

Redefining Masculinity: A Study on the Shifting Landscape of Advertisements and its Impact on the Perception of Masculinity among Young Adult Men

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Abstract

This paper examines how men aged 18-30 perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and what they believe to be the effects of this. With a growing societal shift in the representation of gender roles, the advertising industry has started to diversify their portrayal of masculinity. To get a better idea of how to portray masculinity to reduce the phenomenon of toxic masculinity, it is important to understand the impact and potential effects of this shift. This paper specifically focuses on men between the age of 18-30.

To study this, 15 male participants between the age of 18-30 were shown a set of traditional advertisements as well as a set of progressive advertisements and were interviewed in semi-structured interviews about their thoughts and feelings on the portrayal of masculinity in each. These interviews were then coded and analyzed using the software 'Atlas.ti'.

It was found that a majority of participants perceived the portrayal of masculinity in the traditional set of advertisements as outdated, unrealistic, and potentially harmful, while the second compilation was received overall positively, with participants praising the diversity and emphasis on individuality within the compilation. This suggests that the shift in the portrayal of masculinity positively impacts men between the age of 18-30 in several areas, resulting in more tolerance and diversity among men. Ultimately, this leads to the conclusion that the shift can be beneficial in reducing the phenomenon of toxic masculinity in society in general.

Keywords: Gender Roles, Toxic Masculinity, Portrayal Masculinity Advertisements, Shift Portrayal Masculinity, Male Perception Shift Masculinity

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1. Introduction

“Man up!” has been a phrase commonly used for decades. But what does behaving in a ‘manly’ manner actually entail? In advertisements, men are traditionally portrayed as independent, competitive, and in control. Additionally, men’s bodies are often objectified and associated with power and dominance, and in advertisements specifically targeted toward men, women are frequently depicted as a reward for men after choosing a certain product (Craig, 1992). These depictions rely on historical patterns and reflect and shape cultural norms and meanings (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). With growing awareness of the potential harm of these stereotypes, societal norms have begun to shift towards a more progressive, inclusive definition of masculinity. This shift is also prominent in popular media, particularly in advertisements. Within this definition, men are portrayed in a greater variety of roles, including decorative roles and family roles (Tsichla, 2020). Another significant change is the growth in the portrayal of androgynous and non-binary gender portrayals, to address LGBTQIA+ audiences. While Tsichla (2020) among other researchers detected a prominent shift in the portrayal of genders in advertising, stereotypical gender portrayals and power dynamics are still common, with a limited representation of non-traditional male roles (Gentry & Harrison, 2010.)

To get a better idea of the underlying reasons for these stereotypical portrayals of gender, it is important to understand the significant impact of gender roles on societal norms. Gender roles have been around for centuries and have strongly shaped the behavior and decision-making of men and women all over the world. To conform to the strict definitions of what being a man or woman should entail, many people have felt the need to suppress or enhance certain characteristics and sets of behaviors, often with negative effects on themselves as well as their surroundings (Harrington, 2021). According to the Gender Equitable Men Scale, created by Promundo, seven thematic pillars represent the behaviors associated with masculinity, according to respondents. These pillars include self-sufficiency, acting tough, physical attractiveness, rigid masculine gender roles, heterosexuality and homophobia, hypersexuality, aggression and control (Irvine et al., 2018). These traits are often reinforced through media, by portraying the main male character with traditionally desired characteristics, leading viewers to feel an expectation to conform to these standards (Eisend, 2019). This can result in a phenomenon called toxic masculinity, which refers to a loosely interrelated collection of norms, beliefs, and behaviors associated with masculinity (Sculos, 2017). Examples of toxic masculinity can include aggressive male behavior toward a female partner to assert dominance and power and a stigma around mental health in men. This stigma often results in men being unable to share their emotions and getting help with their mental health.

Wizdom Powell, an associate professor at the University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill Department of Behavior states: “In general, when men adhere rigidly to the kinds of norms that encourage them to not share their emotions, (...) they can have poorer mental health outcomes, particularly more depressive symptomatology, because doing so cuts them off from the social networks and social supports that might help them through a difficult time”. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, men are significantly less likely than women to talk about, recognize and seek help for depression, which often manifests itself in the form of anger, irritability, and aggression, and leads to higher suicide rates among men (Grewal, 2006). Due to these severe harmful effects not only to men themselves but also to all other members of society, measures to reduce this phenomenon should be urgently considered.

Since this study focuses on advertisements as an influential factor in particular, the role and impact of media, and advertisements specifically, needs to be understood. The strong impact of media on viewers has been extensively studied. For example, the cultivation theory has found that over time, media can strongly impact the thoughts and beliefs and therefore ultimately the behavior of viewers (Morgan et al., 2016). This is important to note, since, within the field of media, advertisements are no exception, and this impact also includes viewers’ perceptions of gender roles. Studies have found that advertisements have a strong influence in shaping viewers’ beliefs about their own gender identity. According to Garst and Bodenhausen (1997), men’s gender role attitudes can be significantly influenced by the images of men they regularly see in the mass media. Although the growing societal acceptance of a broader, more inclusive portrayal of gender roles has caused the advertising industry to gradually diversify its portrayal of masculinity and femininity (Tschla, 2020), traditional representations of gender roles are still the norm.

While there has been extensive previous research conducted on the portrayal of female characters in media, the shift in the portrayal of masculinity and its impact specifically has not been thoroughly studied yet. This research will aid in understanding the impact and effects of the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, specifically among men between the age of 18-30 years of age. This particular age group was selected, as it covers men that are old enough to have experienced and grown up with the traditional portrayal of masculinity, but simultaneously still fall in the demographic age group that is most strongly impacted by media. This makes them the ideal group to comment on the shift that is investigated within this research.

Within this study, several concepts are of relevance to fully understand the topic of research. Firstly, the concepts ‘Masculinity and Gender Identity’ need to be defined, to

understand their role in the portrayal of masculinity. Secondly, the shift in the portrayal of masculinity has to be investigated, in which the former portrayal as well as the current portrayal need to be compared. After attaining a good understanding of the shift, it is important to understand how this shift impacts the gender identity of men, which will be discussed in the third concept. Another important factor to consider is how men are impacted by this shift emotionally, which will be discussed in concept 4. Lastly, the effects of the shift on men more broadly will be taken into account, by investigating the impact of the shift on the beliefs and behaviors of men.

All concepts will be carefully explored in the theoretical framework. Then, a qualitative study with semi-structured interviews will be conducted, transcribed, coded and analysed, to answer the research question:

How do men aged 18-30 perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and what do they believe to be the effects of this?

2. Theoretical Framework

Advertisements play a significant role in shaping cultural norms, including what is defined as masculine. In recent years, the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements has shifted away from the stereotypical, traditional definition of masculinity towards a more diverse and inclusive representation. This study aims to explore how this shift impacts the perception of masculinity in men aged 18-30, and the effects this impact has. To do so effectively, all relevant concepts will be determined and defined and previous academic research on the topic will be collected and investigated. The process of the literature search has been thoroughly documented in the literature search log (Appendix 1).

2.1 Masculinity and Gender Identity

To understand how the portrayal of masculinity in media is formed, the concept of gender identity and masculinity need to be understood. Masculinity is a social construct that is defined by cultural expectations surrounding male behaviour, appearance, and emotions. Traditionally, these expectations include traits such as strength, independence, and emotional restraint (McKenzie et al., 2018). According to Connell (2005), masculinity is not a fixed or inherent trait but is rather shaped by social, cultural, as well as historical factors. When harmful traits within the concept of masculinity are amplified, toxic masculinity occurs (Grewal, 2006).

Based on these cultural expectations stereotypically associated with masculinity, men form and define their own gender identity.

Gender identity is described by the World Health Organization (2019) as “each person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body”. In the context of this study, the gender identity would describe how men define their own masculinity and how their personal sense of masculinity is impacted by the portrayal in men in advertisements. While gender roles in advertising are still commonly portrayed with stereotypical depictions of masculinity and femininity, a shift towards a more inclusive portrayal of masculinity can be seen. The degree of gender stereotyping in advertising differs across different countries and is impacted by multiple factors, including gender equality, women empowerment, and cultural values. These differences have however become smaller over time (Eisend, 2019). Through understanding how gender identity is formed and can be affected by advertisements, this study can effectively research how the perception of gender identity as well as the general definition of masculinity among men is impacted by the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements.

2.2 The Shift in the Portrayal of Men in Advertisements

After getting a clearer insight into the base concepts of masculinity and gender identity, the shift and its effects need to be investigated further. Looking into pre-existing research on the topic, the shift appears to be less drastic than initially expected, and researchers are divided on how impactful this shift essentially is. While some studies suggest a significant shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, most find that traditional gender roles and stereotypes still dominate the representation of men. Gentry & Harrison (2010) found that out of 1,392 commercials observed during sports coverage, only two showed a man in an indoor-domestic role. Additionally, only seven out of a hundred advertisements displayed fathers with emotional ties to the children and only seven out of 225 commercials on children’s television showed fathers, with none of them displayed in nurturing roles. Similar findings were made by Verhellen et al (2016), who found that certain gender stereotypes in advertising persisted over time, such as women being more associated with caregiving roles, housekeeping, and being portrayed as sexual objects. Mager & Helgeson (2011) concluded, that while there was a decreasing trend towards more gender balance in role portrayals in advertising, women were still predominantly portrayed as dependent on men and in need of their protection (Mager &

Helgeson, 2011), with similar findings from a recent study conducted by Isentyeva et al (2023), who found that over the last 20 years, the portrayal of masculinity in advertising has remained relatively stable and stereotypical. Men are still commonly portrayed as active, dominant, and in control.

However, multiple studies also detected substantial progress in the portrayal of gender roles in advertising. Grau & Zotos (2016) noted an increase in interest in the portrayal of masculinity among consumers, with some ads challenging traditional masculinity roles. The study also found a significantly higher decrease in the degree of gender stereotyping in high-masculinity societies like Japan, than in low-masculinity societies like Sweden. These findings correlate with findings by Eisend (2010), who discovered that the decrease in the degree of stereotyping was significantly higher in high-masculinity countries, while low-masculinity countries showed no substantial decrease. Additional changes were detected by Fowler & Thomas (2015), who found an increase in the portrayal of male lead characters as fathers, from 17% in 2003 to 26% in 2008. They also found that in 2003, 30% of commercials had male lead characters, while in 2008, it decreased to 21% and detected a decrease in the sexualization of women, with male leads treating women as sexual objects less frequently in 2008 compared to 2003. In addition to the previously listed changes in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, Tschla (2020) also detected progress toward a broader representation of men. These include an increase in androgynous and non-binary gender portrayals and covert strategies, to appeal to LGBT audiences.

Overall, the literature shows that while there are significant changes in multiple areas within the portrayal of masculinity among men, traditional gender roles are still the norm. This needs to be taken into account when researching the impact of this shift, and special attention should be paid to how participants perceive the shift in the shown advertisements, as well as in advertisements in general.

2.3 Impact on Gender Identity

Regardless of the strength of the shift, there is sufficient research to suggest that there is a shift. To get a better insight into the impact of this shift on male viewers, the effects on their gender identity should be investigated. Studies suggest that there is a noteworthy impact, with a growing resistance of customers toward traditional gender roles. Extensive research suggests the significant impact of media on the perception of the gender identity of individuals. One particularly popular theory advocating the noteworthy impact of media on its viewers is

the Social Cognitive Theory. According to this theory, behaviours and attitudes are learned through observation and modelling (Bandura, 2001). This also applies to gender roles portrayed in advertisements, which can impact the gender identity of viewers. Based on the Social Cognitive Theory, the constant observation of the stereotypical portrayal of masculinity could lead viewers to model and adapt the traditionally masculine traits portrayed, while a more diverse portrayal of masculinity provided individuals with new role models for behaviour, which might consequently increase their understanding- or impact their view of their own gender identity.

However, the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements may also negatively impact the gender identity of individuals. Ward (2016) found, that conflicting or negative portrayals of masculinity may contribute to confusion or dissatisfaction toward an individual's own gender identity. Current research also suggests an active resistance among individuals towards traditional gender roles depicted in advertisements. Zayer et al (2019) highlight, that individuals are actively engaging in the delegitimization of traditional gender ideals portrayed in advertising, resisting, and opposing dominant power structures. Consumers seek to delegitimize gender ideals through reframing and prioritizing personal norms, stressing the growing importance for the advertising industry of gendered ad messages being deemed legitimate by audiences.

The shift in the portrayal of masculinity appears to mainly broaden the understanding and development of the gender identity of viewers, with a growing dissatisfaction of the traditional portrayal of masculinity in advertisements. How this impacts viewers emotionally, will be discussed next.

2.4 Emotional Impact

The shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements appears to primarily elicit positive emotional responses from male consumers, according to research. Both Tschla (2020) and Eisend (2019) agree that a more inclusive portrayal of gender roles mainly resulted in positive attitudes. Non-traditional or counter-stereotypical male portrayals were especially positively evaluated by consumers with a non-traditional gender-role ideology and deviations from the expected traditional portrayal of men in advertisements lead to favorable advertising outcomes due to surprise and positive feelings among consumers. Additionally, less idealized body portrayals are also strongly correlated with increased body satisfaction and self-esteem (Eisend, 2019). However, the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements may also

negatively impact men, as Eisend (2010) found, that a deviation from gender-related values in advertising can have negative effects on consumers, leading to disbelief, rejection of the message, and potential backlash.

The traditional portrayal of masculinity in advertisements not only causes short-term negative emotional responses but can also seriously harm the mental health of male viewers. By adhering to traditional masculine norms can, among others, lead to the worsening of depression and anxiety, substance abuse, issues with interpersonal intimacy and violence, homophobia and discouragement in seeking help. This negative impact on help-seeking behaviors among men ultimately increases the morbidity and mortality rate of men. (Chatmon, 2020). National trends in the United States have found that men are four times more likely to die from suicide attempts than women and tend to exhibit significantly more violent behaviors and alcohol-related issues. (Iwamoto et al., 2018). While limited research has been conducted on the mental health effects of a more inclusive portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, the previously discussed studies that found primarily positive emotional responses in combination with the increased body satisfaction and self-esteem suggest, that this type of portrayal can positively impact the mental health of male viewers.

These studies show the strong variance in emotional impact between the traditional portrayal and the progressive portrayal. While the traditional portrayal strongly negatively impacts the emotional state and mental health of male viewers, the progressive portrayal appears to primarily positively impact the emotional state of viewers. Within this study, this should be further explored, to get deeper insights into this variance in emotional responses.

2.5 Impact on Male Beliefs and Behaviours

While the impact of the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements on the definition of masculinity among men has not been thoroughly studied yet, research suggests a shift in the perception of masculinity among men. Zayer et al (2019) show a trend towards a more individual definition of masculinity, as individuals increasingly form their own personal, authentic perception of masculinity, rather than basing their definition on the idealized masculine standards portrayed in advertisements. This has the effect that the definition of masculinity among men is less easily impacted by outside forces, including advertisements. Additionally, research suggests that non-stereotypical gender role representations in advertisements are more positively perceived by consumers, resulting in a decrease in gender stereotyping and a broader definition of the concept of 'masculinity' (Grau & Zotos, 2016).

This shift in portrayal can also lead to a change in behaviors of male viewers. Since the traditional portrayal reinforces and reproduces pre-existing gender norms and hierarchies, it can lead men to feel the need to adhere to these standards, in order to be validated as ‘manly’ by society. This restrains them in their individuality (Estrada & Arciniega, 2015). Additionally, a study conducted by ‘The Men’s Project’ and Dr. Michael Flood found that men who highly endorse these standards are more likely to take on unhealthy behaviors, perpetrate violent acts as well as sexual harassment, end up in risky situations and avoid seeking help for their mental and physical health (Irvine et al., 2018). By portraying a more inclusive image of masculinity, these negative effects can be reduced. Estrada and Arciniega (2018) found that the portrayal of a more healthy and positive masculinity can increase the number of men seeking mental health care and can enhance a man's sense of social support. Ultimately, this allows men to express themselves in a way more authentic and accepting toward themselves, leading them to be kinder towards themselves as well as others.

Overall, the research suggests that the key to the change in beliefs and behaviors lies in the growing acceptance of individuality among men, which results in more men seeking mental and physical health counseling. This reduces the phenomenon of toxic masculinity, which then ultimately decreases the beliefs and behaviors of men associated with this concept.

Based on the research previously discussed, it can be concluded that a shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements exists and impacts the feelings of gender identity, emotional wellbeing and beliefs and behaviors of men. A deeper insight into these effects will be gained within this study. Findings can be used to better determine how masculinity in advertisements should be portrayed to ultimately reduce the phenomenon of toxic masculinity. This will be achieved by answering the research question:

How do men aged 18-30 perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and what do they believe to be the effects of this?

Within this research question, the following sub-questions will be answered:

1. How do participants perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements?
2. What impact does the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on the gender identity of participants?
3. What emotional impact can the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on men aged 18-30?

4. What impact can the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on the beliefs and behaviors of men aged 18-30?

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample

The aim of this study is to get a better insight into the personal feelings and opinions of men aged 18-30 towards the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements. Since this shift continues to gain prominence and its impact and effects on men have not extensively been studied yet, further research on the topic is urgent. This study aims to fill this gap in research and will aid in determining the ideal way to portray masculinity in advertisements to ultimately reduce the phenomenon of toxic masculinity.

To be able to get in-depth responses from participants regarding their opinions and feelings on the topic, a qualitative interview study was selected. As this study requires a deep understanding of the impact of advertisements on participants, qualitative, semi-structured interviews were determined as the most effective approach to get an insight into the opinions of participants and the reasoning behind them. By choosing to conduct semi-structured interviews, participants were able to freely share their perspectives without major restrictions on the depth of their insights. The data will consist of primary data, collected by the researcher themselves.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

All interviews were conducted in the time period between 02.05.2023 and 08.05.2023 and were held online, via a Microsoft Teams Video Conference. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling, which was an effective way to find a large number of participants that fulfilled the requirements for participation, due to the fact that the direct and indirect social circle of the researcher consisted of university students between the age of 18-30. The requirements for participation included being male and between the age of 18-30. In total, 15 participants took part in the study. The age and nationality of all participants was collected and is displayed in Table 1. All interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions. In some cases, open follow-up questions were added, to acquire more information on a certain topic if deemed necessary. All interviews lasted between 26-65 minutes with an average length of 38,8 minutes and were recorded via an audio recording on the researcher's computer, as well as a recording within the Microsoft Teams conference.

Table 1*Participant data*

	Age	Nationality
Participant 1	26	Dutch
Participant 2	20	Dutch
Participant 3	27	Turkish
Participant 4	18	Dutch
Participant 5	20	Dutch
Participant 6	20	Dutch
Participant 7	23	Greek
Participant 8	19	Dutch
Participant 9	21	Spanish
Participant 10	20	Dutch
Participant 11	23	Spanish
Participant 12	18	German
Participant 13	24	Syrian
Participant 14	22	Italian
Participant 15	20	Dutch

Prior to the interviews, all participants received information about the topic and purpose of the study, as well as their role in it. They were also informed about the fact that they had the right to withdraw from participation at any time prior to, during, or after the interview and were encouraged to contact the researcher with questions at any moment. Several days prior to the interview, each participant received a consent form (Appendix 2A), providing them with information on their rights and the process of the interview as well as the procedure during data analysis and data storage.

At the start of the interview, participants were once again informed about the purpose of the study and the process during the following interview. Then, the consent to record the interview was asked again, and the recording was started on the researcher's computer, as well as in the Microsoft Teams conference. The interview was structured according to the interview script (Appendix 2B). Participants were presented with two sets of advertisements, with each set containing two selected advertisements targeted toward men.

The first set included two advertisements with a more traditional portrayal of masculinity. Advertisement 1 was created by the beer brand 'Grolsch' and showcased a male character, who could be observed entering a party and being greeted by several guests. During these greetings, he showcases a vast number of skills, including basketball, fighting, and singing. The second advertisement within the first set is an advertisement by the brand 'Axe', a man's fragrance brand. Within this advertisement, viewers could observe a psychically strong man building a wooden boat from scratch, with the intention to recreate the Arch Noah. In the end, this male character uses the brand's body spray, which results in a large number of stereotypically attractive, young women, to approach the boat. The second set of advertisements consists of two advertisements from the brand 'Axe' as well, however, the second advertisement was broadcasted in the UK, where the brand is known under the name 'Lynx'. Within the first advertisement of this set, a big diversity of men is portrayed, with each of them engaging in a different activity they appear to be passionate about. These activities include reading, dancing and drag. The narration of the commercial in the background explains that masculinity does not need to look one certain way but can be whatever you want, as long as you find something that makes you unique. The commercial ends with the message "Who needs some other thing, when you got your thing. Now work on it. Find your Magic". The second advertisement also displays men in a variety of different situations, while posing the question whether certain things that may not be stereotypically associated with traditional masculinity are okay to feel and do. Towards the end of the advertisement, the narrator states that these questions are some of the questions commonly asked by men every day, implying that viewers are not alone in their insecurities.

In the interviews, the traditional set of advertisements was shown first, and participants were asked to report on the impact of the portrayal of masculinity within the advertisements, how they were personally affected, and what they believed to be the potential effects of these portrayals on male viewers in general. Afterward, the second set of advertisements with the progressive, inclusive portrayal of masculinity was shown and participants were asked the same questions as for the previous set of advertisements. Then, participants were asked a set of questions specifically about the shift in the portrayal of masculinity from the first set of advertisements to the second set and finally, participants were questioned on their general thoughts on the portrayal of masculinity and the advertising industry's role in it.

3.3 Data analysis

After data collection, all interviews were transcribed (Appendix 2C) with the help of the software otter.ai and analyzed using a thematic analysis. This specific type of analysis was chosen, as it allows researchers to examine common themes and sentiments within a set of texts and is therefore ideal to gather insights into participants' thoughts and opinions. For the data analysis, a combination of a deductive and inductive approach was selected. The predetermined set of codes was considered for the formulation of the interview questions, which made it possible to get sufficient data from the participants on all important themes. By also adding the inductive approach, any further relevant codes identified during data analysis could still be added, which resulted in a rich and complete coding scheme (Table 2), that would not have been possible without the mixed-methods approach. The predetermined coding scheme included the themes 'Portrayal Masculinity', 'Personal Impact Participants', 'General Effects of Portrayal Masculinity', 'Comparisons Compilations' and 'Additional Thoughts'. These themes were chosen based on the findings from the previous research in the theoretical framework and were determined as the most effective themes to choose in order to reliably answer the research question. Each theme contained several subthemes. For the data analysis, the software atlas.ti was chosen. All 15 transcripts were uploaded, and the codes were added.

Then, the first round of coding started, and the content of the transcripts was scanned and coded according to the previously determined coding scheme. Within this first round of coding, it was found that several were missing in order to accurately code all relevant information. Those missing codes were then added to the coding scheme and included in further coding. Within the theme 'Portrayal Masculinity', the subthemes 'Main Purpose Compilation' were added for both the first and second compilation. The theme 'Personal Impact Participants' was completed by the subtheme 'Participants' Exposure to Advertisements'. Additionally, the subtheme 'Direct Effects', 'Indirect Effects', 'Positive Aspects and 'Negative Aspects were all added to the theme 'General Effects of Portrayal Masculinity' and the theme 'Influential Factors', was included as well, containing the subthemes 'Factors that influence Portrayal Masculinity in Advertisements' and 'Factors that Influence Impact on Men'.

Table 2

Codebook

Themes	Subthemes	Unit of Analysis	Definitions	Example quotes
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Portrayal Masculinity	Description of Male Characters and Behavior Compilation 1	Sentence	Statements about the male characters and their behavior in the advertisements in compilation 1.	'First advertisement seems to be a friendly and open guy who seems to know a lot of different kind of people from different cultures and integrates well with them. And the second advertisement is I don't know, a guy building a boat'.
	Description of Male Characters and Behavior Compilation 2	Sentence	Statements about the male characters and their behavior in the advertisements in compilation 2.	"In the first advertisement, you saw a lot of different types of men. It wasn't really focused on one person, but more of like a lot of different types of people. And it was basically showing people that it's okay, whatever you are however you feel, however you identify and whatever you want to do, it's okay. And you are just, you're a good person if you just do what you want to do and how you want to feel. And the second advertisement was very similar, but it was more from the view of someone who's maybe a little bit insecure, who's not sure, can I do this? Can I do that? So it was more of like this question asking."
	Comparison to Societal Portrayal of Masculinity Compilation 1	Sentence	Discrepancies and similarities noticed by participants of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1 compared to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly.	"I think in society nowadays it's more broad. I think masculinity is not really one thing. I think it's not the kind of like old manliness that people used to think of men. I don't think that's there anymore. But I think that nowadays, men are just accepted as they are, and they don't really have to do anything special. They don't have to be very muscular. They're accepted if they like to wear a dress or something like that or if they just behave how back in the days they would be called, not

a man because of that. But nowadays, I believe that yeah, it's not really demanded from a man. Men can show their feelings nowadays, and in the advertisements, I would say it was more like the stereotypical man that you could see”

<p>Comparison to Societal Portrayal of Masculinity Compilation 2</p>	<p>Sentence</p>	<p>Discrepancies and similarities noticed by participants of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2 compared to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly.</p>	<p>“The first one, I think is pretty similar to what society is like, every guy has their thing, or every person has their thing. Like, it is. It is good, like maybe to have some things that you find attractive, even though you have to work for them. But it's also very important to accept your things and find value in those. So I think that's how society works. And it's not very far away from reality”</p>
<p>Comparison to Traditional Gender Roles or Stereotypes Compilation 1</p>	<p>Sentence</p>	<p>Statements concerning how the advertisements in compilation 1 challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes.</p>	<p>“Maybe the first one was just reinforcing this stereotype or just the idea of the man just being curated and nice and fit and athletic. Like the drinks, beer maybe. I don't know how much of a stereotype it could be. I don't care. But it didn't really leave that much of an impact of how a man should be. While the other one really showed the as I said before, again like the social construct that just men come first, that they're over, that one man is worth a thousand girls.”</p>
<p>Comparison to Traditional Gender Roles or Stereotypes Compilation 2</p>	<p>Sentence</p>	<p>Statements concerning how the advertisements in compilation 1 challenge or</p>	<p>“I would say they challenge them more than they reinforce them. I wouldn't say that they reinforce any stereotypes, but they challenge them, especially the second one and the first one of course, also. But the second</p>

reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes.

one, by specifically asking the questions, is it okay if I do this? Is it okay if I feel like that? I think that of course, directly asks those those questions if that's okay. And that's of course meant in a way where people say, oh, yeah, of course, that's okay. But it's I think in society some people still feel like, oh, I'm not sure can I really be myself or do I have to fit into this old stereotype? And then the first one as well, of course, because there are, I mean, I don't really know any advertisements where there's a disability, where there's a person who's disabled in it or someone in heels who identify as a man, I don't really know any of that. And of course that's nice if they're showing everyone.”

Problematic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1

Sentence

Problematic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 1.

“And of course, he also got a lot of women in the end which of course is also a little bit problematic, I would say, because not every man likes only men. There're always bisexual people, or there are gay people. It's not really only women.”

Problematic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 2

Sentence

Problematic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 2.

“it gives a very one-sided view of things. It focuses on the specific sets of like scenarios where it asks the same question over and over again slightly different but practically identical if you switch out the one trade scenarios that are followed up, one after another, like is this okay? And then, they show guys being miserable with the trait, is this okay? And then they show, like, there were a few more positively vibed ones in

it, but there were, there were also mostly in well, more concrete, back neighborhood tunnel kind of places, so yeah”.

Unproblematic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1	Sentence	Unproblematic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 1.	“I don't think there's any problems with these ads.”
Unproblematic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 2	Sentence	Unproblematic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 2.	“I didn't find anything problematic. I think that it's the opposite. I think it's a good step to making everybody feel nice the way they are and not pressuring people into changing how they are just because that's how some other someone else wants them to be. But I think it's a good step in the direction that everyone can just be themselves and do what they want to do.”
Realistic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1	Sentence	Realistic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 1.	“It was a realistic portrayal, because he just went into these rooms slash party, had a chat with everybody. It was, could have happened to anybody to just walk into a party, dressed like that, get a beer, well I don't think that was really the goal of this study, but the first one seemed realistic to me. He just got a beer at the party.”
Realistic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 2	Sentence	Realistic aspects in the male portrayal noticed in compilation 2.	“I think it is realistic for men to question themselves. It's actual real men questioning if it's okay to do this, and if it's okay, if it's not. And I didn't see them taking power or using their masculinity in the second commercial, I really didn't see that, it was just a general decent commercial.”

