

# Social Comparison and Inverted Male Gaze in Marketing: An Exploratory Study of Gay Male Instagram Users' Reasons for Stopping and Holding the Scroll

Glenn Mehta

Technological University Dublin, Ireland

[Glenn.Mehta@TUDublin.ie](mailto:Glenn.Mehta@TUDublin.ie)

**Abstract:** It is argued that images of fit muscly men on Instagram disrupt the scroll for men and gay men in particular. Six pack abs may make gay men stop and hold the scroll, as may other body features, such as muscles, facial features, hair and beard, or even an obvious bulge in tight shorts. These are some of the main reasons why gay Male Instagram Users (MIUs) stop their scroll and stay on an image. However, there are other factors (i.e. affective triggers) such as the background imagery, weather, or their own emotions and desires. Marketers may exploit this when composing messages aimed at men.

Little research has been undertaken to date into "inverted" male gaze - i.e. how males look upon themselves and other males in advertising, particularly on social media. This study aims to bridge this gap and make a theoretical contribution to the study of inverted male gaze in marketing. It will focus on the use of the male body from an idealised and idolised point of view on Instagram, focussing on a sample of gay men. Adopting the lens of social comparison theory, the research objectives (ROs) are as follows:

RO 1 – To investigate which aspects of male body image influence gay MIUs to stop and hold the scroll.

RO 2 – To explore if affective triggers impact the scrolling behaviour of gay MIUs.

RO 3 – To contribute to the literature and knowledge and suggest updates to the theory.

The research employs a qualitative interpretivist approach. Phase One involved an autoethnographic study of the author's Instagram scroll, and an identification of the appealing aspects of body image and affective triggers on scrolling behaviour. Phase Two is underway using semi-structured interviews with a sample of gay MIUs to probe which aspects (if any) of male body image and affective triggers influence the scrolling behaviour of gay MIUs, and to identify the marketing implications of this. This is important and of interest to theorists and practitioners. Findings are expected in 2026.

**Keywords:** Social Comparison, Inverted Male Gaze, Content Analysis, Social Media, Digital Narcissism, Gay Male Instagram Users

---

## 1. The Current Research

While always a feature in art and media, the use of male body imagery has increased in digital marketing in recent decades (Kraye, Ingledew & Iphofen 2007: 895; Myers et al, 2012: 342; Ho, Lee & Liao 2016: 4; Pan and Peña 2020: 731). This increase is arguably more prevalent in advertisements specifically targeting men across a myriad of social media platforms, as brands seek influence and court influencers as they compete to reach male consumers (Schroeder and Borgerson 2015: 1726; Melki et al, 2015). However, while much research focuses on male gaze and the female body in advertising, there is a notable gap in research into inverted male gaze and the use of the male body to influence from an idealised and idolised point of view; there is an even more noticeable gap in research on this topic focused on gay men (Morrison, Kalin & Morrison 2004; Elliott and Elliott 2005: 5; Kraye, Ingledew & Iphofen 2007: 895; Melki et al, 2015; Ho, Lee & Liao 2016: 4; Iqbal 2022; Allegrini 2023). Proposing a qualitative interpretivist study, this doctoral research aims to contribute to the literature and knowledge in the area by focusing on inverted male gaze and the attraction and power of body influence on Instagram posts that target men.

## 2. Gap in the Current Literature

There is a particular gap identified in several studies which focus on gay men (as outlined above). While there is a wealth of literature discussing female body representation in advertisements, there is a clear gap cited in relation to the male physique, and in particular in relation to gay men's perceptions of this, which has led to calls for more research into the impact of male body representation in advertisements and social media posts targeting all demographics (Morrison, Kalin & Morrison 2004; Elliott and Elliott 2005: 5; Kraye, Ingledew & Iphofen 2007: 895; Melki et al, 2015; Schroeder and Borgerson 2015: 1726; Ho, Lee & Liao 2016: 4; Iqbal 2022; Allegrini 2023). The impact of this research may influence policy and strategy for advertisers and the influencers that they often utilise. It will contribute to the expansion of social comparison theory and the discussion on

consumer perceptions of male body representations in advertisements, as it seeks to address any imbalance in approach to utilising body imagery by different gender identities and across different sexual orientations.

