



March, 2008

## Study on Body Image and Fitness Magazines Earns Professor and Student Top Award

---

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Communication Studies Professor Lorraine D. Jackson recently won an award for a paper she authored with recent Communications Studies graduate Danielle Boulger.

Professor Jackson and former student Boulger conducted research on the effects of viewing fitness magazines, for both men and women.

While there is plenty of research documenting that viewing fashion magazines causes women to feel worse about their bodies, the effect of men's and women's fitness magazines haven't yet been extensively studied, Jackson said.

According to the Cal Poly professor's study, completed with volunteer Cal Poly students, viewing women's fitness magazines caused the women measurable loss of body esteem. But men's fitness magazines didn't cause any lack of body confidence in men.

Jackson noted that the majority of her college-age subjects were unhappy with their bodies -- and working out to change them. College males reported working out and taking dietary supplements to "bulk up" while women reported working out and dieting to slim down.

Increasing media images of ultra-thin fashion models or ultra-lean female fitness subjects, as well as increasing media images of sculpted and heavily muscled men, may be shaking more Americans' own body images -- another ripe area for study, Jackson noted.

Jackson presented the paper at a communications conference in Denver Feb. 17. Jackson and Boulger's work received the Top Paper in Health Communication honor from the Western States Communication Association (WSCA).

Their paper is titled "Short-term Exposure to Idealized Body Images in Health and Fitness Magazines: The Effects on Men's and Women's Body Esteem." Jackson was able to complete the research paper in 2007 with assigned time awarded by College of Liberal Arts Dean Linda Halisky.

##

[CP Home](#) • [CP Find It](#) • [Get Adobe Reader](#) • [Microsoft Viewers](#)

[Events](#) • [Recent Releases](#) • [Cal Poly Magazine](#)  
• [Cal Poly Update E-newsletter](#) • [Contact Public Affairs](#) • [Alumni](#) • [Giving](#) • [Athletics](#)

**Cal Poly Public Affairs**  
California Polytechnic State University  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407  
805.756.7266  
[polynews@calpoly.edu](mailto:polynews@calpoly.edu)