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The Construction of Masculinity: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Men's Lifestyle Magazine Advertisements

Yue Tan · Ping Shaw · Hong Cheng · Kwangmi Ko Kim

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Abstract The increasing global popularity of men's lifestyle magazines offers a unique opportunity to study how advertising constructs masculinity across cultures. This study conducted a content analysis of 636 ads from the three most popular men's lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States to examine the representations of masculinity in their advertisements between 2008 and 2010. The objectives were to determine how masculinities are currently portrayed in terms of types and roles. The study found that the magazines from all three countries typically portrayed men as refined and sophisticated. The defining characteristic of global hegemonic masculinity is commodity consumption, with a particular emphasis on a trendy and refined appearance. We found no significant cross-cultural differences in the types of masculinity, namely, "Vigorous and Macho", "Refined and Sophisticated", and "Trendy and Cool". The traditional preference for "Refined and Sophisticated" in Chinese and Taiwanese ads and a preference for "Vigorous and Macho" in the U.S. ads have largely disappeared. Instead, the global consumption market and its associated consumer culture are the primary determinants regarding representations of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazine ads. This global culture may underlie the lack of differences found.

Y. Tan (✉) · P. Shaw
Institute of Communications Management, National Sun Yat-sen University, No.70, Lianhai Rd., Gushan District, Kaohsiung City 804, Taiwan, Republic of China
e-mail: yuetan@gmail.com

H. Cheng
E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University, Athens, OH, USA

K. K. Kim
Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies, Towson University, Towson, MD, USA

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Introduction

During the 1980s, new men emerged within the commercial culture of retail advertising in the West, and men's lifestyle magazines have become increasingly important sites in which to elaborate their new masculinities (Crewe 2003). As U.S. magazine ads emphasize idealized images of masculinity (Kolbe and Albanese 1996), their representation of masculinity has focused mainly on appearance and grooming, in response to the increasing availability of male personal care products and fashions (Segal 1993). Alexander (2003) calls this new consumption-based masculinity a "branded masculinity," which is rooted in U.S. men's insecurities, generated by consumer capitalism, focusing on men's bodies as well as on consumer choices.

The increasing portrayal of consumption-based masculinity in the mass media has made U.S. and European males more self-conscious about their bodies, held them responsible for their personal appearances, induced them to seek out models of physical beauty, and influenced their self-identification through their bodies (e.g., by their fashion sense and level of fitness) and how they evaluate themselves (Budgeon 2003; Davis 2002; Kimmel and Messner 2004; Vigorito and Curry 1998). Consequently, U.S. and European men have become vulnerable to the allure of the consumer market (Wienke 1998).

Research from Italy (Boni 2002) and Canada (Ricciardelli et al. 2010) suggests that the consumption-based masculinity has become a globally hegemonic masculinity. In other words, the global media predominantly represent only a single model of commodity masculinity; however, it is adapted to suit the needs of the markets in each target country (Boni 2002). Even though the local countries' cultures moderate the representation

of masculinities, the global consumption market and its associated consumer culture are the primary determinants in representations of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazine ads.

The most popular men's lifestyle magazines in China are derived from examples in the United States and the United Kingdom. These foreign titles are conspicuously attentive to "Western and youth cultures" and mainly advertise foreign brand-name products (Hird 2009, p. 13). Given that it is the European and U.S. culture and institutions that "supply the content of global mass media, design the commodities and the labor process of producing them, and regulate the accumulation of resources," they are redefining the most desired masculinity characteristics in Asia (Connell 1993, p. 612). The global media act as a socialization agent, perpetuating global gender image standards such as photographic poses and race of the models in Taiwan (Shaw 1999) and Singapore (Frith et al. 2004).

Different societies and cultures throughout history have constructed their own distinct types of masculinity (Craig 1992; Goffman 1979). Given that the images of masculinity are commoditized, exported, and consumed in a variety of cultural environments, it is necessary to compare them cross-culturally in the context of the increasingly global, postmodern cultural environment to facilitate understanding the various types of masculinity constructed by different societies (Darling-Wolf 2004). However, previous research on types of masculinity in terms of the mass media's visual and textual codes has been limited to case studies regarding the representation of masculinity in the United Kingdom and the United States (Ricciardelli et al. 2010). China is chosen for this study because it recorded the largest growth in the sale of male personal care products in 2003, but no quantitative content analysis has been done to examine how Chinese men and masculinities are represented in mass media. Although Taiwan shares a similar culture with China, it has a higher level of commercialization and a distinctive hybrid culture. Conversely, the United States possesses a Western culture that exerts enormous influence on the rest of the World. A comparison of the advertisements in men's lifestyle magazines from each of these three societies would shed light on how social factors, such as economic development and cultural norms, influence the construction of masculinity and how global hegemonic masculinities interact with local traditional hegemonic masculinities.

Hegemonic masculinity is represented via discourses concerning physical appearance (e.g., strength, size), affects (e.g., work ethic, emotional strength), sexualities (e.g., homosexual, heterosexual), behaviors (e.g., violent, assertive), occupations (e.g., manager, executives, professionals), and dominations (e.g., subordination of women and children) (Ricciardelli et al. 2010). Based on the visual codes of the ideal male image in men's lifestyle magazines, Yuan and Shaw (2011) identified seven types of masculinity (Table 1 includes a definition for each type of masculinity) in Taiwan. Intending to undertake targeted research, this study recoded the masculinities into three major categories ("Vigorous and Macho," "Refined and Sophisticated," "Trendy and Cool") based on the conceptual correlations among the categories' definitions and examined how they interacted with magazine nationalities and role portrayals.

This study addresses three research questions. First, in light of Connell's (1998, with Messerschmidt in 2005) work on hegemonic masculinity, the study explores how masculinities are currently portrayed in men's lifestyle magazine ads. In particular, what types of masculinity are represented in men's lifestyle magazines published in Taiwan, China, and the United States? Is there any evidence of a global hegemonic masculinity among the three countries? If so, what does it signify?