Unrealistic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1	Sentence	Unrealistic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 1.	A lot of things were unrealistic. There are of course guys who could probably build a ship by themselves if they've had enough time, or there are of course also people who can sing and dance and have a lot of friends. But I think that in the broad, if you look at society in total, I think that the percentage of guys that are able to do that, is very, very low. And I think that, yeah, it's not really representative of the average, I would say. It's more of like these extremes that were shown.”
Unrealistic Aspects Portrayal Compilation 2	Sentence	Unrealistic aspects in the male portrayal in compilation 2.	“I would say that in the first one, it again gave that real advertisement impression of going real just.. Very much action which is not the most realistic thing”
Main Purpose Compilation 1	Sentence	The main purpose the advertisements in compilation 1 noted by participants, such as selling a product or raising awareness for an issue.	“I think the first compilation was more focused on really selling product and portraying something that helps for the selling of the product.”
Main Purpose Compilation 2	Sentence	The main purpose the advertisements in compilation 2 noted by participants, such as selling a product or raising	“And the second compilation was more focused on like societal problems and as a bonus, maybe try to enforce their brand.”

			awareness for an issue.
Positive Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1	Sentence	Aspects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1 that participants specifically highlighted as positive, beneficial or healthy.	“But also, I mean, if we're really looking at nuance, we can see a positive effect, because I mean, taking care of women is not bad, as long as you keep it normal. But I mean, I think it's also a positive thing.”
Positive Aspects Portrayal Compilation 2	Sentence	Aspects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2 that participants specifically highlighted as positive, beneficial or healthy.	“Both can have positive effects in romantic relationships. Because when you're more yourself I guess you can be also more positive towards.. more real towards your relationship and of course more romantic.”
Negative Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1	Sentence	Aspects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1 that participants specifically highlighted as negative, wrong, bad or harmful.	“It does have an effect on the way men will see their own role in a relationship. So more to be the breadwinner or to take care of women. So, I mean, it could be a negative effect.”
Negative Aspects Portrayal Compilation 2	Sentence	Aspects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2 that participants specifically highlighted as negative, wrong, bad or harmful.	“While the second one gave way more of a.. It kind of sucks, but that's normal. You're allowed to be yourself, but it was overly depressive in my opinion. And bleak, which is generally, well, not exactly how I see reality.”

Personal Impact Participants	Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 1	Sentence	All statements by participants about their personal emotions experienced while watching compilation 1 and the explanation offered by participants as to why these emotions was elicited.	“No, I wouldn't say that there were any special emotions that came up for me, because of course, I knew that it was an advertisement and, yeah, no special emotions for me.”
	Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 2	Sentence	All statements by participants about their personal emotions experienced while watching compilation 1 and the explanation offered by participants as to why these emotions was elicited.	“Not really special emotions, I would say. I didn't feel any bad emotions. I was kind of feeling happy, but I don't know why. It was just that it was just a happy advertisement, I would say.”
	Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 1	Sentence	Impact of compilation 1 on participants' own personal definition of the concept 'masculinity' in general.	“I mean, I have been aware of masculinity or at least a stereotypical way of thinking of masculinity, so yeah, just attracting females and feeling confident. So I think it didn't change that much, but I do think that is also one extreme part how people think about masculinity. Yeah, that's it.”

	Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 2	Sentence	Impact of compilation 2 on participants' own personal definition of the concept 'masculinity' in general.	"It didn't change because I already think that the traditional way of considering male behaviour in the traditional sense it's not for me, and I don't think it did change anything like this."
	Participants' Exposure to Advertisements	Sentence	Remarks made by participants concerning the frequency and depth of their exposure towards advertisements.	"I don't really notice the general shift in society of how advertisements are going, since I don't watch a lot of advertisements."
General Effects of Portrayal Masculinity	Effects on Mental Health of Men Compilation 1	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 1 on the mental health of men.	"The people who don't relate to this kind of masculinity are going to have some insecurities already. And seeing this on an everyday basis on TV can feed those insecurities. So of course, it can have a very negative effect."
	Effects on Mental Health of Men Compilation 2	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 2 on the mental health of men.	"They could help for sure, they could make people feel better. That both of them could really be helping integrating more inclusiveness and helping men, young men, older men accept themselves more and be more okay with their masculinity."
	Effects on Platonic Relationships of Men Compilation 1	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 1 on platonic relationships, meaning	"I think that if in advertisements, men are only shown to be strong and to be able to do all of these things and to be muscular, I think that in friend groups sometimes you can maybe be pressured into some things and because it's like, oh, you're a man, you can do that. And I feel like that can of course get reinforced by those

		friendships and social connections, of men.	advertisements. But I feel like if you have really close friends, then that won't really happen.”
Effects on Platonic Relationships of Men Compilation 2	Sentence	Participants’ perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 2 on platonic relationships, meaning friendships and social connections, of men.	“Maybe it could improve them. Cause for example a few of them got picked up by a friend. So I hope that people, men, would just be kinder to each other and stop picking up and making fun of their friends because of their lack of masculinity.”
Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 1	Sentence	Participants’ perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 1 on romantic relationships of men.	“I think it really depends on, I think they get really unrealistic views of how a relationship works, and that way it can, well, it depends on the rest of the outcome. Either they will never learn and will just kind of fail romantically or they will eventually like still force someone into it and then it like is kind of a crappy relationship or they grow out of it and like learn how it is. But that's, again, still not great. I think it sets a precedent that is not healthy.”
Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 2	Sentence	Participants’ perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 2 on romantic relationships of men.	“I do think these types of advertisements give more room for men to develop the way they view romantic relationships. Like the they mentioned being the little spoon and being a virgin and all those things. So I do think it gives men more room to think about and act on the way they see romantic relationships rather than

Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity Compilation 1	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 1 on the beliefs of men in general towards what masculinity should entail.	the norm. So, I do think this is a positive for romantic relationships, these type of advertisements." "I think the effect of these advertisements could be that men see the role of masculinity or the role of men and this sort of masculinity as the norm, as being the standard, as being expected."
Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity Compilation 2	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 2 on the beliefs of men in general towards what masculinity should entail.	"These advertisements can have an effect on the way men view masculinity. And I think that's already happening a bit, I mean, not as much as I, or other people would want. But it does change the way men will view masculinity in a positive way, in my opinion, it will break down the old generals and the men being the providers kind of thing."
Effects on General Behavior of Men Compilation 1	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 1 on the general behavior of men.	"Men will try to be more charismatic and also more the provider, which I think could be good, but as long as it feels natural to those men and not push them in any direction, they are uncomfortable with. And then I think that's a positive effect. But like I said, it's.. I don't think that's the case for most people. I think most people will try to push themselves out of their comfort zone into some really awkward situations or things they don't actually stand behind."

Effects on General Behavior of Men Compilation 2	Sentence	Participants' perceptions of potential effects of the advertisements in compilation 2 on the general behavior of men.	"They might happen that men end up.. Might be enticed into being more open about who they are and how they are and how they want to express themselves, but also about being less judgmental. So accepting other people as they are, even if their masculinity and their idea of masculinity doesn't really conform to their ideal masculinity."
Direct Effects Compilation 1	Sentence	Potential effects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1, specifically described as direct by participants.	"In olden days, people were really taking inspiration from advertisement, from movies, from tv, from anything, to just try to be like them. Until now, people do that, but they're more independent and they learn that that's not how the world works."
Direct Effects Compilation 2	Sentence	Potential effects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2, specifically described as direct by participants.	"At least with the second one, pretty directly it affects my personal disagreement with my weaker sides. And it's encouraged me to at least give me a chance to think about whether to accept some things or not, which I think is a very healthy way of deciding on things, which is everything on his chance."
Indirect Effects Compilation 1	Sentence	Potential effects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1, specifically described as indirect by participants.	"Because I think these kind of commercials can pretty much reinforce insecurities men already have. If a man doesn't have any severe insecurities, I think it doesn't have too much of an influence on at least in part of their mental health. Of course, you could see it from the bigger picture that these kinds of commercials shaped the public view on masculinity, which then could

				cause mental illness in men, if it is a toxic view. But more directly, I think, would only impact the more vulnerable.”
	Indirect Effects Compilation 2	Sentence	Potential effects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2., specifically described as indirect by participants	“Nothing directly, but maybe people will have more relationships with people if they're less insecure about themselves.”
Comparisons Compilations	Similarities between Compilations	Sentence	Similarities in the portrayal of masculinity between compilation 1 and compilation 2.	“I think the biggest similarity, of course, is that it's advertised towards men. Uh, yeah, I would say that's the main similarity. And yeah, I think in the first advertisement of the first two pairs of advertisements, you could still see different types of men. It wasn't as much as in the second pair, but I would say it at least they showed different types of men. And not only this one guy, although he was the main character in the advertisement. I think that was also a little bit similar, but that would be everything.”
	Differences between Compilations	Sentence	Differences in the portrayal of masculinity between compilation 1 and compilation 2.	“The biggest difference I would say is that it wasn't really just about one guy, with this one guy that's stereotypically manly, but the second advertisements were about very different kind of people. And yeah, they were of course more challenging those views of how a man has to be. And they showed someone with a disability, they showed someone in heels, they showed just a different spectrum of people instead of just this

				one guy as a main character who is this typical man. Yeah.”
	Preferred Compilation and Reasons for Preference	Sentence	Participants’ preferred compilation between compilation 1 and 2 compilation 2, and their provided reasons for their preference.	“I preferred the second one because it was more open, inclusive and upbeat. It was really showing that anybody, everybody is okay. Everybody’s fine as they are.”
Shift Portrayal Masculinity	Perception of Shift in Advertisements in General	Sentence	Comments about how participants perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general.	“I think in the past these kind of advertisements were more common. But nowadays it’s becoming weak, because I think it’s kind of showing of the civilization and in the future it’s gonna be weak, less and less, I think.”
	Perception of Impact Advertising Industry	Sentence	Comments of participants on how big they perceive the influence of the advertising industry in impacting viewers’ opinions on masculinity.	“They of course influence a lot of people. And if they influence someone in a bad way and maybe get them into depression or something like that, I think that’s bad.”
	Comparison of Shift in Compilations to Shift In General	Sentence	Participants’ perceptions of the similarities and differences between the shift from the portrayal of masculinity	“Yeah, I would say so. I would say that more advertisements nowadays try to get different kinds of people and they don’t really try to get this stereotypical man, but they just try to get an actor. And if that actor is disabled, then that actor is disabled. If that actor is wearing heels, then that

actor is wearing heels. They don't really have these demands of what you have to look like to be able to be part of an advertisement. So I think, yeah, it is representative, but I still think that there are not as much advertisements yet who really show disabled people or things like that. It's getting more, but I don't think it's really representative of the society yet.”

Influential Factors	Factors that influence Portrayal Masculinity in Advertisements	Sentence	Factors that influence how masculinity is portrayed in advertisements. These factors can, among others, include cultural factors, the age of the consumers, etc.	“It depends on the society, which country or region depends. Uh the place where I live is not very anymore, I think it's not the same.”
	Factors that Influence Impact on Men	Sentence	Factors that impact how men are impacted by the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements	“That depends on the character of the people.”
Additional thoughts	Additional thoughts	Sentence	Additional thoughts and remarks of participants that do not fit in any of the other categories	“I think if we get rid of this, this judgement part, and just show maybe it's exclusive. mutually exclusive. If you show one part, maybe you also show that if you idealise one part, maybe you say that the other part is not to be idealised. So I'm not quite sure. But to be less judgement, judgmental, would be so beneficial for the whole society.”

After finishing the first round of coding, there was a gap in themes detected, as there appeared to be no theme that adequately described the shift in the portrayal of masculinity specifically. This gap was filled by adding the code 'Shift Portrayal Masculinity'. The subtheme 'Comparison of Shift in Compilations to Shift in General' was moved to this code group, and the additional subthemes 'Perception of Shift in Advertisements in General' and 'Perception of Impact Advertising Industry' were added. Also, the theme 'Future of Masculinity', including all subthemes attached to this theme, was removed, as it did not contribute to answering the research question, and was therefore not relevant to the goal of this study.

To get further insights into potential ways to improve of the coding scheme, an external researcher was asked to code a transcript from the research, using the current codebook. To determine potential flaws and areas of improvement, a feedback session with the external research was held, and an intercoder reliability analysis was performed. Within the feedback session, the external researcher shared that they perceived the coding scheme as overall clear but expressed some difficulties with the codes concerning the positive and negative aspects of the portrayal, as well as the direct and indirect effects. Based on this feedback, several changes were made in the codebook. Firstly, the definition of the codes 'negative effects' and 'positive effects' for both compilation 1 and 2 were slightly adapted within the coding scheme, to clearly list that the codes should only be used when the participant explicitly states that they perceive a certain phenomenon or effect as positive or negative, rather than also using the code when certain statements by participants were interpreted as positive or negative by the researcher. Additionally, they were moved from the theme 'General Effects of Portrayal' to 'Portrayal Masculinity', since, after careful consideration, they were categorized as more fitting for that category. Next, the definition of the codes about the direct and indirect effects of the portrayal of masculinity in both compilations was adapted, to ensure that the codes should only be used, whenever participants explicitly stated or described a direct or indirect effect.

Next, the intercoder reliability was measured. The coded transcript of the external researcher was merged with the same coded transcript by the main researcher, using the software 'atlas.ti'. Then, an intercoder reliability analysis was performed and the Krippendorff's alpha score was calculated for all 7 themes (Table 3). These scores were generally high. For 6 out of 7 themes, the Krippendorff's alpha scores were above the minimum accepted score of $\alpha \geq 0.667$, with a mean score of 0.787 for all themes. Only the theme 'Personal Impact Participants' scored lower, with an alpha score of 0.467. Within this theme, the strongest disagreement between coders occurred for the subthemes 'Impact on Definition

Masculinity Compilation 2’, and ‘Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 2’. For the subtheme ‘Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 2’, there was a strong overlap in the coding of the external researcher for the subthemes ‘Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 2’ and ‘Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity’. This resulted in a change in the codebook to clearly state that the subtheme ‘Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 2’ exclusively concerns the personal impact on participants, whereas the subtheme ‘Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity’ discusses the effects on men in general. For the subtheme ‘Emotions Elicited by Advertisements’ for both Compilation 1 and 2, there appeared to be some confusion regarding whether this code should merely include the elicited emotions, or also the explanation why this emotion was elicited. This was adapted in the codebook, to ensure that both should be included. There was also some overlap detected between the subthemes ‘Preferred Compilation and Reasons for Preference’ and ‘Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 2’. The lack in overlap was caused by the fact that the main researcher coded several statements by the participant under the latter subtheme, as this information was provided in response to a question concerning their preference. However, after careful consideration, it was decided that the coding of the second researcher was more accurate, as the participant clearly describes their emotional response in the coded part, but the fact that they shared this information as an explanation to their preference, led the original researcher to disregard it for that code. To prevent mistakes like this in the future, the code description in the codebook was adapted to clearly state that all statements about the personal emotional response of participants should be included under the subthemes ‘Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 1’ and ‘Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 2’, not merely statements given when specifically asked about the emotional response.

With the adapted codebook, a second round of coding was started. As no further issues were noticed, this round concluded the coding phase.

Table 3

Intercoder Reliability Results

Code	Coder	Applied	Units	Total Units	Total Coverage
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Comparison to Societal Portrayal of Masculinity Compilation 1					
	Dominique Westerveld	1	153	17564	0,87%

	Lara Marie	1	153	17564	0,87%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Comparison to Societal Portrayal of Masculinity Compilation 2					
	Dominique	1	104	17564	0,59%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	1	104	17564	0,59%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Comparison to Traditional Gender Roles or Stereotypes Compilation 1					
	Dominique	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Comparison to Traditional Gender Roles or Stereotypes Compilation 2					
	Dominique	2	439	17564	2,50%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	1	241	17564	1,37%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Description of Male Characters and Behavior Compilation 1					
	Dominique	2	346	17564	1,97%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	1	230	17564	1,31%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Description of Male Characters and Behavior Compilation 2					
	Dominique	1	71	17564	0,40%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	1	71	17564	0,40%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Main Purpose Compilation 1					
	Dominique	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	1	74	17564	0,42%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Main Purpose Compilation 2					
	Dominique	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	2	411	17564	2,34%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Negative Effects Portrayal Compilation 1					
	Dominique	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Westerveld				
	Lara Marie	1	232	17564	1,32%
	Lingnau				
PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Negative Effects Portrayal Compilation 2					

					Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 1	MASCULINITY:	Positive Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 2	MASCULINITY:	Positive Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	2	249	17564	1,42%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 1	MASCULINITY:	Problematic Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 2	MASCULINITY:	Problematic Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 1	MASCULINITY:	Realistic Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	1	477	17564	2,72%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	1	477	17564	2,72%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 2	MASCULINITY:	Realistic Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	2	184	17564	1,05%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	3	304	17564	1,73%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 1	MASCULINITY:	Unproblematic Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	2	70	17564	0,40%
					Lara Marie Lingnau	1	50	17564	0,28%
PORTRAYAL Compilation 2	MASCULINITY:	Unproblematic Aspects	Portrayal						
					Dominique Westerveld	2	280	17564	1,59%

**PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Unrealistic Aspects Portrayal
Compilation 1**

Lara Marie 1 48 17564 0,27%
Lingnau

Dominique 2 581 17564 3,31%
Westerveld

Lara Marie 2 621 17564 3,54%
Lingnau

**PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Unrealistic Aspects Portrayal
Compilation 2**

Dominique 0 0 17564 0,00%
Westerveld

Lara Marie 0 0 17564 0,00%
Lingnau

Agreement Coefficient
Krippendorff's c- α -binary:
0.738

Code	Coder	Applied *	Units *	Total Units *	Total Coverage *
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**PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Emotions Elicited by
Advertisements Compilation 1**

Dominique 4 299 17564 1,70%
Westerveld

Lara Marie 2 253 17564 1,44%
Lingnau

**PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Emotions Elicited by
Advertisements Compilation 2**

Dominique 2 249 17564 1,42%
Westerveld

Lara Marie 1 47 17564 0,27%
Lingnau

**PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Impact on Definition
Masculinity Compilation 1**

Dominique 1 187 17564 1,06%
Westerveld

Lara Marie 1 187 17564 1,06%
Lingnau

**PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Impact on Definition
Masculinity Compilation 2**

Dominique 3 536 17564 3,05%
Westerveld

Lara Marie 1 34 17564 0,19%
Lingnau

**PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Impact on Feelings towards
Own Masculinity among Participants Compilation 1**

	Dominique Westerveld	1	34	17564	0,19%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	34	17564	0,19%

PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Impact on Feelings towards Own Masculinity among Participants Compilation 2

	Dominique Westerveld	1	35	17564	0,20%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	35	17564	0,20%

PERSONAL IMPACT PARTICIPANTS: Participants' Exposure to Advertisements

	Dominique Westerveld	1	26	17564	0,15%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	26	17564	0,15%

Agreement Coefficient
Krippendorff's c- α -binary:
0.467

Code	Coder	Applied *	Units *	Total Units *	Total Coverage *
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INFLUENTIAL FACTORS: Factors that Influence Impact on Men

	Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS: Factors that influence Portrayal Masculinity in Advertisements

	Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%

Agreement Coefficient
Krippendorff's c- α -binary:
1.000

Code	Coder	Applied	Units	Total Units	Total Coverage
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GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Direct Effects Compilation 1

	Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Direct Effects Compilation 2

Dominique Westerveld	1	119	17564	0,68%
Lara Marie Lingnau	2	305	17564	1,74%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity Compilation 1

Dominique Westerveld	1	340	17564	1,94%
Lara Marie Lingnau	1	340	17564	1,94%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity Compilation 2

Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
Lara Marie Lingnau	2	392	17564	2,23%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on General Behavior of Men Compilation 1

Dominique Westerveld	1	246	17564	1,40%
Lara Marie Lingnau	1	246	17564	1,40%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on General Behavior of Men Compilation 2

Dominique Westerveld	1	128	17564	0,73%
Lara Marie Lingnau	1	129	17564	0,73%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Mental Health of Men Compilation 1

Dominique Westerveld	2	221	17564	1,26%
Lara Marie Lingnau	1	232	17564	1,32%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Mental Health of Men Compilation 2

Dominique Westerveld	2	305	17564	1,74%
Lara Marie Lingnau	2	305	17564	1,74%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Platonic Relationships of Men Compilation 1

Dominique Westerveld	1	61	17564	0,35%
Lara Marie Lingnau	1	62	17564	0,35%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Platonic Relationships of Men Compilation 2

	Dominique Westerveld	1	118	17564	0,67%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	118	17564	0,67%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 1

	Dominique Westerveld	2	216	17564	1,23%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	2	224	17564	1,28%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 2

	Dominique Westerveld	1	99	17564	0,56%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	81	17564	0,46%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Indirect Effects Compilation 1

	Dominique Westerveld	1	131	17564	0,75%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	2	586	17564	3,34%

GENERAL EFFECTS OF PORTRAYAL MASCULINITY: Indirect Effects Compilation 2

	Dominique Westerveld	3	345	17564	1,96%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	2	247	17564	1,41%

Agreement Coefficient
Krippendorff's c- α -binary:
0.875

Code	Coder	Applied	Units	Total Units	Total Coverage
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COMPARISONS COMPILATIONS: Comparison of Shift in Compilations to Shift In General

	Dominique Westerveld	2	626	17564	3,56%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	147	17564	0,84%

COMPARISONS COMPILATIONS: Differences between Compilations

	Dominique Westerveld	1	220	17564	1,25%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	220	17564	1,25%

COMPARISONS COMPILATIONS: Preferred Compilation and Reasons for Preference

Code	Coder	Applied	Units	Total Units	Total Coverage
COMPARISONS COMPILATIONS: Similarities between Compilations	Dominique Westerveld	2	517	17564	2,94%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	652	17564	3,71%
	Dominique Westerveld	1	26	17564	0,15%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	27	17564	0,15%
Agreement Coefficient					
Krippendorff's c-α-binary:					0.729
FUTURE OF MASCULINITY: Future Changes in Definition of Masculinity	Dominique Westerveld	1	220	17564	1,25%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	1	220	17564	1,25%
FUTURE OF MASCULINITY: Responsibility of Advertising Industry in Portrayal of Masculinity	Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	2	183	17564	1,04%
FUTURE OF MASCULINITY: Role of Advertisements in Future Changes in Definition of Masculinity	Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%
Agreement Coefficient					
Krippendorff's c-α-binary:					0.701
ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS: Additional Thoughts of Participants	Dominique Westerveld	0	0	17564	0,00%
	Lara Marie Lingnau	0	0	17564	0,00%

Agreement Coefficient
Krippendorff's c- α -binary:
1.000
Total
Krippendorff's c- α -binary:
0.843

4. Results

4.1 Masculinity and Gender Identity

The first concept discussed in the literature review was the concept 'Masculinity and Gender Identity'. Since this concept had the mere purpose of providing a clearer understanding of the terms "Masculinity" and 'Gender Identity' and discovering what role these play in the phenomenon of toxic masculinity and the impact of the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements on men, there are no findings that are applicable to this category, as the findings on the impact of the shift on gender identity will be presented under the paragraph 4.3: 'Impact on Gender Identity'.

4.2 The Shift in the Portrayal of Men in Advertisements

Firstly, to get a visual impression of the shift, a code-cooccurrence analysis was performed in 'Atlas.ti'. For this analysis, all quotes by participants that specifically mentioned certain aspects of the portrayal of masculinity in each compilation as either positive or negative were coded as 'Negative Aspects Compilation 1' and 'Negative Aspects Compilation 2'.

Compilation 1

For compilation 1, these findings are visualized in Table 4. For compilation 2, these findings are visualized in Table 5. In compilation one, Table 4 shows a significantly strong correlation between the codes 'Negative Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1' and 'Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 1', suggesting that participants perceived the effects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1 on romantic relationships to be particularly harmful. For the other categories, the correlation between the different categories and the negative aspects appears to be slightly higher in several categories, however this difference is not large enough to be viewed as significant.

Table 4

Negative and Positive Aspects Compilation 1

	Negative Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1	Positive Aspects Portrayal Compilation 1
Comparison to Societal Portrayal of Masculinity Compilation 1	0	0
Comparison to Traditional Gender Roles or Stereotypes Compilation 1	1	0
Description of Male Characters and Behaviour Compilation 1	2	1
Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity Compilation 1	4	2
Effects on General Behavior of Men Compilation 1	4	4
Effects on Mental Health of Men Compilation 1	5	2
Effects on Platonic Relationships of Men Compilation 1	3	1
Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 1	12	3
Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 1	2	3
Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 1	0	0
Impact on Feelings towards Own Masculinity among Participants Compilation 1	0	0

After getting an overview on the general shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and its potential impact, the qualitative findings will be discussed. Between the two compilations of advertisements, participants noted a significant difference in the portrayal of masculinity. To get a better idea of what elements were most prominent in the shift that this study focuses on, participants were first asked to describe the portrayal of masculinity in the shown advertisements. In the first compilation, the male lead characters were described by participants as conventionally attractive and confident. Overall, the physical appearance of the male characters was noted as fairly realistic. While most participants found the portrayal of the male lead character in the second advertisement of the first compilation to be traditionally masculine, opinions were divided on whether the male portrayal in the first advertisement could be considered typically masculine as well.

“The main guy in the first ad was, I would say, just a normal guy, not really particularly manly, just having a good time with everybody. (...) But I don't think it was necessary for that person to be a man or a woman. So, I don't think it's particularly masculine.”

Participant 5

The first advertisement of the first compilation was perceived as predominantly realistic in their portrayal of masculinity, while the second advertisement was viewed as significantly more unrealistic, by displaying the building of the boat and the approach of a large number of women as potential romantic partners to be untrue to reality, and even problematic, as it reinforces traditional gender norms and can fuel unrealistic expectations in viewers. Participants were divided on whether the portrayal of masculinity within this compilation was representative of the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly. While some participants felt like the displayed image of masculinity was outdated, others found it to be predominantly representative. Most participants agreed that while several aspects of the portrayal in the compilation were realistic and still applicable to the current societal portrayal, they also see a clear change in the societal portrayal of masculinity, that was not presented in the advertisements presented in compilation 1:

“There are similarities in nowadays society, but people are changing now. So, a lot has changed I think since that advertisement. But there is a lot of similarities. Because guys and men still use their power, as in male power, to have dominance over women, which is disgusting.”

Participant 7

Compilation 2

In compilation 2, the correlation between positive aspects in the portrayal of masculinity and several categories appear to be significantly higher than the correlation between the different categories and the negative aspects of the portrayal (Table 5). This suggests that participants generally perceived the effects of the portrayal of masculinity as more positively rather than negatively, suggesting that the second compilation affects male viewers more positively in the context of the topic of masculinity. While the findings from the code-cooccurrence analysis in itself are not a reliable source to draw conclusions, they can be taken into consideration in combination with the qualitative findings and can aid in getting a more visual and comprehensive overview of the participants’ sentiments towards the effects of the portrayal of masculinity in the shown compilations per category.

Table 5

Negative and Positive Aspects Compilation 2

	Negative Aspects Portrayal	Positive Aspects Portrayal
	Compilation 2	Compilation 2
Comparison to Societal Portrayal of Masculinity Compilation 2	0	0
Comparison to Traditional Gender Roles or Stereotypes Compilation 2	1	0
Description of Male Characters and Behaviour Compilation 2	2	1

Effects on Beliefs of Men about Masculinity Compilation 2	4	2
Effects on General Behavior of Men Compilation 2	4	4
Effects on Mental Health of Men Compilation 2	5	2
Effects on Platonic Relationships of Men Compilation 2	3	1
Effects on Romantic Relationships of Men Compilation 2	12	3
Emotions Elicited by Advertisements Compilation 2	2	3
Impact on Definition Masculinity Compilation 1	0	0
Impact on Feelings towards Own Masculinity among Participants Compilation 2	0	0
Main Purpose Compilation 2	0	0

The portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2 was perceived as less classically masculine by participants, with a stronger focus on a diverse representation of masculinity and individuality of male characters than in compilation 1. While most participants expressed a positive sentiment towards the portrayal of masculinity in the second compilation of advertisements, two noted that the main focus still appeared to be the attraction of women, especially in the first advertisement. Participant 12 states:

“In these advertisements the main subject is kind of again at attracting attention of women of course. And I mean they use the products and the perfume, and they attract the attention of the women. It looks very easy.”

Participant 12

Whereas multiple participants perceived the main purpose of the advertisements in compilation 1 to be mainly profit-oriented, they felt that the second compilation rather had the purpose to challenge the traditional concept of masculinity and address the societal issue associated with it.

“The second compilation was more focused on societal problems and as a bonus, maybe try to enforce their brand.”

Participant 5

In compilation 2, participants saw a stronger similarity between the portrayal of masculinity in the advertisements and the societal portrayal. This suggests that the chosen advertisements for each compilation of this study appeared to be overall representative of the general societal shift. However, some participants also noted that the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2 displays more of an idealized version of masculinity, rather than a realistic one:

It would be perfect if that would go in line with society right now, but for me it doesn't, cause you know, it's all positive. You don't have to have all this, you can just be yourself. Everything is okay, but that doesn't work like that right now. It's not okay if you don't have all of it. It's not okay if you're missing out on one of them. If you don't have a six pack, it's not okay, but it comes down to the same thing.

Participant 3

Participant 7 elaborates on this further, by stating:

“Compared to nowadays society, people are not just going to go stay with one thing. If they're good at one thing, they're not gonna say if I'm like smart as hell, I'm not just gonna go outside unshowered, for example.”

Participant 7

Still, most participants perceived the portrayal of masculinity within the advertisements to be realistic. Particularly the diversity of masculinity portrayed in the advertisements and relatability of the topics discussed made the portrayal of masculinity realistic to them. Within the first advertisement, participants criticized that the goal still appeared to be focused on

attracting women. Another aspect commonly named as problematic by participants was the promotion of needing something special in order to be attractive:

“The only problematic thing I found with the first one was, that it promotes still finding your magic to be with someone. And that should not always be the goal of course.”

Participant 5

Two participants also noted that the second advertisement can have a discouraging effect, as the situations displayed are portrayed in a negative light, leading viewers to interpret possessing these qualities as something negative.