There is a dearth of research in *digital* narcissism, especially that which is focussed on gay men. Wright, Webster & Syed (2021: 320) note that several studies have been conducted into perceived positive personality traits, but few have focussed on so-called *dark* personality traits (such as sub-clinical narcissism) and its influence on marketing on social media platforms.

The literature review further confirms that there is little research into “inverted” male gaze - i.e. how males look upon themselves and other males in advertising, particularly on social media. The aim of this research is to bridge this gap and make a theoretical contribution to the area of inverted male gaze in advertising and social comparison theory. It will focus on the use of the male body from an idealised and idolised point of view on Instagram, focussing on a sample of gay MIUs (Male Instagram Users).

The research gaps identified in the literature review are the following:

- Gap A: Aspects of body image/inverted male gaze that may engage (stop and hold the scroll).
- Gap B: Impact of affective triggers on the scrolling behaviour of gay MIUs.

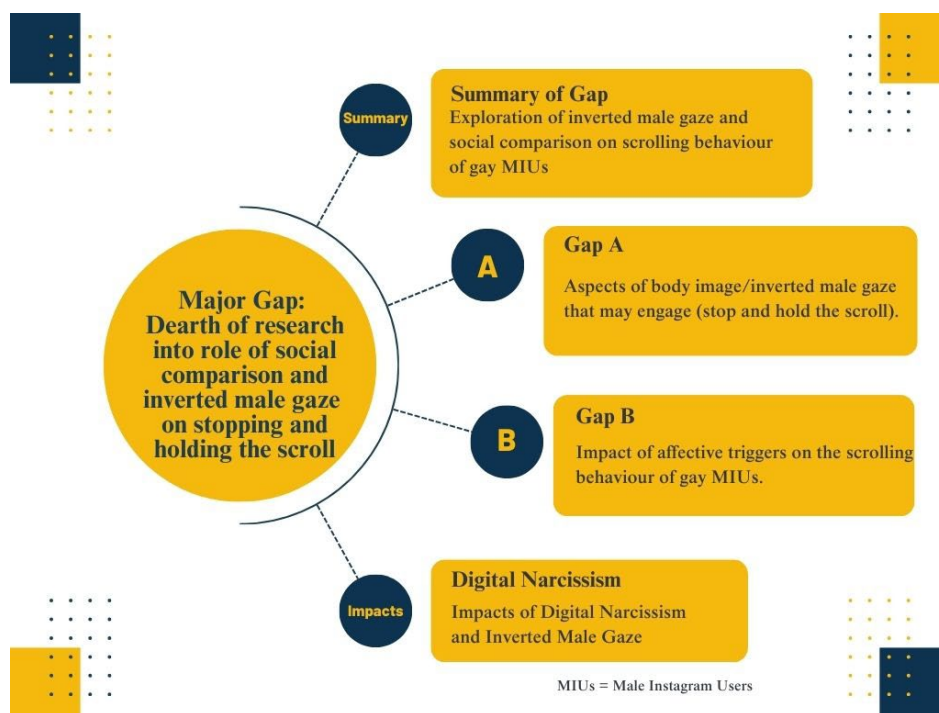


Figure 1: Summary of Gaps in Research

### 3. Theoretical Framework

Social comparison theory was initially proposed by social psychologist Leon Festinger in 1954. It explains how individuals evaluate their own opinions and desires by comparing themselves to others. Since its introduction to communication and social psychology, research has shown that social comparisons are more complex than initially thought, and that people play an active role in comparisons (Suls, Martin & Wheeler 2002). It has been employed in the fields of social psychology and communication/advertising since the 1950s and throughout the following decades. A number of revisions, including new domains for comparison and motives, have also been made since 1954 (Elliott and Elliott 2005). Emergent themes from social comparison theory include the following motivations for social comparison (Kruglanski & Mayseless, 1990; Suls, Martin & Wheeler 2002): self-enhancement; maintenance of a positive self-evaluation; perceptions of relative standing; components of attributes; closure, and the avoidance of closure.