The second research question examines the cross-cultural differences in the portrayals of masculinities in Taiwan, China, and the United States. Specifically, are there any significant discrepancies in how Asian and U.S. ads represent the ideal male image and masculinity? Previous literature from studies in Taiwan and China (e.g., Huang 2006b; Louie 2002; Song 2004; Yang et al. 2005) suggests that Western societies place a greater emphasis on fitness and muscularity than does Confucian culture, while Confucian culture values intellectual achievement and gentleness more than Western cultures do as measures of desired masculinity. We also expect that a higher level of commercialization in the United States and Taiwan increases the popularity of the trendy and cool masculine image in magazine ads as compared to their Chinese counterpart.

The third question tests the relationships among masculinity types and role portrayals of the models in the ads. Which masculinity types correlate to particular roles of the male models in the ads? In addition, do these relationships vary across cultures? To answer these three questions, we analyzed the content of 636 ads that were published in the three most popular men's lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States between 2008 and 2010.

The Construction of Masculinity

The definition of masculinity conceptually overlaps with manhood, male identity, manliness, and men's roles (Connell 1993; S. Huang 2004). The Longman dictionary (1995, p. 874) defines masculinity as "the characteristics and qualities considered to be typical of men." Masculinities and male bodies are socially and historically constructed, created, and reinforced by social expectations based on shared meanings, especially by gender display in the mass media (Craig 1992; Goffman 1979).

A society also has multiple competing masculinities—some are hegemonic, while others are marginalized (Connell 2000)

Table 1 Description and coding schemes of variables

Variables	Categories	Description
Masculinity type	Vigorous and Macho	1. *Tough and Macho.* With a traditional cowboyish look and temperament, the model is muscular in physique and determined in facial expression. The sharp, angular lines of his face speak of toughness and resolution. With tanned skin, in leather or cowboy clothes, the model appears—in either expression or posture—nomadically unkempt, strong-willed and lion-hearted.
		2. *Vigorous and sunny.* Like a boy next door, the model often wears a coy, innocent, and brilliant smile. His skin is tanned. His clothing is sporty and casual. His look and posture are those of someone who is amiable and easy-going.
	Refined and Sohisticated	3. *Refined and Gentle.* With the look of a well-learned intellectual, the model appears cultured, polite, graceful, and good-mannered. He is often dressed in preppy style (e.g. shirts, argyle sweaters, etc) and wears glasses. His hair is always neat and tidy, and his appearance is always clean and classic.
		4. *Stern and Sophisticated.* With a confident and firm look, the model impresses the viewers as mature and reliable. He is dressed in formal attire (usually suits). He is a man of some age, with wrinkles upon his face. His gaze is focused. He is often a man with a successful career.
	Trendy and Cool	5. *Trendy and Cool.* Clothed and accessorized in the latest fashion, the model is likely to stand in a provocative posture and displays a freedom-loving and rebellious temperament. His facial expression is either numb or aloof, thereby creating a sense of distance between him and his viewers. He often leers at people and assumes the attitude of indifference and scorn.
	Other	6. *Sensual and Sexy.* Often in sexually arousing attire or revealing, tight clothes such as swimming suit and underwear, the model usually looks away from the camera and refrains from appearing smart and sophisticated or springy and sunny. His facial expression and posture—such as caressing his own body—often seem unnatural because they are contrived to seduce his viewers and arouse their sexual desire.
		7. *Androgynous.* With exquisite features, the model dresses and behaves in a more feminine way or wears makeup. He appears in a more delicate, meek, and dependent posture.
		Other types that cannot fit into the above categories. Please record in details.
Roles	Professional/occupational role	The model is engaged in a certain profession or occupation, in professional attire.
	Entertaining role	Includes any identifiable movie stars, TV celebrities, etc.
	Familial role	The model is portrayed as a father, a husband or a family member.
	Recreational role	The model is staged to appear engaging in a certain kind of recreational activity, such as exercise, outdoor activity, swimming, boating, sailing, etc.
	Decorative role	The model is NOT portrayed as any functional character, such as a father, a worker, or a movie star. He appears solely for his lure and look.
	Other	Any other roles that do not fit comfortably into the abovementioned categories.

in terms of class, race, social division, generation, region, and institution (Connell and Wood 2005). Hegemonic masculinity refers to the most honored or desired masculinity in a society (Connell 1993, 1998). It is determined by social structure—more specifically, the economic system of a society. Even though it may not be the most common type of masculinity, it sets the standard against which the achievements of all other men (the majority) are judged. Hegemony is established and maintained by the ruling class and used to attract (Frederick et al. 2005) and subordinate women (Donaldson 1993).

Traditional Masculinities in Cultural Contexts

Within the U.S. context, the muscular body constitutes a cultural ideal that symbolizes stereotypical notions of masculinity (Wienke 1998). Muscularity and body size has been used to be iconic of hegemonic masculinity throughout Western history (Dworkin and Wachs 2009). As an early form of manhood in the United States, it reflects the ideals of an economy based on a pre-modern mode of production—namely, agriculture (Kimmel 1996). By the late 19th century, production, work, and responsibility (rather than consumption, display, and pleasure) were perceived as the defining characteristics of masculine identity in the United States (Chapman 1988; Osgerby 2003). When men's work no longer required physical strength in modern U.S. society, working out at the gym became the means of becoming more muscular (Pope et al. 2000). Now, U.S. men re-emphasize the importance of aggression, violence, and muscularity as measures of masculinity to compensate for feelings of inferiority in the face of the rising status of women (Jeffords

1993; Yang et al. 2005). Action figure toys and leading role actors in the United States have also become more muscular over time (Ricciardelli et al. 2010).

