilbourne, 1999). The social effect of this is similar to what has been found with the self-objectification of women; the body becomes an object to be viewed and judged by others. Early in the history of objectification theory, researchers identified a relation between self-objectification and body shame for men (Fredrickson et al., 1998). However, men were not found to be as affected by self-objectification as were women, leading to the assumption that self-objectification was much more problematic for women than men. There was, however, a potentially important confound in the Fredrickson et al. (1998) study. The characteristics of the experimental situation may not have been equivalent between men and women in producing self-objectification. Although both genders were asked to wear either a swimsuit or a sweater, women were given snug swimsuits exposed the shape and size of their bodies, whereas men were given regular swim trunks that may not have represented a comparable, self-objectifying eliciting situation. Such contrasting conditions may at least partially explain the lack of experimental effects for men in that study.

As self-objectification was explored further, researchers learned more about the negative outcomes for high self-objectification in men (Fredrickson et al., 1998; Morry & Staska, 2001). Research has demonstrated that, compared to women, the consequences of self-objectification for men may be somewhat different, although similarly detrimental (Martins, Tiggemann, &

Kirkbride, 2007). For example, exposure to and internalization of the media's representation of the ideal male body has been shown to cause self-objectification (Morry & Staska, 2001) as well as muscle dissatisfaction (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004) in men. As the objectification of male bodies has increased in the media and in interpersonal relationships, so has the number of ways in which men try to alter their appearance in response to such pressure. Harvey and Robinson (2003) argue that the abundance of fitness centers, purchase of exercise equipment, use of anabolic steroids, and participation in both invasive and non-invasive cosmetic procedures, may reflect men's attempts to achieve Western appearance ideals for men. In women, the difference between current and preferred body shape and size is positively associated with body dissatisfaction and other negative consequences such as restrained and disordered eating behaviors (Stice, 2002). With the escalating objectification of men in our society, disturbed eating behaviors are becoming more common among men as well (Harvey & Robinson, 2003; Morry & Staska, 2001).

Although some research illuminates the problems that arise when men self-objectify, more research is needed to understand both the antecedents and components of male self-objectification. For example, Fredrickson et al. (1998) demonstrated that men did not experience some typically female components of self-objectification like body shame and body guilt when trying on a bathing suit during their experiment. Although, body surveillance has been found to be a primary manifestation of self-objectification among men (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), body surveillance was not examined in the swimsuit/sweater study. Body surveillance, as well as other behaviors related to appearance-related commentary, warrant more attention among male participants.

### *Self-Objectification and Appearance-related Commentary*

As reviewed above, there are many potential consequences of appearance-related commentary (e.g., body image disturbance, eating disorders, unhealthy weight control behaviors, low self-esteem). Despite that self-objectification is linked to body image disturbance, eating disorders, and self-esteem (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), few studies have investigated self-objectification as a negative outcome of appearance-related commentary. Calogero and Herbozo (2009) investigated appearance-related commentary and self-objectification in women and found that appearance criticisms predicted body surveillance and body dissatisfaction. Additionally, body surveillance (a key component of self-objectification) was found to partially mediate the relation between the impact of appearance commentary and body dissatisfaction, an effect that was further moderated by the women's level of trait self-objectification (Calogero & Herbozo). To date, there have been no investigations on the relationship between appearance-related commentary and self-objectification in men.

### *Need for Approval and Self-Esteem*

Previous research has found need for approval and self-esteem to be pivotal variables in the understanding of women's body image, eating behavior, and overall psychological well-being (Furnham & Calnan, 1998; Moulton, Moulton, & Roach, 1998; Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2001; Williamson & Hartley, 1998). Need for approval seems to be a significant motivator for eating disordered behaviors and levels of body satisfaction (Moulton, Moulton, & Roach, 1998; Kiyotaki & Yokoyama, 2006). Garfinkel and Garner (1982) suggested that individuals with eating disorders possess a great need for approval from others and a need to please others with their actions in order to maintain a sense of positive self-worth. Mukai, Kambara, and Sasaki

(1998) found that need for approval is related to body dissatisfaction, above and beyond eating disordered tendencies in college-aged women. Self-esteem similarly is correlated with body image, eating pathology, and other behaviors performed to change ones' appearance. Tiggemann (2005) suggested that self-esteem is directly related to and in some cases based on feelings about appearance. Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, and Bouvrette (2003) propose that appearance is a separate facet of self-esteem. Other studies (e.g., Button, Sonuga-Barke, Davies, & Thompson, 1996) have shown that pre-existing self-esteem seems to predict later eating concerns, disorders, and body image problems.

#### *Appearance Change Behaviors and Strategies in Males*

Dissatisfaction with body shape, size, or weight, is fairly pervasive. For women, such dissatisfaction is so common that it has been referred to as a “normative discontent” (Rodin, Silberstein, & Striegel-Moore, 1985). More recently, research has focused on men who also experience dissatisfaction with their bodies (Pope, et al, 2001, Cohane & Pope, 2001, McCreary and Sasse, 2000). Studies have shown that men typically desire to be leaner and more muscular (Muth & Cash, 1997, Hildebrandt, Langenbucher, and Schlundt, 2004, Morrison, Morrison, Hopkins, & Rowan, 2004, Yelland & Tiggemann, 2003, McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004, Pope et al. 2002). Therefore, it seems that for both men and women, body weight and body shape are central themes of body image. However, researchers may have too narrowly defined the attitudes and behaviors associated with male body image as a result of the generalization of concepts taken from literature on female body image. Again, as with measuring appearance-related commentary from men, most studies use measurement to address questions designed specifically for women and those instruments may not yield valid information about men.

Recent research has demonstrated that there are other, unique facets that may comprise male body image besides leanness and muscularity concerns (Schooler & Ward, 2006, Tiggemann, Martins, & Churchett, 2008). Tiggemann, Martins, and Churchett (2008) found that among men, ideal body part ratings differed from perceived actual body part ratings, resulting in dissatisfaction for those parts. They also found that, on average, men desired to be leaner, more muscular, have a fuller head of hair, have less body hair, be taller, and have a larger penis. Perhaps even more importantly, all of these aspects were considered at least moderately important to their notions of physical attractiveness. Schooler and Ward (2006) investigated the aspects of sweat, body hair, and odors in relation to male body image and found that men who were relatively uncomfortable with these body aspects had less body esteem and engaged in riskier sexual behaviors compared to men who were more comfortable with those body aspects. Schooler and Ward speculated that the shame men experience related to sweat, body hair, and odors may lead them to become emotionally and communicatively withdrawn from partners.

Another area which may affect male body image is hair. Regarding body hair, hair removal, or depilation, has become more accepted for men. Boroughs and Thompson (2002) reported that 90% of men in their sample removed hair from their torso/abdomen, 85% removed hair from their chest and groin, and 20% removed hair from their upper back. Moreover, they found that many men reported feeling anxious when they were unable to remove hair before social events, and 65% of their sample indicated that removing hair prior to social engagements was either important or very important (the two highest ratings) on a scale used to assess that behavior. Interestingly, all participants reported receiving positive feedback from others regarding their hair removal behaviors (Boroughs & Thompson, 2002). This is an obvious and

interesting change from previous ideal of manliness, in which body hair was considered a symbol of masculinity and virility (Basow, 1991; Basow & Braman, 1998; Tiggemann & Kenyon, 1998) and hair removal was the province of women (Basow & Braman, 1998; Hope, 1982; Tiggemann & Kenyon, 1998). Comparatively, modern Westernized culture currently seems to value the hairless male body, making depilation culturally acceptable and important for both men and women.