If you look at it, it is way more.. it says the thing for instance, like, is it okay to be this thing? And then it shows you somebody with that thing being generally in a miserable looking setting or getting bullied about it. And then you're like, okay, so is that thing okay? Well, no, it's not okay. You're getting the opposite effect of what they're trying to achieve, in my opinion.

Participant 15

Still, most participants noted, that they perceived both advertisements within compilation 2 as generally unproblematic, with a good, diverse, and inclusive representation of masculinity.

To accurately understand the portrayal masculinity in advertisements as well as their impact, certain factors need to be taken into account. Within the interviews, several of these factors were listed by participants. Firstly, the country and region where an advertisement is broadcasted strongly impacts how masculinity is portrayed. Secondly, the quantity of exposure to advertisements influences how men are affected by the portrayal of masculinity. When presented with the same portrayal of masculinity repeatedly, a change in views and behaviour becomes more likely. Another significant factor to consider are the characteristics of the viewer, with self-conscious men being more easily affected. The age of the man, the social groups in which he frequents, and his cultural background can be substantial factors as well. Additionally, participants listed that views contrary to the popular media, such as those promoted by influential figures like Andrew Tate, can also impact men's views. Lastly, participants stated that previous views also impacted if, and how strongly men were impacted in their views and behaviour by the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements.

“I would still guess that the people who are within the bubbles of where masculinity is very important, that those people don't really care about advertisements like these, they just keep their masculine bubble and everyone in there fits within masculinity, or they want to fit in with masculinity.”

Participant 2

To get a better insight into how participants perceived the shift in the portrayal of masculinity from compilation 1 to compilation 2, participants were asked to compare the portrayal and elaborate on how representative they found the shift visible in the compilations of the shift in society more broadly. A majority of participants felt that both compilations were targeted towards men and depicted men in leading roles, with the purpose to present masculinity in a positive light. However, while the first compilation mainly focuses on one main male character and emphasizes traditionally masculine behaviours, the second compilation displays diverse types of men, each behaving according to their individual wishes, which challenges the traditional portrayal, that can be observed in compilation 1. Overall, the second compilation was preferred by participants due to its diverse and tolerant representation of men and the shift in the portrayal of masculinity visible from compilation 1 to compilation 2 was perceived as representative of a general shift in the advertising industry. However, several participants also felt that the shift visible in the advertisements did not represent the shift in society more general. One participant noted that the only reason there was a shift visible between the compilations, was because the researcher of this study specifically selected advertisements that show a strong shift, yet they did not feel that this shift was as prominent in general:

“I mean, there is indeed a shift within the first compilation and second compilation, because we handpicked it ourselves. But no, I don't think it's really a shift. It's more like diversity in opinion. So, I don't think it represents almost all of the advertisements that I have seen in my life or recently. I don't think there's actually a shift, but it's more like different kind of perspectives.”

Participant 6

When asked about their perception of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general, most participants noted that they perceived a clear shift towards a

more accepting, tolerant, and diverse representation of men. Within this shift, the traditional concept of masculinity is challenged and the expectations of what being a man needs to entail become less strict.

“In our parents’ generation, men were supposed to be a real man. And they were supposed to be this kind of alpha male, who were supposed to take care of their families, provide for them and fix everything. Well, this idea, and I think now, people are more acceptant of the fact that masculinity doesn't mean that. Masculinity is just being comfortable with who you are as a man and just making your own way. Not following any traditional concept of behaviour.”

Interview 11

On the contrary, one participant felt that the portrayal of masculinity has become harsher and more toxic, rather than healthier:

“Right now, as I'm seeing, the definition is getting harder and harder, it's getting just more harsh, more toxic in a sense. (...) Eventually, there's gonna be a turning point, where we're gonna say, okay, this is not good enough, it's gonna stop now and I think it's just gonna plateau. Might as well decrease as well. But I think right now it's just an upward trend, becoming more toxic and toxic.”

Participant 3

To get a better understanding of the role of advertisements in this shift, participants were asked how influential they perceived the advertising industry to be within this change. Some participants believed that the advertising industry has a strong influence on shaping the beliefs of men regarding masculinity and generally had a significant impact on the lives of viewers.

“The world is watching, like people watch, it has impact on people's lives. They might not know it, and I'm sure they do, but it has impact. People can be inspired from it. People can be really upset from it. People can be offended from it. So yeah, it is really important.”

Participant 7

However, a majority of participants felt that the impact of advertisements on shaping beliefs about masculinity was minimal compared to other factors, as they viewed advertisements as merely one parameter among many others. Another important point to consider is that many participants noted that did not actively consume a large number of advertisements, due to either using ad blockers, skipping them or simply not paying attention. As this impacts their ability to give informed answers on questions concerning the general shift in advertisements, this factor needs to be taken into account when drawing conclusions from the findings of this research.

Generally, participants noticed a clear shift in the portrayal of masculinity from compilation 1 to compilation 2, which was perceived as generally representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly. Overall, the portrayal of masculinity in the first compilation was seen as less realistic and more problematic than compilation 1, with a clear reinforcement of traditional gender roles. On the contrary, the second compilation challenges traditional gender roles and portrays masculinity more inclusively, with less problematic and more realistic aspects. This is further supported by Table 4 and Table 5, which display a clear shift of mainly negative effects in several categories in compilation 1, to primarily positive effects among those categories in compilation 2.

4.3 Impact on Gender Identity

To get a better understanding of the impact of the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements on the gender identity of viewers, participants were asked whether the shown compilations had any impact on their view of masculinity as well as their feelings towards their own masculinity.

Compilation 1

A majority of participants reported that they did not feel like their definition of masculinity was in any way changed by watching the first compilation of advertisements. However, the reasons for this lack of change differed. Most commonly, participants stated that there was no change, since the portrayal of masculinity in this compilation of advertisements was similar to the portrayal of masculinity more generally, and therefore all elements portrayed within the advertisements had been expected by them.

“Well, it wasn't new that commercials like this exist and that companies use men to dominate women in many ads, this is not the only two advertisement I've seen

many. And so it wasn't a surprise for me to actually see this, I've seen things like this before."

Participant 7

Two participants mentioned that they did not agree with the portrayed definition of masculinity and had a differing definition from the one insinuated in the advertisements. Another participant also did not notice a change, due to having a more complex definition of the concept of masculinity than exclusively the type of masculinity portrayed in the advertisements.

"It didn't really change my concept of masculinity in general, like I said, more reinforced it, although nowadays, because there's a bit of a counter movement going on, this also has shaped my idea of masculinity. So, I feel like it's a bit more complete than just what I saw."

Participant 8

For a majority of the participants, watching the advertisements within the first compilation did not change their feelings towards their own masculinity. Multiple participants stated that they found the portrayal of masculinity within the advertisements unrealistic or problematic or did not see themselves as the targeted age group or cultural group, and therefore were not personally impacted.

"For me personally, there wasn't a change because I just feel like it's unrealistic anyway. So, I don't really change the way that I look at myself just because of some advertisement, but I can see how some people, of course, if they get hurt by that, that they might think that what they're feeling is not correct. And that, of course, can hurt a lot of people, but for me personally, it didn't change anything."

Participant 14

Compilation 2

With the second compilation, a majority of participants stated that watching the advertisements did not change, but rather reinforce their previous definition of the concept of masculinity. Multiple participants also named several aspects in which their definition had been expanded. For example, participant 7 learned that masculine men can also be insecure, and for

participant 3 and 8, watching the advertisements in compilation 2 put masculinity in a softer light:

“Like for me, I kind of had a harsh definition of masculinity before, but maybe I've realized now that it's okay to not have everything, especially from the second advertisement. It was like, okay, yeah, we don't have to be so harsh on ourselves. Like it's okay to be harsh sometimes and you know, strive for becoming a better person, but it's not okay to put everyone away like that.”

Participant 3

“With the second one, pretty directly it affects my personal disagreement with my weaker sides. And it's encouraged me to at least give me a chance to think about whether to accept some things or not, which I think is a very healthy way of deciding on things.”

Participant 8

One participant stated that he did not feel a change in his definition of masculinity, as he did not perceive the watched advertisements to discuss the topic of masculinity:

“I would say that these videos aren't that much about masculinity, but more about that it's okay to be who you are.”

Participant 1

Similar to the first compilation, most participants did not feel impacted in their feelings towards their own masculinity by the second compilation of advertisements. Multiple participants mentioned that they felt their previous beliefs of what masculinity entailed reinforced within the compilation and therefore did not perceive a change.

“I wouldn't say it changed anything. I would just say that it backed up my opinion of what a man has to be, that everyone can be themselves, and that everyone can just behave and look the way they want, and they don't get forced into doing anything like maybe plastic surgery or something like that because they're insecure about their nose. Yeah, I just think it backed up my way of thinking about a man, and I think that's good because I think that my view of how a man should be is the

right view of how men should be, and I think it's good that that's also reinforced in the media now.”

Participant 14

Multiple participants also mentioned that watching the portrayal of masculinity in this compilation made them more accepting towards themselves.

“This whole showing of different uniqueness made me treasure my uniqueness, whereas the second one is a bit more relevant for me because I'm struggling to accept my weaker sides personally. (...) And well, it does change my own feelings towards masculinity a little bit, because I am pretty convinced that those weaknesses or lesser nice parts or moments shouldn't be discarded so quickly.”

Participant 8

Finally, participant 5 stated that while the advertisements within this compilation did not significantly change any feelings towards his own masculinity, it did impact his thoughts on how to view masculinity in other men.

“I guess I can think more about what I do sometimes and if it's really necessary or if I really should be judging those people for the way they behave.”

Participant 5

Overall, the second compilation appears to mainly have a positive impact on the gender identity of participants. For both compilations, the participant's definition of masculinity as well as their perception of their own masculinity were minimally impacted, yet for different reasons. While the first compilation did not represent the prior view on the topic of masculinity of most participants or did not display any view on masculinity that was unknown by participants prior to viewing the advertisements, it had little impact in shifting the participants' views on their gender identity. The second compilation was perceived as much closer to the prior definition of masculinity of most participants, which had the effect that the gender identity of many participants may not have been changed but was certainly reinforced.

4.4 Emotional Impact

Compilation 1

The first compilation of advertisements elicited mixed emotions by participants. While some participants reported no emotional impact by either advertisement, other participants experienced positive as well as negative emotions while watching the advertisements. The emotional responses also differed strongly between the two advertisements. The first advertisement elicited mainly positive responses, with participants perceiving the advertisement as cheerful, entertaining and by some even inspirational, to copy the actions of the main character. The second advertisement elicited feelings of frustration or indifference among a majority of participants. Most described it as strange and ridiculous or felt upset by the harmfulness of the portrayal. Among the participants experiencing no emotional response, several reasons were given for this lack of impact. While some had no emotional response due to not seeing themselves as the target audience, of the advertisement, others stated that their cultural background prevented them from feeling affected. When asked, whether he felt emotionally impacted by the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, participant 6 stated:

“In the Netherlands, not really, but it's related to my background, because I come from Indonesia, I was born there, I grew up there. So, the perception is different. If I'm here, if I looked through that kind of masculinity and stuff in advertisements, then it doesn't really intrigue me in some ways.”

Participant 6

When asked how they believed the portrayal of masculinity in this advertisement could impact the mental health of male viewers, a majority of participants felt that the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1 could negatively impact the mental health of male viewers. Due to the unrealistic masculine standards, feelings of insecurity and worthlessness could be fueled, ultimately resulting in depression. Multiple participants named that those negative effects on the mental health would be especially strong among men with low self-confidence prior to exposure. Participant 8 even went a step further by stating that exclusively male viewers with prior insecurities would be impacted in their mental health.

“I think it mostly depends on how emotionally stable they are. Because I think these kind of commercials can pretty much reinforce insecurities men already have. If a man doesn't have any severe insecurities, I think it doesn't have too much of an

influence on at least in part of their mental health. Of course, you could see it from the bigger picture that these kinds of commercials shaped the public view on masculinity, which then could cause mental illness in men, if it is a toxic view. But more directly, I think, would only impact the more vulnerable.”

Participant 8

Participant 2 offered a slightly different point of view by expressing that he believed that men who naturally possessed less of the stereotypically masculine traits were most affected.

“I guess if you're a man who definitely doesn't do these manly things, especially from the first ad, like you don't like sports, you don't like pushing your friends around, you do like martinis those kind of things, then I guess you could feel left out. You could feel like you are not doing the manly thing, and I guess that could impact your mental health.”

Participant 2

Compilation 2

Watching the second compilation of advertisements, most participants experienced positive feelings. The first advertisement of the compilation was commonly perceived as humorous, and multiple participants reported that the inclusive and accepting portrayal of masculinity within the advertisement made them happy. Within the second advertisement, feelings of vulnerability and recognition were commonly reported by participants. Many could relate to the vulnerable situations shared within the advertisement and stated that they felt understood. Some participants shared that they were unable to relate to the specific examples but gained a deeper understanding what other men had to deal with.

”In the second one, I guess I felt a little bit understood, but it was also confronting, because, well, I'm a pretty regular guy. I do like sports, and I do stuff that's mainly masculine, so seeing that some of these things trouble other guys, I feel for them because it doesn't really bother me a lot.”

Participant 5

The impact of compilation 2 on the mental health of men was generally positively perceived by participants. A majority of participants noted that the portrayal of masculinity in these

advertisements could lead men to feel reassured and accepted and therefore, overall, happier with themselves, which positively impacts their mental health.

“I think it's the exact opposite as the other two advertisements that I saw, because this can maybe make people who are already insecure about themselves (...) feel happy again and make them assured that what they are feeling is okay, and that how they want to behave is also very normal, it's nothing strange.”

Participant 14

However, multiple participants also disagreed with the positive impact of the second advertisement, as they felt that the portrayal of masculinity could also negatively impact the mental health of male viewers.

In the second one, it's way more of the depressing vibes portrayed with the non-masculine things together, which actually I could realistically see making people insecure about their masculinity, or lack of.

Participant 15

Generally, participants describe a clear difference in the emotional impact of compilation 1 compared to compilation 2. Even though the first advertisement of the first compilation elicited mainly positive emotions, most participants agreed that the overall effect on the emotional state and mental health of male viewers is negative. The second compilation on the other hand appeared to have mainly positive emotional effects on participants and was also assessed as way more beneficial towards the mental health of men in general. While some participants saw an issue with the portrayal of masculinity in the second advertisement of the second compilation, most agreed that the second compilation can have a much more positive emotional impact on male viewers than the first compilation. Assuming that the chosen advertisements for each compilations were representative of the general shift in the portrayal of masculinity, this would suggest that the shift mainly increases the emotional wellbeing of male viewers.

4.5 Impact on Male Beliefs and Behaviors

Compilation 1

In regard to the effects of the portrayal of masculinity in compilation 1 on the beliefs of men about masculinity, multiple participants felt that the way masculinity was portrayed could lead men to think that the traditional portrayal displayed should be seen as the norm. This could then cause men to feel like they need to adopt toxic sets of behaviours in order to conform to this traditional masculine norm.

“I think it can negatively affect masculinity in the way that if you don't think that you are this alpha male who does all his own work and is the centre of attention for women, you're not being as masculine as other men.”

Participant 11

Overall, participants expressed that the second advertisement had a stronger impact on the beliefs of men about masculinity than the first one. But not only the beliefs of participants were affected, also the behaviors of viewers could be impacted. Multiple participants felt that through the normalization of certain stereotypically masculine traits, male viewers could feel encouraged to behave more carelessly and assertively.

“The male is shown us like a superior, like he's free to act as he wants. And if people watch it, they can think if it is normal in the advertisements, in the national channels or on the internet, like on YouTube or something, and they can think if it is normal, I can do it as well. I can act freely as well. (...) it's shown us as normal, so it's fine.”

Participant 12

This normalization of traits could also lead male viewers to feel pressured into adapting certain behaviors, which they would normally not execute. While most participants agreed that the second advertisement could primarily impact male behavior in a negative way, some participants believed that the first advertisement could also have positive effects. Multiple participants argued that the happy and social nature of the male character portrayed in the advertisement could lead people to copy these positive characteristics as well.

“In the first advertisement, if you tend to be more like the main character, it can have really good effects in your life. He's very enjoyable and very likeable to everybody.”

Participant 10

To get a clearer insight into the impact of the portrayal of masculinity in the two compilations on social behaviors of men specifically, participants were also asked to comment on potential effects toward platonic as well as romantic relationships of men. Within the first compilation, the opinion of participants in regard to the effects on platonic relationships of men were divided. A majority of participants stated that they believed the first advertisement to promote and positively impact platonic relationships. Others felt that the portrayal of masculinity in the first advertisement could also fuel the need to be the center of attention, which would then make platonic relationships harder.

I think (...) if both people in the same room think they're the main character, that really quickly breeds conflict as well. If everybody wants all the attention and wants to be the star of the show all the time, that is not a possibility basically. So, yeah, I think it will be more difficult to make friends, I guess.

Participant 15

For the first compilation of advertisements in general, several participants also listed having less platonic relationships with women as a potential effect, due to feeling superior to them.

“I think if you are affected a lot by the advertisements, I would believe that male people would look a little bit down on their female friends. And they would look at them like not like an actual person, but more as something to win over or so, something to you want to acquire. It has been sexualized in that case a little bit.”

Participant 4

Compilation 2

Almost exclusively, participants felt that the impact of the portrayal of masculinity on the beliefs of men about masculinity in compilation 2 was positive. Several participants agreed that the portrayal broadens the definition of masculinity, which can make men not only more comfortable to be themselves, but also more tolerant toward other men.

“These ads definitely contribute to an evolution in the idea of what masculinity should be, that's gonna change the actual idea of masculinity. I feel like if someone

says, this is masculine, this is not masculine, the word masculine has this load for most, I would say for me as well, that says it's a stereotype. The word is a stereotype on its own, it feels like. So, for me, it doesn't matter what masculinity means, but what masculinity should entail gets more broader by advertisements like these.”

Participant 2

Participant 15 did not agree, as he felt that the second advertisement portrayed stereotypically less masculine traits portrayed in a bad light, which could negatively impact the beliefs of men towards masculinity.

“The second one says masculinity is the absence of these bad traits. And if you have those traits, then you are masculine and not being masculine is miserable. So it kind of makes you fearful of not being masculine.”

Participant 15

Nearly all participants agreed that the portrayal of masculinity in the advertisements could provide male viewers with encouragement to feel more comfortable with themselves and consequently behave in a manner more authentic to themselves and more accepting towards others.

Men (...) might be enticed into being more open about who they are and how they are and how they want to express themselves, but also about being less judgmental. So, accepting other people as they are, even if their masculinity and their idea of masculinity doesn't really conform to their ideal masculinity.

Participant 9

In regard to the impact on social behaviors, mainly positive effects were listed for compilation 2. A majority of participants agreed that the portrayal of masculinity within the advertisements could encourage acceptance and support among men, ultimately affecting platonic relationships, among men as well as between men and women, in a positive way.

“Guys might maybe treat each other with more respect, more understanding, and then relationships between woman and men can be more equal instead of traditional with roles.”

Participant 2

Similarly, participants noted that the portrayal can also be beneficial for romantic relationships, as it can aid in breaking traditional stereotypes of the male role in relationships and result in more acceptance of different types of relationships. This can then help men in being more confident in exploring their ideal type of relationship, which results in healthier relationships. However, participant 7 noted, that the first advertisement may also have a negative impact on romantic relationships of men, as it may cause men to interpret the advertisement's message in a way that they can be satisfied with one positive quality and no longer invest in self-improving.

Comparing the effects of the two compilations on the beliefs and behaviours of men, a clear trend can be seen toward more healthy beliefs and behaviours, ultimately resulting in more positive relationships of men toward themselves, as well as a healthier approach and maintenance of social relationships with others.

5. Discussion

This study was conducted with goal to get a better insight into how men aged 18-30 perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and what they believe to be the effects of this. To do so effectively, the following sub-questions were posed:

1. *How do participants perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements?*
2. *What impact does the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on the gender identity of participants?*
3. *What emotional impact can the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on men aged 18-30?*
4. *What impact can the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on the beliefs and behaviors of men aged 18-30?*

To be able to get a complete and thorough answer to the posed research question, each sub-question will be answered separately, applying the research findings of this study as well as preexisting literature.

1. **How do participants perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements?**

The findings of this study portray valuable insights into the participant's perceptions of the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements. The advertisements selected within the two compilations were generally perceived as representative of the shift in society more broadly, which suggests that the compilations shown within this study accurately portray the general shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements. Although almost all participants acknowledge that there is a shift, the nature and extent of this shift is not uniformly agreed on and overall, the shift appeared to be less prominent than initially expected. This goes in line with findings from previous research, as there was also a significant dissonance between several studies on the topic. While several studies detected a substantial change over time in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements, such as Tschla (2020) who detected a significant progress towards a more diverse representation of men, others found that the general portrayal stayed relatively similar. One example of this is a relatively recent study conducted by Islentyeva in 2023, which found that the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements had remained rather consistent and stereotypical over the last 120 years.

This variance in perceptions about the strength of the shift may be due to several influential factors listed by participants, that can impact how and to what extent a viewer is influenced by a certain portrayal of masculinity within an advertisement. These factors include the quantity of exposure to similar portrayals in advertisements, the impact of influential figures with contrasting views, and individual characteristics of viewers, including their cultural background and prior insecurities. Among others, the difference in cultural values was also listed as an influential factor by Eisend (2019). Other factors found by Eisend included gender equality and women empowerment. Within this study, no findings were made to support these factors. However, since the study by Eisend (2019) was focused on gender roles in general, it is understandable that this study, which exclusively focused on the male gender norms, included no findings on factors impacting female gender roles.

Furthermore, the impact of the advertising industry on the general shift in the portrayal of masculinity in society was perceived as relatively insignificant, compared to other influential factors. Participants noted that they felt that advertisements had a stronger impact in reinforcing previous beliefs on the portrayal of masculinity among male viewers, rather than changing them. Also, the effects were perceived as mostly indirect. Nonetheless, the shift was overall perceived positively, due to a more realistic and inclusive portrayal of masculinity in compilation 2 compared to compilation 1. Several participants expressed that they felt their prior beliefs reinforced by compilation 2, whereas the first compilation was too unrealistic to

be taken seriously. This further supports the previously found hypothesis that advertisements play a bigger role in reinforcing prior beliefs, rather than changing beliefs.

2. What impact does the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on the gender identity of participants?

Neither compilation appeared to have a significant impact on the participants' perception of gender identity. For the first compilation, participants stated that the portrayal of masculinity was too unrealistic and contrary to their prior definition of masculinity to have an impact. This suggests that, while the traditional portrayal of masculinity may be harmful, its effects might not be as impactful as initially expected, due to many male viewers being aware of the unrealistic nature of the portrayal. This may be explained by a study conducted by Zayer et al (2019), which found a trend of individuals actively engaging in the delegitimization of traditional gender ideals and are therefore less strongly impacted when being exposed to the traditional portrayal of masculinity.

On the contrary, the second compilation portrayed masculinity much closer to the prior perception of masculinity of a majority of participants, which also resulted in little to no change in the participants' perception of gender identity, due to simply reinforcing prior beliefs. Still, several participants did mention a reinforcement of their prior definition of masculinity, as well as an expansion of their understanding of the concept. Some even mentioned that seeing the portrayal of masculinity within this advertisement led them to more self-acceptance and more comfortability with their own masculinity. This shows, that while the impact of advertisements appears to be smaller than initially expected, there still is an effect. This effect seems to be more prominent in the portrayal of masculinity in the second compilation, due to a majority of participants sharing the displayed view of masculinity prior to watching the advertisements. This suggests that advertisements may be more influential in reinforcing prior beliefs, rather than changing them and is also supported by the study of Zayer et al (2019), since it found that consumers based their idea of gender roles much more on personal norms and rejected gender ideals portrayed in advertisements that did not align with their personal beliefs.

3. What emotional impact can the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on men aged 18-30?

The first compilation of advertisements received mixed emotional responses. While the first advertisement elicited mainly positive feelings due to its energetic and positive atmosphere, the second ad of the first compilation either did not impact participants emotionally at all or

caused negative emotions. Participants perceived the effects of compilation 1 on the mental health of men as predominantly negative, as its harmful portrayal of masculinity may lead to feelings of insecurity and worthlessness among male viewers, and worsen mental illnesses such as depression. This was in line with findings by Chatmon (2020), who also discovered that, among others, depression and anxiety could be worsened when adhering to traditional masculine norms depicted in media. Within this study, men with low self-confidence and prior insecurities were named as especially vulnerable to a negative influence by participants.

The second compilation predominantly evoked positive feelings, with participants praising the inclusivity and diversity of masculinity portrayed. Participants almost exclusively agreed that this compilation can positively impact the mental health of male viewers, fostering reassurance and acceptance.

Taking these findings for both compilations into account, it appears that the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements has a predominantly positive impact on the emotional wellbeing of men between the age of 18-30. This aligns with findings by Tsihla (2020) and Eisend (2019), who both detected that a more inclusive portrayal of masculinity resulted in positive attitudes. While Eisend (2010) found that a deviation from traditional gender-related values in advertising can have negative effects on consumers, no evidence was found within this study to support those findings.

4. What impact can the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements have on the beliefs and behaviors of men aged 18-30?

In terms of general behaviour, concerns were expressed that the first compilation may normalize harmful, stereotypically masculine traits that could encourage male viewers to adopt careless and assertive behaviours. While some participants believed that the first advertisement of the first compilation could positively impact platonic relationships, as respectful and positive social interactions were portrayed, others perceived a negative impact of the portrayal of social interactions, suggesting that it may encourage attention-seeking behaviour and present challenges. Estrada & Arciniega, 2015 presented similar findings, which showed that these portrayed gender norms may lead men to feel the need to adhere to these stereotypical expectations of masculinity. In regard to romantic relationships, many participants noted potential negative effects, due to the second advertisement presenting unrealistic and problematic views on the man's role in a relationship, which could lead to superficial, harmful and unfulfilling relationships. Looking at the findings from these different categories, a pattern of predominantly negative effects of the first compilation becomes visible. Considering that

this compilation was identified by participants to be mainly in line with a traditional portrayal of masculinity, it can be assumed that this type of portrayal appears to impact male viewers mostly in a harmful manner.

Compilation 2 was viewed as encouraging men to behave in a more authentic and accepting manner, towards themselves as well as others around them. This increased acceptance and support among men was also believed to positively influence platonic relationships and by challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes and promoting more acceptance for diverse relationship dynamics, romantic relationships were thought to be positively impacted as well. This increase in acceptance and support was also noted by Estrada and Arciniega (2018), who found that it allows men to express themselves more freely and authentically, ultimately resulting in overall more positive behaviors. The positive nature of the effects in all categories suggest the overall positive effects of the portrayal masculinity in this compilation. As a majority of participants agreed that this compilation was predominantly in line with the current portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in the western world, it can be assumed that advertisements have shifted towards a portrayal of masculinity with significantly more positive effects than previously.

Overall, the shift appears to impact the beliefs and behaviors and men aged 18-30 in a positive way, by creating a more diverse definition of masculinity and challenging traditional gender norms. This can help viewers to change their traditional, unhealthy beliefs on what masculinity needs to look like and can lead to healthier relationships of men with themselves as well as with others, either platonically or romantically.

To evaluate the findings' reliability, multiple limitations of the study should be considered. For this study, four advertisements have been selected by the researcher, to represent a more traditional portrayal of masculinity as well as a more progressive portrayal of masculinity. Although participants were asked about their perception of how accurately they perceived these advertisements to represent the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements more broadly and the selected advertisements were predominantly perceived as strongly representative, the possibility needs to be taken into account that the opinions of participants on the selected advertisements may not transfer to advertisements in general.

Another potential limitation within this study could be the occurrence of self-serving bias. As the subject of masculinity can be rather personal, some participants may feel uncomfortable sharing certain insecurities or feelings, which may lead them to make false statements. This possibility needs to be considered when interpreting the findings, especially

when looking at statements about the personal impact of the portrayal of masculinity on participants.

Finally, researcher's bias needs to be considered as a potential limitation. As conclusions drawn from qualitative research are partially based on the interpretation of the researcher, researcher's bias often occurs and also needs to be considered for this study.

Practical Implications and Future Research Directions

This study can be used to better determine the most effective way to portray masculinity in media to reduce the phenomenon of toxic masculinity. The findings from this study suggest that advertisements with a more inclusive portrayal of masculinity appear to positively affect male viewers aged 18-30 and contribute to healthier beliefs and behaviors. Since the shift in advertisements makes this type of portrayal more common, it can be assumed that the shift is beneficial in reducing the phenomenon of toxic masculinity and should continue to grow and spread.

As prior research on the effects of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements is limited, further studies are urgently recommended. To be able to generalize the findings, more studies are necessary that research the topic on a bigger scale. Also, longitudinal studies may be effective in getting a more comprehensive insight into the shift and its long-term effects. Furthermore, cross-cultural studies are recommended to further explore the cultural differences listed by several participants in this study and discover their effect on the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements as well as their effect on the impact on male viewers of this portrayal. Lastly, this study merely focused on the age group of 18-30. It may be interesting to also research the effects on other age groups and compare, how they differ.