In an analysis of classic Chinese scriptures and modern media texts, Louie (2002) proposes one important distinction between traditional Western and Chinese masculinities. According to Louie, Chinese masculinity has two components: *wen* and *wu*. *Wen* (translated as "mental" or "civil") refers to the qualities associated with the literary and artistic pursuits of the classical scholars. *Wu* (translated as "physical" or "martial") represents the qualities associated with martial valor, physical strength, military force, and power. In the West, physical force and violence play a central role in idealized masculinity; however, Chinese culture values cultural attainment such as intellectual knowledge over *wu*. *Wen* has generally been associated with elite men in possession of greater social power (Louie 2002). For example, Chinese men have aspired to the Confucian ideal of the *Junzi* (gentleman, refined man, or virtuous man). The valuing of *wen* (high education and academic degrees) over *wu* (labor works) continues into the present day in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China (Huang 2006a). Correspondingly, Taiwanese men express significantly less body dissatisfaction than their U.S. counterparts do, and Taiwanese magazine advertisements portray significantly fewer undressed men than do U.S. magazines (Yang et al. 2005). In summary, the literature suggests that U.S. culture places a greater emphasis on fitness and muscularity as a measure of masculinity than does Chinese culture (Yang et al. 2005; Pompper 2010).

Even though international advertisers preserved their global brand image when entering Chinese markets, they also absorb Chinese culture to identify with local consumers' social norms, cultural values, and needs (Frith and Feng 2009, p.161), and therefore the media texts are called "cultural hybrids" (Kraidy 2005, p.6). In similar ways, male models in global ads need to reflect the target audience's expectations for ideal male images, for which the corresponding hypotheses are:

H1: The "vigorous and macho" type would be used more frequently in U.S. men's lifestyle magazine ads than in Chinese and Taiwanese magazine ads.

New Men

During the 1970s, feminist movements and changing patterns in family life redefined masculinity by turning the U.S. "new man" into a consumer, who was eventually split into a nurturer and a narcissist (Chapman 1988). The new man defines himself against the old man (the macho) who represents traditional masculinity. The new man recognizes and makes peace with his feminine side. He sets priority on love and relationships over personal ambitions and promotion. He favors egotism, greed, caring, and sharing his life with his partner of choice. The U.S. (Chapman 1988) and UK (Crewe 2003) new men fit perfectly into the advertising markets, which are increasingly concerned with lifestyle marketing rather than particular products. The Western new man shares similarities with traditional Chinese masculinity. According to Martin Huang (2006), traditional Western masculinity defends itself against the feminine, but Chinese masculinity "validates itself through the feminine" (p. 32). Song (2004) argued that, in pre-modern China, masculinity was mainly constructed in scholar-beauty romances rather than in opposition to women.

In the U.S. media, Asian men have been portrayed as weak, nerdy, effeminate, and asexual compared with the idealized form of White masculinity (Hirose and Pih 2010). It is argued that the feminized Chinese male is part of a colonial discourse constructed to subordinate Chinese people (Song 2004). However, cultural differences have indeed been revealed by Bem's (1974) BSRI index, which is designed to "assess the extent to which the culture's definitions of desirable female and male attributes are reflected in an individual's self-description" (p. 1048). In the United States, males scored higher on possessing masculine items such as independence, self-sufficiency, assertiveness, risk-taking, dominance, and power, in addition to having strong personalities, leadership abilities, and the ability to take a stand and be aggressive. Female respondents scored higher on feminine characteristics such as being affectionate, sympathetic, sensitive to others' needs, understanding, compassionate, eager to soothe hurt feelings, warm, tender, gentle, and having a love for children (Bem 1974).

However, Chinese male respondents scored higher than Chinese females did on four feminine items, including being affectionate, complimentary, warm, and loving children (Zhang et al. 2001). Similarly, compared with Taiwanese females, Taiwanese males rated themselves higher on five feminine items, including eagerness to soothe hurt feelings, tenderness, sensitivity to others' needs, gentleness, and loving children (Peng 2006). Based on the literature review, we expect the construction of the ideal masculine image in China to place greater emphasis on intellectual achievement and contain more feminine characteristics such as gentleness and sensitivity.

H2: The "refined and sophisticated" type would be used more often in Chinese and Taiwanese magazine ads than in U.S. men's lifestyle magazine ads.

Consumer Culture

The depictions of masculinity in the United States since the 1950s have emphasized personal pleasure, stylistic expression, and commodity consumption (Osgerby 2003). The rise

of the male consumer image has met modern capitalism's demand for an endlessly regenerating consumer market in the United States (Nixon 1997). Among all the characteristics of the new male image, commodity consumption is the most prominent feature and gives rise to the other characteristics. Alexander (2003) named the new consumption-based masculinity in the United States as a "branded masculinity," which is "rooted in consumer capitalism, wherein corporate profit can be enhanced by generating insecurity about one's body and one's consumer choices and then offering a solution through a particular corporate brand" (p. 535). The image of branded masculinity in *Men's Health* is represented by a combination of muscularity, fashion, and financial success (Alexander 2003).

Based on a content analysis of eight different men's lifestyle magazines sold in Canada, Ricciardelli et al. (2010) discussed two types of masculinities that are distinguishable from traditional muscular masculinity. One is metro-sexuality, which appeared in the 1970s and was subsequently developed in the 1980s (Simpson 1994). The other is laddism, which emerged in the 1990s (Ricciardelli et al. 2010). While the former attempts to form non-oppressive relationships with women, children, and other men (MacKinnon 1992), the latter rejects gender equality (Nixon 2001) and renounces self-responsibility (Ricciardelli et al. 2010). However, both types of masculinity focus on appearance and grooming in response to the increasing availability of male personal care products and fashions (Segal 1993). In the United States and European countries, male consumers are continually convinced that their appearance can and should be manipulated and enhanced through consumption (Davis 2002).

The branded masculinity is also a globally hegemonic masculinity. Based on a media frame analysis of the Italian edition of *Men's Health*, Boni (2002) highlights that there is a copycat masculinity that is the local translation of the globally hegemonic masculinity. Centered on the "commodified male body," the copycat masculinity is framed as the encouragement of self-surveillance of bodily health and appearance to maintain (bodily) identity (Boni 2002, p. 475). According to Ricciardelli et al. (2010), fashion (image, style, and appearance) has become a central dimension of masculinity in Canadian magazine commercials. The hegemonic power of fashion models lies in their appearance because they attract the attention and interest of women, which puts themselves in a position of power and control (Ricciardelli et al. 2010).