In terms of head hair, the literature has shown that both men and women rated a full head of hair as more desirable than bald or thinning hair (Tiggemann, Martins, Churchett, 2008). More importantly, men who were going bald or currently bald identified themselves as less attractive and reported more self-consciousness and stress (Cash, 2001). Others perceived balding or bald men as older, less masculine, and less physically and socially attractive (Cash).

Penis size is another area that may influence male body image. Studies have shown that many men consider their penis to be smaller than an average penis (Lee, 1996; Son, Lee, Huh, Kim, & Paick, 2003). Men in these studies also tend to underestimate their own penis size. In one study, which included 25,000 male participants, 45 percent of men were dissatisfied with the size of their penis and reported that they wish it were larger in size (Lever, Frederick, & Peplau, 2006). Similarly, Morrison, Bearden, Ellis, and Harriman (2005) found that the length of the penis with which men are most dissatisfied compared to other body aspects such as shape, hair, or odor.

If men are increasingly dissatisfied with their physical appearance, it is reasonable to infer that they may be increasing the amount of time and the number of behaviors they do in order to address their perceived shortcomings. For example, Grogan (2008) reports that men

account for 9 percent of the total cosmetic procedures performed in the United States, with a 2 percent increase of minimally invasive procedures (i.e., Botox injections, chemical peels, and laser hair removal) from 2007. Men underwent 1, 120, 803 cosmetic procedures in 2008, which is a 9.7 percent increase from the year 2000. Pectoral implant surgery has increased 203 percent from 2007. The most performed procedure for males in 2008 was nose reshaping, followed by eyelid surgery, liposuction, breast reduction, and hair transplantation, respectively (ASPS, 2008).

In a similar vein, the emergence of beauty products on the market that are specifically targeted to men have notably increased. Popular and previously female-dominated brands like Clinique and Shieshedo have introduced products specifically for male image concerns, including skin care, lotions, hair removal products, and wrinkle treatments. In 1997, men purchased over 3.5 billion dollars worth of beauty products, a large increase from the previous decade during which there were fewer male cosmetic products on the market (Pope, Phillips & Olivardia, 2002). As such, the rise in both cosmetic surgery procedures for men and the purchase and use of male beauty products suggest that concerns of male body image outside the realm of leanness and thinness are becoming more customary in the modern man. Taken together, the above research suggests that the ideal male is odorless, sweat-free, and practically hairless (with the exception of a thick head of hair). He also has a long penis, smooth skin, and is wrinkle free, in addition to having the mesomorphic V-shaped body and minimal body fat (Alexander, Pope, & Gleason, 2000). Obviously, few men match this stringent ideal and many may start and or continue to participate in behaviors aimed to help remedy these seeming insufficiencies.

### *Summary of Findings and the Current Study*

Appearance-related commentary has been linked to reduced psychological well-being in individuals, particularly in the realm of body dissatisfaction and disordered eating (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Because men are being diagnosed with body image and eating problems more frequently, it is important to understand the mechanisms by which commentaries adversely influence men's body image and associated behaviors (Carlat, Camargo & Herzog, 1997). Previous literature has yielded discrepant findings regarding the links between negative appearance-related commentary and body image disturbance and poorer mental health outcomes in men. Some research has shown that negative appearance-related commentary has pejorative effects on male body image and psychological functioning (Gleason, Alexander, & Somers, 2000; Schwartz, Phares, Tantleff-Dunn & Thompson, 1999), whereas other research has found no significant correlation between appearance commentary and body satisfaction for men (Schwartz, et al., 1999; Phares, Steinberg, & Thompson, 2004).

One possible variable that may play a role in the link between negative appearance-related commentary and men's body image disturbances and behaviors is self-objectification. Men increasingly report higher levels of self-objectification, leading them to adopt and internalize outside views of their physical selves (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). As discussed earlier, men's self-objectification is related to eating pathology (Harvey & Robinson, 2003; Morry & Staska, 2001), muscle dissatisfaction (Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004), compulsive exercising, use of anabolic steroids, and participation in both invasive and non-invasive cosmetic procedures (Harvey & Robinson, 2003). To date, there have been no investigations on the relation between appearance-related commentary and self-objectification in men. The current

study addresses this gap in the literature and may help to explain why men have increased their appearance/body-change behaviors. This study represents an extension of previous research by examining the extent to which appearance-related commentary predicts body image disturbance and eating pathology in men while considering the role of self-objectification in the process. I examined the predictive ability of commentary on self-objectification, compulsive exercising, investment in appearance, body image disturbance, eating pathology, and appearance/body-change behaviors.

### *Hypothesis 1*

Men who receive relatively higher levels of positive or negative appearance-related commentary and appearance-related teasing throughout their lives will likely engage in higher levels of appearance change behaviors, perhaps in an effort to reduce the appearance feedback or the negative emotions surrounding the feedback. Therefore, it was hypothesized that men who received more positive appearance commentary, negative appearance commentary, and appearance-based teasing relative to those who received less would have higher levels of body dissatisfaction, eating pathology, compulsive exercising, appearance change behaviors and distress from such feedback. It was also hypothesized that men who reported more distress associated with positive, negative, and teasing focused appearance feedback would have higher levels of body dissatisfaction, eating pathology, compulsive exercising, appearance change behaviors compared to men who reported less distress associated with the feedback.

### *Hypothesis 2*

It was hypothesized that self-objectification may account for any observed differences between men who report high and low levels of distress from appearance-related commentary

and teasing on the number of appearance-change behaviors, eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, and compulsive exercise. Need for approval and self-esteem, two variables found to be related to several of the study DVs, were treated as potential covariates that might influence relations being examined in the current study. This prediction is based on the idea that the more self-objectification men engage in, (or need for approval or self-esteem), the more likely they are to internalize the opinions of other people.

## CHAPTER TWO: METHOD

### *Participants*

Participants were 454 male undergraduate students from a large Southeastern University. All eligible men were recruited from psychology courses and through the university's online-based research recruitment program. Participation was open to all male undergraduate students, regardless of age, race, or sexual orientation. Participants had a mean age of 20.6 with a standard deviation of 3.6. Regarding ethnicity, 293 (64.7%) self-reported as non-Hispanic White, 70 (15.6%) as Hispanic/Latino, 45 (9.9%) as African-American, 21 (4.8%) as Asian-American, and 22 (4.9%) as "other." Regarding class standing, 163 (35.9%) self-reported as holding a freshman status, 100 (22%) as sophomore status, 119 (26.2%) as junior status and 72 (15.9%) as senior status.

### *Materials*

Participants completed an in-person or online research packet consisting of the following measures:

#### *VCOPAS*

The Verbal Commentary on Appearance Scale (Herbozo & Thompson, 2009), is a 21-item measure that assesses the frequency and effect of physical appearance-related commentary. It consists of negative weight and shape, positive weight and shape, and positive general appearance subscales. The negative weight and shape subscale measures body-related comments that are considered to be negative (e.g., offensive) whereas the positive weight and shape subscale measures body related comments consisting of positive content (e.g., flattering). The positive general appearance scale assesses comments related to overall physical appearance that

are positive in terms of content. Respondents are asked to provide a frequency rating by indicating how often they were the recipient of each listed comment using a five-point rating scale from never to always. Unless the participant responds “never” to a comment, they also are asked to indicate how positively or negatively they experienced each comment using a five-point scale from very positive to very negative.