6. Conclusion

This research aimed to identify how men aged 18-30 perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and what they believe to be the effects of this. Based on a qualitative, thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, it can be concluded that the shift was perceived as predominantly positive, with a majority of participants enthusiastic about the growing inclusivity and broader representation of masculinity. Primarily positive effects were listed on the beliefs and behaviors of male viewers, the mental health, and the pursuit and maintenance of platonic and romantic relationships.

For this study, a semi-structured interview style was selected. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using a combination of an inductive and deductive coding approach. This allowed for a complete coding scheme that was both relevant to the crucial concepts discussed within the study, and inclusive of all important themes discussed within the interviews. The analysis included two rounds of coding and was conducted with the software 'Atlas.ti'. While a qualitative approach limits the generalizability of the findings, it was most relevant for this research, as it allowed to get in-depth insight of participants into the impact and perceived effects of the shown advertisements.

This study aids in better understanding the shift in the portrayal of masculinity, which is yet largely unexplored. Due to the severe effects of toxic masculinity on men, women, and society in general, solutions to reduce the phenomenon of toxic masculinity are urgent. The findings of this study can be used to better understand the shift and its impact and can ultimately aid in determining effective ways to reduce toxic masculinity. Still, further research is necessary to increase the generalizability of these findings and ultimately win the battle against toxic masculinity.

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Appendix 1

Literature search log

Research question:

How do men aged 18-30 perceive the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements and what do they believe to be the effects of this?

Key words:

Shift, Portrayal, Masculinity, Advertisements, Effects

Synonyms for key concepts:

Shift: Change

Portrayal: Representation, Depiction

Masculinity: Manliness

Advertisement: Advertising, Advertising industry, Commercial

Effect: Consequence

Logbook:

Date	Where did I search	Search String	Number of Hits/ Relevancy
09.05.2023	Google Scholar	Shift* OR Change* AND portrayal OR representation AND masculinity OR manliness AND advertisement* OR commercial OR (advertising industry) AND Effect* OR consequence*	Total Hits: 41.800 Relevant Hits: 9

09.05.2023	Scopus	<p>→ Use of Boolean operators AND and OR and Boolean modifiers () and * Shift* OR Change* AND portrayal OR representation AND masculinity OR manliness AND advertisement* OR commercial OR (advertising industry) AND Effect* OR consequence*</p>	<p>Total Hits: 4 Relevant Hits: 0</p>
09.05.2023	Google Scholar	<p>→ Use of Boolean operators AND and OR and Boolean modifiers () and * Shift* AND portrayal AND masculinity OR manliness AND advertisement* AND Effect*</p>	<p>Total Hits: 33.200 Relevant Hits: 19</p>
		<p>→ Use of Boolean operators AND and OR and Boolean modifiers () and *</p>	

05.05.2023	Scopus	Shift* AND portrayal AND masculinity OR manliness AND advertisement* AND Effect* → Use of Boolean operators AND and OR and Boolean modifier*	Total Hits: 0 Relevant Hits: 0
05.05.2023	Google Scholar	Shift portrayal masculinity advertisements	Total Hits: 34.200 Relevant Hits: 5
18.04.2023	Google Scholar	Toxic Masculinity	Total Hits: 56.700 Relevant Hits: 1
05.05.2023	Google Scholar	Cultivation theory	Total Hits: 2.180.000 Relevant Hits: 2
05.05.2023	Google Scholar	Psychological OR emotional AND Effect Or impact AND advertisement* OR Commercial* → Use of Boolean operators AND and OR and Boolean modifier*	Total Hits: 3.690.000 Relevant Hits: 2
05.05.2023	Google Scholar	Social AND Cognitive AND Theory AND Impact AND Advertisement* OR Commercial*	Total Hits: 2.180.000 Relevant Hits:

→ Use of Boolean operators AND and OR and Boolean modifier*

Social AND
Cognitive AND
Theory

Total Hits: 4.950.000
Relevant Hits: 4

Appendix 2

Appendix 2A: Consent Form Participation

"Redefining Masculinity: A Study on the Shifting Landscape of Advertisements and its Impact on the Perception of Masculinity among Young Adult Men":

Consent to take part in research

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves a 30-45 minute interview in which participants will be shown different advertisements and will be asked you a number of questions regarding their opinions and feelings towards them as well as the impact of advertisements on the concept of toxic masculinity in general.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my

interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the researcher's bachelor thesis.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be encrypted on the researcher's computer and stored in an ISO 27001- and NEN 7510-certified directory. As the analysis will merely be conducted by one researcher, this researcher is the only individual with access to the data and no data transfer is necessary. The data will be stored until the exam board confirms the results of the bachelor thesis.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years from when the exam board confirms the results of the bachelor thesis.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalization I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher

Marie Lingnau

Student BSc Communication Science, University of
Twente

Contact: l.m.lingnau@student.utwente.nl

Appendix 2B: Interview Script

Compilation 1 (traditional)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoYWmV98CvM>

Compilation 2 (progressive)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DU09_SBPmWM

Short description of study:

First of all, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. The goal of the study is to get a better understanding of the impact of advertisements on the perception of

masculinity among men. To do so, I will show you two different compilations of advertisements. Each compilation contains two advertisements. Then I will ask you a number of questions regarding your opinions and feelings towards them. You have the right to end the interview at any point, so if at any moment you do not want to continue, do not hesitate to let me know.

Definition of toxic masculinity:

For the purpose of this study, toxic masculinity will be defined as an attitude or set of social guidelines stereotypically associated with manliness. These attitudes often have a negative impact on men, women as well as society in general. Within this definition, it is important to point out that toxic masculinity does not imply that the idea of masculinity in itself is bad, but rather that the impact that certain stereotypical perceptions what masculinity needs to look like can be harmful. Examples of these stereotypical perceptions can include homophobia, the need for control through assertion of dominance, sexual aggression towards women, risk-taking and the expectation towards a certain physical appearance (Vallie, 2022).

→ Do you have any more questions about the study and your role in it?

→ Do you consent to the recording of this interview?

Interview

Portrayal of masculinity in advertisements

- In your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?
- In your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?
- Can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?
- In what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? Can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?
- In what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? Can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Personal impact

- How did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you?
 - What specific moments or images elicited those emotions?
- Have you ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms depicted in advertising and if so, can you specify what elements within the advertisement led to this pressure?
- Did watching these advertisements reinforce or challenge these pressures for you? (skip if answer to previous answer was 'no')
- In what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?
 - What specific elements impacted this change?
- In what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept 'masculinity' in general?
 - What specific elements impacted this change?

Effects of portrayal of masculinity in advertisements

- In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?
 - Why do you think so?
- In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships (meaning non-romantic relationships) of men?
 - Why do you think so?
- In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?
 - Why do you think so?
- In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?
 - Why do you think so?
- In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?
 - Why do you think so?

Comparisons

- What similarities stood out the most to you between the first compilation of advertisements compared to the second compilation of advertisements?
→ How do you feel about these similarities?
- What differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation of advertisements compared to the second compilation of advertisements?
→ How do you feel about these differences?
- Do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertisements representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general? Why or why not?
- What compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity? What specific elements caused you to prefer this one?

The impact of advertisements on toxic masculinity

- Do you believe that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? Why or why not?
- How do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?
- What role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share in regard to the portrayal of masculinity within these advertisements and potential effects of this?

That was the last question! I'd like to thank you for your participation and hope you have a great rest of the day! If you have any more questions about the study in the future, do not hesitate to contact me!

Appendix 2C: Transcripts

Transcript 1

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, I will show you the first compilation of advertisements. If the image or the sound.. If there's any issues, just let me know.

Interviewee:

Sure.

Interviewer:

All right, so first of all in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Wait one more time. <Laugh>.

Interviewer:

How is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters within the ads and how they behave?

Interviewee:

Okay. First advertisement seems to be a friendly and open guy who seems to know a lot of different kind of people from different cultures and integrates well with them. And the second advertisement is I don't know, a guy building a boat, <laugh>. There's not a lot more to say about that.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I think it's quite similar to some people, of course, like in reality people are always very different, but I could imagine both of them as a real person.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Okay. So wait, do you have a list of traditional gender roles?

Interviewer:

Yes. For example, a certain physical expectation, for example looking muscular, or a certain behavior, like for example, a display of dominance or something in that regard.

Interviewee:

It's difficult questions, I should have studied for this.

Interviewer:

<Laugh>, we can also skip it if you want. We can just keep going with the next one.

Interviewee:

If you don't think it's that important, we can skip it.

Interviewer:

Yeah, we can skip it. In what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I don't think there's any problems with these ads.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you go maybe a little bit into more detail what made them unproblematic in your opinion?

Interviewee:

Well, the lack of problems, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. In what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Okay. Those seem like two questions.

Interviewer:

We can also split them. So, first of all in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic?

Interviewee:

Yeah, in both videos, as I said before I could believe they would be real people. I know that in reality everyone is different, right? So people like this I just think there could be a possibility and therefore it's realistic. Maybe it also is the case that I don't really categorize people that much, like not by gender or by like religion or anything else. I just see them as for who they're like as an individual, I guess. And in that that case they both could be real individuals.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Were there any elements that were unrealistic to you or anything that you might think this is not really a realistic portrayal of masculinity?

Interviewee:

Well, of course, both advertisements had some parts that weren't that realistic, but I wouldn't necessarily say that had to do with masculinity, more in general. Like those situations that were shown there, wouldn't really happen in real life. You could get someone closer to that, or like mostly people who played in advertisements could be real people, but the situation like that wouldn't really happen.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you?

Interviewee:

Yeah, the first advertisement made me feel happy, I guess had good vibes, and the second, I'm kind of indifferent too.

Interviewer:

And can you specify what exact moments or images in the first advertisement led to this happy feeling?

Interviewee:

I would say the whole advertisement is about that guy kind of greeting people, right? And like interacting with them. I was just cheerful, I guess.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And have you ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within the advertisement led to this pressure?

Interviewee:

I don't think so.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

I don't think it has an influence.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did it have any influence on your definition of the concept of masculinity in general, and if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

I also don't think so. I don't pay that much attention to masculinity. It's not like really part of my daily life, so I also haven't really thought about a good definition of masculinity.

Interviewer:

And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

Well, as both advertisements had at least a part which was unrealistic, and if people would still strive to be that way, then you'll just always trying to get somewhere which isn't realistic, right? And that can not be good for you.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So non-romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I don't think these advertisements would influence that a lot.

Interviewer:

Okay. and what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men, or in general sexual relationships?

Interviewee:

I guess the second one, the second advertisement could normalize having sexual relationships with a lot of people at the same time.

Interviewer:

Could you elaborate on what specific elements could cause this?

Interviewee:

I mean, that's kind of what it was insinuating with all the different women going to the boat, <laugh>.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Can you ask it one more time?

Interviewer:

What effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail? So basically how could it impact how men think masculinity needs to look like and should be defined?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I don't think it would have a lot of influence just as much as anything else. Like, if it's too different from what they already think masculinity is supposed to be, they wouldn't, we wouldn't associate it with masculinity. So it should be kind of the same direction as what they were thinking originally before watching the advertisements.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I guess it's the normalizing, again, I don't know if there's anything in the first advertisement that seems abnormal to someone, but if there was, then maybe they will see it as normal after watching the advertisement, I'd say for the second one.

Interviewer:

Okay. Then I will now show you the second compilation of advertisements. Again, if there's anything wrong with the image or audio, just let me know.

Interviewee:

Will do.

Interviewer:

All right, so first of all in your opinion, how was masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Yeah, not really. There's a lot of male characters here and they all are quite different.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly, are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I mean, from what I could see from the characters, which is like one or two seconds, it seems realistic. <Laugh>.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you elaborate on what exactly you found realistic or what exactly stood out to you?

Interviewee:

Well, as far as they didn't do anything that was unrealistic within those two seconds.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

I guess the first one kind of challenges the fact that you don't need to have an athletic body or have good muscles, which I think is important for a lot of people as a masculine trait. And I don't think there was anything in the second one.

Interviewer:

So you don't think there was anything in the second ad that either reinforced or challenged the traditional gender norms or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think so. I don't really remember that well, like both advertisements were kind of similar, so I can't really remember which one was the first one and which one was the second one, but yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? Can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I don't think there's anything problematic here.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? You've already kind of touched on it, but can you elaborate a little more and give some specific examples of what you found realistic or what you maybe found unrealistic?

Interviewee:

I mean, it's realistic in the sense that there's a lot of different people who are different and that this is shown in the videos. Besides that, I cannot elaborate a lot more because each character is only visible for a few seconds.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you or any specific feelings?

Interviewee:

Hmm. Yeah, I don't think there were any specific feelings.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

I don't think there was any change.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

I don't think there is any change.

Interviewer:

Okay. In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men? And why do you think so?

Interviewee:

I think people who are insecure about who they are might find comfort and reassurance that it's okay to be who you are.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And how would that specifically impact their mental health then, would you say?

Interviewee:

Well, if you're always insecure and then you're not insecure anymore, or less insecure, that's the impact on the mental health in a positive way. I think most people don't like being insecure.

Interviewer:

Yeah. In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Nothing directly, but maybe people will have more relationships with people if they're less insecure about themselves.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I think the same, if you're less insecure, then you might start romantic relationships with people.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I, I would say that these videos aren't that much about masculinity, but more about that it's okay to be who you are.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you elaborate a little bit on that?

Interviewee:

Yeah. So from what I know, masculinity is a group of traits that are traditionally common in men. And this video or these two videos are about that it's okay no matter which traits you have. So then you don't have to be those traits which are traditionally seen as masculine. You can have other traits. So that doesn't really say anything about masculinity, it just it's okay to be who you are.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I guess not directly that much but, of course, as I said before, if people are less insecure, they might be become more outgoing.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. Now I want to get a little bit more into the differences and similarities between the first compilation and the second compilation. So what similarities stood out the most to you between the first compilation of advertisements and the second compilation?

Interviewee:

Oh, both were mainly about men.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation and the second compilation?

Interviewee:

I think the first one, they tried to associate their product with the masculinity. And the second one was about that it's okay for you to be who you are. It didn't really have a lot to do with masculinity, in my opinion.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity or just the portrayal of men in general in the first set of advertisements compared to the second one, representative of the shift in how men are portrayed in advertising in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

I think in some way, you wouldn't have seen the advertisement from the second compilation, I think 20 years ago. But now, you'll see both, I think. I don't watch a lot of ads <laugh>. That's what I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. So you think the shift that was visible within the two compilations I showed you is pretty realistic, compared to the shift in general in advertisements?

Interviewee:

I wouldn't really say that there is a shift. I think it's just a new type of advertisements also existing now, that didn't exist before.

Interviewer:

Can you elaborate a little bit more on that?

Interviewee:

Well, there used to be like, if you had an advertisement targeted with your target audience of men, then you would only have advertisements that fit in the category, which are similar to

from the first compilation. But now there's also advertisements that fit in the category similar to the second compilation, but both still exist. It doesn't feel like all the advertisements are trying to move away from how it was like compilation one, to compilation two.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of men or masculinity? And what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee:

I wouldn't really say I had that much of a preference. I liked the first advertisement of compilation one because it was cheerful.

Interviewer:

So would you say overall you preferred the first compilation over the second one?

Interviewee:

I guess you could say so, the first video in the first compilation just gave me good vibes, like was happy and cheerful. And the second one was at least like artistic or, like a new idea to represent something. And the second one were just questions or saying it's okay to be who you are, which is, you know, I'm sure there's a lot of people who enjoy watching that, but for, for me, it gets a bit boring quickly.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you believe in general that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity?

Interviewee:

No.

Interviewer:

Can you elaborate why you don't think so?

Interviewee:

I mean, the people making the advertisements can, I think, make it however they want. And if a lot of people want to see an inclusive representation, then those ads will do better.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

I think the definition of masculinity will just get updated to how men on average act now. Because now, masculinity is how traditionally men acted in the past and in the future that will refer to around this time period.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what role do you think advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

I think it'll have quite a minimal impact. It'll help a bit because it's, again, like, saying something about people, but I think like what you would see in real life would have a stronger impact.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. That was actually the last question. So is there anything else, any other thoughts you have or any other things you would like to share in regards to the portrayal of masculinity in the advertisements I showed you, but also more in general and the potential effects of advertisements?

Interviewee:

No.

Interviewer:

Okay. Perfect. Then I would like to thank you for your participation and if you have any more questions about the study either now or in the future, you're always welcome to contact me and ask them, and I will make sure to answer them for you.

Interviewee:

Okay.

Interviewer:

Perfect. Then I'm gonna stop the recording.

Transcript 2

Interviewer:

All right, so first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

They are described as very competent and very in the leading role. Assertive as it were, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

Well, it depends, I do think masculinity is often overblown, just like many other stereotypes, and it does somewhat line up with the more competent, strong man, that in the leading role, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

I would say that what I originally expected was more of the strong bodybuilder type masculinity, to put it that way. However, it was still a little bit present in the second one. However, it was mostly just that no consequences for your actions basically, and just stuff just happens and it works out and just they can do whatever they want basically, and kind of.. yeah..that leader role.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you specify what exactly you found problematic?

Interviewee:

What I would find somewhat problematic is that it kind of inspires obnoxious behavior, because for instance, well the first one is like the most clear because then he actually acts and he just waltzes in everywhere, interrupts it and does his thing. And in the advertisement, you of course can get away with it and stuff, but in the real world, it can.. People just waltzing in and doing whatever they want can get really annoying really quickly, especially if they think they are the main character, that kind of thing. And just the star of the show every single time, and being the best always everywhere could be not healthy if you just think you are, but aren't.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what about the second one? Was there anything that you found problematic in that advertisement?

Interviewee:

Well, kind of if you use this, then women are attracted to you. So kind of like the best individual as it were, that like also somewhat biblical comparison also, which could also be seen as well very, yeah. Somewhat harmful.

Interviewer:

Can you elaborate in what ways exactly?

Interviewee:

Well, I'm not that good with my biblical history, so I don't know exactly who built the arc, but they are, well, somewhat important, so like comparing yourself to a biblical figure is like quite risky. And also comparing women to like all the animals that are loaded into the arc is, well, not a great comparison to make from an equality perspective.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and also what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

One of the things I found on the more realistic side was actually that they kind of looked like normal people. Like they, they weren't super buff or anything, but on the other side it was that they could just get away with anything. Again, no consequences, no negative consequences for your actions in any way. And also they are good at everything. Well, the second one wasn't especially, he didn't really show a lot of skills, but he could build a boat out of just some wood, which isn't quite normal. And the other one could like sing, play the piano, do cartwheels, like do tricks everything. So that's kind of not the most realistic at all in my opinion.

Interviewer:

And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up watching them?

Interviewee:

I found the second one mostly to be just somewhat strange. At first I was like, oh yeah, he's, working hard to do something. Wait, he suddenly built a boat. Oh God, what is happening now? You know, kind of that vibe and was like, like, oh yeah, it's an advertisement. And the first one was kind of like, okay, there is a lot of action here. All of stuff is happening. He's getting away with it. Kind of like, yeah, like humorous, but also, what actually is happening here? So, sort of confusion, I usually don't watch a lot of advertisements at all actually Ad Blockers exist, so seeing them for like, I don't know if these are old or new, but seeing them for the first time in a long time, they are more surrealistic than I remember.

Interviewer:

Okay. And have you ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within those advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

Hmm. Not specifically. Well, like masculinity in general, I am sometimes unsure about mostly my physical strength and well, my like self-confidence, my ability to talk to people, those things. However, I rarely pick those things up from advertisements. They're actually really disconnected since I think I do quite a lot of stuff to avoid them practically always, so I don't engage with a lot of advertisements.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

I think that when you are close to a viewpoint and you kind of agree you can reinforce the need for, like.. I need to be masculine, I need to be this sort of person. But since I am quite far removed from it and also, like in this context, of a study, go look at it, I kind of find it strange and like surrealistic and it is like, yeah, I would like to be able to achieve things, but also that's never gonna actually work, so stop selling me your product. <Laugh>.

Interviewer:

Right. Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

I think it is slightly changed from more that focus on like improvement to the level that it becomes toxic to more of the, the attitude of being able to get away with everything, so, yeah.

Interviewer:

And did that impact how you view masculinity? Like how you define masculinity in your daily life in general?

Interviewee:

I think that at the entire beginning of it, you said you had masculinity and you have toxic masculinity. Are we talking about masculinity in general or toxic masculinity?

Interviewer:

Yeah, masculinity in general. So how the way that masculinity was portrayed within those advertisements, how that impacted your definition of the concept, masculinity in general.

Interviewee:

Hmm. How that impacted my definition. I do think that as I see it portrayed more and more in society, we move more and more away from the very classic masculinity in the sense of the strong hero is going to save the princess masculinity and more in the, you can get away with everything and you are just a great person because you're a man masculinity. And I find that like kind of more scary in a sense since it comes with less obligations.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men? Not just you specifically, but men in general as well?

Interviewee:

I'd say that it can both cause them to be very insecure since, well, you should be able to achieve anything, so failure to do so is just your personal failure and personal failure is just not great, so that could cause insecurity, but also it could cause sort of imposter.. Again that you can't really reach that level or that you, even if you think you made it, that like it doesn't really fit. And on the other end it's also if people try to emulate that kind of stance, it's just not great.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men? So for example, friendships or yeah, some other social relationships with other people.

Interviewee:

I think it can get, if both people in the same room think they're the main character that really quickly breeds conflict as well. If everybody wants all the attention and wants to be the star of the show all the time, that is not a possibility basically. So..Yeah, I think it will be more difficult to make friends, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Hmm. Let me see. I think it really depends on, I think they get really unrealistic views of how a relationship works, and that way it can, well, it depends on the rest of the outcome. Either they will never learn and will just kind of fail romantically or they will eventually like still force someone into it and then it like is kind of a crappy relationship or they grow out of it and like learn how it is. But that's, again, still not great. I think it sets a precedent that is not healthy.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

I think, could you repeat the question please?

Interviewer:

What effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Well, I think these advertisements really portray more of the carelessness, the lack of responsibility and the being able to do anything and get away with anything mentality, without negative consequences. And I think that those are among the worst traits of toxic masculinity in itself.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I think that really depends. In some cases, of course, people are affected by advertisements. However, I think that it'll only be if it's very ingrained in everything, but then again, it might be, so it's, it's not gonna be like, oh, you watched an advertisement, you're gonna definitely behave exactly like the character of the advertisement, but if it would have an effect, I do think that it indeed promotes this more like, like careless, assertive lifestyle in a way.

Interviewer:

Okay. Then I will now show you the second set of advertisements. Again, if there's any issues with the quality of the image or the audio, let me know.

Interviewee:

Alright, so first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

In general, the male characters are less classically masculine and more so just doing their own thing and just like, yeah, just less physically strong, physically imposing, less of a presence in the room, that kind of thing and more so each having, well, their own traits, their own things going on. I found that the first one, they were way more focusing on the few things they were competent in. So you saw way less of the character themselves and way less of the flaws basically, and way more of the this is the thing they're good at or this is their one trade go for it. While the second one was way more of these are all the flaws you can have. Don't worry about it, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I would say that in the first one, it again gave that real advertisement impression of going real just.. Very much action which is not the most realistic thing, however, it was pointing out these things of, well, nobody is exactly like the model, let's put it that way. But then on the other hand, it also kind of like unrealistically enlarged that, basically took it under the

microscope scope, but that's to be expected in the form of media, I guess. While the second one gave way more of a.. It kind of sucks, but that's normal. You're allowed to be yourself, but it was overly depressive in my opinion. And bleak, which is generally, well, not exactly how I see reality <laugh>.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you go into a little more detail with what you mean with depressive and bleak?

Interviewee:

For instance, it used overly muted colors. It always focused on the.. At least big parts, focused on the negative things. It said that this is a thing you can't do, that's okay, this is a thing you can't do. This is a thing... Like the second one was all, you can't do this, you can't do that. Or this downside and that downside while the first one was all.. You have this thing going on. And while the first one was more like things going on that weren't classically masculine, but they were still like, you could say upsides. Like for instance, there was this one guy with kittens and you were like, wow, kittens are cute. So, so that's an upside, but it's not classically masculine. Well, in the other one, you have like skinny and like, it's not really a downside, but if you portray it like, like alone in a dark room with muted blue collars, then you're like, you don't get a good feeling with it, let's put it that way.

Interviewer:

And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

I would say that they very much challenge traditional gender roles. If you look at the first one for instance, then you very much like people dressed in very colorful clothing and high heels and generally skinnier too, and, well, dancing, that kind of stuff. Things that are generally not seen as very masculine things to do. And in the second one, the traditional male is like they never give up. They always, you know, they, command the presence. And in the second one, it's way more held back, like somewhat free, but also lost in a way. And that's not very classical. As a man, you're always supposed to do the thing.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? Can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I found the first one to be in a very different way, still having the.. You can do whatever you want and you are the man, but like in a, you can be whoever you want, but in a very pronounced way. However, I would say that since you can kind of take away the message that everyone has their own thing going on, it is less pronounced than in the first advertisement of like the previous set. And in the other one though, when compared to the other one, I find it, well, better in my opinion since the second one. If you look at it, it is way more it says the thing for instance, like, like is it okay to be this thing? And then it shows you somebody with that thing being generally in a miserable looking setting or getting bullied about it. And then you're like, okay, so is that thing okay? Well, I now, it's not okay. You're getting the opposite effect of what they're trying to achieve, kind of, in my opinion.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

The first one was a lot about parties and doing things with people, which while there were a few shots there, which just some, some guy in a suit like walking over the street, which I'm like, yeah, that that's gonna happen someday, but also like, like more, yeah, general just advertisement things like for instance, a guy just from a pizza for a pizzeria or just, well, dancing in a party is gonna happen, but I don't know how all parties get because <laugh>, that's not really my thing, so I can't really judge on how realistic those things are. And the second one, I find while yes, those things do happen, I find them put very much under the magnifying glass, let's put it that way. And yeah, it's slower, more like calm tone, things do happen, I guess. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Can you elaborate a bit on what you mean when you say they're put under the magnifying glass?

Interviewee:

I mean that it gives a very one-sided view of things. It focuses on the specific sets of like scenarios where it asks the same question over and over again slightly different but practically identical if you switch out the one trade scenarios that are followed up, one after another, like is this okay? And then, they show guys being miserable with the trait, is this okay? And then they show, like, there were a few more positively vibed ones in it, but there were, there were also mostly in well, more concrete, back neighborhood tunnel kind of places, so yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

I found the first one to be quite a non offensive piece of well, do whatever you want, just roll with it. And it didn't really inspire me to be classically masculine, but also not to do, yeah, anything special about it. Just roll with whoever you are. And it was kind of like a nice message. And the second one I found actually kind of like actively demotivating in a way to like, well, it kind of gave you that idea that not being masculine is kind of a bad idea, <laugh> because okay, it showed all these individuals being miserable about it. And while I do get the message, I can hear what they're saying and I can read, but it's just, they bring their message of classic masculinity, be yourself. And then they show everyone being miserable in their own way and then that just doesn't really inspire me personally.

Interviewer:

And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept of masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Masculinity in general... I think the first one further reinforced the more since they, well, were also not necessarily classically masculine, but also not well physically the opposite, was more so as masculinity, really being less of a physical thing, more of a way you.. A presence in the room, what you kind of do in the room. And it was, well, somewhat blurred the lines, but it still keeps somewhat clear, with the second one, setting again, more of a focus on

masculinity is also having these other traits that are very much physical actually and you, yeah... For instance, being skinny is not masculine, having long hair, not masculine, and just this entire list of like what is masculinity actually, at least in its opinion.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

I would say that the first one is rather non-offensive and kind of a message of like, go out there, do your thing. You could once more have the, that you can't, like, that you think, oh, I, I can't live up to that, but it's more so people being silly at a party and if you're silly people, that's what, what they're selling, you know. But in the second one, it's way more of the depressing vibes so portrayed with the non masculine things together, which actually I could realistically see making people insecure about their masculinity, Or lack of. Yeah.

Interviewer:

And when you say the second one, do you mean the second set of advertisements or the last advertisements?

Interviewee:

The, the second advertisement of the second set.

Interviewer:

Okay. Alright.

Interviewee:

When I say the first one, I mean the first advertisement of the second set.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Platonic relationships. That's like friends, right?

Interviewer:

Yeah, like friends, social connections, these kind of relationships.