The consumption-based masculinity is also represented via visual codes of ideal men's images in men's lifestyle magazines in Taiwan. In Yuan and Shaw's (2011) coding system, both "Refined and Sophisticated" and "Trendy and Cool" emphasize fashion and consumerism in spite of their different styles. While *trendy* is a synonym for fashion, *cool* requires further explanation. The "cool" style in the United States was initially used by African-American male street culture to display or defy authority (Majors and Billson 1992). Later, young men learned to perform the "cool pose" of urban gangster masculinity from MTV and popular films (Jhally 1999). In the U.S. context, the cool personality has three traits: narcissism, ironic detachment, and hedonism (Pountain and Robins 2000). Narcissism means an exaggerated admiration of oneself, particularly one's personal appearance. Distinctive clothing and haircuts have always been key signifiers of *cool*. *Cool* wishes to be gazed at. Successful commercial artists encourage young people to fall in love with themselves and become self-invented stars. *Hedonism* is a love of physical gratification. *Cool* is an ethic adapted to a life of consumption rather than production because it allows young people to construct their masculinity through shopping, which is easier than the discipline of study or practice is (Pountain and Robins 2000). The competitive spirit hidden behind *cool* drives continual consumption. *Cool* has "the dominant mindset of consumerism": you are the product that you like and therefore buy (Pountain and Robins 2000, p. 161).

Taiwan's economy underwent rapid growth during the 1970s, some 15 years earlier than did the growth of China's economy (which took place during the late 1980s). Taiwan opened its men's magazine market to foreign capital during the 1980s, whereas China did not begin this process until the late 1990s. Therefore, media representation of masculinity in Taiwanese ads is more heavily influenced by capitalism and consumer culture than is its counterpart in China. Chinese men's lifestyle magazines emerged in the 2000s and targeted a stratum of affluent middle-class men (Song and Lee 2010). Because consumption-based masculinity is rooted in the development of consumer capitalism, we argue that the level of commercialization will influence the popularity of the "Trendy and Cool" masculinity in men's lifestyle magazine ads.

Besides, unlike Taiwan, China has been strongly influenced by communism. The ideal gender image of the Chinese Communist Party is a plain-looking and casually dressed working-class individual engaged in production (Luo and Hao 2007). Communist ideology in China views high levels of consumption and leisure as a manifestation of capitalism and a bourgeois lifestyle (Song and Lee 2010) even though the introduction of a capitalist market economy during the 1980s was accompanied by an increased emphasis on consumption, "good taste," fashion, leisure, and appearance in Chinese magazines (Karan and Feng 2009; Luo and Hao 2007; Song and Lee 2010).

In sum, because the United States and Taiwan have higher levels of commercialization and have not been influenced by communism, the corresponding hypothesis is that:

H3: "Trendy and Cool" models would appear more often in U.S. and Taiwanese magazine ads than in Chinese magazine ads.

Men's Roles

The term *gender role* refers to internalized characteristics culturally regarded as appropriate behaviors for males and females (Bem 1974). Male roles are socially constructed and reinforced by mass media (Berger 1963). Histories, cultural norms, and social development indicators are the most important factors determining media portrayals of male roles across cultures. From a historical perspective, females in the United States achieved equitable opportunities in education and employment much earlier than did Chinese and Taiwanese women. The first wave of the feminist movement in the United States began in the decade of 1910–1920. In contrast, Chinese women began to challenge thousands of years of feudal oppression until the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 (Luo and Hao 2007), and Taiwan's women's movement began in the early 1970s (Ku 2008).

Education and gender have been the most salient features of Confucian value systems as compared to Western values (Chaffee and Chu 1992). With a long history of oppressing women (Simeon et al. 2001), traditional Confucian philosophy in China prescribed for men a higher status than that of any woman (Gallin 1984). Both in the domestic and public spheres, the male role consisted of being aggressive and independent, while the female role consisted of being mainly supportive and subservient to men (Ku 2008). During the imperial era of Chinese history, Chinese men exclusively dominated the public sphere, including the bureaucracy, trade and commerce, secret societies or rebellions, scholarly academies, and the civil service (Mann 2000).

Since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the communist ideology of gender egalitarianism was enforced in modern China. Women's social status has been greatly improved in terms of education and labor participation. Taiwan has preserved traditional Confucian values in gender roles better than China has (Redding 1990). However, since the1970s, rapid industrialization and urbanization in Taiwan have helped to promote the status of women (Clark and Clark 2002). Together with the rise of feminist movements, increased employment and education have allowed women to gain more socio-cultural resources and self-confidence. Despite these changes, the centuries-old cultural tenets of Confucianism continue to prevail. Compared to the Japanese and Americans, the Chinese exhibited the strongest gendered stereotypes in working roles (Simeon et al. 2001). In 2001, the Taiwanese continued to show strong gendered stereotypes in familial and working roles (Lu 2011).

In U.S. and European media, traditional male roles are professional and recreational roles (Courtney and Lockeretz 1971; Eisend 2010; Furnham and Mak 1999; Furnham and Paltzer 2010). In particular, compared to U.S. women, U.S. men were more frequently portrayed in professional or occupational roles and recreational activities but less likely to be entertainers and in familial and decorative roles (Courtney and Lockeretz 1971). A recent study of U.S. magazine ads (Mager and Helgeson 2011) found an increasing trend in males being displayed in suggestive poses. Males are also decreasingly portrayed in executive roles. A 2010 review (Furnham and Paltzer 2010) found that role portrayal differences have largely disappeared in most European countries.

Cross-cultural comparisons of gender role portrayals also yield significant differences among the three societies. Compared with U.S. magazine ads, Chinese ads showed more men as professional workers, entertainers and in decorative roles but fewer men as office workers, in familial roles, and in recreational roles (Zhang et al. 2009; Paek et al. 2011). The above findings suggest that in Taiwanese, Chinese and U.S. ads, because of cultural and economic differences, significant differences will be evident in the frequency of male models presented in different roles (H4).