Solomon’s (2016) PhD research employed social comparison theory to research the impact of idealised female body imagery exploring the relationship between social media use, social comparison and self-evaluation. This research proposes a similar approach by using social comparison theory as a framework to investigate the main reasons that a man may stop scrolling on Instagram when he sees an image of another man. It goes further by

exploring what affective triggers and motivating factors influence the inverted male gaze and if this is to satisfy the viewer's psychological and/or social needs. It explores the variety of reasons why a man may stop and hold on such an Instagram post (Lou et al, 2023).

The current research proposes to continue to frame the research around social comparison theory. If the outcome of a social media interaction is consumers of social posts stopping/examining the post, a key question is *What makes them stop?* Is it comparison, trust, narcissism, attraction, objectification, motivation, goal setting, visual culture, or something else? This research investigates this in terms of inverted male gaze, with an emphasis on upward social comparison – the impact of gay MIUs comparing themselves to idealised and idolised fit body images.

## **4. Summary of the Literature Review**

### **4.1 The Male Body as an Idealised and Idolised Image**

Decoding meaning from imagery (semiotics) in the case of advertising involves taking the viewer on an emotional journey (Morrow 2022: 293, Lander, Harris & Garrido, 2023). MIUs compare themselves regularly to body images in posts and advertisements, mostly in an upward social comparison, which can greatly impact perceptions of body image (dis)satisfaction (Sun, Li, & Huang, 2023: 2087, Wang et al, 2018). How the MIU decodes the message is influenced by many factors, and not just the image itself (Iqbal 2022, Sternatori and Abitbol 2022) but also their emotions, surroundings, and other affective triggers.

### **4.2 Inverted Male Gaze**

Male gaze involves men observing a female subject and has been widely discussed throughout history. In the modern era, a focus on the inversion of the male gaze is required, i.e. how men look upon themselves and other men as a way of decoding meaning of masculinity and what it means to be a man, as well as from the perspective of sexual attraction and other factors (Chatzopolou, Filieri & Arzu, 2020: 1271-2, Fagerlund and Wright 2021; Iqbal 2022). Inverted male gaze as an antecedent and influence on body image (dis)satisfaction for gay MIUs requires further discussion and is identified as a research objective in this research.

### **4.3 Influence in Contemporary Marketing**

Fitness influencers are widely used by MIUs as a point of comparison and trust in forming definitions of idealised masculinity and what it means to be a man (Allegrini 2023; Beyer 2023, Pourazad, Stocchi & Narsey, 2023) and forms an element of peer-to-peer communication with multiple demographics (Alampi 2019: 208). The power of influence is evident in the upward social comparison that takes place on Instagram (Kramer, Ingledew & Iphofen 2007: 896).

### **4.4 Digital Narcissism**

Sub-clinical narcissism with a proliferation of male body imagery has been linked to increased social media usage amongst all MIUs (Ho, Lee & Liao 2016) including gay MIUs. Despite this, there is a paucity of research into the role of sub-clinical narcissism in how an MIU responds to idealised body imagery used in marketing and influence, including fitness influence (Wright, Webster & Syed (2021), and there are calls for research into its impact on body image and definitions of masculinity in gay men (Duggan and McCreary 2004).

## **5. Research Objectives**

Following the literature review, the identification of social comparison theory as the preferred framework, and the investigation into an appropriate methodology, the research objectives to address the gaps in the areas are as follows:

**RO 1** – To investigate which aspects of male body image influence gay MIUs to stop and hold the scroll.

**RO 2** – To explore if affective triggers impact the scrolling behaviour of gay MIUs.

**RO 3** – To contribute to the literature and knowledge and suggest updates to the theory.

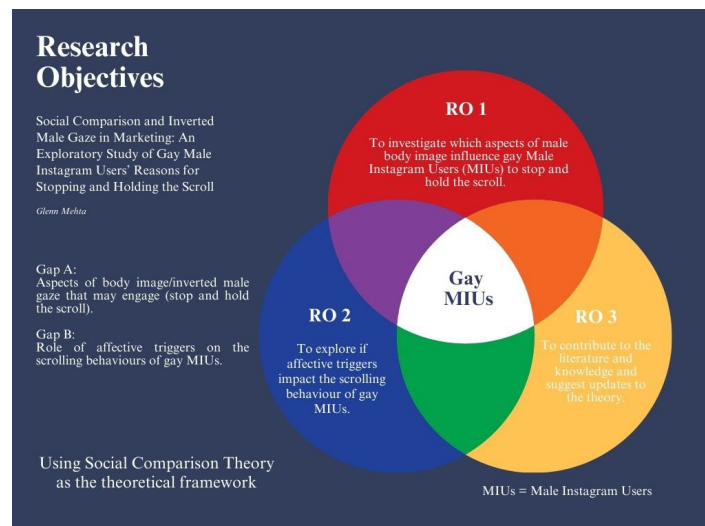


Figure 2: Research Objectives

## 6. Primary Research Methodology

This research commenced with an in-depth exploration of the relevant literature to contextualise the issues and frame the research design and objectives, allowing further refinement of the research question, aims and objectives, and suggesting a way forward on the research methodology.

There has been a call for exploratory research into the use of male body imagery in advertising. Consequently, and based on initial secondary research, this study points towards qualitative interpretivist research using autoethnography and semi-structured interviews. Based on the literature, this is believed to be the best approach to study the imagery and context in depth.

Having completed the first three years on this project (part-time), this research now proposes to bridge the gap in the literature by focussing on inverted male gaze, and the perceptions of the idealised and idolised male body imagery used to influence on Instagram when targeting gay men.

A qualitative interpretivist study of the power and influence of social comparison with the idealised and idolised male body stereotype on Instagram is an investigation that could lead to important results for modern marketers. Such a study is recommended by a variety of sources in order to better understand men's reactions to male body representation in advertisements and other media (Morrison, Kalin & Morrison 2004; Elliott and Elliott 2005: 5; Krayner, Ingledew & Iphofen 2007: 895; Melki et al, 2015; Schroeder and Borgerson 2015: 1726; Ho, Lee & Liao 2016: 4; Iqbal 2022).

The conceptual framework adopts theories on social comparison, content analysis, thematic analysis, digital advertising and the literature on body imagery and how idealised and idolised body imagery assists the viewer in deriving meanings from the environment around them. In particular, the research will focus on how this can be leveraged in the marketing of products, services, lifestyles and concepts targeting men who are attracted to men. The primary research is important given the limited research and clear gaps in this area.

This will involve a visual analysis of a variety of posts and must begin with the object itself and a description of the imagery as a starting point for interpretation. The research will draw further on the work of Schroeder and Borgersen (2015) who investigate the intersection of gender identity, culture and marketing communications by analysing and commenting on media imagery using a semiotic analysis as suggested by Williamson (1978) and Barthes (1957, cited in Huppertz 2011), and note that representations such as media images (e.g. Instagram posts, stories and reels) make identities available to us as raw material for "identity construction" (Schroeder and Borgerson 2015: 1726). Various authors suggest that this intersectional approach is the most productive method to explore gender representation in advertising within a matrix of identity factors which include sexuality.

Phase One involves an autoethnographic study into the researcher's own habits on Instagram, investigating (as a gay MIU) what aspects of the body and other factors make the researcher stop and hold the scroll on his Instagram feed when he sees an image of a fit male physique. This autoethnographic approach helps to explore

the researcher’s personal journey and interest in inverted male gaze as part of framing the research plan. According to Wall (2006: 146):

“Autoethnography is an emerging qualitative research method that allows the author to write in a highly personalized style, drawing on his or her experience to extend understanding about a societal phenomenon. Autoethnography is grounded in postmodern philosophy and is linked to growing debate about reflexivity and voice in social research.”

Continuing to employ a qualitative interpretivist approach, Phase Two will employ semi-structured interviews with a sample of gay MIUs as consumers of such images to probe deeper and to contextualise the imagery under analysis. A qualitative interpretivist approach will analyse the data gathered using thematic analysis (Weber 1990; Scharp and Sanders 2019) which captures, categorises and presents the data in a patterned way, allowing a structure to emerge from the data which may be presented, analysed and discussed in the findings. The data gathered in this study will be organised into themes to facilitate the investigation, analysis and identification of key patterns. Relevant qualitative analytical tools (such as NVivo) will be used in the data analysis. Results are expected in 2026.