Interviewee:

I think that the first one is maybe more just party and just do your thing and I think it would be quite healthy since you're both just, yeah, vibing, it kind of reaches.. At least that's the message I get out of it. It's kind of like, do your thing and accept others. While the accept others might just be with like, what, what you think you should do, do that also to others, which is, yeah. And the second one, I get way more of the society doesn't accept this vibe, which could make you fearful for social situations. However, it also has this like undertone of but you can hang out with.. There are a few friends you can trust and like, it'll point at relationships in a good way, in a certain sense that it is like relationships are nice to have, but, it doesn't really guide you to it and more so just kind of yeah, disincentivizes like, oh no, you're gonna get bullied. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I would say that the first one doesn't really have a lot to say about romantic relationships as far as I can remember, but more so about the.. Don't worry about you are, you are fine. So I don't think it is more so a change of go do this, but more so keep your status quo intact, which means it doesn't really change the outlook who, for whoever's watching it other than that they maybe might wanna try new things someday while the second one might, I don't know. I think it's really, really depends on the message you take away since the intended.. It seems that the intended message, if you follow it, is being less masculine is okay, but you can also take away the opposite message dependent on what you do. You can kind of go either way with being less masculine or more masculine basically in a relationship. But I do also think it is like less about being the.. It says little about being assertive or not being present. It's more so about, yeah, it says little about being your own presence in the room, let's put it that way. It only has the absence of it. So it says little about direct relationships. It says like it's okay to be not too assertive in your relationship, which is kind of the baseline I agree with. So I don't think it changes that in any way.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

The first one could be a sort of loosening it up like, like don't worry about it too much, just vibe. Do your own thing. You're always masculine as long as you're doing your thing well. The second one is masculinity is the absence of these bad traits. And if you have those traits, then you are masculine and not being masculine is miserable. So it kind of makes you fearful of not being masculine, which, on the other hand it does ask you the question and say you can be whoever you want, which is kind of the opposite to at least what I tonally retrieve from it. But that's again, just how I personally interpret it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I think the first one is more so just validation that people are doing the thing they are doing and that they should just feel less insecure about themselves and continue with what they're doing. So I think it's less of a shift in like.. Guide them in a direction and more so just like a happy feel good, continue rolling the way you are going. While I think that the second one dependent on the message you wanna take away out of it, actively makes you fearful of not being masculine and therefore drives people towards being more masculine in the ways they portrayed that not being masculine is bad. Or you could say that to be yourself, do your own thing, that is also a message people could take away out of it.

Interviewer:

Okay. now I wanna get into the comparison between the first set of advertisements versus the second one. So between the first set of advertisements and the second set of advertisements, what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

What stood out to me was that in the first set, one advertisement was a really active, cut after cut action, while the second one was a way calmer, slower kind of thing. And that was also mirrored in the second one. But while the first one were both very positive of masculinity as a whole, the second one was, well one was positive, however, it wasn't necessarily about not being masculine while the second one was about not being masculine. However, it might have had a positive message, however it didn't have a positive vibe to it. So especially in succession, if you for instance, compare the first one, of the first one, which is a masculine guy doing his masculine thing and having the day of his life to the second one of the second one, which is the not masculine individuals generally not having a great time, , it's a product comment on like the entire thing, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. So you've already kind of mentioned it, but could you elaborate a bit more on what exactly the differences were that stood out the most to you between the two different sets?

Interviewee:

The difference that stood out the most to me was that in the first set you really had that, that positivity of like you were a man and you can do whatever you want and go for it. And the second one was may more of a message of whatever you're doing, it's fine. Yeah, kind of more acceptance, like you don't need to conform to the classical norms of what it means to be a man basically.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertisements, representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity and advertisements in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

It really depends on the timeframe, I would say. So I think I mentioned this before, but like all the way back it was all about courage and standing up and being the hero with all the morals and like the strongest and the best. And then it became way more about just not really the morals, but about being able to do anything and achieve what you wanted to achieve. And now it is, at least in the places I go, way more about doing what you like doing and not really

about the body or accepting others, basically. But I don't really notice the general shift in society of how advertisements are going, since I don't watch a lot of advertisements.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee:

I find it difficult to answer. In the first one, I found them to be way more pleasant to watch, since I found especially the one of the second set to be very depressing, which I perceive as negative and that just doesn't give me great feels. However I found the second one of the first set to be also very condescending and kind of sexist to be fair. So that just isn't great. And then if I compare like the first one of the first one and the first one of the second one, it was way more like just general situations in the second one. I mean, where it was just, I don't know, that's just not really the vibe I'm into. So yeah, I would say that I am more attracted to like classic, like not necessarily toxic masculinity. I mean the first one was kind of obnoxious. I don't know which, I think I prefer the first one, because the second one kind of had negative vibes to it.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Interviewee:

In some, in the second one, yeah. Mm-Hmm.

Interviewer:

And do you believe that advertising in general has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

I find that at the current rates of how I see advertisements, that as long as advertisement isn't passing it off as genuine, then advertisement isn't meant to be realistic in any way, shape or form. So basically advertisements have no responsibility to portray anything in any way, in my general opinion, since anything they say is a lie anyway, so it's, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

It is really hard to say. If you say masculinity as what it means to be manly, the like classical male values, I think will still be in there a lot. However, how masculinity will be like by the.. We are very masculine and that is our identity individuals, I think that will become like maybe even more toxic than this. I don't know how like it develops, I think in general, it seems that society's going more and more towards the free, anything can happen, like be whoever you wanna be, kind of vibe, which is the opposite to masculinity. So it is like what men are will no longer be what the word masculinity means. I think that's what it's going towards, but yeah, it depends. What exactly is masculinity again?

Interviewer:

Yeah, I mean it depends on how you wanna define it. I think in the stereotypical sense, there's certain attributes or features that are related to it, but then looking at how it might change in the future, the term masculinity might be interpreted and defined very differently.

Interviewee:

Yeah. I do think it really depends on if masculinity will stick to the classical male values or if it'll stick to what a man generally is, let's put it that way.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

Honestly, I don't trust advertisements to play any role in anything I find remotely important. I think that if advertisements decide to portray more healthy and realistic things, that is a good thing. However, with the goal of advertisements being to sell you a product, they will forever not be about doing the right thing, so yeah. I think advertisements have an influence on people, however, so I think it should in some way be given a responsibility. However, I do think that in general maybe people should disregard advertisements as a source of truth and information. Especially if it comes to more complex topics.

Interviewer:

All right. Well that was actually the last question. So is there anything else that you have thoughts about or would like to share in regards to either specifically the advertisements we watched or just advertisements in general and their impact on the portrayal of masculinity and potential effects?

Interviewee:

Not really that I can think of.

Interviewer:

Okay. Well then I would like to thank you for your participation and if you have any more questions or remarks or anything else in regards to the study, just let me know and I'm happy to assist you with any questions or remarks you might have.

Interviewee:

Okay. yeah, no problem.

Interviewer:

I will stop the recording then.

Interviewee:

Okay.

Transcript 3

Interviewer:

All right. So I will start off by showing you the first compilation of advertisements. If there's anything wrong with the image or the sound of the advertisement, just let me know.

Interviewer:

So first of all, in your opinion, how was masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Yeah. In the first ad there was a guy at some sort of party or some sort of event. And he was having a lot of fun. He was dancing a lot. He had a lot of friends. He looked muscular and yeah, he was just having fun at an event. And at the end, of course, he got a beer and he was able to sing. And in the second advertisement, there was a guy who built a ship, which is of course based on the Arch Noah I think it's called. And because of that, he was also.. It was also an advertisement and he got a lot of women.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I think in society nowadays it's more broad. I think masculinity is not really one thing. I think it's not the kind of like old manliness that people used to think of men. I don't think that's there anymore. But I think that nowadays, men are just accepted as they are, and they don't really have to do anything special. They don't have to be very muscular. They're accepted if they like to wear a dress or something like that or if they just behave how back in the days they would be called, not a man because of that. But nowadays, I believe that yeah, it's not really demanded from a man. Men can show their feelings nowadays, and in the advertisements, I would say it was more like the stereotypical man that you could see.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

In the second advertisement, he was able to build a ship all by his own. So the man has to be able to build stuff and to create stuff which of course a lot of men just can't do because they're just not educated in that way. And of course, he also got a lot of women in the end which of course is also a little bit problematic, I would say, because not every man likes only men. There're always bisexual people, or there are gay people. It's not really only women. And in the first advertisement, I would say it was better than the first one. It wasn't as stereotypical because there were still a lot of different types of men who were having fun together. But I

still think that it was shown as like this muscular man, who could do a lot of things. He could sing, he could dance, he was muscular. And it's not really representative of the of the society, I would say.

Interviewer:

And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think that it can be problematic for some people. For me personally, it wouldn't be because I feel comfortable with who I am and how I am. But people who maybe don't have as high of a self-worth already who already think of themselves not as highly, can of course get damaged mentally by that because, maybe they aren't that muscular. They can't sing. They don't have a lot of friends, or they're just not good at building, or maybe they don't like women, which would maybe make them feel yeah, attacked by, not really attacked by it, but it might make them feel like they are feeling wrong about themselves. Like it's not okay that they're feeling what they're feeling.

Interviewer:

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements? Realistic. And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think a lot of things were unrealistic. There are of course guys who can build, who could probably build a ship by themselves if they've had enough time, or there are of course also people who can sing and dance and have a lot of friends. But I think that in the broad, if you look at society in total, I think that the percentage of guys that are able to do that is very, very low. And I think that, yeah, it's not really representative of the average, I would say. It's more of like these extremes that were shown.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And what specific moments or images elicit those emotions?

Interviewee:

No, I wouldn't say that there were any special emotions that came up for me, because of course, I knew that it was an advertisement and, yeah, no special emotions for me.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And have you ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within these advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

No, not really. Me personally, I haven't, I don't really get affected by advertisement as much, if I see an advertisement, I just don't really react as much. And nowadays in my generation, you could just skip most of your advertisements because I don't watch television. So if I get an advertisement on YouTube, I just mostly skip it in the first five seconds. So I don't really see as much advertisement anymore. The only advertisement that I see is through creators mostly. And those advertisements, I wouldn't say that they are like the other advertisements you just showed me.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? And what specific elements impacted this change, if there was a change?

Interviewee:

For me personally, there wasn't a change because I just feel like, yeah, it's unrealistic anyway. So I don't really change the way that I look at myself just because of some advertisement, but I can see how some people, of course, if they get hurt by that, that they might think that what they're feeling is not correct. And that, of course, can hurt a lot of people, but for me personally, it didn't change anything.

Interviewer:

And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept, masculinity in general in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

No, not really. I believe that the advertisements you've shown me mostly depict the definition of masculinity, how it was back in the days. But the definition for me, I don't really have a definition for masculinity. I think that everyone can behave how they want to behave, can look how they want to look, can do what they want to do, unless they hurt other people, of course. But yeah, for me, there's not really one definition for masculinity. Masculinity is just, yeah, I don't know how to define it really.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

I think that some people could really feel affected by it if they, of course, already don't have that high of a self-esteem and maybe already have doubts about themselves, whether it's okay, how they're feeling. And then if these advertisements just always show the contrast to what they are, then they might really think about themselves and yeah, just not feel comfortable with themselves. And that, of course, can lead to depression or other mental illnesses.

Interviewer:

And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men? Meaning non-romantic relationships, but friendships or any other type of social interactions?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think that if in advertisements, men are only shown to be strong and to be able to do all of these things and to be muscular, I think that in friend groups sometimes you can maybe be pressured into some things and because it's like, oh, you're a man, you can do that. And I feel like that can of course get reinforced by those advertisements. But I feel like if you have really close friends, then that won't really happen.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, and in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships or sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think it's pretty similar. I think that it can of course affect it because.. I don't know, if your partner only sees those advertisements, has that view of a man because of them, they only grew up with those advertisements, they don't really have their own view on that, but they only get their opinion maybe from their parents who watch a lot of television, and then also get all of those ads, then they might have a wrong picture of what a man is. So they have still have this traditional view, and then, yeah, maybe they also pressure you into being more manly and behaving in a different way, just because you have to be a man.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what about specifically the approach of men towards romantic or sexual relationships? Do you think the advertisements could have an impact in that way?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think it can because the men can obviously think, oh, I already have to be that way in order to get into a romantic relationship. So they will treat their partner differently because they wanna show I'm strong, I'm this manly guy. Which of course can maybe be positive for some relationships, but I think most people don't really have that view anymore.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Yeah, as I said, I believe in today's world, it doesn't really have as big of an impact because most people don't watch television anymore, so you don't really get these traditional advertisements. But I think that it can of course change the way that people see it, because they just.. If they don't get any different view, if they don't have friend group where they see

different kind of men and they don't really get this broad view of what a man can be, then I think it can definitely lead them into this old stereotypical way of thinking about men.

Interviewer:

And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think that it could lead some men to be like this tough, bad guy kind of personality because they think, oh, if I don't behave in that way, then people won't take me as full or don't really treat me right, because I have to be a man, so I have to behave like them.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. Then I will now show you the second compilation of advertisements. Again, if there's any issues with the sound or image, don't hesitate to let me know.

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Yeah. In the first advertisement, you saw a lot of different types of men. It wasn't really focused on one person, but more of like a lot of different types of people. And it was basically showing people that it's okay, whatever you are however you feel, however you identify and whatever you want to do, it's okay. And you are just, you're a good person if you just do what you want to do and how you want to feel. And the second advertisement was very similar, but it was more from the view of someone who's maybe a little bit insecure, who's not sure, can I do this? Can I do that? So it was more of like this question asking. But yeah, it was pretty similar. It was also a lot of different types of situations where some men might feel like, oh, can I do this? Can I do that? And yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I think it's pretty similar. I would say of course, there are a lot of different types of people and everyone's a little bit different. The first advertisement of course, also had disabilities in there, or someone who was wearing heels. And it was just, I would say, it was just the broad spectrum of what you can find. So I would say it's more realistic, yes.

Interviewer:

And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Yeah I would say they challenge them more than they reinforce them. I wouldn't say that they reinforce any stereotypes, but they challenge them, especially the second one and the first one of course, also. But the second one, by specifically asking the questions, is it okay if I do this? Is it okay if I feel like that? I think that of course, directly asks those those questions if that's okay. And that's of course meant in a way where people say, oh, yeah, of course, that's okay. But it's I think in society some people still feel like, oh, I'm not sure can I really be myself or do I have to fit into this old stereotype? And then the first one as well, of course, because there are, I mean, I don't really know any advertisements where there's a disability, where there's a person who's disabled in it or someone in heels who identify as a man, I don't really know any of that. And of course that's nice if they're showing everyone.

Interviewer:

And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I didn't find anything problematic. I think that it's the opposite. I think it's a good step to making everybody feel nice the way they are and not pressuring people into changing how

they are just because that's how some other someone else wants them to be. But I think it's a good step in the direction that everyone can just be themselves and do what they want to do.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in what way do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think they were realistic, because they of course showed a lot of different people, like I already said, the guy in the wheelchair or the guy who was in heels, or the guy who was maybe a little bit insecure about his nose, or in the second advertisement, of course, there were also people who were a little bit insecure about something and they weren't sure if they can really do the things that they feel. So yeah, I think that a lot of men still feel like that. A lot of men still don't really know if they can really be themselves or if they have to like put on this persona to act like a man.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

No really special emotions, I would say. I didn't feel any bad emotions. I I was kind of feeling happy, but I don't know why. It was just that it was just a happy advertisement, I would say.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity, and what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewee:

I wouldn't say it changed anything. I would just say that it backed up my opinion of what a man has to be, that everyone can be themselves, and that everyone can just behave and look the way they want, and they don't get forced into doing anything like maybe plastic surgery or something like that because they're insecure about their nose. Yeah, I just think it backed

up my way of thinking about a man, and I think that's good because I think that my view of how a man should be is the right view of how men should be, and I think it's good that that's also reinforced in the media now.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you've already kind of mentioned it, but in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Yeah, it hasn't changed, it just reinforced it as I just said.

Interviewer:

And in your opinion, what effects could the portray of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

I think it's the exact opposite as the other two advertisements that I saw, because this can maybe make people who are already insecure about themselves, already struggling a bit with maybe some depression or something like that, or some other mental illness, it can make them feel happy again and make them assured that what they are feeling is okay, and that how they want to behave is also very normal, it's nothing strange. And it's okay that they are who they are and that they behave how they behave.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men, and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

I think it's, again, the opposite of the first advertisements, because it can lead people in friend groups that people are maybe not pressured into doing things, but they're accepted how they are. Or you don't have to.. Maybe a good example would be if you're drinking, sometimes people are like you can drink more, you can drink more. You're a man, you can drink. But

maybe now if someone says, oh no, I don't like drinking, that they're just accepted and they don't try to pressure them into drinking.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships or sexual relationships of men, and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think that men don't really have to be as manly anymore, as back in the days, they can... Also in the same advertisement, what I remember is being the small spoon, because a lot of men feel like, oh, I have to be the big spoon. I have to be the man. I have to protect the woman or my partner. And I think that it's okay to just also do what you like, and if you want to be the small spoon, that's okay. And that's also okay if you're a man.

Interviewer:

In your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail, and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think it changed it in a bit, in a good way. I think that it shows men that there are different types of people and that everyone is different and that everyone likes different things and feels differently, and that's okay, and that not everyone has to be this muscular guy or the fit guy or the good looking guy. Everyone is just good as they are.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men, and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think it can just lead to more acceptance maybe, that people don't make fun of men that don't fit in their stereotypical way of how a man is. So if they see a man walking in heels that they don't shout anything on the street or that they just accepted it and say nice for them,

that they can behave how they want to feel and that they are confident enough to say this is what I am, and I can show myself like that.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Now I kind of wanna get into the comparison between the first and the second compilation. So first of all, between the first compilation of advertisements we just watched, and the second one, what similarity stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

I think the biggest similarity, of course, is that it's advertised towards men. Uh, yeah, I would say that's main similarity. And yeah, I think in the first advertisement of the first two pairs of advertisements, you could still see different types of men. It wasn't as much as in the second pair, but I would say it at least they showed different types of men. And not only this one guy, although he was the main character in the advertisement. I think that was also a little bit similar, but that would be everything.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation of advertisements compared to the second compilation?

Interviewee:

The biggest difference I would say is that it wasn't really just about one guy, with this one guy that's stereotypically manly, but the second advertisements were about very different kind of people. And yeah, they were of course more challenging those views of how a man has to be. And they showed someone with a disability, they showed someone in heels, they showed just a different spectrum of people instead of just this one guy as a main character who is this typical man. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general, and why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I would say so. I would say that more advertisements nowadays try to get different kinds of people and they don't really try to get this stereotypical man, but they just try to get an actor. And if that actor is disabled, then that actor is disabled. If that actor is wearing heels, then that actor is wearing heels. They don't really have these demands of what you have to look like to be able to be part of an advertisement. So I think, yeah, it is representative, but I still think that there are not as much advertisements yet who really show disabled people or things like that. It's getting more, but I don't think it's really representative of the society yet.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in the representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee:

Definitely the second pair, because it backed up my view of what I think and it did make me feel like a little bit happy. I don't know why, but yeah, I just liked watching the second ones more because it was not this one person who wants to get the women again, but it was more like you fine how you are. And I think that's very important.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And do you believe that the advertising industry has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think they do, because they of course influence a lot of people. And if they influence someone in a bad way and maybe get them into depression or something like that, I think that's bad. And I think that it doesn't hurt the company if they are inclusive to everyone and just show different types of people because that is also how society has changed in the past. Because back in the days you had this stereotypical view of a men, and now it's more broad. And I think that it can even be positive for a company if they, if they try to be inclusive in that way.

Interviewer:

And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

I don't really know. I would say it will go more in the direction of everyone can be what they want to be. So like the advertisements showed a lot of people obviously still have the old view of how a man should be, definitely older generations. But I think that all the younger generations and in the future, of course those will also have kids and they will teach the kids that it's okay, however you are. So I think that the idea that everyone can be who they want to be and everyone can behave how they want to behave will just get even bigger.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

I think advertisements can of course have a role in that because a lot of people still watch television nowadays, and they still get a lot of these advertisements. But I think that it's not only the advertisements, but I think that it also has to be in in other parts that younger generations now watch. Because I would say most young people watch YouTube or watch some kind of streaming service. And I think that those streaming services should also represent the society and advertisements I think are not as important anymore as they were back in the day.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> Well, that was actually the last question. So is there anything else that you would like to share in regards to either the portrayal of masculinity in the two set of advertisements we just watched or in general within the advertising industry and its potential effects?

Interviewee:

No, I don't really have anything else to say.

Interviewer:

Okay. Then I would like to thank you for your participation and hope you have a great rest of the day. And if you have any more questions about the study either now or in the future, feel free to reach out and contact me and I will make sure to answer them for you.

Interviewee:

Yeah, thank you for having me.

Interviewer:

Then I will stop the recording.

Transcript 4

Interviewer

I'm gonna start off with a couple of questions about this set of advertisements. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behaviour?

Interviewee

So in the first ad from Heineke, they guy was very charismatic he seemed to get along with everyone and tried to. And the second ad the guy was.. yeah, I mean, the typical masculine man building a boat all by himself and then all the women came.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

Right. So the question is if the masculinities that I just described in those two.. in those advertisements is also presented in this society at all? Yeah, if you would say that that's kind of a good representation of how it is portrayed in society more broadly. I mean, no, of course it's an advertisement. So I think it's an exaggeration and they are very charismatic and manly men. But I don't think that's a very big part of society. And uh, also less exaggerated, of course. That there's no one that builds a boat and invites 40 women. I would assume so, at least.

Interviewer

Right. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

I mean, the second one does confirm the standard. Men need to be strong and provide for women, I would assume. The first one, I mean, you could maybe say that the man needs to be engaging women and the other way around. So maybe that's a typical general.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? Can you provide specific examples of what exactly you find problematic and why?

Interviewee

I'm not sure if I see something wrong with the first ad as such being problematic. I, of course, it's an exaggeration. And such situation don't often happen in real life, I would assume. The second one I do feel is a little bit more problematic, because then it might give the impression that men need to provide for women and be the breadwinner, and then such.

Interviewer

Okay, and in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic or unrealistic? And why?

Interviewee

We briefly touched upon this already, I don't think both are realistic. It's not situations that occurred to me, at least in regular on a regular basis. I don't think it's even possible to build such a boat all by yourself. Or get along with everyone in a party. So I don't think they are that realistic.

Interviewer

Okay, and how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you?

Interviewee

I mean, I quite liked the first advertisement actually, it was nicely videographed. And, I mean, it was well put together. So there was not some kind of negative sentiment or particularly positive as well, but I didn't mind looking at it. The second one, I mean, it was an advertisement from 2012. And you could feel that in the whole way it was set up. And so it was more like a.. I mean, it sounds weird to say but like a throwback, that kind of thing. Like the way advertisement used to work, not that the situation or the advertisement was a throwback, but like, the whole setup of the advertisement felt a bit.. yeah, I don't know.

Interviewer

Okay, and have you ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms depicted in advertising? And if so, what specific elements within those advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee

Can you repeat the question, please?

Interviewer

Yeah. Have you ever felt any form of pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms depicted specifically in advertising? And if you did, then what elements within this advertisement led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee

No, I don't think so. I mean, it's hard to judge I think, but I always I mean.. pressure and peer pressure stuff doesn't really faze me that much. I'm not that influenced by it anyways. And especially advertisements. I don't think it could pressure me into some gender norms. So I would think not but I mean, like I said, it's hard to say for yourself, I think.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee

No, Nah. I mean, I don't ever want to be like the second guy in the second ad, so it didn't change my feeling towards my own masculinity. And in the same way, the first one actually,

like, I know I can be charismatic. I mean, not as much as that guy, but I I know that I am. I'm confident in myself, I would say it didn't change this, this didn't change anything.

Interviewer

And in what ways did watching these advertisements? Or did watching these advertisements in any way change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee

I would say no.

Interviewer

Okay. Then, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee

I mean, that's interesting, because I think it does have an influence. So you can see it now as well with other stuff going on. And mental health for men is, of course, a difficult topic, apparently. But I do think that these types of depictions of masculinity does influence men in general. And therefore, also the mental health of those men. So the question was whether.. do you see an influence? Or?

Interviewer

Yeah, what effects these types of portrayals of masculinity in those advertisements could have on the mental health of men.

Interviewee

I think that if all the ads were like this, and the masculinity was depicted in all ads, and everywhere around us, I do think more and more men will think this is the norm. And being a.. you need to be provider or to be the funniest guy out there. So in that sense, I do think that there is an effect in the way men see masculinity because of these ads.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships, meaning non-romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee

So these type of ads, what their effect is on platonic relationship?

I mean, it's hard to say, because I think, in my opinion, that if there were to be an effect of these ads, it would have been an indirect effect. So to say, so that people who think that this is the type of normal behaviour to show as a man and therefore confine to those norms, would then have more of an influence on the way they see platonic relationships. However, I do not think that the opinion of men on platonic relationships directly changes because of the ad, but maybe in an indirect way.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee

Yeah, I mean, I'm focusing on the second ad. Again, I think, like I said before, that it does have an effect on the way men will see their own role in a relationship. So more to be the breadwinner or to take care of women. So, I mean, it could be a negative effect. But also, I mean, if we're really looking at nuance, we can see a positive effect, because I mean, taking care of women is not bad, as long as you keep it normal. But I mean, I think it's also a positive thing. I think that's also an effect of these ads.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee

So the question is, what the effect of these advertisements is on the message.. repeat it again, sorry.

Interviewer

Yeah. What the effects of the portrayal of masculinity in these ads can have on how men view masculinity in general.

Interviewee

So basically, the effect of these ads on the view of masculinity among men. Of course, I think the effect of these advertisements could be that men see the role of masculinity or the role of men and this sort of masculinity as the norm, as being the standard, as being expected. So yeah.

Interviewer

And would you say that's more of a positive thing or a negative thing?

Interviewee

I mean, no, I think it's a negative thing. I mean, I think masculinity in general and relationships are far more complicated than these norms. And, of course, like I said before, it's not all negative, there are positives. And I mean, some people might find it easier to live towards this kind of masculinity, or like this kind of gender roles. But I think it's way more complicated and needs way more.. I mean, it's also way more personal than this standard, then it's being depicted now. So, yeah.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behaviour of men?

Interviewee

I mean, the possible effects could be, for example, is that men will try to be more charismatic and also more the provider, which I think could be good, but as long as it feels natural to those men and not push them in any direction, they are uncomfortable with. And then I think that's a positive effect. But like I said, it's.. I don't think that's the case for most people. I think most people will try to push themselves out of their comfort zone into some really awkward situations or things they don't actually stand behind.

Interviewer

Okay. I will now show you a second compilation of advertisements.

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behaviour?

Interviewee

Right. So I don't think there was like a certain leading role or something, but the role of masculinity was more about being yourself and being who you want to be rather than a certain role they should be. Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer

Okay. Can you tell me a little bit more about the behaviour of the characters in the ads? Was there anything specific that stood out to you?

Interviewee

I mean, of course, they were more themselves, right? So everyone had their own thing. And their behaviour was.. but I mean, I assume because it's an ad, of course. So you don't know for sure. But the people were more of themselves and seem to enjoy that as well.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

I mean, I think it's easy to say because we live in the Netherlands, of course, which is a fairly progressive and multicultural, open minded culture. Although still, in the Netherlands this is an issue, I think. But I do feel that.. I mean, these ads are of course, also from Axe, but then I assume more recently. So you can also see in there that there does seem to be a shift, there was a shift away from the gender norms. So I think that's also visible in society.

Interviewer

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles and stereotypes?

Interviewee

I mean, for starters, and they were also talking about the option of being homosexual, which I don't think was an option. I mean, to be honest, well, it was but earlier on, it wasn't. But also the way the men didn't have to be the providers, didn't have to be the the chasers of women.. I mean, it was different in all aspects, basically.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you think of specific examples of what you found problematic?

Interviewee

No, no, I did not see an issue with these ads. I mean, there is a danger to I mean, in my opinion, at least, to this whole shift, that might be normalising things that we don't find normal. And I don't mean homosexuality, I mean, things such as pedophilia stuff, like, I do think that's the danger with this movement and the problem, if I relate it back to the question, but that was not the case. In this advertisements, at least, I did not see a problem.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic, or what you found unrealistic?

Interviewee

I mean as I said, before, it's easier to say this in the Western world, right? Because in the countries that are way less progressive than we live in, this is, of course, far from being realistic. But I mean, in our world, at least in our society, I would say this is more or less realistic. Yeah.

Interviewer

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you?

Interviewee

No, not really. No, no, no, I don't think so.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? Or did they change any feelings?

Interviewee

No, I mean, like I said before, I'm pretty confident with my own masculinity and the way I am. And it's not that I felt more.. yeah, I didn't feel any confirmation of that. But I mean, it's not.. it didn't have a negative effect.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general? Or did these advertisements change your definition in any way?

Interviewee

No, I mean, it didn't change it. But that's purely because I already kind of have a feeling that masculinity should be something like this, or mean, at least less like the previous ads. So in that case, I would say it didn't change anything. But I could think that if, like I said earlier, if everything around us has this view of masculinity, then again, I could see how this changes the way masculinity works for men.

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men? And why do you think so?

I think the most bizarre thing about this view on masculinity is that because it's way more easy to be yourself, and it's also way easier to talk about your mental health and act on it and change things. And yeah, so I think this is benefits towards.. or at least this movement, this view on masculinity, it is positive towards mental health.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships, meaning non-romantic relationships of men? And why do you think so?

Interviewee

Yeah, again, like the previous ads, I think it's not so much direct effects, they are more indirect effects. So it's the way men look at masculinity as a whole will also change the way men look at platonic relationships. But not these ads, I think, they will not change on their own the way people look at platonic-relationships.

Interviewer

Okay, and in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee

I mean, it's difficult to say, of course, but I do think these types of advertisements give more room for men to develop the way they view romantic relationships. Like the they mentioned being the little spoon and being a virgin and all those things. So I do think it gives men more room to think about and act on the way they see romantic relationships rather than the norm. So, I do think this is a positive for romantic relationships, these type of advertisements.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee

Yeah, these advertisements can have an effect on the way men view masculinity. And I think that's already happening a bit, I mean, not as much as I, or other people would want. But it does change the way men will view masculinity in a positive way, in my opinion, it will break down the old generals and the men being the providers kind of thing.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behaviour of men?