The definitions of *masculinity* and *male role* overlap (Connell 1993; S. Huang 2004). The idealized image of masculinity stems from the social expectations of sex roles (Segal 2007). Because each man's role is associated with specific demands and rewards (Goffman 1959), the idealized male image for various male roles should differ. For example, the ideal image of a father is different from the ideal image of a company manager. Because the congruence between the "look" of the model and the advertised product enhances the effectiveness of the U.S. advertisements (Englis et al. 1994; Solomon et al. 1992), we argue that advertising professionals will choose to display men in ways that match the models' images with their portrayed roles. Thus, the next general hypothesis is that there is a significant relationship between men's roles and masculinity types.

It is hypothesized that male models with traditional masculinity types ("Vigorous and Macho" in the United States and "Refined and Sophisticated" in China and Taiwan) are more likely to be portrayed in traditional male roles (professional roles), while male models with the new masculinity type ("Trendy and Cool") are more likely to appear in non-traditional male roles (decorative roles). In particular, we make the following hypotheses:

H5: Compared with other models, "Vigorous and Macho" models are more likely to be portrayed in recreational roles than in other roles.

H6: Compared with other models, "Refined and Sophisticated" models are more likely to be portrayed in professional roles than in other roles.

H7: Compared with other models, "Trendy and Cool" models are more likely to be portrayed in decorative roles than in other roles.

Finally, because the interactions between culture values and role portrayals (H4) and between masculinity types and role portrayals (H5–H7), we also expect that the impact of

culture values on media representation of masculinity types will vary across different roles (H8).

Hypotheses

Multiple masculinities coexist in any given culture, varying among different classes, races, social divisions, generations, regions, and institutions (Connell and Wood 2005). To increase advertising effectiveness, advertising professionals will choose to display men in ways that are socially and culturally resonant with local fashion and masculine norms. Hence, again, the hypotheses are:

H1: "Vigorous and Macho" would be used more frequently in U.S. men's lifestyle magazine ads than in Chinese and Taiwan magazine ads.

H2: "Refined and Sophisticated" would be used more often in Chinese and Taiwanese men's lifestyle magazine ads than in U.S. ads.

H3: Compared with Chinese magazine ads, "Trendy and Cool" models are more likely to be portrayed in U.S. and Taiwanese ads.

H4: There will be significant differences in the frequency of male models presented in different roles in Chinese, Taiwanese, and U.S. ads.

Social expectations regarding different male roles are represented by different types of idealized men's images. Therefore, to increase advertising effectiveness, advertising professionals will choose to display men in ways that match masculinity types with male roles. Thus, there is a significant relationship between male roles and masculinity types. In particular,

H5: Compared with other models, "Vigorous and Macho" models are more likely to be portrayed in recreational roles than in other roles.

H6: Compared with other models, "Refined and Sophisticated" models are more likely to be portrayed in professional roles than in other roles.

H7: Compared with other models, "Trendy and Cool" models are more likely to be portrayed in decorative roles than in other roles.

H8: Finally, the impact of culture values on media representation of masculinity types will vary across different roles.

Method

We chose to study men's lifestyle magazines in which the new visual coding of U.S. masculinity occurred initially and most extensively (Nixon 1997). The advertisements featured in three issues from 2008 to 2010 of the three most popular male lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States were subjected to content analysis. The selection of the following publications was based on their leading circulation and sales figures: *GQ, Esquire* and *Men's Health* (United States)*, Esquire, Men's Health,* and *FHM* (China), and *GQ, Cool,* and *Men's UNO* (Taiwan).

In the United States and the United Kingdom, men's lifestyle magazines are popular and primarily marketed to middle-class male Caucasians. These magazines became popular in the late 1980s when they targeted a stratum of affluent, professional, and unattached men (Crewe 2003; Edwards 2003). Chinese men's lifestyle magazines emerged only in the 2000s and targeted affluent middle-class men (Song and Lee 2010). This social group is economically privileged, obsessed with status, and make up only a small portion of the urban population. Because this target group is relatively small in number, the smaller market size and lower subscription rates per capita in comparison with other publications serves as a disincentive for advertisers to pay for ads in these magazines. Consequently, Chinese men's lifestyle magazines contain the least number of ads in comparison with those in the United States and Taiwan. By contrast, international men's lifestyle magazines entered the Taiwanese market during the mid-1990s, spurring a rapid development in the production of local magazines. In our sample, two of the most popular Taiwanese men's lifestyle magazines were local, possibly including greater elements of the local culture than foreign titles did. Compared with *GQ*, the two local magazines in Taiwan are marketed to younger males of lower social and economic status (Yuan and Shaw 2011).

One issue of each magazine was chosen at random from each year during the period of 2008 to 2010. A total of 27 issues, including 636 ads, were analyzed as part of this study. Table 2 shows the exact number of ads coded within each country and the specific magazines from which they were selected. Vacations (i.e., Valentine's Day, Christmas, and New Year's Day) were avoided by substituting the most recent months because vacation ads tend to portray certain types of masculinity. The unit of analysis was a full-page ad. For each ad, only the main male model—the one occupying the most space overall or dominating the foreground—was coded. If the same ad appeared in different magazine issues (from different years or countries), it was included each time in the coding process.

Our coding categories of masculinity types were derived from Yuan and Shaw's (2011) seven-type typology. After careful analysis of men's lifestyle magazine covers in Taiwan, Yuan and Shaw classified the visual images of male models into seven different types of masculinities: "Tough and Macho," "Refined and Gentle," "Stern and Sophisticated," "Vigorous and Sunny," "Trendy and Cool," "Sensual and Sexy," and "Androgynous." This method of visually coding male images was initially used by Nixon (1997), Englis et al. (1994) and has subsequently been adopted by later studies (Frith et al. 2004, 2005) to classify types of female beauty and femininity.