The VCOPAS was originally created and normed on women. For the purpose of this study, the authors of the scale were contacted and permission to modify several items in an attempt to make them more applicable to men was granted. Item numbers 3, 1, and 12 were modified accordingly. The VCOPAS was used as four separate subscales for this study, frequency of positive comments, frequency of negative comments, distress associated with positive comments, and distress associated with negative comments. Reliabilities for the current study were .70, .84, .84, and .90, respectively.

#### *POTS*

The Perceptions of Teasing Scale (Thompson, Cattarin, Fowler, & Fisher, 1995) is an 11-item scale measuring the frequency and effect of teasing in two domains: weight-related teasing and competency-based teasing. Respondents were given the following instructions for teasing effect ratings: "Unless you responded never to a particular question, rate how upset you were by the teasing." Ratings are made based on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not upset) to 5 (very upset). Because participants only complete an effect item if they respond other than "never" to the frequency item, the effect score is a mean per item (total effect score divided by the number of response items). Only the weight-related teasing subscale will be used for this research. Cronbach's alpha has been reported to be .88 for this subscale. Additionally, items assessing

muscularity, hair, and overall appearance (item numbers 4-6, 9, 11-15) were created by the researcher to better assess perceived appearance-based commentary specifically for men. These items address strength, hair, and working out in an effort more accurately assess body aspects that men may be teased about. The frequency of teasing received has a Cronbach's alpha of .95 in the present study. The distress associated with the teasing had a Cronbach's alpha of .96.

*Appearance Orientation Subscale of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire*

The Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ) is a widely used self-report measure of body image as has been normed for both men and women (Brown, Cash, & Mikulka). It has 10 subscales that assess individuals' investment in as well as evaluation of their appearance, health, fitness, illness, weight, and shape. The MBSRQ has demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability based on a large, national sample (Brown, Cash, & Mikulka). For the present study, only one of the subscales was used. The 12-item Appearance Orientation (AO) subscale ( $\alpha = .88$ ) was used to assess the extent of an individuals' investment in their appearance, which has been correlated with levels of self-objectification in women (Brown, Cash & Mikulka, 1990). Higher scores represent a greater importance placed on the individuals' physical appearance. Cronbach's alpha was .86 in the current study.

*Eating Disorder Inventory-3*

The Eating Disorder Inventory-3 (EDI-3) (Garner, 2004) consists of eight subscales that assess traits, behaviors, and attitudes typically associated with eating disorders, with higher scores reflecting greater eating pathology. Three of the subscales of the EDI-3 were administered in the current study: Drive for Thinness (7 items measuring an extreme desire to be thinner and an intense fear of weight gain); Bulimia (8 items measuring the tendency to engage

in bouts of uncontrollable overeating [e.g., binge eating]); and Body Dissatisfaction (10 items measuring dissatisfaction with one's overall shape and size of the body). These subscales have been found to be reliable; Cronbach alphas reported in the EDI-3 Manual were .91 for Drive for Thinness, .63 for Bulimia, and .91 for Body Dissatisfaction in adult clinical samples. For more information about their psychometric properties, see Garner). In the current study, Drive for Thinness and Bulimia were combined into a single variable, eating pathology, with a Cronbach's alpha of .92. Body Dissatisfaction had an alpha level of .87.

#### *Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire*

The Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire is a 20-item measure designed to measure the psychological compulsion to exercise (Pasman & Thompson, 1988). Participants rate their exercise behaviors (e.g., "When I don't exercise I feel guilty") on a 4-point scale anchored by 1 (Never) and 4 (Always). It was normed for both men and women. Test-retest reliability was found to be .96 and internal consistency was calculated to be .96 (Thompson & Pasman, 1991). In the present study, the Cronbach reliability alpha was .90.

#### *Measure of Appearance Change Behaviors/ Strategies for Men*

This measure was created for the purpose of the present study in an effort to gain a better understanding of the different behaviors and strategies employed by men to alter their appearance. The measure consists of items in several categories (e.g., body shape and size, body hair, skincare) each of which is rated in terms of if the individual participates in the activity (e.g. have participated in the past, currently engage in behavior) and, if so, how frequently they are engaging in the behavior (e.g., never, once a month, daily, etc.). Since reliability could not be calculated for this measure, test-retest reliability was examined and found to be .84.

### *Need for Approval*

To assess participants' need to be approved by others, they completed the *Martin-Larsen Approval Motivation Scale-Short Form* (MLAM-sf; Martin, 1984). The short form is based on the original, 21-item MLAM (Larsen, Martin, Ettinger, & Nelson, 1976) that was designed to assess respondents' desire to receive positive evaluations and social approval from others. The MLAM-sf contains five counter-balanced statements to which participants respond using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with response options ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Higher scores reflect a higher need for social approval or acceptance. The MLAM-sf has been found to have adequate internal consistency (Cronbach alpha = .67). Construct validity for the MLAM-sf was demonstrated by its inverse correlations with global and social self-esteem and positive correlations with self-monitoring and a measure of inadequacy (see Martin). In the present study, the Cronbach reliability alpha was .98.

### *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale*

The RSE consists of 10 items assessing global self-esteem (e.g., "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself"). Previous studies have reported alpha reliabilities for the RSE ranging from .72 to .88 (Gray-Little et al., 1997). In the present sample, alpha reliability was .73.

### *Procedure*

Participants agreed to complete a research packet either online via the University's research collection protocol or in person after one of their upper-level psychology courses. This study was reviewed and approved by the institutional review board where the study took place. Participants who completed the packets in person were given the questionnaires during class and were instructed to fill them out after class in one sitting. They were further instructed to return

them to class the following week. Participants who filled out the questionnaires online received the same material and were to complete the questionnaires in their entirety in order to receive credit.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

### *Hypothesis 1 Testing*

It was hypothesized that individuals who receive more frequent positive appearance-related commentary, negative appearance-related commentary, and appearance-related teasing would have higher levels of eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, compulsive exercising, appearance change behaviors, and distress caused from such commentary relative to those who receive less. Additionally, those who felt more distress from positive appearance-related, negative appearance-related, and appearance-related teasing comments also would have higher levels of these variables (i.e., eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, compulsive exercising, and appearance change behaviors). To test this hypothesis, two groups of participants were established from the sample based on the levels of appearance-related commentary they reported having received. More specifically, the 25% of participants who received the most commentary was compared to the 25% of participants who received the least amount of commentary. These comparative groups were established three times: once based on the frequency of positive commentary received, once based on the frequency of negative commentary received, and once based on the amount of teasing they had received. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed for each set of comparative groups. To control for Type 1 error due to multiple comparisons, a Bonferoni adjustment was made to the alpha level for five total comparisons. The new alpha level is .01 (.05/5).