## 7. Phase One – Autoethnography

Following a recommendation by the doctoral annual review panel in January 2024, this researcher engaged in a reflective diary on his Instagram feed. He recorded the factors that he felt disrupted the scroll to make him take notice of a particular male image. Using the Apple Journal function on an Apple iPhone over morning coffee for three months, Instagram was opened as normal and a regular scroll ensued. When a particular image of a male caught the attention of the researcher, a note was made in the reflective diary of the aspects of the image (e.g. body, facial features, fitness, etc.) that caused him to stop (i.e. disrupted his morning scroll). For 92 days between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024, the Apple Journal documented notes that captured the reasons for stopping on particular images, and recorded screenshots of the images. Further, it captured the affective triggers that influenced the decision to stop. For example, if it was a cold day, and the image of a man on the beach wearing just shorts suggesting warm weather appeared in the feed, this feeling of cold in the Irish spring and longing for warmth of the summer sun was recorded as an affective trigger. This exercise was conducted in order to determine if an ethnographic (or autoethnographic) study would be an appropriate and useful research methodology to answer the research questions.

For March 2024, the first random image of a man (that the researcher does not normally follow) that attracted the researcher enough to stop the scroll was recorded. For April 2024, the first image from the suggested reels on Instagram (from accounts that the researcher does not normally follow) that attracted the researcher enough to stop the scroll was recorded. Finally, for May 2024, the first random image of a man that the researcher does not normally follow that attracted the researcher enough to stop the scroll was recorded, similar to March 2024, but this time with a focus on which element of the body image in particular made the researcher stop (e.g. abs, shoulders, eyes, beard, etc.)

For each factor that disrupted the scroll to make the researcher stop and review it, an impact score of 1, 2 or 3 was assigned, where the higher score was a major contributing factor to making the researcher stop and hold the scroll. If the factor was not a major contributing factor but was a consideration, a lower score of 1 was assigned. The key elements of body image that stopped and held the scroll are presented in figure 3.

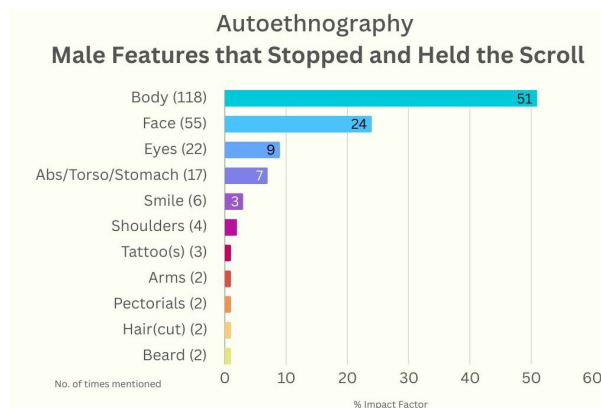
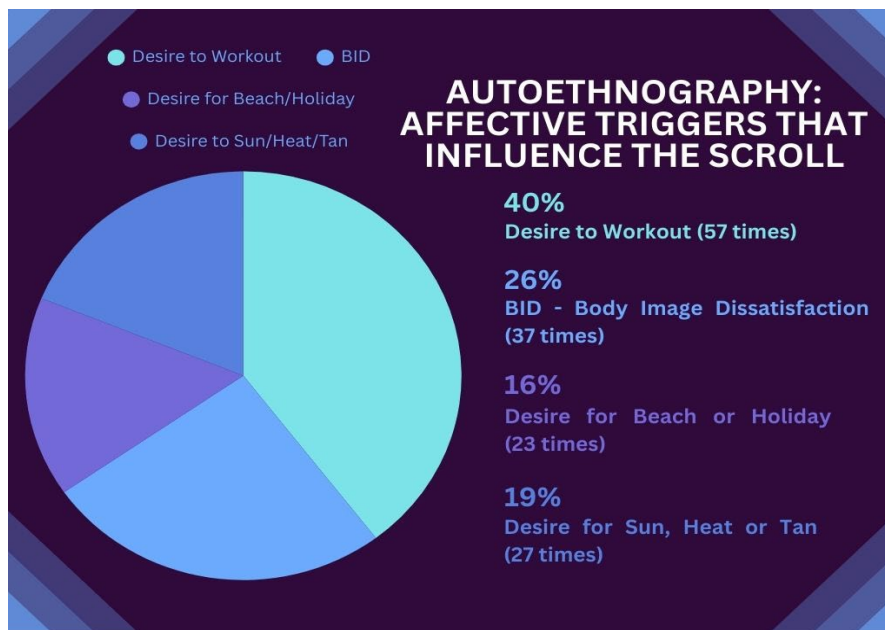