Table 2 Sampling size for each men's lifestyle magazine analyzed

	US			China			Taiwan		
Magazines	GQ	Esquire	Men's Health	Esquire	Men's Health	FHM	GQ	Cool	Men's UNO
Circulation ranking	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
No. of ads coded	161	79	69	41	44	27	81	56	78
Total number of ads	309			112			215		

The magazines' circulations from the U.S., China and Taiwan were obtained from Audit Bureau of Circulations (www.accessabc.com), Century Chinese International Media Consultation LTD (www.chinesebk.com), and *Brain* Magazine (July, 2009), respectively

Our coding of the masculinity types was a two-stage process. First, we coded the male models according to Yuan and Shaw's seven-type typology. Then, to focus our research on cross-cultural differences in media representation of masculinity, we combined the seven types into three larger categories. Specifically, we combined "Tough and Macho" with "Vigorous and Sunny" into a single category named "Vigorous and Tough." By definition, they both value a strong and healthy physique, but "Vigorous and Sunny" is applied to a younger population than is "Tough and Macho." Similarly, we combined "Refined and Gentle" with "Stern and Sophisticated" into "Refined and Sophisticated" given that both types emphasize intellectual achievement and a refined appearance. The major distinction is that "Refined and Gentle" describes younger males than does "Stern and Sophisticated." Finally, we omitted the "Sensual and Sexy," "Androgynous" and "Other" categories from all country comparisons because they were not the focus of this study, and their sizing was small (6.6 %, 2.5 %, and .5 %, respectively).

Besides masculinity types, each male model in every ad was coded based on role portrayal (professional/occupational, entertaining, familial, recreational, decorative, and other). The familial and "other" roles were omitted from our final analysis because of their small sizing (1.3 %, and .3 %, respectively). The operationalizations used for the two variables are presented in Table 1. Two graduate students, fluent in Chinese and English, coded all of the variables for the selected ads. The coders were trained on a separate Taiwanese sample to become familiar with the coding scheme used in this study. Subsequent to the formal coding, 149 ads (23.4 % of the total) were randomly selected for an inter-coder reliability check. Using the formulas of Scott's Pi (1955) and Cohen's Kappa (1960), the reliability for masculinity type was determined to be .86, while the reliability of role portrayal was .95. These inter-coder reliability coefficients are regarded as satisfactory (Riffe et al. 2005). Disagreements between coders were resolved through discussions prior to statistical analysis.

In addition to Chi-square tests, following the method used in Gilpatric's (2010) study, we examined the adjusted standardized residuals (the standard deviation units above or below the mean) for each cell to test for sub-group differences.

Results

Table 3 contains the descriptive statistics of male models' masculinity types and male roles. As shown in the table, despite the same number of issues published, men's lifestyle magazines in China carried far fewer ads (n=112) featuring male models compared with the other countries. For example, China's total was only 36.2 % and composed 52 % of the numbers of those in U.S. (n=309) and Taiwanese magazines (n=215). This finding suggests that the Chinese economy has the lowest degree of liberalization and the youngest male magazine industry and commercial market, resulting in the least number of male products and ads. Therefore, China has the least commercialized masculine culture.

In all three countries, "Refined and Sophisticated" was the most prevalent masculinity type. In particular, it was used in 51.8 % of the Chinese ads, 40.5 % of the Taiwanese ads, and 38.2 % of the U.S. ads. "Trendy and Cool" was the second most popular type of masculinity used in the Taiwanese (29.3 %) ads, the U.S. (27.2 %) ads, and the Chinese (22.3 %) ads.

Although cultural differences were shown in the hypothesized directions, they were not statistically significant. The chi-square analysis with masculinity types by country showed no significant difference across the three countries (X^2=6.54, df=4, p=.16; Cramer's V=.08, p=.16). In particular, there was no significant difference in the proportion of models of any masculinity type across the three societies. Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 could not be confirmed. In particular, the "Vigorous and Macho" type was not used more frequently in U.S. men's lifestyle magazine ads than in Chinese and Taiwanese ads (H1); "Refined and Sophisticated" was not used more often in Chinese and Taiwanese ads than in U.S. ads (H2); and "Trendy and Cool" was not used more often in U.S. and Taiwanese ads than in Chinese ads (H3).

The roles of the models differed significantly across societies (X^2=23.8, df=4, p<.001; Cramer's V=.14, p<.001), with professional and entertaining roles accounting for a much larger proportion in Taiwan (Adjust Std. Resid.=2.8, 20.1 %) than in the United States (Adjust Std. Resid.=−3.1, 10 %). This finding supports H4, which predicts that there

Table 3 Average count and percentage of models dedicated to masculinity types across the three societies

	Taiwan	China	US	Total
Masculinity types: X^2=6.54, *df*=4, *p*=.16; Cramer's V=.08, *p*=.16.				
Vigorous and Macho	41 (21.5 %)	23 (21.7 %)	76 (27.3 %)	140 (24.3 %)
Refined and Sohisticated	87 (45.5 %)	58 (54.7 %)[a]	118 (42.4 %)	263 (45.7 %)
Trendy and Cool	63 (33 %)	25 (23.6 %)	84 (30.2 %)	172 (29.9 %)
Total	191 (100.0 %)	106 (100.0 %)	278 (100.0 %)	575 (100.0 %)
Roles: X^2=23.84, *df*=4, *p*<.001; Cramer's V=.14, *p*<.001				
Professional (occupational) & entertaining role	43 (20.1 %)[a]	18 (16.2 %)	30 (10 %)[a]	91 (14.5 %)
Recreational role	15 (7.0 %)[a]	15 (13.5 %)	60 (19.9 %)[a]	90 (14.4 %)
Decorative role	156 (72.9 %)	78 (70.3 %)	211 (70.1 %)	445 (71.1 %)
Total	214 (100.0 %)	111 (100.0 %)	301 (100.0 %)	626 (100 %)

"Other" categories were removed from all country-comparison analysis because their sizing is small

[a] These cells are significantly different because their absolute values of Adjusted Standardized Residuals are larger than 1.96

will be significant disparity in the frequency of male models presented in different roles in Taiwanese, Chinese, and U.S. ads. Furthermore, the U.S. ads were more likely to portray male models in recreational roles (Adjust Std. Resid.=3.8, 19.9 %) than were the Taiwanese ads (Adjust Std. Resid.=−3.8, 7.0 %, respectively). This finding suggests that the representation of masculinity in Taiwan magazine ads values recreational sports and physical strength less than U.S. magazine ads do.