In the first MANOVA, the independent variable (IV) was group membership (top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of frequency of *positive* appearance related feedback received). The dependent variables (DVs) were appearance change behaviors, eating pathology

(as measured by the combined scores of the drive for thinness and bulimic symptoms subscales of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III), body dissatisfaction, compulsive exercising, and distress resulting from positive comments received. Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs (using Wilks' Lambda,  $F [5,187] = 37.4, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .500$ ). Univariate tests indicated that men who received the most frequent, positive appearance commentary reported performing significantly more appearance-change behaviors ( $M = 28.7, SD = 14.3$ ) than those who received the least commentary ( $M = 16.9, SD = 10.5$ ), ( $F [1,191] = 40.4, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .175$ ), reported higher levels of compulsive exercise ( $M = 2.4, SD = .52$ ) compared to those who received the least positive commentary ( $M = 1.9, SD = .46$ ), ( $F [1,191] = 60.2, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .240$ ), and reported significantly more distress from positive comments ( $M = 4.1, SD = .59$ ) relative to those who received the least positive commentary ( $M = 2.7, SD = 1.1$ ), ( $F [1,191] = 127.6, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .401$ ). Contrary to prediction, men who received the most frequent, positive appearance commentary reported significantly less body dissatisfaction ( $M = 1.1, SD = .80$ ) than those who received the least positive commentary ( $M = 1.8, SD = .99$ ), ( $F [1,191] = 23.5, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .110$ ). There was no significant difference between groups relative to their eating pathology.

In the second MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of frequency of *negative* appearance related feedback received). The DVs remained the same as in the previous MANOVA, except that distress from positive comments was removed and distress from negative comments was included. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was

associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [5, 193] = 41.3, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .517$ ). As predicted, univariate tests indicated that men who received the most frequent, negative appearance commentary reported significantly more appearance-related change behaviors ( $M = 28.1, SD = 16.9$ ), relative to those who received the least negative commentary ( $M = 20.4, SD = 10.7$ ), ( $F [1,197] = 13.4, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .063$ ), reported significantly more compulsive exercising ( $M = 2.3, SD = .59$ ) relative to those who received the least negative commentary ( $M = 2.0, SD = .49$ ), ( $F [1,197] = 9.4, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .045$ ), reported significantly more body dissatisfaction ( $M = 2.0, SD = .81$ ) relative to those who received the least negative commentary ( $M = 1.1, SD = .81$ ), ( $F [1,197] = 51.0, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .206$ ), reported significantly more eating pathology ( $M = 1.4, SD = .75$ ) relative to those who received the least negative commentary ( $M = .60, SD = .63$ ), ( $F [1,197] = 61.5, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .238$ ), and also perceived significantly more distress associated with receiving negative appearance commentary ( $M = 2.7, SD = .58$ ) relative to those who received the least negative commentary ( $M = 1.4, SD = 1.1$ ), ( $F [1,197] = 121.9, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .382$ ).

In the third MANOVA, the IV was group membership (top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of frequency of *appearance-related teasing* received). The DVs remained the same as in the previous MANOVA, except that distress resulting negative comments received was removed and distress from teasing comments received was included. Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [5, 91] = 25.3, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .581$ ). As predicted, univariate tests indicated that men who received the most frequent, appearance-related teasing reported significantly more body dissatisfaction ( $M = 2.2,$

$SD = .78$ ) relative to those who received the least teasing ( $M = 1.3, SD = .95$ ), ( $F [1,95] = 17.4, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .209$ ), reported significantly more eating pathology ( $M = 1.7, SD = .84$ ) relative to those who received the least teasing ( $M = 1.0, SD = .86$ ), ( $F [1,95] = 10.4, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .132$ ), and reported significantly more distress related to the teasing ( $M = 2.6, SD = .76$ ), relative to those who reported the least amount of appearance-related teasing ( $M = 1.0, SD = .15$ ), ( $F [1,95] = 47.8, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .550$ ). There was no significant difference between the groups in terms of the number of appearance change behaviors or compulsive exercise.

In the next series of MANOVAs, participants were compared based on their level of distress resulting from positive, negative, and teasing-based appearance-related commentary. Specifically, the 25% of participants who reported the most distress from appearance-related commentary was compared to the 25% of participants who reported the least distress from such commentary. To control for Type 1 error due to multiple comparisons, a Bonferoni adjustment was made to the alpha level for four total comparisons. The new alpha level is .013 (.05/4).

In the first MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of distress from *positive* appearance-related comments received). The DVs were appearance change behaviors, eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, and compulsive exercising. Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [4, 205] = 14.0, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .215$ ). As predicted, univariate tests indicated that men who reported the most distress from positive appearance-related commentary reported significantly more compulsive exercising ( $M = 2.3, SD = .54$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress ( $M = 2.0, SD = .50$ ), ( $F [1, 208] = 23.6, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .102$ ). Contrary to prediction, men

who reported the most distress from positive appearance-related commentary reported significantly less body dissatisfaction ( $M = 1.2, SD = .96$ ) compared to those who reported the least distress ( $M = 1.9, SD = .93$ ), ( $F [1, 208] = 24.6, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .106$ ). There was no significant difference between the groups with regard to the number of appearance-change behaviors performed or eating pathology.

In the second MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of distress from *negative* appearance-related comments received). The DVs remained the same as in the previous MANOVA. Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [4, 199] = 6.9, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .121$ ). As predicted, univariate tests indicated that men who reported the most distress from negative, appearance-related commentary reported significantly more compulsive exercising ( $M = 2.3, SD = .50$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from negative-appearance commentary ( $M = 2.0, SD = .49$ ), ( $F [1, 202] = 27.3, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .119$ ), reported significantly more eating pathology ( $M = 1.1, SD = .85$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from negative-appearance commentary ( $M = .78, SD = .69$ ), ( $F [1, 202] = 7.3, p < .01$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .035$ ), and reported participating in significantly more appearance change behaviors ( $M = 28.3, SD = 17.2$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from negative-appearance commentary ( $M = 22.3, SD = 12.4$ ), ( $F [1, 202] = 8.1, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .038$ ). There was no significant difference between the groups regarding body dissatisfaction.

In the third MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of distress from *teasing-related* comments received). The DVs remained the

same as in the previous MANOVA. Table 6 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [4, 108] = 14.4, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .348$ ). As predicted, univariate tests indicated that men who reported the most distress from appearance-related teasing reported significantly more appearance change behaviors ( $M = 33.7, SD = 19.0$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from appearance-related teasing ( $M = 23.3, SD = 15.7$ ), ( $F [1, 111] = 10.4, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .085$ ), reported significantly more body dissatisfaction ( $M = 2.3, SD = .78$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from appearance-related teasing ( $M = 1.2, SD = .92$ ), ( $F [1, 111] = 43.6, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .282$ ), and reported significantly more eating pathology ( $M = 1.9, SD = .79$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from appearance-related teasing ( $M = .94, SD = .75, (F [1, 111] = 41.5, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .272)$ ). There was no significant difference between the groups regarding compulsive exercising.

### *Hypothesis 2 Testing*

It was hypothesized that need for approval, self-objectification, and self-esteem may account for the observed differences between distress levels on the number of appearance-change behaviors, eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, and compulsive exercise. Initially, MANOVAs were conducted to determine if the comparative groups differed significantly on three potential covariates: self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval. If the groups differed significantly on one or more variables, a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was performed comparing groups on the study DVs on which they previously had been found to differ, while treating self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval as covariates.