Interviewee

I mean, in an ideal world, these advertisements will not only benefit the Axe company company on their social responsibility, of course, but also the way men see each other and women, most importantly, themselves. So yeah.

Interviewer

And now I kind of want to get into the comparisons between the first set of advertisements and the second set of advertisements. So can you tell me what similarities stood out the most you between the first compilation compared to the second compilation of advertisements?

Interviewee

The question is, what the biggest similarity was?

Interviewer

Yeah, the biggest similarities between the two compilations.

Interviewee

Yeah, I would say that the men was the leading role in both sets of advertisements.

Interviewer

Okay, and what differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation and the second compilation?

Interviewee

Yeah, the whole thing about the way men should behave themselves in the first compilation, of course, was more about what is expected from men, or at least what was expected and the gender norms and the generals. And the second one was more about being yourself and not caring about what others have decided for you to be.

Interviewer

Okay. And do you find the shift point of portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertising representative of the general shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements? And why or why not?

Interviewee

Yeah, we briefly touched on this earlier as well. Yeah, I think this is shifting. More recently, it's been shifting back and forth a bit with the whole I mean, you probably will hear this more often. But through Andrew Tate and other influences that.. I mean, that are more of the old fashioned way. But I do feel that still now, it's still shifting towards people.. at least in the Western world, in our context, more shifting towards being able to be themselves.

Interviewer

Okay. And what combination of advertisements did you prefer in the representation of masculinity? And what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee

So which of the ads I preferred or which of the views or masculinity I prefer?

Interviewer

Which of the set of ads.

Interviewee

I didn't like either set of advertising more than the other. I do think both of them were, I mean, that's the thing right, advertisement today, they're definitely there to sell something. And so therefore, I can pretty much disable advertising for myself and the sentiment that they try to give me. But yeah, I didn't have a preference. Of course when I look at it from the way I view masculinity, the second one was way better in my opinion towards society, as a purely advertisement based and the weight of videographing, I didn't have a preference.

Interviewer

And do you believe that advertising in general has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity and why or why not?

Interviewee

Um, yes, and no, I do think everyone has a role in the way we see masculinity. The advertisement are purely based to sell people stuff, right. So this is part of those companies, or at least second advertisements, were part of building corporate social responsibility. So they can do whatever they want, basically, I mean, you do risk it going to the completely opposite side, right? So people hating your company, because of the way you feel

masculinity, but I do think it's not the responsibility for these advertisements to show this, but I mean, but also, I do think so because everyone should change this. I mean, it's difficult, yes or no, I would say,

Interviewer

Okay, and how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future? And in what ways?

Interviewee

It's difficult to say, of course, because your guess is as good as mine. But I do feel that it will keep continuing like this now. So more people being able to be themselves. And I believe that in like 40-50 years or so, in the next generation, this the standard. The generals and stuff are way less, are almost gone. But like I said before, I do fear that we might go too far with this and start normalizing things that just aren't. But I mean, that's difficult to say, because people 50 years ago, also did not agree to think that being gay was also okay, right? So maybe that will also change. And maybe there are arguments and things for people I did not find normal now that will be normalized in 50 years, but that's as long as we can like, justify the way why we think and why we normalize things and why we change things. So unless it's justified, then yeah, I think it's going to get better.

Interviewer

Okay, and what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee

I think advertisement will play a role, but not a particularly huge one. I think it could be compared to all other ways companies handle this change or the shift, I think. And I think that it's an influence, of course and the way companies handle this, but I do think that the broader change will lie in individuals themselves and people with a platform and I don't think it will be the biggest influence. They will of course, have an influence but not too large, I think.

Interviewer

Okay. But that was the last question. Is there anything else you'd like to share in regards to the portrayal of masculinity within these advertisements or advertising in general and the potential effects?

Interviewee

No, no, no, no.

Interviewer

Okay. Great. Then, I'd like to thank you for your participation and hope you have a great rest of the day. And if you have any more questions about the study in the future, you're welcome to contact me anytime. All right, thank you so much. I'm gonna stop the recording.

Transcript 5

Interviewer:

So I'm gonna start off by showing you the first compilation of advertisements. If there's anything wrong with the image or the sound, just let me know.

Interviewee:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ad and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Sure. I think in both advertisements there is actually in the first advertisement, there was kind of molestation to the women without any permission. The boy tried to, you know, touch them or something stuff. And in the second one, in the advertisement, people use the women like kind of something to.. How can I explain.. It's not a creature, like it's a thing. Like when the boy uses something, the stuff, their stuff they can attract easily to do women, something like that. Yeah.

Interviewer:

And in your opinion how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

It depends on the society. I think nowadays, in our society it is not smart anymore, that kind of things, or at least it's not more often compared to the past years. But it's still, as I said, it depends on the society, which country or region depends. Uh the place where I live is not very anymore, I think it's not the same.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Alright, in these advertisements generally the male it shown us like a superior, because they were on the start of the advertisements and they do something and they take attention of women and yeah they look kind of superior, I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you find problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Alright. If I talk about first advertisement the boy in the advertisement was doing everything that he wants. And as I said before, he touched, for example, a woman without any permission, which is shown as a normal thing in the advertisement. And this advertisement is visible for everybody, also for the children, which can be really problematic because the children can be influenced very easily. So I think this kind of advertisement should be more. how can I say gender free, you know.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic or what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Okay. Well the subject here is the masculinity, right? I mean, it's using stuff you cannot attract all the other women, it's not unrealistic. And on the other hand in some societies, people still can do whatever they want, I mean to the woman and yeah. They can act freely. Yeah. This is realistic for specific societies, I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you or specific moments or images that elicited specific emotions?

Interviewee:

I mean, for example, in the second advertisement the boy used the product and it felt.. It must be very attractive <laugh>. It looked to me like very, very attractive material. But yeah, that's all.

Interviewer:

Okay. And have you ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, could you specify what elements within the advertisement led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

To be honest, I'm not really.. Are we talking about these advertisements or in general?

Interviewer:

Just in general in advertisements.

Interviewee:

To be honest, I'm not really into TV or the.. I don't watch advertisements, so I have no idea, but okay. Yeah, I have no comment about the question.

Interviewer:

That's alright. In what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

I mean, I don't pay attention to advertisements to be honest. And I mean, these advertisements are more effective on the young ages. Not for me. I think, cause they're here for teenagers and children. I think of course for some mature people, but generally for the younger generation, so it didn't affect me at all.

Interviewer:

Okay. So did these advertisements change your definition of the concept of masculinity in general in any way?

Interviewee:

I would say not.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

As I said before in advertisements, the male is shown us like a superior, like he's free to act as he wants. And if people watch it, they can think if it is normal in the advertisements in the national channels or on the internet, like on YouTube or something, they can think like, oh, if it is normal, I can do it as well. I can act freely as well. It's because it's normal, it's shown us as normal, so it's fine. Like, something like that.

Interviewer:

Okay. And when you, when you say acting freely, you're talking specifically about the interaction with women or in general?

Interviewee:

I meant mostly about the women.

Interviewer:

Okay, and in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So non-romantic relationships?

Interviewee:

It's of course non-romantic generally the men have the same kind of relationship with their friends. And also, it depends on the men, but yeah. I mean, it depends. That depends on the character of the people. I think. I mean, for me, as I said that it doesn't change anything, but maybe, I mean, for example, it gives some feelings to the man, maybe to seduce women very easily, for example and it's a very basic thing, like hanging out with women or seducing them for some men.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portray of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

It's definitely hurtful for romantic relationships, I think because it's far away from being romantic. The first ad was a little bit more romantic than the second. It was very far away from being romantic and it's a very harmful idea.

Interviewer:

And just in general, how men approach women in general and their views towards any types of relationships with women, what do you think in that regard? So not necessarily a romantic relationship, but just any type of sexual relationship?

Interviewee:

I mean, that kind of advertisements, it's not for the men, superior advertisement, it's valid for, I think it's same for the woman. I think we should emphasize the equal about the gender, you know, among the gender. So I think we show the one gender very compared to the other. I think we should emphasize always equality in advertisements for that reason it may be always harmful.

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

If you use some products, they can increase their masculinity like in the ads. I mean they can increase their masculinity using the commercial things, you know?

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Generally, to be honest, men tend to attract attention of the women. And when they watch this video, they may think like, oh, why don't I use this product, because it looks like I can easily achieve something. So yeah, they push the men to buy these products to increase their so called masculinity.

Interviewer:

Right. Okay. I will now show you a second compilation of advertisements.

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Sure. I would say in these advertisements the main subject is kind of again at attracting attention of women of course. And I mean they use the products and the perfume and they attract the attention of the women. It's very easy. It looks very easy. And when they use these products they, they superior their masculinity features.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? And are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I mean, of course there are some similar and different points of view about this question. I would say, of course some products may be very effective, may be very influenceable on the woman, but it's not a valid for generalization and you can not include easily like this, all people.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles in stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Can I pass this question?

Interviewee:

Yeah, that's okay.

Interviewer:

Then, in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Okay. Again, it looks kind of sex object and I think advertisements like the body of people like to sell some product that shows like a sex object. And I don't find it right.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic or what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Let me think about the advertisements. I mean these products may have very attractive smells, for example, in comparison to other parfums, for example. It may smell good and I mean, smelling good is always better in the society and it may be attractive for people.

Interviewer:

And, do you think specifically how masculinity was portrayed or how the male characters were portrayed, do you think that was realistic or do you think that was not really a realistic representation of how men are, or how masculinity is supposed to look like in your opinion?

Interviewee:

I think I answered this question in the first question. It depends on society. I mean, it all depends on the man. I mean, it's about the character. It may be realistic for some people, because I think it's kind of about self-confidence. Like yeah, if, if they believe in themselves, they can not act like this.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements, so this specific set of advertisements, how did those make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you in regards to those advertisements?

Interviewee:

I would say these products are very attractive, they're well placed advertisements, and they know how to gather the attention of people. As I said, the object is like sexy bodies and how you can attract the attention of people easily. So yes. If I see these in a shop, I may think again like should I buy it or not?

Interviewer:

And if you not necessarily focus on the product, but more on how the men were portrayed, do you think that that was portrayed in a good way or would you that was not good?

Interviewee:

Yeah, as I said before, the main focus, for example, for this advertisement, was on men and I mean, as I said, we should emphasize all the genders in the advertisement, I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? Specifically focusing on this set of advertisements that we just watched?

Interviewee:

Right. To be honest, nothing has changed for me.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

I would say again, no.

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portray of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

As I said before, it depends on the age of people, I think. Young people, especially, for example children watch these advertisements. Almost all of the children have access to this during you know, surfing on YouTube or Instagram or whatever. And it may affect them very easily. And if they are influenced by these advertisements at their early ages, it may cause serious problems in the future for them. They can see themselves for example as a failure, but it's for both men and women, you know?

Interviewer:

Yeah. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So again, like friendships between men or just social, social connections in general.

Interviewee:

Yeah, it may be harmful, because it's kind of unrealistic things and people. Also, the product was not very realistic, because you cannot do the same thing by using this product in the real world. So, I don't know, maybe it gives some unrealistic feelings to the people.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic or sexual relationships in general of men?

Interviewee:

It depends on the point of view of the men, I think, because men can use it to be romantic or just to seduce people. So, depends on the people.

Interviewer:

But looking at how masculinity was portrayed, not necessarily how the product was portrayed, but just looking at how masculinity was portrayed in the advertisements, do you think that can impact people in a way to approach romantic relationships or relationships in general?

Interviewee:

I think it's harmful for romantic relationships, because it is emphasized that just having a good smell or having a sexy body is the main thing to attract attention. So yeah, it's helpful.

Interviewer:

Okay. And between the first set of advertisements and the second set, what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

I mean, the second part was a little bit more, I think showed us a little bit less superior of the man, as far as I remember. And I think the first couple of advertisements were more, you know, superior men and the women were like, just an object and they were just attracted like an animal. There is no thinking because of just smells. But the second part of the advertisements was little bit more smooth compared to the others.

Interviewer:

Can you elaborate on that a bit? What exactly do you mean by that?

Interviewee:

I mean in the second advertisements, the behavior of the men than women, for each other, between each other, was more realistic I think, and less harmful.

Interviewer:

Alright. And do you find the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements compared to the second one representative of the shift in how masculinity in advertisements is portrayed in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yes, I would say yes. It's very easy to drive the people and this shift may be helpful and give good feelings and the correct feelings for the people about the role of male and female in society.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity?

Interviewee:

I like the second one. I mean the second part. We're comparing the first group and second group, right?

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly.

Interviewer:

And can you tell me what specific elements you liked more about the second group that made you prefer that one?

Interviewee:

Because I don't like that kind of advertisement where women are just like an object that are affected by men using some stuff. And they don't have any emotions. They don't have any feelings. But in the second part it was not like this, it was more realistic, so that's right.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you think that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why do you not think so?

Interviewee:

I don't think so, of course it has some responsibility, but I mean, I think doesn't influence a lot to people, of course, it has some interesting, but they're just commercial things and I don't think people can easily be affected, for me in specific. I mean, I, I don't care about advertisement, it's just advertisement is not important. But some people may think it's attractive or it may influence some people, but I don't know, it's just not important for me.

Interviewer:

Yeah. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future? And in what ways exactly do you think it will change?

Interviewee:

Alright. I think culture of the gender will be more important in the society. And also I think in the past these kind of advertisements were more common. But nowadays it's becoming weak, because I think it's kind of showing of the civilization and in the future it's gonna be weak, less and less, I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what roles do you believe advertisements specifically play in this change?

Interviewee:

I mean, it's just one parameter between all the others, so it's not very important for me, as I said personally, but also it may have some effect on the people, as I said, as usual. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. That was the last question. So is there anything else you would like to share? Any thoughts that you have in regards to the portrayal of masculinity within either these advertisements that I just showed you or just advertisements in general?

Interviewee:

Yes. In general, these kind of advertisements heavily emphasize masculinity and they say like look, you can do anything you want. You are superior. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> kind of Kind of give some feelings, but for me it's not important, the feelings. Yeah. That's all.

Interviewer:

All right. Well thank you so much for your participation and I hope you have a great rest of your day. I really appreciate your help. And if you have any more questions about the study, you can always contact me.

Interviewee:

Alright, thank you. Good luck to you. I hope you can do everything great. Yeah.

Interviewer:

All right. Thanks so much. Bye. Have a good day.

Interviewee:

Bye-Bye. You too.

Transcript 6

Interviewer:

So I'm gonna start off by showing you the first compilation of advertisements. If there's anything wrong with the image or the sound, just let me know.

Interviewee:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ad and their behavior?

Interviewee

Sure, well i think both were kind of the main characters of the advertisement and of course they are the centre of attention. But more like, all of the other characters surrounding them were not even secondary, like even less than secondary, like everybody was just focusing on them and them only.

Interviewer

Okay, and in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly, are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

Well, I mean, of course there a lot of discrepancies. Yeah, I don't think that masculinity is that important, I mean the fact that they were behaving like that manly like for example, in the video of the like, the know both the guy was being like very, you know, like, the idea of a man like has to be like his own things like to do his own work and then he will get a lot of women because of that. It gets a little bit well, I want to say idiotic, because that's not how it works in society. And the other one was just, I think it was just a ridiculisation like the first advertisement that one of Heineken I don't think like that one has that much difference between like societal and the advertisement but it still had some I want to say yeah, radicalised situations.

Interviewer

Okay, and can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

Well, this Axe advertisement, I already said, I think it can negatively affect masculinity in the way that if you don't think that you are this alpha male who does all his own work and is the the centre of attention for women, you're not being as masculine as other men. Well of course that can feed some insecurity. However, I do think like the Heineken one, although it did also have some negative things, I think it was also in a way kind of positive like the way of seeing like the confidence of one person can affect very positively in like the opinion that others can have on you. So as well it will also have that positive effect.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic and can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee

Yeah, problematic, with the Axe, I would actually say everything was problematic. I think like relating this behaviour to like sexual connotations was really bad, because basically they are feeding behaviour that is not supposed to be positive or it can be maybe in a way but it doesn't have to be, to a very extreme reward. Then the first advertisement, yeah, to be honest, also like, this alpha male situation can also have a lot of negative connotations. Because I mean, you were seeing fiction, a movie. So if one person would behave this way, probably like real life scenario, it wouldn't be good. So, yeah.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why

Interviewee

I think both is pretty clearly not realistic. However, you did have some a real moments, for example, like men are like, supposed to, for example, have manly drinks, for example, like the guy was offered like cocktails, but he was going for the beer because that's more manly. Or like, the guy that was building the boat. He was doing it because men are supposed to like working with tools and know how to do all the work ourselves. So yeah, that's kind of like real connotations that men do have in society still.

Interviewer

Okay, and how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee

Yeah, the second one, it was kind of funny for me, not in like a weird way, just like, I cannot believe someone thought of that way. Yeah, the first one actually was kind of entertaining to see but still, I can see the negative connotations in the advertisement, and I don't feel that good about it. But like, the whole concept itself was pretty fun to see.

Interviewer

And have you ever ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, what specific elements within these advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee

Maybe now I want to say no, but probably, it's yes. There are a lot of things that subjectively we do just because we see done and we learn to behave like that. So broadly, the answer is yes.

Interviewer

Okay. And can you think of any specific specific things that led you to feel these pressures in advertisements?

Interviewee

Well, maybe I think every man has been in the situation of like, having the need to be like the guy who steps up, you know, like, someone needs help, like, I don't know, like, fixing something. So you would see this idea of like, you have to step up to someone who is in need, and fix everything because you are a manly man that knows how to fix everything. So okay, probably yes.

Interviewer

And did watching these advertisements that we just watched, reinforced or challenged this pressures for you in any way?

Interviewee

I don't think so.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee

I can see very clearly that it's ridiculisation of masculinity itself. So I don't feel any pressure whatsoever to my masculinity

Interviewer

And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee

No, I don't think so.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effect could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee

Well, as I said before, the people who don't relate to this kind of masculinity are going to have some insecurities already. And seeing this on an everyday basis on TV can feed those insecurities. So of course, it can have a very negative effect.

Interviewer

Okay, and in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men meaning friendships or any type of social relationships?

Interviewee

I think nowadays men are more open to talk with their friends about how they feel and how they are supposed to be safe in certain situations. So I think I think this ad was from 2012. So maybe, it seems like not too long ago, but actually it is. And maybe the men did not speak that much, that proudly with their friends about feelings and how they are supposed to be safe in some certain ways, and how are they supposed to feel. I think now, these situations are much better, and they are even getting better with the day and with the normalization of men having not to behave in certain ways, having certain standards. So, I do think that nowadays, the effect is not that big, but maybe the year it was released. It could feed on also some negative connotations of other men not wanting to talk about how are they not supposed to be like that.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic or in general sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee

Yeah, I mean the second ad was pretty straightforward with the sexual situation. Basically, the idea is that if you're manly, you're gonna get laid, which is kinda stupid. So yeah, I think that effect is very negative, I think one person just has to be oneself. And the moment that you start, like, feeling the pressure of being more manly, that is when you're gonna find some negative effects on relationships in general.

Interviewer

And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards masculinity in general, or what the concept should entail?

Interviewee

Well, that can have like, two ways, I think, the way of thinking that people would feel like this the way men are supposed to behave, and they're supposed to do things. And there is the way of people who don't agree with what they are seeing and tolerating the opposite.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behaviour of men?

Interviewee

Well, I think for example, the first one is more, I would say, impactful, because it's more clear about the idea that, for example, men are supposed to drink beer and not fancy cocktails. So for example, if you see this and you go out with your friends the next day or whatever, you would order a beer because that's manly. And that's changed. Even behaviour that you maybe didn't even think about but you see done, then you think it's how are you supposed to do things.

Interviewer

Okay. Then I will now show you the second compilation of advertisements. Again, if there's anything wrong with the sound or the image, just let me know.

All right. So, first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behaviour?

Interviewee

Yeah, it's totally different from their first set of advertisements. Like in these ads, you're gonna see a totally different approach, more of an inclusive thinking, that not every guy should behave in a manly way, if you don't feel like that. It is okay for these characters to be themselves and behave in their standards, not what society puts for them.

Interviewer

And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

Well, the first one, I think is pretty similar to what society i like, every guy has their thing, or every person has their thing. Like, it is. It is good, like maybe to have some things that you find attractive, even though you have to work for them. But it's also very important to accept your things and find value in those. So I think that's how society works. And it's not very far away from reality.

Interviewer

Okay, and can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

Yeah. Well, the second ad was basically just about this. How men are questioning themselves about some certain behaviours. And I think view by view, it is being accepted that all kinds of behaviours are okay. Not because of being men just because of being who you are. I mean, I don't think that there's a relation with that.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee

Yeah, maybe the first ad was focusing too much on like, men have to attract women with what they got, or not attract women, sorry, just attract other people. That doesn't have to be like that, that can be a little bit problematic. You don't have to find your thing. I mean, it is okay if you don't have a thing or you think you don't have a thing. You don't have to force it. So I think it's a little bit forcing in that way.

Interviewer

Okay, is there anything you found problematic in the second advertisement?

Interviewee

I mean, the second one was all about inclusivity. So be honest, no.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee

Yeah, I think I related to actually some of the things that they were talking about in the second advertisement. I myself and I think every other guy in existence, probably at some point in their lives has asked themselves one of these questions that they were talking about. So yeah, and actually in the first one as well. I think the kind of questions, well the kind of mentality once you accept yourself, it's also very relatable, once you find yourself and you can have your own own things. Yeah.

Interviewer

And how did these advertisements make you feel that any specific emotions come up for you? And what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee

The first one was focusing on humour. So it was pretty funny, like how he was rhyming with all the things. So, also, it felt like, not only fun, but also like, if make me feel good about myself a little bit. Like, yeah, I don't think every guy is perfect or has these aesthetic things, but every one of us has their own things that make us unique. So it was pretty nice to see. And the other one I couldn't like, relate right now to any of these insecurities, because I mean, I already.. maybe like before, I did have them, but I overcame them with time. But I could sense that many people could be really relieved by seeing these kinds of videos.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee

I don't think in any way.

Interviewer

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee

Well, can you give me a definition of masculinity?

Interviewer

Yeah, I mean, I guess how it's stereotypically defined would be an attitude or set of social guidelines stereotypically associated with manliness, which can have a negative impact on women and society in general. So I guess that would fall more into the traditional definition of masculinity. So would you say after watching these advertisements, your definition of masculinity may have changed in any way?

Interviewee

Well I don't think I agree with the original definition of masculinity. So for me, it didn't change because I already think that the traditional way of considering male behaviour in the traditional sense it's not for me, and I don't think it did change anything like this.

Interviewer

Okay. And now, I kind of want to get into the comparison between the first compilation and the second compilation. So, between the first compilation of advertisements and the second compilation what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewee

That men should be attractive and they should attract other people. They should be the centre of attention, they should have some kind of charm to them.

Interviewer

Okay, and what differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation and the second compilation?

Interviewee

Well, in the first one men were like, the traditional definition of men, this kind of static definition. These manly men, yeah. Whereas in the second one, they were totally just not one people, just normal men that you will find in any kind of situation.

Interviewer

Yeah, okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set to the second set, representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general and why or why not?

Interviewee

Hmm, I think so. Like I said before, like men were not that open to talk about mental health or their emotions. So that's changing with time. And also like the concept of masculinity is changing with time, because people have learned to accept that not everyone wants to be this masculine guy. So I think, yeah, advertisements and communication in general, like visual communication is changing to a more inclusive way of portrayal.

Interviewer

Okay, and what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity? And what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee

Hmm, I would say the first advertisement of the second set was my favourite, I would say.

Interviewer

Okay, and do you believe that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity and why or why not?

Interviewee

I think both, I mean, it can help or it can also unhelp. I think inclusiveness is a very important thing, to follow this message that not being this alpha male is also okay. You don't have to be like that. If you don't feel like you should be like that.

Interviewer

And do you think that the advertising industry in general has a responsibility to provide a certain image? Or do you think that they should be allowed to portray whatever image that they feel they want to portray?

Interviewee

I think everyone is free to portray how they want to portray things. I mean, if your product is for manly men, then you are free to advertise among those men. It doesn't have to imply that you think every man is supposed to feel that way. Just that your optimal clients are those.

Interviewer

And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee

I think it's like following a pretty clear path, in the sense of maybe like in our parents generation, men were supposed to be a real man. And they were supposed to be this kind of alpha male, who were supposed to take care of their families, provide for them and fix everything. Well, this idea, and I think now, people are more acceptant of the fact that

masculinity doesn't mean that. Masculinity is just being comfortable with who you are as a man and just making your own way. Not following any traditional concept of behaviour.

Interviewer

And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee

Well, it depends on what kind of advertisements, it can either stay with the definition of traditional masculinity and then not help at all or be more inclusive, like in the second set of advertisements and maybe raise the boys of change, I would say.

Interviewer:

Okay. That was the last question. So is there anything else you would like to share?

Interviewee:

No, not really.

Interviewer:

All right. Well thank you so much for your participation and I hope you have a great rest of your day. And if you have any more questions about the study, feel free to contact me.

Transcript 7

Interviewer

Okay, perfect. So I'm gonna start off by showing you the first compilation of advertisements if there's anything wrong with the sound or the the image just let me know

All right. So, to just kind of start off, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behaviour?

Interviewee

All right, if I remember correctly. In the first one, the character was very joyful, very happy He had this behaviour that could include everybody. And it was quite more enjoyable than the

second one I would say, which was definitely targeted only towards female attraction, if I can say that. So, yeah, I don't think that masculinity is so visible in the first advertisement as in the second one, though.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly, are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

All right, in the second one, of course, the whole concept of the advertisement is to make everybody want to buy the product. So it targets, of course, men, and also more, especially the desire of men to have more women, if I can say that, which I don't know if it's true, but this is what the advertisement is about, though. In the first one I didn't actually see so much of masculinity or something. I did quite enjoy the whole vibe of the advertisement without seeing any bad influence on anybody. Equal to everybody, I guess.

Interviewer

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements might either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

Of course, the second one is perfectly visible, that a very traditional thought is that the man needs to be liked from many women to have a lot of women or to be.. how can I say.. women to like him, I guess. So this can promote that behaviour a lot. In the first one, though, I think this is not so visible.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what exactly you found problematic?

Interviewee

All right, with a second, I will go again with a second advertisement. And I would say that this is totally not true. It's very fast paced, the whole advertisement and can lead to wrong

behaviours towards women. On the other hand, we all know that it's an advertisement. So yeah, do you want a specific example of what exactly?

Interviewer

Yeah, I mean, just if anything specifically stood out within the advertisements where you thought, oh, this specific element is really problematic, maybe.

Interviewee

Yes, a parade of women in the second advertisement going towards the man with his chest out. Looking very sensual, I can say something like that.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found maybe unrealistic and why?

Interviewee

Both advertisements had realistic and unrealistic I would say phenomenon. In the first one. I didn't, okay, of course, nobody can be liked so much. But that was the whole point of the advertisement. So it's not so realistic to do all these, I guess, showing and this behaviour, on the second advertisement, of course, it's unrealistic to have I guess, to want so many women, I don't know how to actually answer this question. The whole advertisement is pretty unrealistic, to be honest.

Interviewer

Okay, and how did these advertisements make you feel, did any specific emotions or feelings come up for you and what specific moments or images and those emotions?

Interviewee

To be fair, in the second advertisement had more of an influence towards me as a man, but because it was a bit far fetched, as I told you before. Also men, I guess, tend towards to like this traditional behaviour I would say. So, of course the second advertisement stuck a bit to my mind more, because it was more fun. In the first one, I would say that it's like a enjoyable advertisement.

Interviewer

And in general, have you ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted within advertising? And if so, what specific elements led you to feel this pressure to live up to those expectations?

Interviewee

To answer very simply, no. Of course not.

Interviewer

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity in any way or yeah, in what ways?

Interviewee

It did not, though the first advertisement because it was more cheerful, the character was more enjoyable towards everybody. He was likeable towards everybody. I guess one can tend to conform with his behaviour, maybe to be more likeable.

Interviewer

Yeah, and in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept of masculinity in general?

Interviewee

All right, can you again tell me the construct of masculinity?

Interviewer

So basically, what you what you feel what character traits or what physical traits or what behaviours men should have to be considered manly in a way.

Interviewee

All right, and the question was again?

Interviewer

In what ways you think watching these advertisements changed your definition of how you would define masculinity?

Interviewee

I don't think that, because I am as I told you, not the best person to answer this question, I would say that I don't have the knowledge to know so much about masculinity as a core concept. But I would say that masculinity I don't think it's a bad thing in general, except if it impacts other social groups. So in the first one, it doesn't seem to have a bad influence towards other groups. But the second one, because it was far-fetched, it can have negative results towards women, also to men of course because they tend to react over these advertisements and promote this behaviour.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have just in general on the mental health of men?

Interviewee

Actually, we're going back a bit to the first questions, that the second advertisement again is far fetched. Can you repeat the question again, please? I'm sorry.

Interviewer

Yeah, what specific effects the portrayal can have on the mental health of men so how men feel about themselves or how their mental state is impacted, or could be impacted.