However, most male models (71.1 %) were portrayed in decorative roles without cross-cultural differences. In this sense, H4 predicting that there will be significant differences in the frequency of male models presented in different roles in Taiwanese, Chinese, and U.S. ads is not supported. Even though U.S. magazine ads featured 7 (2.8 %) male models in familial roles, only one model in an Asian magazine ad appeared in this role. Due to the low frequency of the familial role, it was excluded from further analysis.

H8 predicts that the impact of cultural values on media representation of masculinity types is moderated by different role portrayals. However, we found no significant cross-cultural differences among professional and entertaining role (X^2=4.2, *df*=4, *p*=.39), recreational role (X^2=6.1, *df*=4, *p*=.19), and decorative role (X^2=3.9, *df*=4, *p*=.42) in the frequencies of "Vigorous and Macho", "Refined and Sophisticated" and "Trendy and Cool". Since none of the three chi-squares tests yield statistically significant relationships, H8 is not supported. Given the large number of categories for role portrayals and masculinity types, four cells in cross-cultural comparison have counts less than 5, which makes chi-square tests unreliable (Norusis 2000, p. 318). Therefore, following Paek et al.'s (2011) study, the aggregate data in Table 4 have been used to examine the relationships between role portrayals and masculinity types.

As shown in Table 4, there was a significant correlation between types of masculinity and the portrayed roles (X^2=46.71, *df*= 6, *p*<.001; Cramer's V=.19, *p*<.001). Men portrayed as "Vigorous and Macho" are more likely to be engaged in a recreational role (Adjust Std. Resid.=5.9, 45.6 %) than in a decorative role (Adjust Std. Resid.=−5.3, 16.2 %). Therefore, H5, which predicts that "Vigorous and Macho" models are more likely to be portrayed in recreational roles than in other roles, was largely supported.

Furthermore, men portrayed with "Refined and Sophisticated" masculinity had no significant preference to a particular role portrayal. In this way, H6 is not supported, because it predicts that "Refined and Sophisticated" models are more likely to be portrayed in professional and entertaining roles than in other roles. Finally, men in the type of "Trendy and Cool" masculinity are more likely to be portrayed in a decorative role (Adjust Std. Resid.= 2.2, 29.7 %) than in a recreational role (Adjust Std. Resid.= −2.7, 15.6 %). Thus, H7 was supported because it predicted that "Trendy and Cool" models are more likely to be portrayed in decorative roles than in other roles.

Discussion

The first objective of this study was to examine how masculinity is represented in men's lifestyle magazine ads from various cultures. The findings reveal that the most popular type of masculinity in Taiwanese, Chinese, and U.S. ads is "Refined and Sophisticated," which emphasizes intelligence, the value of education as well as academic, financial, and occupational achievement. As a masculinity trait, Refined and Sophisticated had traditionally been regarded as more important and valuable than physical strength in Confucian cultures (Louie 2002). Even though U.S. culture traditionally placed greater emphasis on fitness and muscularity as measures of masculinity (Yang, et al. 2005), unlike their fathers or uncles, young U.S. college men have begun to value mental

Table 4 Average count and percentage of models dedicated to roles of models across the three masculinity types

Masculinity types	Professional & entertaining role	Recreational role	Decorative role	Total
Vigorous and Macho	23 (25.3 %)	41 (45.6 %)[a]	72 (16.2 %)[a]	136 (21.7 %)
Refined and Sohisticated	41 (45.1 %)	32 (35.6 %)	189 (42.5 %)	262 (41.9 %)
Trendy and Cool	24 (26.4 %)	14 (15.6 %)[a]	132 (29.7 %)[a]	171 (27 %)
Other	3 (3.3 %)[a]	3 (3.3 %)[a]	52 (11.7 %)[a]	58 (9.3 %)
Total	91 (100 %)	90 (100 %)	445 (100 %)	626 (100 %)

X^2 =46.71, df=6, p<.001; Cramer's V=.19, p<.001

[a] These cells are significantly different because their absolute values of Adjusted Standardized Residuals are larger than 1.96

over physical masculinities (Pompper 2010). Hegemonic masculinity in the 21st century is predominantly defined in non-physical terms rather than being "Vigorous and Macho."

The prevalence of "Refined and Sophisticated" masculinity is consistent with Connell's argument (Connell 1998; Connell and Wood 2005) that the emerging hegemonic form of masculinity in the current global arena is transnational business masculinity, which is characterized by egocentrism, libertarian sexuality, and calculative rationality. This type of "rational man" in the United States and European countries (Connell 1998; Davis 2002) controls the dominant institutions of the global economy. We also found that "Refined and Sophisticated" men have frequently appeared in all types of men's roles in all three societies.

The second most desired type of masculinity in the Taiwan and U.S. ads is "Trendy and Cool." This finding is consistent with Yuan and Shaw's (2011) results that "Trendy and Cool" has become the mainstream type of masculinity in Taiwan's local men's lifestyle magazines. Even though the concept of cool originates from African-Americans in the United States (Majors and Billson 1992) and has no exact equivalent in East Asian cultures (Pountain and Robins 2000), the concept has developed a global appeal thanks to Hollywood films, rock and roll, and British pop music since the end of World War II. Cool has become the most popular attitude, especially among youth in North America (Danesi 1994; Pountain and Robins 2000). Imported from the United States, "cool" has become even "cooler" for Asian youth. After growing up in more traditional family settings, young readers from China and Taiwan love to use this U.S.-style masculinity to express their private rebellion. This rebellion, concealed behind a mask of ironic impassivity, is the core element of cool and is expressed through consumerism by young British males (Gill et al. 2005).