In the first MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of distress from *positive* appearance-related comments received). The DVs were the three potential covariates: self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval. Table 7 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [3, 213] = 5.0, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .066$ ). Univariate tests indicated that men who reported the most distress from positive appearance-related commentary reported significantly higher levels of self-objectification ( $M = 3.4, SD = .75$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from positive appearance-related commentary ( $M = 3.1, SD = .66$ ), ( $F [1, 111] = 10.6, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .047$ ). There was no significant difference between the groups regarding self-esteem and need for approval. As a result of this finding, a MANCOVA was conducted to determine if self-objectification accounted for previously obtained group differences on compulsive exercise and body dissatisfaction. Group membership continued to be associated significantly with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [2, 210] = 24.1, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .187$ ), suggesting that self-objectification did not account for differences between the two levels of distress from positive appearance-related commentary.

In the second MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of distress from *negative* appearance-related comments received). The DVs were the three potential covariates: self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval. Table 8 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [3, 213] = 6.3, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .082$ ). Univariate tests indicated that men who reported the most distress

from negative appearance-related commentary reported significantly lower levels of self-esteem ( $M = 2.0, SD = .86$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from negative appearance-related commentary ( $M = 2.5, SD = 1.0$ ), ( $F [1,214] = 14.1, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .062$ ) and reported a greater need for approval ( $M = 2.8, SD = .57$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from negative appearance-related commentary ( $M = 2.6, SD = .54$ ), ( $F [1,214] = 7.4, p < .01$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .033$ ). There was no significant difference between the groups regarding self-objectification. As a result of this finding, a MANCOVA was conducted to determine if either self-esteem or need for approval accounted for the previously obtained group differences on compulsive exercise, eating pathology, and appearance-change behaviors. Group membership continued to be associated significantly with an effect on the DVs ( $F [3, 201] = 9.5, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .124$ ), suggesting that self-esteem and need for approval did not account for differences between the two levels of distress resulting from negative appearance-related commentary.

In the third MANOVA, the IV was group membership (the top 25% and bottom 25% of the sample in terms of distress from *appearance-related teasing* received). The DVs were the three potential covariates: self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval. Table 9 shows the means and standard deviations on the DVs obtained by the two participant groups. Group membership was associated with a significant effect on the DVs ( $F [3, 114] = 3.8, p < .01$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .092$ ). Univariate tests indicated that men who reported the most distress from appearance-related teasing reported significantly higher levels of self-esteem ( $M = 2.4, SD = .70$ ) relative to those who reported the least distress from appearance-related teasing ( $M = 1.9, SD = .87$ ), ( $F [1,116] = 9.9, p < .01$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .079$ ). There was no significant difference

between the groups regarding self-objectification or need for approval. As a result of this finding, a MANCOVA was conducted to determine if self-esteem accounted for the previously obtained group differences on body dissatisfaction, eating pathology, and appearance-change behaviors. Group membership continued to be associated significantly with an effect on the DVs ( $F [3, 109] = 14.9, p < .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .291$ ), suggesting that self-esteem did not account for differences between the two levels of distress resulting from appearance-related teasing.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

It was hypothesized that individuals who receive more frequent positive appearance-related commentary, negative appearance-related commentary, and appearance-related teasing would have higher levels of eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, compulsive exercising, appearance change behaviors, and distress caused from such commentary relative to those who receive less. Additionally, those who felt more distress from positive appearance-related, negative appearance-related, and appearance-related teasing comments also would have higher levels of these variables (i.e., eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, compulsive exercising, and appearance change behaviors). The data supported the hypothesis. Men who reported receiving relatively high levels of positive appearance-related commentary reported engaging in higher levels of compulsive exercise, appearance-change behaviors, and reported experiencing higher levels of distress from such commentary compared to men who reported that they received relatively low levels of positive appearance-related commentary. Compulsive exercise has been studied extensively as a maladaptive behavior in men with body image disturbance and eating pathology (Brehm & Steffen, 1998 & Morgan, 2008). Men who receive positive appearance-related commentary may be more likely to begin a workout regimen, maintain a current workout regimen, or increase their current regimen after receiving such feedback. It may be that men are inspired to keep their physique as is, leading them to exercise more, or it may be that receiving positive feedback functions as a source of extrinsic reward, driving men to workout harder and longer to continue being praised. Because motivation to exercise was not assessed in this study, our data do not clarify the motivational reasons behind compulsive exercise. Also, men who reported receiving more frequent, positive appearance-based commentary reported performing

more appearance-change behaviors compared to those who received less positive appearance-related commentary. Similar to compulsive exercise, men who achieve a sense of extrinsic reward from receiving appearance praise may be more inclined to begin or continue altering their appearance as a way to continue receiving positive attention from others.

The finding that men who reported receiving relatively high levels of positive appearance-related commentary reported experiencing distress in response to the comments is somewhat perplexing. Perhaps men experiencing such distress internalize such feedback as a realization that people are observing and making judgments based on their physical appearance. It also is possible that men who receive high levels of positive appearance-related commentary have mixed emotions about such comments. More specifically, they may, in part, enjoy the praise while not wanting unwanted attention. The ambivalence over positive appearance-related commentary may underlie some or much of the distress reported. It also is possible that men's distress over positive appearance-related commentary leads to exercising or grooming as a way to channel their discomfort over positive appearance-related commentary into socially appropriate behaviors. If that were to be the case, such sublimatic actions may function to temporarily relieve some anxiety from being observed or judged based on physical appearance. As suggested, it is difficult to know with certainty why positive appearance-related commentary would be associated with distress among men. Previous research investigating the relation between feedback and distress has illuminated this issue with women. Herbozo and Thompson (2006), for example, found that the frequency of positive appearance-related commentary was significantly related to appearance dissatisfaction, lower appearance investment, and lower self-esteem, as well as increased levels of distress from such feedback in a sample of college women.

From such findings, it stands to reason that something about receiving complimentary appearance feedback leads to a negative response in both men and women.

Contrary to prediction, men who reported receiving more positive appearance-related commentary reported having higher body satisfaction. This prediction had been made primarily based on findings among women. Women tend to experience a decrease in body satisfaction and may develop a body image disturbance when they receive positive or negative feedback on their appearance (Calgero & Herbozo, 2009; Schwartz, et al., 1999; Thompson, et al., 1999; Thompson & Smolak, 2001). Some researchers (e.g., Herbozo & Thompson, 2006) have suggested that this occurs, regardless of connotation, because women's bodies are objectified and women are socialized to believe that they ought to change their bodies in response to others' comments. Calogero and Herbozo (2009) investigated receiving positive appearance commentary in a sample of women. All women in their sample reported increased body dissatisfaction in association with receiving positive comments. Their research supports the notion of *complimentary weightism*, a phenomenon that seems to occur when positive appearance-related comments have detrimental consequences for women's level of body satisfaction (Calogero & Herbozo). It is both interesting and hopeful that perhaps men receiving complimentary feedback on their physical appearance may internalize this feedback less than women and that it may actually serve to bolster their body satisfaction. Or, men may take the comments at face value, as compliments. The positive comments may reinforce their positive self-appraisals and motivate them to look their best. My results seem to suggest that men are better able to accept compliments about their body without construing such praise as negative or harassing.