Figure 3: Autoethnography - Features that Stopped and Held the Scroll

Further, the affective triggers (e.g. desire to workout, BID – Body Image Disturbance, sun, holidays) that were evident when stopping and holding the scroll were also recorded. These were based on the feelings, mood and weather as experienced by the researcher on the day in question. The key affective triggers are displayed in figure 4 below.



**Figure 4: Autoethnography Affective Triggers**

This reflective diary exercise was very useful in framing the impact that body imagery, specific body parts, and affective triggers may have on capturing a gay man’s attention when he looks at another man and draws inferences about his place in comparison to said images (social comparison theory) and warrants further exploration in Phase Two (from Spring 2025) including an investigation into the role of these factors.

## 8. Originality and Innovative Nature of the Research

The dynamic and innovative nature of changing social media platforms and their functionality means that there is gap in the literature in relation to subject-specific articles. Advertisers of all types want to engage with niche demographics and to access influencers’ perceived influence over consumers. Further, there is limited research into the use of male body influence to date in advertising (gap in literature), and how men look upon themselves and other men including from a sexual attraction perspective. There is limited research on the impact of influence as an advertising tool targeting male consumers and calls for further investigation. There is limited discussion of affective triggers that impact gay MIUs in stopping and holding the scroll on Instagram. The benefits from this research study may include a development of an understanding of what stops the scroll on Instagram for gay men when they see images of other men (unique area, with limited research). This will also consider any affective triggers that may impact the scroll. Further possible benefits include an in-depth analysis of the impact of Instagram posts on gay men in relation to male body idealisation and idolisation, and a development of a framework that may be used by practitioners when marketing to gay MIUs, and by those responsible for drafting policies in the sector. Possible limitations include changes in or obsolescence of Instagram or its tools during the lifetime of this research, the subjective nature of themes identified, and the availability and openness of a sufficient sample of participants.

## 9. Contributions

This research aims to contribute to the research in the areas and build on the work of a variety of authors including Iqbal (2022), Wright, Webster & Syed (2021), Pan and Peña (2020), and Schroeder and Borgerson (2015). It will further contribute to emerging findings in social comparison, gender and queer studies. It aims to expand and update social comparison theory to the specific sample. Further, it aims to contribute to marketing and advertising practices by responding to a need for improved and targeted approaches to social media marketing, and to policy development for social media platforms and policy makers, as well as the advertising and technology industries.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge in particular Dr. Patricia Medcalf and Dr. Etain Kidney, supervisors for this research, for their continued support and guidance on this doctoral research project.

## Ethics Declaration

The Technological University Dublin Research Ethics Committee has provided ethical clearance for this research.

## AI Declaration

Artificial intelligence has been used as part of mind-mapping and brainstorming on topics related to this research only. It has not been used to compose any part of this paper or the research thus far. It is envisaged that AI will be used to assist in transcription of the interviews, to link with NVivo for qualitative analysis, and to complement manual thematic analysis. Wherever AI is used in the research, it will be clearly cited.