Connell's concept of masculinity (1998, with Messerschmidt in 2005) does not discuss the Trendy and Cool elements that are used to assert power and dominance. The new man is defined against the traditional ideal of U.S. masculinity characterized by production and responsibility (Chapman 1988). Similarly, although laddism has been described as a backlash towards the new man in the United States (Nixon 2001), laddism also focuses on consumption rather than production. Therefore, we argue that the defining characteristic of global hegemonic masculinity, associated with the image of the new man, is commodity consumption, display, and pleasure (Chapman 1988), through an emphasis on a trendy and refined appearance.

The second objective of this study was to examine the cross-cultural differences in terms of the portrayals of masculinities in Taiwan, China, and the United States. The results of the cross-cultural comparison suggest that cultural traditions exert little influence on the representation of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazines. Two hypothesized differences were not found among the three countries in terms of masculinity types—that is, Chinese and Taiwanese magazine ads place a similar degree of emphasis as do U.S. ads on the "Refined and Sophisticated" and "Vigorous and Macho" types of masculinities. Similarly, the results of the cross-cultural comparison suggest that the degree of economic development exerts little influence on the representation of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazines. Magazines in both the United States and Taiwan had similar proportions of "Trendy and Cool" masculinity as those in China did.

Again, these findings support Connell's argument for the emergence of a unified global hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1998). The branded masculinity as identified in the United States (Alexander 2003) has been diffused, not only to Italy (Boni 2002) but also to Asia. Although the Taiwanese men's lifestyle magazines are locally published and Chinese men's lifestyle magazines have formed alliances with local magazines, their ads portrayed men and masculinity in ways comparable to those published in the United States. Additionally, even though international men's lifestyle magazines launched their titles in China only around 10 years ago, they have quickly embraced international masculinity standards and global conventions, such as clothing, poses, facial expressions, temperaments, and occupations.

The defining characteristic of global hegemonic masculinity is commodity consumption, with a particular emphasis on a trendy and refined appearance. We found no significant cross-cultural differences in the types of masculinity, namely, "Vigorous and Macho," "Refined and Sophisticated," and "Trendy and Cool." The traditional preference for "Refined and Sophisticated" in Chinese and Taiwanese ads and a

preference for "Vigorous and Macho" in the U.S. ads have largely been changed by the transnational media. Instead, the global consumption market and its associated consumer culture are the primary determinants regarding the representations of masculinity in men's lifestyle magazine ads.

Frith and Feng (2009) also question whether the cultural hybridity theory can adequately explain the cultural impact of globalization on local cultures in the case of women's magazines in China. In China, global titles need to form alliances with local magazines. According to the General Administration Press and Publication of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese should play the leading role, and the percentage of editorials directly translated from the original version should be limited to 50 % (Frith and Feng 2009). While the local features make them look and feel like "local" magazines, they are hardly hybrids, because they only reflect and transmit consumer values that serve the interests of global brands. Compared with communist ideals, consumerism in Chinese magazine ads fits into the current government economic plan more comfortably (Frith and Feng 2009; Karan and Feng 2009; Song and Lee 2010).

Cultural tradition nevertheless played an important role in the cross-cultural difference of male models' role portrayals. Compared with those in the U.S. ads, Chinese and Taiwanese models were more likely to appear in identifiable professional and entertaining roles but less likely to be attending recreational activities (e.g., exercise, outdoor activity, swimming, boating, sailing). This finding may result from the fact that Confucianism emphasizes diligence and responsibility (Huang et al. 2010), which is not congruent with the image of a recreational role. Role portrayal, as compared to masculinity type, belongs to a deeper level of culture and is less influenced by U.S. culture.

The third objective of this study was to examine the relationships between masculinity types and male roles. The findings suggest that "Vigorous and Macho" masculinity is closely associated with recreational roles, while "Trendy and Cool" is more likely portray a decorative role. In addition, "Refined and Sophisticated" men appear with similar proportions across various roles. This type of "hegemonic masculinity" has been applied to all types of male roles in all three societies.

When comparing our findings with those from previous research, we found that the male models in men's lifestyle magazines were much more likely to be portrayed in decorative roles than were those featured on ordinary TV (Furnham and Paltzer 2010; Paek et al. 2011) and in print ads (Zhang et al. 2009). More than 70 % of the male models were portrayed in decorative roles (appearing solely for their lure and looks), even though this role is predominantly confined to the entertainment industry. This finding substantiates the argument that men's bodies in the U.S. media are increasingly represented as objects for other men's gazes, turning men into sex objects (Bordo 2000; Craik 1994). The British new man is more self-conscious and emotionally expressive and he takes pleasure in displaying himself as a sexual object (Crewe 2003). This type of objectification of male bodies cannot be simplistically interpreted as a step toward greater equality between men and women in the United States (Bordo 2000; Dotson 1999). Both face-off masculinity and the leaning body are not passive images, because those men are selling products to consumers by actively inviting the audience to look at their bodies (Bordo 2000). Younger generations in the UK endorse sexual representation (viewed as "cool") based on "consent, equality, participation and pleasure, free of politics" (McRobbie 2004, p. 260).

This study has at least four limitations. First, we selected men's lifestyle magazines as the form of mass media for this research. As the magazines' target audience is men, caution should be exercised in making generalizations based on the findings of this study with regard to other mass media, given that communication of masculinity is fundamentally different when it aims to influence women as compared to when it aims to influence men. Whereas the former is likely to highlight mate values, the latter is likely to showcase physical formidability in the United States (Frederick et al. 2005). Second, this study only coded male models in the ads, even when they were presented with women. Future research could also examine how women in the ads were addressed. We found that 12 % of the total ads included cross-gender interactions. It would be interesting to examine the interactions between the two genders and how cultural factors and role portrayals moderate these interactions. Third, to examine the most popular type of masculinity in each culture, this study coded different magazine titles, based on the fact that magazines with the highest circulations differ in each target country. Future research could also examine how the same magazine titles differ within the various cultures, as this fosters understanding of how different cultures define men's lifestyles. Finally, this study did not include magazine issues that focused on specific holidays, because they tended to portray certain types of masculinities. It would be interesting, however, to know what these types of masculinities are and whether they correspond to each other or differ across societies.

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