Consistent with the hypothesis, men who reported receiving relatively high levels of negative appearance-related commentary reported engaging in significantly more appearance-change behaviors and compulsive exercising, and reported more body dissatisfaction, eating pathology, and distress than men who received low levels of negative appearance-related commentary. These results are similar to those obtained with women for whom negative appearance-based commentary tends to lead to maladaptive practices, thoughts, and outcomes (Herbozo & Thompson, 2006; Schwartz et al., 1999). These results suggest that for many individuals, irrespective of gender, they interpret the feedback as criticism and consequently the feedback has a powerful, detrimental effect on their self-image. This could lead to potentially engagement in an array of behaviors that range from helpful (e.g., moderate dieting) to dysfunctional (e.g., excessive dieting). The extant research in this area is clear on this point in that negative feedback directed towards ones' physical appearance generally leads to harmful or maladaptive outcomes (Fabian & Thompson, 1989). As most of this research has been examined with female participants, it is important to recognize that these effects are generalizable to men and even to boys (e.g., Phares, Steinberg, & Thompson, 2004).

With regard to appearance-related teasing, men who reported relatively high levels of teasing were more likely to experience body dissatisfaction and eating pathology relative to the men who received less appearance-focused teasing. When compared to negative, appearance-related commentary, appearance-based teasing in all likelihood is a hurtful, generally direct attack on a person's physical appearance. Moreover, teasing by definition reflects aggression on the part of the teaser. (Keery et al., 2005). Such unambiguous criticism with aggressive overtones may lead individuals to become more self-conscious about particular body parts or aspects. As

expected, men at the two levels of teasing also differed significantly on teasing-related distress. Body dissatisfaction, problematic eating patterns, and distress more clearly represent psychopathology compared to compulsive exercising or appearance-related change behaviors, and teasing was most linked with the first group of indices of psychopathology. Stated differently, teasing may produce more severe reactions among the targets of the teasing compared to positive or negative appearance-related comments. These results seem to replicate the outcomes of similar studies performed with female participants, in which women who reported being teased about their physical appearance were at a higher risk for engaging in inappropriate weight control behaviors compared to pursuing healthier, more appropriate actions to either change their appearance or ignore the teaser (Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2002).

The next set of results pertained to groups of men who differed specifically in the level of distress they reported from the different types of comments. Distress has been found to be more directly related to negative outcomes from appearance-related comments in women (Cash, 1995; Fabian & Thompson, 1989). In my study, I examined this with men due to the paucity of research in this area on male participants. As expected, men who reported relatively high levels of distress from receiving positive, appearance-related commentary were more likely to participate in compulsive exercising than men reporting relatively low levels of distress. Similar to the explanation above, men who are distressed from receiving appearance-related commentary, even commentary which praises their physical bodies or characteristics, may drive them to engage in behaviors such as exercise as a means to continue receiving such praise. Stated differently, although men may experience and report feeling distressed over positive comments about their appearance, positive comments are compliments nonetheless, and may serve as

extrinsic motivators for maximizing their appearance via exercising. Consistent with this notion, yet adding to the complexity of this situation, it was found that men who are relatively distressed over positive appearance-related comments reported relatively high levels of body satisfaction. This finding is counter to what had been predicted and is inconsistent with results that have been obtained among women (Cash, 1995; Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2002). It is noteworthy to describe the difference between men in my study and previous research performed among women. Women, upon receiving and feeling distress at positive commentary, seem to focus on their interpretation of the meaning behind the compliment, rather than accept the praise for what it is (Barker & Galambos, 2003; Keery et al., 2005). Men in this study, although distressed by the positive feedback, may simply use the compliment as fuel to the proverbial fire. That is, men may be pleased by the comment and feel better about their bodies relative to men who never receive positive feedback on their appearance. As a group, women commonly experience a decrease in body satisfaction regardless of the connotation of the comment. Ricciardelli, McCabe, and Banfield (2000) examined body-oriented praise towards boys and found the praise to be associated with increased body satisfaction when the messages originated from their mothers and female friends. Perhaps a pivotal variable that influences some of these findings is the source of the positive, appearance-related comments.

When men reported more distress from negative, appearance-related commentary, they were more likely to participate in compulsive exercise as well as appearance-change behaviors and have higher levels of eating pathology. Similar to the results with frequency of negative comments, distress associated with this feedback is related to a host of negative behaviors. There has been little research highlighting the dangers of negative appearance feedback in men.

Although one study found that negative appearance-related messages predict a drive for muscularity in men (Vartanian et al. 2001), no study has examined the relation between specific, eating disordered tendencies or the frequency with which men attempt to change their appearance through other means and negative appearance-related commentary. Negative feedback on appearance does not seem to function in a way that is helpful to either men or women. Interestingly, there was no difference in the degree of body dissatisfaction between men reporting high or low levels of distress from negative appearance-related commentary. This is contrary to some literature that reports that negative appearance messages predict body dissatisfaction in men (Gleason, Alexander, & Somers, 2000), and has established teasing as a significant risk factor for body dissatisfaction in adolescent boys (Barker & Galambos, 2003). Perhaps men in this study who are experiencing the distress from such feedback are more likely to proactively shape their bodies and characteristics with physical, hands-on approaches like exercise, diet, and grooming, instead of passively feeling negatively and doing little to change it. Because many of the men in the studies cited above were in high school and middle school, it is possible that college age men have more access and time to perform such body changing behaviors. It also is possible that all three categories of behaviors (eating, exercising, and grooming) are behaviors that start out within normal limits but end up being excessive or maladaptive in response to comments from others. Ricciardelli, McCabe, and Banfield (2000) found that although body satisfaction was related more to positive comments from mothers and female friends, both positive and negative comments from fathers and male friends were even more influential in affecting boys' body change strategies, independent of their satisfaction.

Distress reported from appearance-related teasing was associated with appearance-change behaviors, eating pathology, and body dissatisfaction. Men who felt higher levels of distress about being teased were more likely to attempt to change their appearance through a number of means, were more likely to have negative or maladaptive eating patterns, and reported higher levels of body dissatisfaction. Again, the nature of appearance-related teasing may lead men to attempt to change the way they look to avoid receiving such feedback. As discussed earlier, teasing is distinct for positive and negative appearance-related comments given that teasing is typically intended to offend the target of the teasing and typically reflects aggressive intentions on the part of the teaser (Keery et al., 2005). The nature of teasing likely explains the finding that high levels of distress over teasing were not associated significantly with compulsive exercising. Teasing that causes distress likely does not serve as a positive motivator to engage in behaviors such as exercise.