## References

- Alampi, A. (2019) "The future is micro: how to build an effective micro-influencer programme", *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, Vol 7, No. 3, pp 203-208
- Allegrini, A. (2023) "TikTok as an influencer marketing channel for user acquisition", *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, Vol 11, No. 2, pp 107-114, [online], <https://hstalks-com.tudublin.idm.oclc.org/article/8054/tiktok-as-an-influencer-marketing-channel-for-user/?business>
- Beyer, S. (2023) "Trust as a Competitive Advantage", *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, Vol 11, No 2, pp 155-163, Henry Stewart Publications, [online], <https://hstalks-com.tudublin.idm.oclc.org/article/8057/trust-as-a-competitive-advantage/?business>
- Chatzopolou, E., Filieri, R. and Arzu Dogruyol, S. (2020) "Instagram and Body Image: Motivation to conform to the "Instabod" and consequences on young male wellbeing", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, Vol 54, pp 1270-1297
- Duggan, S. J. and McCreary, D. R. (2004) "Body image, eating disorders, and the drive for muscularity in gay and heterosexual men", *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol 47, No. 33, pp 45–58, [online], <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315870304-3/body-image-eating-disorders-drive-muscularity-gay-heterosexual-men-scott-duggan-donald-mccreary?context=ubx>
- Elliott, R. and Elliott, C. (2005) "Idealized images of the male body in advertising: a reader-response exploration", *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol 11, No. 1, pp 3-19, March, [online], <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1352726042000263566>
- Fagerlund, L. and Wright, D. (2021) *Gen Z in View*, Carat Report 2021
- Festinger, L. (1954) "A theory of social comparison processes", *Human Relations*, Vol 7, pp 117-140
- Festinger, L. (1954) "Motivations leading to social behaviour" in Jones, M.R. (Ed.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, 1954, pp 191–219, University of Nebraska Press, [online], <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1955-02102-006>
- Festinger, L. (1957) "Social comparison theory", *Selective Exposure Theory*, Vol 16, No. 401
- Ho, S.S., Lee, E.W. and Liao, Y. (2016) "Social network sites, friends, and celebrities: The roles of social comparison and celebrity involvement in adolescents' body image dissatisfaction", *Social Media and Society*, Vol 2, No. 3, [online], <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305116664216>
- Huppatz, D.J. (2011) *Roland Barthes, Mythologies, Design and Culture*, Vol 3, No. 1, pp 85-100
- Iqbal, Y., (2022) "Investigating the impact of male body image ideals on lived experiences of the male body and masculinity", *Doctoral thesis*, Northumbria University, [online], <https://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/50652/>,
- Krayer, A., Ingledew, D.K. and Iphofen, R. (2008) "Social comparison and body image in adolescence: A grounded theory approach", *Health Education Research*, Vol 23, No. 5, pp 892-903, [online], <https://academic.oup.com/her/article/23/5/892/629472>
- Kruglanski, A. W. and Mayselless, O. (1990) "Classic and current social comparison research: Expanding the perspective", *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol 108, No. 2, pp 195-208
- Lander, C., Harris, R. and Garrido, D. (2023) "Marketers should use social media to build trust in their brand, but they must know how to measure it", *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, Vol 11, No. 1, pp. 20-29, Henry Stewart Publications, [online], <https://hstalks-com.tudublin.idm.oclc.org/article/7845/marketers-should-use-social-media-to-build-trust-i/?business>
- Lou, C., Kiew, S.T.J., Chen, T., Lee, T.Y.M., Ong, J.E.C., and Phua, Z.X. (2022) "Authentically Fake? How Consumers Respond to the Influence of Virtual Influencers", *Journal of Advertising*, December, [online], <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2022.2149641>
- Melki, J.P., Hitti, E.A., Oghia, M.J., and Muffarij, A.A. (2015) "Media Exposure, Mediated Social Comparison to Idealized Images of Muscularity, and Anabolic Steroid Use", *Journal of Health Communication*, Vol 30, No. 5, pp 473-484, [online], <https://www.tandfonline-com.tudublin.idm.oclc.org/doi/full/10.1080/10410236.2013.867007>