Interviewee

Yeah okay, in the second one of course, people can tend to like this behaviour, especially if they're old fashioned. So they they tend to be more harmonised with it. But in the first one, also, I think it promotes a more generic and happy behaviour, I guess. Towards everybody?

Interviewer

And in your opinion, and what effects could this portrayal of masculinity in those advertisements have on platonic relationships? So meaning just friendships or some kind of social relationships with people, among men?

Interviewee

Among men?

Interviewer

Yeah. So how men approach these platonic relationships.

Interviewee

All right. The second advertisement, I don't think it had any platonic concept, anywhere. So it, for sure does not promote platonic relationships. The first one as I told you, everybody was friends with everybody. Everybody seemed to, except there was, to be honest, sometimes that there were some looks, as I saw, between the main character and female characters in the background, that seemed to be liking also the main character, but in more consensual way, then in the second one. So yeah, the first one maybe promotes more platonic relationships.

Interviewer

And how do you think watching this promotion of more platonic relationships, how do you think that could impact men in their own pursuit of platonic relationships? So men watching the advertisements?

Interviewee

So the question is, actually, do we want platonic relationships? And by watching these advertisements how can this be promoted?

Interviewer

More like, like seeing how it is promoted in those advertisements, and then people watching those advertisements, how these people who watch those advertisements, if they're in any way affected or impacted, based on what they're seeing, so maybe they're thinking, oh, this is like a really nice way to interact with people, so that's something I want to integrate as well in my life, so, how that can impact their own decisions when it comes to platonic relationships.

Interviewee

All right, in the first advertisement, we can see that one can actually have a more positive influence, or at least have more positive influence to work platonic relationships, platonic

relations between men, men and women, everybody. In the second one, again, I would say no. Can I skip this question actually?

Interviewer

Yeah, no worries! But I think you answered it well. And what effects do you think the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements can have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee

All right. That's a good question. In the second advertisement, we see a more traditional and old fashioned way of thinking, that can actually traumatise the whole bond of men and women or men to men are between everything. So I could say that's a no go. That was the second advertisement. So in the first one, repeat the question again?

Interviewer

Yeah. What effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships off men?

Interviewee

Yeah, so in the first one, I guess because we don't see this traditional masculinity as in the second advertisement, we could say that this can tend to have a more positive influence over the romanticising relationships. Not so much in the second.

Interviewer

Okay, and what effects do you think the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements can have on beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee

Can I have this question again?

Interviewer

Of course, yeah! What effects do you think that the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements can have on how men in general view masculinity so what their beliefs are on what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee

Do you have an example?

Interviewer

Yeah, so for example, whether they believe that masculinity needs to include a certain physical appearance or needs to include certain behaviours or needs to include a certain pursuit of women or partners in general, or just like, what they think that masculinity needs to look like.

Interviewee

And the question in general, what was it?

Interviewer

So how do you think that watching how men are portrayed in those advertisements that we just watched how that could impact this belief of men what masculinity should look like.

Interviewee

Right. So I guess what most people think when masculinity comes into mind is like, the strong man that women really like, so most people tend to be more like that, like this traditional way. So the second advertisement mostly promotes this kind of thinking, I would say, rather than the first advertisement, of course, it has a bit of more joyful and more playful way of promoting a man within old-fashioned thinking. So, I would say that in the first advertisement, it promotes a different thing, which is in my opinion, really good.

Interviewer

And in your opinion, what effects do you think the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements could have on the general behaviour of men, do you think it could change how men behave in general?

Interviewee

All right, yes. In the second one, if you think about it, it can have certainly negative effects. Because if you go watch it and start behaving like that, this is most probably something very negative. On the other hand, in the first advertisement, if you tend to be more like the main character, it can have really good effects in your life. He's very enjoyable and very likeable to everybody, I guess.

Interviewer

Okay, perfect. Then I'm gonna show you the second set of advertisements and then ask a couple of questions about that as well. Again, if there's anything wrong with the sound or image, just let me know

All right. So, first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behaviour?

Interviewee

Ah, yes. All right. Well, let me say just in my personal opinion, I found both advertisement really similar, that both tried to make everybody believe that everybody should be themselves. And this is actually really good, I must say. In the first one I would say that it promotes more of a.. even though they want us to believe that everybody should behave like themselves and find their magic as they say, it tends to have also a more manly behaviour in a traditional way, if I must say though, in the second one and to give you an example. Good style, the style that they refer to it as a good one is like an old-school man style with a suit and everything, or another example, if you have the touch, like meaning, like you're very good in bed with women. While in the second advertisement, you could also see this promotion of everybody needs to be themselves, but in a more vague spectrum, in a more big spectrum, if I must say, that does not only include these muscular stereotypes, which also I found really interesting and enjoyable to see also in the commercial, but I must say, I've seen more the commercial box of Axe playing on the big screen rather than the other one.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compared to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly, are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

All right. From personal experience, I would say that where I come from, from Greece until very recently, we had this very traditional way of thought of how a man should behave, which is bad in my opinion in the means of everybody should be themselves as they say in these advertisement. But still, the first advertisement is still more closer to my experiences from

back in Greece that you still can be yourself, but we are still not in the faze that we promote it so much. Being less masculine, I don't know how to express this. Towards the second advertisement, we don't have this behaviour, that was the second advertisement. But there is a change. This I can say.

Interviewer

And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements can either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

Alright. I think both of those entertainments challenge traditional stereotypes, in the way of it breaks the loop of the masculine traditional guy, man. In the second advertisement a bit more. Also. It's more visible this challenge, if I can say, Yes, this is my answer.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee

I didn't find problematic anything to be honest, in these last two advertisements. They both tried to promote something that is good. Even in Axe, okay, it's a man's body spray. Well, I don't know what the Lynx is about, to be honest. But so I guess it's the same thing.

Interviewer

It's the same thing. Yeah.

Interviewee

Yeah, I've seen Axe more times. I know that it promotes more traditional manly things. But I think they're both trying to do something really good here.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found maybe unrealistic and why?

Interviewee

Both, again, I would say they were pretty realistic. I liked very much in the second advertisement that men, it's true that there are a lot of questions that goes out our heads, and that is because most of us has been raised with a traditional way of thought of how we men should behave. So I think that the second one tends to be more genuine I would say, rather than learning the first one the examples of being stylish or with a suit or, again, the example of the unrealistic, like having your touch with women is a bit far fetched as well. But still, they promote something really nice.

Interviewer

And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee

It did not though I am confident that people that have problems with themselves can be more at ease when looking at these advertisements, they do not need to fear to be more sensitive, because it's a big matter of being sensitive as a man, especially if you're raised in different countries, in some specific countries.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept of masculinity in general?

Interviewee

So I wouldn't say change my way of thought of how masculinity is. Because in the first place, I would say that, in my mind, masculinity is like a combination of both advertisements. Everybody can have his own masculinity. And at different levels, if there are levels, I mean, it's pretty vague of what can be, or what everybody thinks about their own masculinity. And that these were what I think is most beautiful thing. But yeah, no, it didn't change anything.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee

Certainly positive. Both of them, the second one a bit more, as I told you. Sensitivity towards men is something that is not very much considered these days. And I think that the second advertisement really promotes this idea, this whole concept. The first one, as well, promotes something similar, but in a bit more old-fashioned way.

Interviewer

And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men?

Interviewee

I would say that both advertisements. I don't know what the answer to this question actually, for these two advertisements, I didn't find something that could promote or not promote platonic behaviours.

Interviewer

Okay, no, that's all right. Um, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee

In the second, actually, both can have positive effects in romantic relationships. Because when you're more yourself I guess you can be also more positive towards.. more real towards your relationship and of course more romantic. It's old-fashioned thinking of a man that he needs to be very muscular and not cry easily, to always be the big spoon as the second advertisement promoted. It's something that needs to stop I think and everybody needs to feel a bit, yeah, different.

Interviewer

Okay, and in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee

Can you repeat the question?

Interviewer

Yeah, What effects do you think the portrayal of masculinity.. so how masculinity in those advertisements was portrayed, how could that impact how men think what masculinity should look like? What needs to be present that it's considered masculine or manly?

Interviewee

Alright, so again, I would refer to the previous answer of mine that masculinity is very different to each of us, I would say. And this can be seen from this advertisement, this is the promoted stuff. Also, it's the way of being themselves, of loving their own characteristics is what makes them masculine.

Interviewer

Okay. And do you think seeing this portrayal of what you said that everyone can just be different and themselves, do you think that can impact how men think about their own masculinity?

Interviewee

Yes, of course, it can for sure affect that positively. I mean, if you embrace who you are, and what you are, and that each of us is different and special in their own way, then this can certainly have positive impacts over the whole society and in men themselves.

Interviewer

Okay, and what effects do you think the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behaviour of men?

Interviewee

On a large scale, I would say that these advertisements totally promote something really good and that they can have certainly positive effects. So in order to eradicate this traditional way of thinking of how a man should behave, or how a man has to look like.

Interviewer

And how do you think that then specifically impacts the behaviour of men? How do you think that this thought process then impacts how how men behave? Or how some men might behave?

Interviewee

Do you have an example of that?

Interviewer

So for example, when you say that everybody can be more comfortable with themselves and stuff like that, how would that impact how they behave with other people or just themselves or something like that?

Interviewee

Yeah, of course, if everybody is more comfortable with themselves, because this is what the advertisements are about, people tend to be more open, more romantic, I would say, something that is missing these days. People can have more true relationships, if I can say, because people nowadays, men in general, tend to have this mirror in front of them that they want to other people to look at it and see what they like, the other people like, while this is not the case as the advertisements.

Interviewer

Okay, Now to just kind of get into the comparison between the first set of advertisements and the second one, so between the first set and the second set what similarities stood out the most you between the different sets?

Interviewee

In all of the advertisements, so we could see men, the big thing the main character, of course, because we're talking about masculinity Yeah, I don't think that they were.. In the first one, actually, the first advertisement, seems a bit more similar to the third and fourth advertisement, which present a man out of the ordinary traditional way of thought of a masculine guy. Yeah, these are the similarities that I could find.

Interviewer

And what differences stood out the most to you between the first set of advertisements and the second one?

Interviewee

This second set of advertisements tended to promote the fact that everybody needs to be themselves and that everybody should enjoy their characteristics. While the first two were more of how to be liked, maybe more. So that's a major difference that I can see.

Interviewer

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set representative of the shift in how masculinity is portrayed in advertising nowadays, in general, and why? Or why do you not think so?

Interviewee

Alright, I'm not watching so much television or advertisements, but I will say to you that it can be representative. Representative towards whole advertisements in general, or in this society?

Interviewer

Yeah, just, either, just in general, I would say how masculinity is portrayed.

Interviewee

Yeah. So I would say that the second set of advertisements were pretty more realistic than the first two of them and actually portray more what masculinity these days is all about.

Interviewer

Okay. And well, what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity? And what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee

Of course, the second set, I would say, I quite enjoy the fact that of all these questions in the fourth advertisements that men ask themselves, like, every day. It's not so true, or, at least to me, it doesn't happen so often, I could say, but I guess there are many people that have these kinds of difficulties. And it's imperative to address these factors.

Interviewer

Great. And, in general, do you believe that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity and why or why not?

Interviewee

If we consider the effect of traditional masculinity over the years and the effect that still has in our times, after all those years, it is a very sensitive topic. And though I know that advertisement is all about money, and how to make money out of a product, it still affects mental behaviour of people. And that is something that we really need to take into account when, I guess designing advertisements that cause these sensitive topics.

Interviewer

Okay, and how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee

All right. All right. Can you repeat the sentence? Yeah, the whole masculinity. How do you call it term?

Interviewer

Yeah, so basically, masculinity could be defined as, like a certain set of behaviours, or, how people feel like they should act towards other people, towards women. Just in general, striving for a certain physical appearance, all of these kinds of elements, but then again, that will probably go more in line with the stereotypical representation of what masculinity should entail. So what I'm kind of asking is how do you think masculinity just the term will be defined more in the future? How will it change?

Interviewee

I think there will be still these elements of the traditional way of thinking of masculinity is addressed by means of good physique and stuff, which is also imperative not to do with physique for others, but by yourself, of course. But also, I hope, at least, to see more elements of the second set of advertisements that everybody should embrace themselves. And everybody should feel very comfortable about themselves and their own masculinity. But it's still good to keep some traditional stuff.

Interviewer

Okay. And what role do you believe advertisements play in this? Or what impact can they have on this change in the future?

Interviewee

Major, I would say, I mean, everybody's watching television or is in a computer every day. So advertisements influence everything nowadays. So also this, and as I told before, it's really imperative to before we make an advertisement, before they upload an advertisement, to really check and double check the context of it, and what they promote, actually.

Interviewer

Okay. Well, that was actually the last question. So is there anything else, any other thoughts you have or anything else you'd like to share in regards to the topic?

Interviewee

No, no, I would say no.

Interviewer

Okay, well, thank you so much for your participation then. And yeah, if you have any more questions about the study in the future, just let me know, do not hesitate to contact me.

Transcript 8

Interviewer:

Alright, then I'm gonna start off by showing you the first compilation. If there's anything wrong with the sound or the image, just let me know.

Interviewer:

So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Okay. Can you gimme a definition of masculinity just to be sure that we're on the same page?

Interviewer:

So how, how it's kind of defined in the traditional sense is as an attitude or set of social guidelines stereotypically associated with manliness. So for example, it could result in the expectation towards a certain physical appearance, the assertion of dominance or sexual aggression towards women, all these kinds of things.

Interviewee:

Okay. So for the first one, I mean the subject was a man, but I don't even think it was straight up directed to men. It could have been any character, any sex, any gender, cause like it was a beer ad and it doesn't really matter, it's not gendered. So it's not really dependent. And even if they chose a man for whatever reason they had, he didn't act like out of standards. Like he didn't show any aggression, he didn't show any disrespect. He was all caring and funny and just silly, goofy mood. It was a little bit cringe. Not gonna lie, but sure. <laugh> and I get, there might have been some stereotypes like the Asian guy doing kung fu, but I guess it's not related to masculinity, but all of interactions and actions, because he didn't really speak, were just normal, socially acceptable to my standards. So I didn't really see any toxic traits from that thing. Of course, he's portraying like the ideal cool man, like with a beer dressed nicely, acting cool, but I don't see anything wrong with it. On the other side, for the other, I loved the body positivity, cause it was just not with the models or like the standard model, cause he was a little bit curvy and everything, but the innuendo that with the product he would've got laid so much to fill a boat of girls. That was weird. Wrong. It felt really out of place. Cause it really feels like, yeah, treating women like just prays and just things to attract with these magical, like deodorant. Yeah, that's about it. Like not aggressive. Again, he didn't speak for anything, but just the position that the two parties ended up having is really like weird.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Maybe the first one was just reinforcing this stereotype or just the idea of the man just being curated and nice and fit and athletic. Like the drinks, beer maybe. I don't know how much of a stereotype it could be. I don't care. But it didn't really leave that much of an impact of how a man should be. While the other one really showed the as I said before, again like the social construct that just men come first, that they're over, that one man is worth a thousand girls.

Interviewer:

In what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic. And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I think it's problematic how, wait, I cannot get the words. It's problematic that you are showing other men or even like younger audiences a stereotype, something that is wrong. So you are giving them the idea that they can do this and they can easily get women by just having some deodorants or just showing that women can be, they can have them by simple action and they're just as the innuendo goes, for sexual pleasure and everything, but the reality is completely different. And it might be dangerous to just put this idea that women are easy to get into people that really don't have that much of a reasoning or that might be still like kids.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisement realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found maybe unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

It was incredibly unrealistic in the first one that he managed to say hi to everybody in the room, but it was a realistic portrayal, because he just went into these rooms slash party, had a chat with everybody. It was, could have happened to anybody to just walk into a party, dressed like that, get a beer, well I don't think that was really the goal of this study, but the first one seemed realistic to me. He just got a beer at the party. But the second one, it was unrealistic for two reasons. I mean, it was realistic because it portrays a body type and a person which is much closer to probably the audience that they were trying to appeal to. But

it was incredibly unrealistic the thing that he did. So like building the whole raft and boat and again, getting all those girls just by spraying himself with the deodorant.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

If I have to be honest, the first one was quite cringe, not gonna lie. It was just obviously like cinematic cliché, that's all. And I was a little bit confused. I didn't know where they were trying to go with it. And the second one was just straight up bad, made me laugh. It was out of.. Made me feel funny. Yeah. And a little bit sad because they really, it kind of conveys this problem or idea that we're talking about.

Interviewer:

And have you ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within these advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

Hmm. I don't know. Sometimes I feel like because of the body shapes and the body of models that they use in advertisements, sometimes I strive to get the same body type by going to the gym and everything, even though I kind of know that it's unrealistic or it is just like very top percent. Yeah. So it kind of influenced me in that way. Like I'm thinking like, oh, look at him, it's so cool. Maybe I can reach that one day. But this on the physical aspect, on the behavioral aspect, I don't think I picked up anything. Also because I don't watch much tv, so, and I skip their advertisements so they pretty much go off, but that's the only thing that comes to mind.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements reinforce or challenge these pressures for you in any way?

Interviewee:

The one that I'm feeling?

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Interviewee:

No, not at all.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? Or did they in any way?

Interviewee:

No, just nothing much.

Interviewer:

And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

Well, just, I didn't really have a good definition before, but now that I have your definition it is still the same before and after the videos.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

I don't know. Cause if you were talking about behavior like before I, could go again over the fact that they reinforce some behavior that I mentioned before, but about mental health as in like wellbeing? I wouldn't say they challenge or reinforce anything. I wouldn't relate these two ads with mental health. Maybe you could consider the cases of just an alcoholic or just someone who's trying to rehab from drinking, which, but it's not really much to the masculinity part of the ad, but more about the product, that's the only thing that comes to mind.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men? So for example, friendships or any type of social relationships.

Interviewee:

Within the same gender or different gender?

Interviewer:

Either.

Interviewee:

The effect that they have on relationships.

Interviewer:

What effect they could have, yeah. In your opinion.

Interviewee:

I, the first one I couldn't get much from the first, like if it was on me or if I tried to think about other people, I don't think they could get much about friendship out of there. But with the other, I could see people just thinking they could get more from their friends just with the spray or just with any other sort thing. But again, I wouldn't relate. These ads too much to the relationship part.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic or sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I really feel like the first one, again, I didn't get much of these kind of relationship status. But the second one, I really feel like it goes to add to a huge amount of guys who just bad. And they consider just women as objects and easy to get. Which ends up being annoying if not even dangerous at a point, because they might be, when they might get denied or they might receive a no, they might end up getting aggressive and all kind of stuff.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Okay. Well they're quite opposite. Nothing like, I feel like the first gives an idea of just like a clean shaved man that just cares about his appearance and it's all fancy and stuff elegant and nice. While the second one goes the whole different concept of masculinity, which is not more defined man, but it's just like the rough one, the one that works, the one that is a farmer, worker, or like builder, which goes with strength and more just like being a little bit kind of the opposite almost. So yeah, so I don't know how to call the second type for masculinity, but I feel like it's the opposite of being all fine and clean.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

The first one, I could only get positive things. It was just showing happy people just saying hi, just shaking hands, while the second one again, it might lead to problematic behavior and just disrespectful behavior and just stuff that you wouldn't do or stuff that you shouldn't do with the other gender.

Interviewer:

Okay, perfect. Then I will now show you the second compilation. Again, if there's anything wrong with the image or the sound, just let me know.

Interviewer:

All right, so first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Yeah, the first one was really inclusive. I liked it. They went all over the spectrum from hetero to gay to disabled to the of disabled. And they were all kinda nice. The masculinity there I feel like it was shown in a positive way. It was kinda, again, a little bit out of place

that always they end up with the hinting at sex and it's always the deodorant. I don't know if it's such a coincidence, but it's funny but I feel like it gave a positive view. It just said be whatever, masculinity is defined by different styles, you get to pick your own. And at the second one, even more, the second one said, that masculinity can be also like what it is not depicted to be. So it is not just the nose, the fire, the hills, but it's also like the insecurities, the what makes you different, what makes you a little bit out of place. Which I find even better because it opens up the definition to much more aspects that are like non-considered.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

I feel like the second one challenges in a way that they present everything that a man, well is not supposed to be, is told not to be. And they show how it is okay to do that while the first one kinda reinforces the stereotype, but at least it's more inclusive. It shows that it can be for anyone. It can be masculine in a good way if you want it to be even if you have the dog, the hair, the gay, the nose, whatever, starting from just abs, which is the standard masculinity to all kind of other things.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I didn't really find it problematic, because for example if I think about the second one, the bullies are men, but also women, I feel like there was the one with the cat, they were just like, what are you doing? So the problem doesn't only come from other men, but from men and women, which is problematic because they're opposing people that just want to be themselves. And in the first one, it seemed pretty much all peace all the way through it. So I didn't see it problematic.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Let me think, well, I don't remember every single situation, because there was a lot of representation, but I didn't find anything unrealistic. I feel like every single scene could appeal to certain people. I don't think anything was unrealistic. I feel like everything was on spot. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

The first one, well, and the second one even better, they really go above and beyond, in showing.. The first one shows the masculinity is indeed something else and it builds on that, it just gets the spectrum broader. But the second one really goes further and it says that masculinity can be also something that isn't something negative again, cause like for example, masculinity is already portrayed a little bit in having the fire or being smart or whatever, but it was never portrayed as the loving cats for example, or just being a virgin. So that really adds to it, challenges the definition, some definition from society.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you think it's representative of specifically how it was portrayed in those advertisements, do you think that that's also how it's portrayed in advertisements in society more generally?

Interviewee:

I think again, everything felt pretty much realistic and I could see, or I could imagine these things happen.

Interviewer:

What about the first compilation of advertisements? How do you think is that set representative of how masculinity is portrayed in society?

Interviewee:

Again, I don't remember all of the clips, but yeah, so wait, now that I think about it some of them really a little bit challenged or disrupted a little bit like the heels and the wheelchair. Yeah. Now those popped back to me. So it was a little bit both on something that already existed. So like the suits as the Heineken thingy and the ab also something that is new and it's more like 2023. So like for example, the heels and the wheelchair. Did you also ask for the second one? Yeah. And the second one, well that was, as I said before, completely new, completely challenging adding to it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And again, about the second compilation that we just watched, how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

Hmm. I don't know. They made me feel, the first one was optimistic. It showed that anybody can be great, anybody can get to their goals and anybody can be happy with how they are because each of us is special. Yeah. And the second one made me feel like, I don't wanna say sad, kind of a mix between sad and conscious and reflective. Cause it shows how even if we don't notice, people might judge themselves for these kind of emotions that they have to try to hide because they think they will not be accepted.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

Mm, no, not much. I didn't relate too much to any of those.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

I was surprised to see that they included the wheelchair one. So it was not just the physical body, like muscles, but it was also like about the movements about the motricity, which was new to me. So this adds to the masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

They could help for sure, they could make people feel better. That both of them could really be helping integrating more inclusiveness and helping men, young men, older men accept themselves more and be more okay with their masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men, so friendships, for example?

Interviewee:

Maybe it could improve them. Cause for example a few of them got picked up by a friend. So I hope that people, men, would just be kinder to each other and stop picking up and making fun of their friends because of their lack of masculinity.

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships or sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee:

It would probably make, again, some men feel better, because it was also portrayed, especially in the second one, how, for example, some men are virgins and that's totally fine with it and doesn't make them less of a man or they might be gay. And again, it's still

masculine to be gay which might help people be more open and okay about their situation, if you can call it a situation.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Well, I hope that watchers can get a kind of broader idea what masculinity is to show that it is not just as it says, just the abs, just the suit, but it is something that everybody can have.

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

They might happen that men end up.. Might be enticed into being more open about who they are and how they are and how they want to express themselves, but also about being less judgmental. So accepting other people as they are, even if their masculinity and their idea of masculinity doesn't really conform to their ideal masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. Now I kind of wanna get into the comparison between the first compilation that we watched and the second compilation. So what similarities stood out the most to you between the first and the second compilation?

Interviewee:

The only thing was that they had men and they were like celebrating being a man. Maybe the first one a little bit less, but it was all about just putting men under the spotlight, cause they're cool, or they can be cool. That's how I got it.

Interviewer:

And what differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation and the second compilation?

Interviewee:

The first one was more like, this is how you should be, but the second one was more like, this is how you can be.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set to the second set representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general, and why or why not?

Interviewee:

Oh I don't, watch enough advertisements, I couldn't say.

Interviewer:

That's alright. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee:

I preferred the second one because it was more open, inclusive and upbeat. It was really showing that anybody, everybody is okay. Everybody's fine as they are.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you believe that the advertising industry has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think they should be responsible for it. I mean, they don't have to be as inclusive as the second one, but at least they should try not to show a negative representation. Like I feel like the first is still fine. The first, first video is still fine, cause nothing was wrong. But the second one was really giving out a bad idea of masculinity. So they should be held responsible for the negative actions that might derive from it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

I hope it gets more inclusive. I hope it gets broader as the last video showed, I hope people will accept that masculinity is not just abs and working and being in a suit, but it's much more, it is many more different aspects of being a man.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

I hope that they will be more open towards this and that they will follow the trend of the society into being more open to this new definition of masculinity. And I can imagine it's happening, cause like also from movies and TV series, I see more of these aspects, so I hope that the advertisements will also follow it.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Well that was actually the last question. So is there anything else you'd like to share? Any thoughts you have in regards to the portrayal of masculinity either in these compilations specifically or just in advertisements in general?

Interviewee:

Nope. All good.

Interviewer:

Okay, cool. Then I would like to thank you for your participation and if you have any more questions about this study either now or in the future, you're always welcome to contact me and I will answer them for you.

Interviewee:

Sure.

Interviewer:

Cool. Then I will stop the recording.

Transcript 9

Interviewer

All right, so I'm going to start off by asking you a number of questions about the set of advertisements. First of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ad and their behaviour?

Interviewee

Let me start off with the first ad, the Heineken one. The male character is portrayed as, well, obviously the main character, and he has this perfect chemistry with everyone he meets, makes no mistakes, there's no awkwardness, he's fully confident that every move he makes, and he makes some pretty daring moves sometimes. With many different kinds of people, we just has this bond or makes this connection and everybody likes and everybody laughs with him and or maybe is longing for him. He's just very attractive to all people and all kinds of attractiveness. And in the second video the masculinity portrayed is, well, firstly, in just the independence of building your own boats, and not needing anyone, not even for the end of the world. And then of course, obviously, the attraction side of things were just with the smell and stench of the man, ladies are attracted to him more than he can handle.

Interviewer

Okay, great. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity and society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

I tend to think that these kinds of advertisements shape the idea of masculinity and society. There's not a very defined idea as far as I can tell, and it kind of differs between social groups. And, well, the more these kinds of advertised advertisements are made and broadcasted, the more people are influenced by it. And not everybody really, critically thinks about them and just looks at them. And well, their ideas get shaped by which ideas are around them. And these are pretty high budget, advertisements, which are everywhere, especially nowadays. It's so commonplace in almost everywhere you look. Any discrepancy I can think of maybe nowadays, there's also like a counter movement going where the emphasis is being put on the emotional vulnerability side of men, where most masculinity shows no emotional vulnerability, which is pretty toxic, actually. And this counter movements, really emphasises

that it's okay to be vulnerable in an emotional way and maybe even physically. And it's okay to talk about, it's okay to let all the feelings out. Whereas there's none of that in these commercials.

Interviewer

Okay. Yeah. Can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements that you've just watched challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

Yeah, mostly reinforcement, I think. Traditionally, the man's the strong person, the confident person, obviously, you must be good looking and physically in shape. But maybe, well, I'm not quite sure if it's traditional, but I do feel that the social interactions are like, there's no mistake he can make he's so good at everything. He is so confident, nobody questions him and he does everything right. And I think that's a pretty, pretty toxic stereotype that's, that's been going on for a long time, I think even before this kind of commercial success.

Interviewer

Okay. In what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic, and can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee

I think the problem is not perse in the commercials of itself. Because you don't have to paint a fully complete picture every time you portray a man. I think you can emphasise on confidence, body type, social interaction. Without every time showing that it's okay, there's room for emotions and it's okay to be vulnerable. You don't have to put everything into one piece, but it's important that it is balanced throughout society. And nowadays, there's just a 90, maybe 95% of these kinds of commercials. And very few inputs that show the different kinds of well, the side of men that are not portrayed in these commercials.

Interviewer

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee

Well, both are fairly unrealistic, I think I'd say there's no way that every interaction you do is so flawless. So if it's not even with the man, maybe the man is all confident, then it's with the people he interacts with. It's just too perfect in both videos. Well, although in a second video, there's not much interaction. But still, I think it's quite unrealistic that with some projects you've made, and a good smell, he attracts loads of women just by standing on a boat. But of course, it's about the idea behind the adverts. And even then, I think it's pretty unrealistic. Of course, there's this deep desire in most people to be this confident and to be this strong. Which this makes you, so of course, and linked it to a product of theirs. It's not realistic to be this strong all the time, and maybe not even at a moment, it's just too perfect. Both of them.