It was hypothesized that self-objectification may account for the observed differences between distress levels on the number of appearance-change behaviors, eating pathology, body dissatisfaction, and compulsive exercise. I also examined whether self-esteem and need for approval would account for obtained differences between the two groups of men, given that these variables have been implicated in many of these study variables (Furnham & Calnan, 1998; Moulton, Moulton, & Roach, 1998; Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2001; Williamson & Hartley, 1998). The data did not support this hypothesis. Although the differences in self-objectification and self-esteem between men reporting relatively high versus low levels of distress from positive appearance-related commentary were significantly different, there was no change in the significance of the relation between the groups and the originally significant dependent variables,

compulsive exercise and body dissatisfaction. Stated differently, men who originally differed in their level compulsive exercise and body dissatisfaction depending on how much distress they felt from positive appearance-related commentary continued to differ even when accounting for self-objectification and self-esteem. It was originally hypothesized that one or all of these variables may account for the differences between groups as similar findings have been reported among women. Calogero and Herbozo (2009) found that the perceived distress of positive appearance comments was associated with body surveillance, a critical component of self-objectification and self-esteem. They also found that body surveillance acted as a partial mediator of the relation between positive appearance-commentary and body dissatisfaction. Their research revealed that women reported more body dissatisfaction overall in association with positive appearance feedback, not appearance criticisms or negative comments. For men, the same variables do not seem to be related to the reasons why men differ in their compulsion to exercise or their level of body satisfaction based on distress from positive appearance feedback. It could be that other variables that were not included in this study may underlie these relations, or that the link between distress and these dependent variables is stronger compared to these relations among women who report distress over positive appearance-related commentary.

A similar result was found among men reporting relatively high levels of distress from negative commentary relative to those who reported lower levels of such distress. Men who reported more distress from negative comments were more likely to compulsively exercise, report higher levels of eating pathology, and participate in a greater number of appearance-change behaviors. Differences between the groups on these variables remained significant even when controlling for self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval. Again, it was

originally hypothesized that these variables would account for the differences between groups as similar findings have been reported among women. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) originally posited that self-objectification is the inclination to view one's self from a third person, rather than from a first person perspective. Within this perspective, appearance-based characteristics were thought to be more highly valued relative to competence based characteristics. Findings among women reveal that negative appearance-related feedback is associated with body surveillance and body dissatisfaction, two variables previously found to relate to eating disorders and an increased investment in appearance (Herbozo & Thompson, 2006), but that this relation is partially moderated by the women's level of self-objectification. The findings of Herbozo and Thompson suggest that for women who self-objectify more, negative appearance-related comments may be difficult to ignore and may become part of their appearance self-concept. Previous research has shown that self-objectification seems to play a critical role in the strength of the relation between negative feedback received and the psychological well-being of women receiving it (Calogero & Herbozo, 2009; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Based on the current findings, for men, the importance seems to differ. Men reporting relatively high levels of distress from negative commentary continue to compulsively exercise, report higher levels of eating pathology, and participate in a greater number of appearance-change behaviors even when self-objectification is taken into consideration. The results may differ between the genders as a result of certain socialization practices regarding women's and men's value in society. Women, more so than men, are valued for their appearance (Buss, 2006; Friend, 1987; Reboussin, Rejeski, & Martin, 2000). If women feel that their appearance is not valued even by receiving negative appearance-based feedback, their self-worth may decrease because appearance is what they have

learned to value in themselves. On the contrary, men's value is more competency based (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Cockburn, 2009; Foschi, 2000). Men can be valued or feel accomplished through a variety of mechanisms, including intelligence, wealth, and success. As such, it may be that men feel they can be "attractive" through a variety of means, whereas women have only their physical attractiveness for which to feel successful. If this were the case, men may not be as influenced by self-objectification because it is not as important how they look; they still have other avenues through which they can feel successful or content. Moreover, recent research has suggested that self-objectification may not be applicable to men as it is currently measured, leading to inconsistent or contrary results when studied with this population (Daniel & Bridges, 2010).

Distress from appearance-based teasing varied significantly between groups. Men who reported high levels of distress from appearance-related teasing reported more appearance-change behaviors, body dissatisfaction, and eating pathology relative to men who reported less distress from such teasing. These relations were still statistically significant even when self-objectification, self-esteem, and need for approval were covaried. Again, these covariates had no effect on the difference between the groups. As with distress from negative appearance-related commentary, distress appearance-based teasing prompted the men in this study to try to change their appearance through a variety of means and to feel dissatisfied with their current appearance. However, my data suggest that whether or not they are prone to self-objectify does not change these relations among men. Similarly, need for approval and self-esteem also had no major influences. Yoo (2008) found that girls who reported distress from appearance-based teasing often went shopping for beauty products or new clothes in response to the teasing as a way to

rectify what the teaser criticized. The girls also reported attempting to modify their shape and overall appearance to be more congruent with the view of the teaser, and these behaviors happened significantly more among high self-objectifiers. The extent to which women self-objectify could be an important variable to consider. If a women accepts an outsider's opinion about her appearance, her reaction to being teased about some aspect of her appearance might be quite different from someone who does not accept others' opinions. Self-objectification as a personality variable is believed to influence the impact of appearance-based teasing on adolescents as well as influence responses to appearance-based teasing (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Yoo, 2008). As discussed previously, men are socialized to believe that they can succeed in a number of non-appearance related domains. Perhaps appearance was not the greatest indicator of success for men in this study. As such, self-objectification would not alter the relation between teasing and negative outcomes as it does with women.

Perhaps the finding that self-objectification did not alter the strength of the relation between group membership (distress from positive and negative appearance comments and distress from teasing) reflects to the robustness of the relation between group membership and outcomes such as body dissatisfaction, eating pathology, compulsive exercise, and other appearance-change behaviors. It is also possible that the dynamics of these variables taken as a whole are different for the two genders (Daniel & Bridges, 2010).

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Continued research in the area of men's reactions to appearance-related commentary and teasing is important to better understand the complex relations between the variables of focus in this study as well as additional variables with an eye toward improving men's health and well-being. A limitation of my study is not having included myriad variables that may play a role in explaining the relations between others' comments and men's reactionary behaviors (e.g., exercising, grooming, etc.). Although this list is not exhaustive, such variables might include the specific source of comments (e.g., family members, classmates, strangers, etc.), self-ratings of attractiveness, subjective values placed on physical appearance, and an array of personality or clinical variables such as autonomy, optimism, general symptoms of distress (e.g., symptoms of anxiety, somatization), and so on. Thus, there are rich theoretical implications of the present results amenable to further empirical study.

The results obtained from this study may have important clinical implications. Therapists working with men struggling with eating or body-image concerns should assess and evaluate the extent to which their clients receive diverse types of feedback from others about their appearance and how the men tend to react to such feedback. Cognitive strategies used to identify, critically examine, and challenge others' comments and men's reactions to such comments may prove fruitful as forms of intervention. In particular, psychoeducational programs designed for women that address appearance-related comments, teasing, and body image concerns (e.g., O'Brien & LeBow, 2006; Stice, Rohde, Gau, & Shaw, 2009) should be adapted for use with men. If the extent to which men react non-constructively to others' appearance-related feedback can be minimized, maladaptive behaviors, such as compulsive exercising, excessive dieting, and so on,

as well as negative psychoemotional reactions such as the development of poor body images, may ultimately be reduced.