- Morrison, T.G., Kalin, R. and Morrison, M.A. (2004) "Body-image evaluation and body-image investment among adolescents: a test of sociocultural and social comparison theories", *Adolescence*, Vol 39, No. 155, [online], [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Todd-Morrison-2/publication/8059139\\_Body-image\\_evaluation\\_and\\_body-image\\_investment\\_among\\_adolescents\\_A\\_test\\_of\\_sociocultural\\_and\\_social\\_comparison\\_theories/links/551645da0cf2b5d6a0ed89b6/Body-image-evaluation-and-body-image-investment-among-adolescents-A-test-of-sociocultural-and-social-comparison-theories.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Todd-Morrison-2/publication/8059139_Body-image_evaluation_and_body-image_investment_among_adolescents_A_test_of_sociocultural_and_social_comparison_theories/links/551645da0cf2b5d6a0ed89b6/Body-image-evaluation-and-body-image-investment-among-adolescents-A-test-of-sociocultural-and-social-comparison-theories.pdf)
- Morrow, V. (2022) "Social storytelling in a post-pandemic world: Four content pillars to build relevant authenticity with today's social consumers", *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, Vol 9, No. 4, pp 290-297, Henry Stewart Publications
- Myers, T.A. and Crowther, J.H. (2009) "Social comparison as a predictor of body dissatisfaction: A meta-analytic review", *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, Vol 118, No. 4, p683, [online], <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016763>
- Pan, W. and Peña, J. (2020) "Looking down on Others to Feel Good about the Self: The Exposure Effects of Online Model Pictures on Men's Self-Esteem", *Journal of Health Communication*, Vol 35, No. 6, pp. 731-738, [online], [10.1080/10410236.2019.1584780](https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2019.1584780)
- Pourazad, N., Stocchi, L. and Narsey, S., (2023) "A comparison of social media influencers' KPI patterns across platforms: Exploring differences in followers and engagement on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter", *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol 63, No. 2, [online], <https://www-warc-com.tudublin.idm.oclc.org/content/article/jar/a-comparison-of-social-media-influencers-kpi-patterns-across-platforms-exploring-differences-in-followers-and-engagement-on-facebook-instagram-youtube-tiktok-and-twitter/151040>
- Schroeder, J.E. and Zwick, D. (2004) "Mirrors of Masculinity: Representation and Identity in Advertising Images", *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, Vol 7, No. 1, March, pp 21-52, Routledge
- Schroeder, J.E. and Borgerson, J.L. (2015) "Critical visual analysis of gender: reactions and reflections", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol 31, No. 15-16, pp 1723-1731, [online], <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2015.1077883>
- Sohn, S.H. (2009) "Body image: Impacts of media channels on men's and women's social comparison process, and testing of involvement measurement", *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, Vol 17, No. 1, pp 19-35, [online], <https://www-tandfonline-com.tudublin.idm.oclc.org/doi/full/10.1080/15456870802505670>
- Solomon, M. (2016) *Social Media and Self-Evaluation: The Examination of Social Media Use on Identity, Social Comparison, and Self-Esteem in Young Female Adults*, William James College, [Unpublished Thesis], [online], <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1855123331/C6EF118C338A413DPQ/1?accountid=10594#>
- Sternadori, M. and Abitbol, M. (2022) "How male consumers respond to "enlightened manvertising" campaigns: Gender schema, hostile sexism, and political orientation feed attitudes", *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol 62, No. 1
- Suls, J., Martin, R., and Wheeler, L. (2002) "Social Comparison: Why, with whom and with what effect?" *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol 11, No. 5, pp 159-163
- Sun, M. Li, C.J. and Huang, G. (2023) "Improving Body Satisfaction Through Fitness App Use: Explicating the Role of Social Comparison, Social Network Size, and Gender", *Journal of Health Communication*, Vol 38, No. 10, pp 2087-2098, [online], [10.1080/10410236.2022.2054099](https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2022.2054099)
- Wall, S. (2006) "An autoethnography on learning about autoethnography", *International journal of qualitative methods*, Vol 5, No. 2, pp 146-160
- Wang, Y., Wang, X., Liu, H., Xie, X., Wang, P. and Lei, L. (2018) "Selfie posting and self-esteem among young adult women: A mediation model of positive feedback and body satisfaction", *Journal of Health Psychology*, Vol 25, No. 2, pp 161-172, [online], <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1359105318787624> and <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105318787624>
- Weber, R.P. (1990) *Basic content analysis*, Sage
- Williamson, J. (1978) *Decoding advertisements: ideology and meaning in advertising*, Marion Boyers
- Wright, B.K., Webster, B.D., Syed, I. (2021) "Narcissists' Perceived Compatibility with Social Media Content: The Moderating Role of Psychological Capital", *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, Vol 9, No. 4, pp. 318-332, Henry Stewart Publications