

popular with young adult girls and women.

One of the elements of body image that can be problematic in these magazines is the portrayal of young women of non-white ethnicity. Assuming that a young woman's healthy body image includes an appreciation of her own cultural or racial appearance, we must also assume that images that distort this view or don't reflect it at all are impacting body image. With this in mind I examined a recent edition of each of these magazines for images that portray women of a variety of ethnicities. I counted the number of advertisements and regular content of the magazines that included women of colour.

In terms of the number of images that include women of non-white ethnicity, *CosmoGIRL!* ranked the highest and *Teen Vogue* the lowest. In all of the magazines the representation of different cultures wasn't balanced. That is, by far most of the content of the magazines portrayed white females. An example of this can be seen in the low number of magazine covers that show women who are African American. In *CosmoGIRL!*, I counted four out of twelve covers that showed females who were not white. Two of the covers portrayed African American celebrities: Destiny's Child and Alicia Keys. The other two covers were of America Ferrera and Jennifer Lopez. *CosmoGIRL!* was actually the most balanced of the three magazines. In *Seventeen*, one out of ten covers showed an African American woman, celebrity Beyonce. *Teen Vogue* had the lowest number of African American women per number of covers, two out of fifteen are singers Ciara and Ashanti. There are pictures, advertisements, and features in these magazines that portray women of non

Alternatives

By Rebecca Ferrie

Teen magazines are notorious for their negative influence over teenaged girls' body image. I found it nearly impossible to find mainstream fashion magazines that contribute to a positive body image for teens. Even if articles talk about self esteem there will always be skinny models in the ads and features. Here are some resources for alternative e-zines who are doing their part to counter the mainstream teen magazines.

gURL.com

<http://www.gurl.com/>

gURL.com is an online community and content site for teenage girls. It contains stories, games and interactive content. They address issues pertinent to teen girls such as body image, health, fashion, self esteem, and dating. They use an ample dose of humour and visuals to reach the teens and try to deal frankly with taboo subjects such as sexuality, emotions and body image.

Extra Hip

<http://www.extrahip.com/>

An e-zine dedicated to young plus-size women. Extra Hip relays information on fashion and nutrition. Fashion articles cover topics such as the latest styles that fit, where to find them, and how to wear them. Each issue profiles celebrities of size and top plus-size models who share their personal stories. This e-zine is not supported by advertising.

BBTeen

http://www.size-acceptance.org/without_measure/BBTeen/zine_graphics/index.html

BBT stands for Big and Beautiful Teens, and is an electronic magazine for plus-sized teens the target audience being girls aged 13-19 years old. The focus of this e-zine is fat acceptance.