## **APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER**



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
 Office of Research & Commercialization  
 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
 Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
 Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### Approval of Exempt Human Research

**From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
 FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

**To: Elizabeth B. Schuster**

**Date: February 11, 2010**

Dear Researcher:

On 2/11/2010, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
 Project Title: Men's Self-enhancement Strategies, Body Image, and Eating Behaviors: An Exploration of Parental Appearance Commentary and Self-Objectification  
 Investigator: Elizabeth B Schuster  
 IRB Number: SBE-09-06644  
 Funding Agency:  
 Grant Title:  
 Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in IRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Joseph Bielitzki, DVM, UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 02/11/2010 11:27:52 AM EST

IRB Coordinator

**APPENDIX B: IRB ADDENDUM APPROVAL LETTER**



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
 Office of Research & Commercialization  
 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
 Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
 Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
 www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

### Approval of Exempt Human Research

**From: UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
 FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

**To: Elizabeth B. Schuster**

**Date: March 26, 2010**

Dear Researcher:

On 3/26/2010, the IRB approved the following minor modifications – three additional scales and some participants will be in-person rather than online – to human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
 Project Title: Men’s Self-enhancement Strategies, Body Image, and Eating Behaviors: An Exploration of Parental Appearance Commentary and Self-Objectification  
 Investigator: Elizabeth B Schuster  
 IRB Number: SBE-09-06644  
 Funding Agency:  
 Grant Title:  
 Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Joseph Bielitzki, DVM, UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 03/26/2010 10:28:59 AM EST

IRB Coordinator

## **APPENDIX C: TABLES**

*Table 1- Frequency of Positive Appearance-related Commentary*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Appearance Change Behaviors	16.9(10.5)	28.7(14.4)	40.4	.000**	.175
2. Body Dissatisfaction EDI-III	1.8(1.0)	1.1(.80)	23.5	.000**	.110
3. Eating Pathology EDI-III	.85(.61)	.86(.69)	.039	.844	.000
4. Obligatory Exercise	1.9(.46)	2.4(.52)	60.2	.000**	.240
5. Distress from Positive Comments	2.7(1.1)	4.1(.59)	127.6	.000**	.401

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Appearance change behaviors

2. = Body Dissatisfaction subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III (EDI-III)

3. = Eating Pathology (combined Drive for Thinness and Bulimic Symptoms subscales from the EDI-III)

4. = Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire

5. = Distress from Positive Comments subscale from the Verbal Commentary on Physical Appearance Scale (VCOPAS)

*Table 2- Frequency of Negative Appearance-related Commentary*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Appearance Change Behaviors	20.4(10.7)	28.2(16.9)	13.4	.000**	.063
2. Body Dissatisfaction EDI-III	1.1(.81)	2.0(.81)	51.0	.000**	.206
3. Eating Pathology EDI-III	.68(.63)	1.4(.75)	61.5	.000**	.238
4. Obligatory Exercise	2.0(.49)	2.3(.58)	9.4	.002*	.045
5. Distress from Positive Comments	1.4(1.2)	2.7(.58)	121.9	.000**	.382

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Appearance change behaviors

2. = Body Dissatisfaction subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III (EDI-III)

3. = Eating Pathology (combined Drive for Thinness and Bulimic Symptoms subscales from the EDI-III)

4. = Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire

5. = Distress from Positive Comments subscale from the Verbal Commentary on Physical Appearance Scale (VCOPAS)

*Table 3- Frequency of Appearance-based Teasing*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Appearance Change Behaviors	29.4(21.1)	32.0(19.1)	.328	.568	.003
2. Body Dissatisfaction EDI-III	1.3(.95)	2.2(.78)	25.1	.000**	.209
3. Eating Pathology EDI-III	1.0(.86)	1.7(.84)	14.4	.000**	.132
4. Obligatory Exercise	2.4(.54)	2.4(.55)	.004	.949	.000
5. Distress from Positive Comments	1.0(.15)	2.6(.76)	115.9	.000**	.550

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Appearance change behaviors

2. = Body Dissatisfaction subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III (EDI-III)

3. = Eating Pathology (combined Drive for Thinness and Bulimic Symptoms subscales from the EDI-III)

4. = Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire

5. = Distress from Positive Comments subscale from the Verbal Commentary on Physical Appearance Scale (VCOPAS)

*Table 4- Level of Distress from Positive Appearance-related Commentary*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Appearance Change Behaviors	22.8(17.2)	27.0(13.9)	3.8	.053	.018
2. Body Dissatisfaction EDI-III	1.2(.96)	1.9(.93)	24.6	.000**	.106
3. Eating Pathology EDI-III	1.1(.87)	.92(.73)	3.5	.064	.016
4. Obligatory Exercise	2.0(.50)	2.3(.54)	23.6	.000**	.102

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Appearance change behaviors

2. = Body Dissatisfaction subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III (EDI-III)

3. = Eating Pathology (combined Drive for Thinness and Bulimic Symptoms subscales from the EDI-III)

4. = Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire

*Table 5- Level of Distress from Negative Appearance-related Commentary*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Appearance Change Behaviors	22.2(12.5)	28.3(17.2)	8.1	.005*	.038
2. Body Dissatisfaction EDI-III	1.4(.87)	1.4(.86)	.177	.675	.001
3. Eating Pathology EDI-III	.77(.69)	1.1(.85)	7.3	.007*	.035
4. Obligatory Exercise	2.0(.49)	2.3(.49)	27.3	.000**	.119

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Appearance change behaviors

2. = Body Dissatisfaction subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III (EDI-III)

3. = Eating Pathology (combined Drive for Thinness and Bulimic Symptoms subscales from the EDI-III)

4. = Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire

*Table 6- Level of Distress from Appearance-based Teasing*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Appearance Change Behaviors	23.3(15.6)	33.7(19.0)	10.4	.002*	.085
2. Body Dissatisfaction EDI-III	1.2(.93)	2.3(.78)	43.6	.000**	.282
3. Eating Pathology EDI-III	.94(.75)	1.9(.79)	41.5	.000**	.272
4. Obligatory Exercise	2.3(.51)	2.4(.54)	2.7	.102	.024

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Appearance change behaviors

2. = Body Dissatisfaction subscale of the Eating Disorder Inventory-III (EDI-III)

3. = Eating Pathology (combined Drive for Thinness and Bulimic Symptoms subscales from the EDI-III)

4. = Obligatory Exercise Questionnaire

*Table 7- Potential Covariates of Level of Distress from Positive Appearance Comments*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Need for Approval	2.9(.61)	2.7(.57)	1.7	.197	.008
2. Self-Esteem	2.2(1.0)	2.4(.83)	4.0	.047	.018
3. Self-Objectification	3.4(.75)	3.1(.66)	10.6	.001*	.047

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Need for Approval Questionnaire

2. = Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

3. = Appearance Orientation subscale of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ)

*Table 8- Potential Covariates of Level of Distress from Negative Appearance Comments*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Need for Approval	2.8(.57)	2.6(.54)	7.4	.007*	.033
2. Self-Esteem	2.0(.86)	2.5(1.0)	14.1	.000**	.062
3. Self-Objectification	3.2(.62)	3.3(.78)	2.8	.098	.013

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Need for Approval Questionnaire

2. = Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

3. = Appearance Orientation subscale of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ)

*Table 9- Potential Covariates of Level of Distress from Teasing-Based Comments*

Variable	Top 25%	Bottom 25%	F	Sig	$\eta^2$
	M (SD)	M (SD)			
1. Need for Approval	2.8(.55)	2.7(.64)	.003	.958	.000
2. Self-Esteem	2.4(.70)	1.9(.87)	9.91	.002*	.079
3. Self-Objectification	3.2(.68)	3.1(.60)	.117	.733	.001

\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .000$

1. = Need for Approval Questionnaire

2. = Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

3. = Appearance Orientation subscale of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ)

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