Interviewer

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel that you have any specific emotions come up? And what specific moments and images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee

Well, the first one with all the social interactions, it kind of made me feel good, because it's nice to see everything happening the way you imagine it will be perfect. And now it's visualized. And it's just awesome. And maybe even surprising. Sometimes they go quite over the top. And yeah, in some way, it's inspiring, I guess it makes you feel like, wow, would been really nice to be like this. The second commercial, that's a bit less to me, because it was so far fetched that it didn't give me this feeling of like, oh, that will be great. Because it's just totally ridiculous, kind of. It's a bit more simple, I suppose. Like this product will make you more attractive. And it's just a kind of funny idea, like, use this and you'll be very attractive. And it was nice to watch but didn't do much to me, in the sense of getting any feelings or something.

Interviewer

Okay. And have you ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within the advertisement led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee

Well, I do think yes, but I am thinking of what elements made me feel this way. Well, I think maybe everybody has insecurities. And these advertisements make it look like these insecurities don't have to be there. Or maybe even shouldn't be there. And that could give some pressure. Like, you can't be awkward, can't be weak. You have to be funny. You have to be nice and kind and understand other people.

Interviewer

Okay. And would you say watching these advertisements reinforced or challenged these pressures for you?

Interviewee

Well, the first one definitely did.

Interviewer

Reinforced or challenged?

Interviewee

Reinforced. And the second one, maybe the idea of independence is also quite strong. I mean, there's nobody else to fix it, but the man and the woman and the man just does his thing and women come to him. So definitely reinforced. There's no challenge, no challenging new ideas or existing ideas with different views.

Interviewer

Okay, and how did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? And what specific elements impacted this change if there was a change?

Interviewee

Well, the funny thing is it's only now that I start analysing it that I think I feel my insecurities a little bit reinforced, whereas only when I watched the advertisements themselves I kind of felt good about it and it was nice. Now I kind of feel a little bit bad about it. I think the more strong element for me is the social interaction, where he was just very nice with everybody, all kinds of persons, that stuck with me and it made me feel like well, not perse that I have to be like that but it speaks to the desire that I have that I want to connect with other people, I want other people to like me and this is how other people would like

another man that's how it is portrayed in this commercial. So it serves as a kind of ideal picture and seeing this ideal picture didn't make me feel insecure or anything but, well, they show a little bit difference between how I view myself and and how the ideal picture is viewed through this commercial.

Interviewer

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee

It didn't really change my concept of masculinity in general. Like I said, more reinforced it although nowadays, because there's a bit of a counter movement going on, this also has shaped my idea of masculinity. So I feel like it's a bit more complete than just what I saw.

Interviewer

Yeah, okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee

I think it mostly depends on how emotionally stable they are. Because I think these kind of commercials can pretty much reinforce insecurities men already have. If a man doesn't have any severe insecurities, I think it doesn't have too much of an influence on at least in part of their mental health. Of course, you could see it from the bigger picture that these kinds of commercials shaped the public view on masculinity, which then could cause mental illness in men, if it is a toxic view. But more directly, I think, would only impact the more vulnerable.

Interviewer

Okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships, meaning non romantic relationships, of men?

Interviewee

Well the first one is a bit more explicit, there's a lot of platonic interactions going on in there. Well, it chose a lot of affirmation and liking towards each other, everybody he interacted with was very happy to have interacted with him. Which also sets a bar in non-romantic

relationships. Like this is how a perfect platonic relationship could be or at least an interaction. And then the second one, it just shows more of the man as an individual. But of course as.. you're part of platonic relationships as individuals together. So even though it is not portrayed in a commercial, it could shape your idea of how you should be personally, even inside of a platonic relationship, but it's less direct.

Interviewer

Okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships among men?

Interviewee

Well, it's fairly similar. Both of these advertisements kind of show this immense attractational force around the main character, like, almost comically, they do one thing and the women swoon away with longing almost, which, of course, is a bit unrealistic, but it just shows maybe the dynamic of how a perfect person would have a romantic relationship, or at least how they would attract romantic relationships. And the same goes for the second one, it's just so over the top, it only shows the attraction part, it doesn't really show the depth of relationship, or the connection you can have with other people on an emotional level. Of course, you can't put that really.., or yeah, I guess you can, but it doesn't show these commercials as a different kind of topic much more serious. And here, it's just about first impressions, first interactions, and, well, if that's your idea of romantic then it shapes a lot, but I think there's more to it, which this this kind of advertisement don't really go into.

Interviewer

Okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what manliness should entail?

Interviewee

Well, quite profoundly, actually. Both of these commercials show a perfect picture of a man. And, of course, you don't have to agree with this perfect picture but it does influence your idea of, well, it visualises an idea of the perfect man and I don't think many men have a very defined picture of an ideal man. And now that there is a visual, of course, this is how men easily interpret things, visually. It really easily influences your personal ideas.

Interviewer

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behaviour of men?

Interviewee

I think they'll maybe subconsciously more than consciously try to adapt this perfect personage that is portrayed in these commercials. Because, of course, everybody has this desire to be as good as they can be, or maybe even perfect. And this just gives them a clue of how it could be, I think it tries to pull you towards that idea to be like that.

Interviewer

Okay. And can you give me specific examples in what ways that would exactly shape the behaviour of men?

Interviewee

Maybe in in their attitudes towards friends or maybe partners who have tried to be more confident. Maybe change their posture a bit, maybe renew their intentions to work out more, or be more funny, humorous, or maybe even more intelligent? I guess it would convince him to try and be better.

Interviewer

Okay. I will now show you a second set of two advertisements.

So, first of all, in your opinion, how was masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behaviour?

Interviewee

Well, the funny thing in these commercials is, there's no real main character like in the first two commercials. It's not about a singular man. They showed many different kinds of men, different shapes, different attitudes, different personalities. What I like about these commercials is that the whole thing about the masculinity part is now portrayed as something personal. Something that's more to do with your identity, which makes it a bit more serious, a bit less ridiculous. Because it gets closer to you personally. And I feel like that's a good, a better way to get to the core of masculinity.

Interviewer

And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee

Yeah, quite, I kind of feel there's a big contrast between both of the second commercials. And the first one from Axe is actually quite smart, because it really taps into the sentiment that is pretty prominent nowadays, that there's this push back towards this classical masculinity idea. Where men who are not conforming to this old school idea of masculinity are also accepted, or at least there's some energy that they should be accepted and some anger. And this has been going through society for a little while now. Not too long. And this advertisement really taps into it, it still connects to this product, still connects to, you need to have something special about you. It's still a little bit toxic as far as I can tell. But the second one really is a more idealistic advertisement, I'm not quite sure if it's an advertisement, I didn't see any products linked to the whole video, but it did make you think about the lesser shown parts of men, or less visible parts, the parts that usually people try to hide. And it makes you think, if that's really necessary, if that's okay, maybe we should change our attitudes about those things. In a way, the first one hinted at that one as well. But it kind of made the opposite point I feel like.

Interviewer

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee

Yeah, both of those videos show men who were different, who lacks some traditional stereotype stereotypical masculinity, but emphasise that even though you're missing that you can still be masculine in different ways. It's not about the class. Basically, they both say the classical idea of masculinity is wrong. For example, in the first commercial, they say if you're skinny, instead of having a big body, or if you are not that good looking, you can still have this very attractive personality or very attractive clothing or something, something special about you, whereas in the second commercial, it showed more of the weaker sides of men.

More of the vulnerabilities. Which, of course really challenges this classical idea of masculinity where weakness are not accepted, even though you might have them? You don't show them?

Interviewee

Yeah. Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you give specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewer

Well, the male portrayals, I don't think they're problematic in any of those. Second commercials. The only thing I find problematic is with the first one of the second commercials, where as where they basically say there's something special, you should have to still be attractive. And then you don't have to conform to this classical idea, which, of course, I very much agree with, you don't, I think classical idea is very short sighted. And this broadens it a little bit, but it still gives you this idea of that you really should have something that sets you apart. And that's your masculinity or something.

Interviewee

Okay, and in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements? Realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you find unrealistic? And why?

Interviewer

What I found realistic, and the first one is, well, we often feel this ideal picture, and then compare it to ourselves and see that this and that, and this is missing. And maybe we can even try and get there. And this commercials showed that even though you're not the ideal picture, you can still be very masculine, you can still have something very attractive about both romantic and non romantic relationship. And what I like in the second commercial is it shows what was the question?

Interviewee

What you found realistic and unrealistic within the portrayal of masculinity in the advertisements,

Interviewer

right? Yeah. So the really realistic part in the second video was this this vulnerability parts where there's scenes or maybe personal conflicts going on, which you usually try and hide. In this ideal scenario, this classical ideal scenario, but in this classical ideal scenario is really unrealistic. Because everybody has doubts. Everybody has some insecurities. Nobody's perfectly confident, or perfectly social all the time. And to show that these moments happen, and are okay. Well, that's actually quite good.

Interviewee

Okay? And how did these advertisements make you feel that any specific emotions come up for you, and what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewer

Yeah, I've been saying, basically, same thing, because the first one, broadens this classical idea of masculinity, which I like and made me feel good. portray some kind of inclusivity. But it's still made me a little bit frustrated, because it basically says, if you're not special, you don't matter. Whereas the second one made me a bit feel a bit more emotional bit more vulnerable, because it showed those vulnerable moments of many kinds of people and ask the question, should we hide these things, or not? And that made me a bit more emotional, because this is the classical idea that we should hide all those things we don't like all those moments, we don't feel good. But if you do that it's really harmful for you mentally and emotionally. So to challenge this idea, I think it's really good cultural change these kinds of commercials very much.

Interviewee

And did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity, and if so, what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewer

Yeah, actually Um, what I like about the first one is that it shows you that there's something that makes you unique. That gives you this while it can give you this attractiveness, it can set you set you apart, and implicitly asked you the question, what makes you special? And it's also encourages you a little bit to, to embrace that and rock it. And I keep forgetting the question.

Interviewee

Did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? And what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewer

Right? Yeah, so this, this whole showing of different unique uniquenesses made me threshold, my uniqueness is for our whereas the second one is a bit more relevant for me because I'm struggling to accept my weaker sides personally. And so I really stuck with me to let those moments be and ask the question, honestly, should we accept these things or not? And while it does change my own feelings towards masculinity a little bit, because I am pretty convinced that those weaknesses or lesser nice parts or moments shouldn't be discarded so quickly.

Interviewee

Okay, you've already kind of mentioned it, but in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general? Yeah, and what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewer

So the uniquenesses of the first one? Yeah, the challenge is this classical idea. So I think it could shape the general idea of masculinity to a bit more inclusive portrayals of masculinity, and maybe even change this, this quick judgement that if somebody isn't fitting this classical idea of masculinity, that they're not masculine, that's through these commercials, maybe they can look a bit past this stereotype and see what sets them apart or what what are they actually who are they basically? And?

Yeah, last question,

Interviewee

and I think you've answered it. I was, in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general? So anything else you would like to add?

Interviewer

No. Okay.

Interviewee

Then, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewer

Well, I've kind of mentioned it, at least with the second one, pretty directly it's affects it's my personal disagreement with my weaker sides. And it's, it's encouraged me to at least give me a chance to think about whether to accept some things or not, which I think is a very healthy way of deciding on things, which is everything on his chance. And the first one but I think people are very much thinking in stereotypes and trying to put everybody in a box and just showing that you don't have to fit in a certain box to still be very good. I think it'd be very healthy for people who feel like they're, they're not fitting in the books.

Interviewee

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships meaning non romantic relationships off man?

Interviewer

I think these commercials encourage the acceptance bonds in platonic relationship that everybody can difference, but still be okay.

Interviewee

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships and men?

Interviewer

Well, of course, they're also the acceptance part plays a big role. But maybe through acceptance of the weaker sides, or maybe the fire somebody doesn't want others to see. It also awakens some attractiveness through vulnerability. Because I think showing vulnerability really helps people connect and when you connect with people on such a deep level, and also

for strong makes the affection between people stronger. So I think these are pretty rad, radical improvements in romantic relationship effects through the spirituals.

Interviewee

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what manliness should entail?

Interviewer

Would you mind repeating that?

Interviewee

Yes? What effect could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what they believe manliness should entail?

Interviewer

And what's the difference between masculinity and manliness?

Interviewee

It's basically the same concept I would say.

Interviewer

So you're basically asking me how the portrayal of this masculinity and these commercials show or changes, men's beliefs in Yeah, how it could impact their perception of what masculinity needs to look like.

Interviewee

Right. I think in the first one, it shows that you, you kind of need this, this energy, this positivity, to accept who you are, even if you're different. And that will make you Mandy, or attract, attracted. And in the second one, it really challenges you to think about what manliness of manliness is in the first place. Because it goes straight into the idea that you're weaker sites are not accepted, in general, so you should hide them. But it really questions that and therefore, it makes you question your idea of masculinity in general.

Interviewer

Okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behaviour of men?

Interviewee

I feel like these advertisements would create more acceptance in general. And the first one, it really encourages people to look past the first appearance. And the second one it makes, it makes you listen more to people to what they have to say and maybe don't even want to say that saying in different ways. I think it helps people connect with other people more than the first one.

Interviewer

Okay. Then looking back at both sets of advertisements, you've just watched what similarities between those different compilations stood out the most to you and why

Interviewee

the similarities between those I think I think the there are lots of similarities between the first three commercials where there's something special something very energetic about men or men in general. That's really inspires friendship or maybe romantic relationships, just straight up lust and other people. And I think the fourth commercial as well doesn't have many similarities, I think through the election,

Interviewer

Okay. And what differences stood out the most to you between the different sets of sets of advertisements.

Interviewee

I feel like the second set of advertisements is very current gen, like really going with the zeitgeist as if it were a very modern day commercial going with what's going on with society right now. Both of these commercials, the second commercials go hard against this traditional masculinity stereotype stereotype. Both kind of question of what it should be if it's not traditional. And the first one kind of answer sheets, and the second one leaves that question, we're open.

Interviewer

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second second set of advertisements? are representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee

Well, you're assuming I'm very aware of the shifts in portrayal of masculinity and in general. I'm not sure if I can really compare them, but I can compare them to my own idea of the shifts in masculinity. And I think they're pretty representative. Like I've mentioned all the way in the beginning of this interview, that there's no room for vulnerability. And these advertisements really show that shift and that the vulnerability is why there's there's been fighting for this vulnerability to be accepted. And General, this vulnerability and men because I feel like this, this feminine movement has been there already, where the, the less accepted sites of females are now more accepted, more put into product lines, advertisements, and this changed the general opinion. But on man, it's been very much the same, at least a couple of years ago. And now they've realised that it's not only women who have been misrepresented, but also men. And, well, these commercials really show this this shift in direction and representation. And I feel like you're pretty representative for the shift.

Interviewer

Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity? And what specific elements caused you to prefer this one?

Interviewee

Yeah, the second one, I would prefer because I think it's closer to true masculinity, at least in the in the in first, well, actually the second one, too. I think the second one of the second set shows that vulnerability is part from insecurity, which is really contradicted with this traditional stereotype. But I feel like both the second set commercials are less judgmental, and less unrealistic, which is why I prefer them. Okay.

Interviewer

Yeah, then. Do you think that advertisements have an impact on the societal definition of masculinity? And if so, how?

Interviewee

The second set or just just in general? Yeah, yeah, I'm pretty sure those have a quite a large impact on society's perception of masculinity. There's like advertisements in general has taken such a prominent place in our nowadays lives. The way we use our phones and computers and the Internet all the time, it's work of personal, recreational, it's always there. And it's the whole system is going towards advertisement. We don't like to pay for stuff. We don't like to have subscriptions. The whole free, but with advertisement things. So, so big now, that means that these advertisements really shape public opinion. Because they're so prominent everywhere and on all all cultural and age groups, they're everywhere. I think they have a huge impact.

Interviewer

Okay. And do you believe that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity and why or why not?

Interviewee

Well, because they have such a huge impact such a society shaping impact that they, yes, they do have that responsibility. But what I'm wondering is how we could ever enforce this responsibility. The way it's been going on now is mostly through social media and counter movements. And then only if advertisers realise that they can make more money to address more people's feelings, that they change their advertisements, stereotypes, not because of the health, or not even for the betterment of society, but just for more money. And maybe that's the way to do it. But I feel like this for the wrong reasons. But regardless of how we would enforce this responsibility, I do think they have that just purely because of the impact they have. Okay.

Interviewer

And do you believe that the prevalence of toxic masculinity and advertisements is changing? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee

Well, yes. This this shift between the first and second set of commercials represents this change in how masculinity is portrayed? What was the question again?

Interviewer

Do you believe that the prevalence of toxic masculinity in advertising is changing? And if so in what ways?

Interviewee

Is it changing prevalence, right? Not too sure about that. I do think masculinity or toxic masculinity has been used quite a lot in the past. It's just an easy way to make an advertisement it's there are a lot if you look in the past commercials, even subtly, in maybe women perfume commercials, you still see this stereotypical men, if there is a man. Nowadays, it's a bit more charged, which makes I think, makes advertisement a bit more wary to use this stereotype. And of course, you have this counter movement, which is shown in the second set of commercials, but I do think prevalence is declining just because of this charge on using a stereotype.

Interviewer

Okay, and do you think that the definition of masculinity will change in the future? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee

Yeah. Like I said, it's this this whole shift that's been going on going on for only a couple of years. And I feel like it's only now really starting to make an impact is counter movement. And I feel like there's a lot more from where that's coming from. Just like with the feminine movements. It takes a while to really complete I don't even think this feminine movement is already completed, but it takes a long time to change a whole societies few of those.

Interviewer

And what role do you believe advertisements play in this change of the definition of masculinity?

Interviewee

Quite a lot, because they have such a big impact, they change many individuals perspective on things, like masculinity among them. So they play a pretty, pretty big role, I think, more than maybe even more than films and series.

Interviewer

Okay. And how do you think masculinity should be portrayed in advertisements in the future?

Interviewee

That's an interesting question. Well, the idea of advertisements is to sell something, and to use masculinity for that purpose. I think, yeah, that's, that's doable. Even if you use the fully correct version of masculinity for whatever that may be. It's still attractive. Of course, it's, it's fine if masculinity regardless of how modern or those who you feel is. That's how I would think it should be. I'm not quite sure. But I do like this movement of more inclusivity more. More of a complete picture of a man than all this judgmental crap that's been before.

Interviewer

Okay. Is there anything else that you have thoughts on or would like to share in regards to the portrayal of masculinity within the previously shown advertisements or advertisement in general, and the potential effects of it?

Interviewee

Yeah, I think if we get rid of this, this judgement part, and just show maybe it's exclusive. mutually exclusive. If you show one part, maybe you also show that if you idealise one part, maybe you say that the other part is not to be idealised. So I'm not quite sure. But to be less judgement, judgmental, would be so beneficial for the whole society.

Interviewer

Can you specify what exactly you're talking about when you mean being less judgmental?

Interviewee

If you portray a certain picture of how a man should be or an ideal picture, you imply imply that if you're not there, you're not perfect and maybe even you're not good enough.

And I think a lot of men struggle with this notion already and showing these commercials or a certain stereotype is idealised enforces this idea that they are not good enough.

Interviewer

Okay. Well, that was the last question. I'd like to thank you for your participation and hope that you have a great rest of the evening. If you have any more questions about the study in the future do not hesitate to contact me and ask them

Interviewee

Alright, thanks very much.

Transcript 10

Interviewer:

Right. So first of all, I'd like to know, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Like, I mean, if you see it like the, for the first eye, it is just a normal advertisement. But if you actually dip it in the first one, obviously he uses his masculinity and his beauty, I think, cuz he what was the advertisement of Heineken?

Interviewer:

Heineken, yeah, it's a beer ad.

Interviewee:

Is it still on? Like is it a new one or just like..

Interviewer:

I'm not sure, to be honest. I think it's a little older, so I'm not sure, I don't think so. But yeah, I don't know for sure.

Interviewee:

I think he was using his look power and the confidence he had that everyone would be pleasing him because his good-looking. And I think it was all about the looks on the first commercial, because you could see even the men were like going for him, like kind of trying

to joke around and kind of wanna say the word pleasing him, but it was clear it was the case. And on the second commercial it was like a deodorant commercial, wasn't it?

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Interviewee:

It's just that nowadays it's the wrong perspective that.. Would go into this so deeply to argue <laugh>but, can you ask specific questions so I can just refer to it?

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah, we can we can just skip this one and move on to the next one if you want. So in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

There is some similarities that people will use their looks to get places in life, especially in this society. But like in this century, in a modern countries and cities, people are changing a bit. They're thinking differently that masculinity is not all, and like women are actually, they're heard nowadays. And although some women in England are not <laugh> because they will still go for people who are controlling them, people who are like very toxic, like in this video, it, it was clear that.. I just believe that men shouldn't use their masculinity and their beauty as a power over woman, that shouldn't be the case. And on the second video it was very disturbing because man standing there, shirtless and all the women are going after him. Why is that the case? Like, there's so many questions I would have for that advertisement person, whoever created that.

Interviewee:

But there are similarities in nowadays society, but people are changing now. So a lot has changed I think since that ad, since that advertisement. But there is a lot of similarities. Because guys and men still use their power, as in male power, to have dominance over women, which is disgusting.

Interviewer:

And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

How they can be challenged In what ways?

Interviewer:

Yeah. Either challenged or reinforced. So if watching those advertisements, could impact gender roles or stereotypes.

Interviewee:

Oh, that's a good question. This is like such a marketing question. <Laugh>. I think on the first video, if you honestly look from the other side, oh it's just a video, it's just a handy cam video. The guy's going inside, he's attractive, he's just like playing around. But if I would change anything, I think I would surely change the guy. I think the atmosphere in there that people are literally melting over him, maybe make it more friendly with women, as he was friendly with men, because it was kind of like a friendly connection between two male, but when it came to women, they were like kind of very intimidated by the man. So I think if there was a friendly connection between women and men and a bit of respect, because there wasn't a bit of.. Especially the last part when he just took the table cloth and just cleaned that woman's lips or something in the end that was just like, not respectful for me, from my perspective, as I see it. And I think I'd need to view the commercial like 500 times to actually deepen it. On the second commercial, I think the man shouldn't be.. Although it's a commercial about the deodorant, but men shouldn't be without shirts attracting women, because women are not attracted to men without t-shirt or something. And it is just, I don't want use the word.. Because they're like, they call themselves like.. I don't wanna use that word, but it feels like they're falling for a man.. Okay, let's skip that because I don't wanna use that word and just sound stupid, but the second video was absolutely ridiculous. The first one was okay, but the second one absolutely crazy.

Interviewer:

So, would you say that both videos are more on the side of reinforcing traditionally what a man would be associated with, in terms of characteristics or looks?

Interviewee:

Unfortunately, yes.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Interviewee:

Yes. Like people nowadays, as I said, they mostly, I would say straight men, no offense, but straight men do use a lot their looks and like, oh, they're gonna come to me anyway, or they will do that anyway. And cuz I'm good looking, I'm a man, I'm in control, I'm in charge. But I'm so glad to see that women in this century they are more advanced and they're more mature and they understand that that's not the case. And in these videos, they both use their masculinity. They both both use like manpower and dominance. On the second video, oh my god, he was thinking the world is in front of him and all the girls are for him. And yeah, that's it I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? You've already kinda mentioned it, but can you provide some more examples of what exactly you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I think on the second video, the problematic part was the man being without shirts and attracting woman. You know, they could have changed a bit like having men and women in a boat or, I know it's like a men deodorant, but who cares and don't bring all those women there. Like make it equal, bring some men too, maybe, bring old men, grandpa, everyone, that everyone loves the smell, not just attractive women going out after attractive men. And I think the being shirtless part, choosing the best looking models because that's not the case. Not everyone is good looking <laugh>. And the first video, again, yeah, it's stupid to say bring ugly looking models, that's stupid. But the second video was more normal than the second, the first video was more normal than the second video. But I need to watch the first video a couple of times to actually see it deeply and understand what's happening. I think even starting from the beginning, you can see straightaway people pleasing him, like offering

drinks because his masculinity, him looking so smart and looking so good. He's just trying to get attention. He's just trying to be the center of attention. Of course, trying to win hearts.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found maybe unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Anything realistic? I think the realistic part is that people actually in a first commercial, that people actually do kind of respect him. I believe people do respect him and I believe he has a lot of talented talents cuz like you can see he's talented with many things. And people do enjoy his company, I believe because they're very friendly with him and yeah, that's realistic. He is like real, it doesn't look like he's too fake. He's just like playing around with people showing his talents, just entertaining. But with the second commercial, what's not realistic, first of all, building that boat, <laugh> that ship or whatever it was. Second, having all this women coming to the desert for that Axe smell, that was like absolutely not realistic.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

On the first one I was like, obviously he just, the first thing you noticed, oh, he's so cute. That's it. People would say, oh, he's good-looking. And then when he goes through in I think what I would say is that I was surprised that it was a Heineken commercial, cause I was just thinking this is like a trailer of a movie or something. <Laugh> And on the second commercial, literally when I said it was like like men trying again to be men like, just like 'ugh' literally that word, and I would literally put it off halfway. But on the first one, I'll be like, oh, that's nice but weird. And those are the only emotions. And the second one is just like straightaway men using their power.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And have you in general ever felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within the advertisement led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

From this current advertisement you showed me or any?

Interviewer:

Just in general, either these or in general. Yeah.

Interviewee:

Okay. Can you read the question again please?

Interviewer:

Yeah. If you've ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertisement, and if so, what exactly within those advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

I think there was one advertisement, I don't remember the name of the fragrance, like it was a fragrance advertisement where they were like I think six, seven or eight men. Very attractive men, just walking the street of Paris and looking so good. And then at some point when they were walking the street, they were giving side eye to not good looking guys, like these guys were with women and they were looking at the women and giving side eye to that men and those women were coming after them. They were leaving their man dead. And it was quite disturbing because when I watched that I was like 18 or something and I was so insecure already about my looks, and I would literally watch that all the time, that commercial just think like, oh, I'm not good looking enough and I wanna look just like these men, which when I look back now, obviously it's stupid <laugh>, it's stupid and ridiculous, but it had an impact on me and I'm sure it had impact on many people because it's a stupid commercial, cause it plays a huge role in your insecurities.

Interviewer:

Yeah. And did watching these advertisements that we just watched reinforce or challenge these pressures for you in any way?

Interviewee:

Oh, absolutely not. I will never let these advertisement get even 1% close to my heart. No, 0%.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity and what specific elements impacted this change if there was a change?

Interviewee:

On the second one, absolutely no change from the second advertisement, but on the first one, <laugh>, I like his hair, so I might just try his hair style <laugh>.

Interviewer:

And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general, and what specific elements impacted this change, if there was a change?

Interviewee:

Well, it wasn't new that commercials like this exist and that companies use men to dominate women in many ads, this is not the only two advertisement I've seen many. And so it wasn't a surprise for me to actually see this, I've seen things like this before, but can you repeat the last part of the question?

Interviewer:

Yeah. How did watching these advertisements just change your definition of the concept masculinity in general, and what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewee:

I think it didn't change anything because okay, in the second video being like.. Having the power to bring so many, so many women in one place and just using your body and your face and your looks, it's just ridiculous. Like, it's just quite something that I might not have a lot of

knowledge of to talk about on this kind of topics because I'm more into.. Um,also I get very nervous speaking on the phone or on teams or anything. Like, honestly, like, I don't do this, but I wanna speak people in person and discuss it in person.

Interviewer:

Yeah, I get that. But no worries. You're doing great and I really appreciate the fact that you're taking the time. So there's no pressure to answer in a specific way, just kind of share your thoughts and feelings and whatever comes to mind and that's all good. All right. So now I kind of have some more general questions about those advertisements. So in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements we've just watched have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

As I mentioned previously, from my experience, like still, this might not affect me now, but I'm sure this commercial is quite an old commercial. And in olden days, people were really taking inspiration from advertisement, from movies, from tv, from anything, to just try to be like them. Until now, people do that, but they're more independent and they learn that that's not how the world works. But from from my perspective, absolutely nothing has changed for me. But I'm sure on the first video, a lot of men have tried to look like him, move like him, have skills like him and just be as fun as entertaining as he is. People have tried, I'm pretty sure, and on a second video you would probably wanna work out really hard to have the body he had, to just look exactly like him, so the women will come up to you and.. More like actually buying the product and actually looking like the person advertising it.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men? So friendships, for example,

Interviewee:

Between men and women, or men and men?

Interviewer:

Either just, yeah, in general,

Interviewee:

I think, again, so you say like, what would be the impact if friends watch this commercial? Is that what you're telling me?

Interviewer:

I think more in general, if men are watching these commercials and seeing like how, for example how masculinity is portrayed in there, how exactly this portrayal could then impact them to behave towards friends or to form friendships with other people.

Interviewee:

I mean, I think if you watch the commercial a couple of times, you will fall under the influence for a couple of hours. So you might just come out and you might just act like you were inside the commercial and you were the main guy, but um I mean, from my own experience, absolutely nothing will change, but I'm sure with other people they might have like thought about to choose friends like these people inside the commercial, like being really bougie, wearing appropriate outfits or even themselves, looking themselves like high up, oh, I'm a man, you know, I might as well make people please me. Just think about themselves higher than their female friends or other male friends. Mm-Hmm.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic or sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Yeah, that's a funny question. <Laugh>. Obviously there's always a difference with straight relationships and gay relationships, but I think this is a common issue with straight relationships between men and women. I'm pretty sure so many people saw this advertisement not on a computer, maybe on a tv, and they're like, oh, look, this is what a man does. Especially on the second one, of course. And I think it could have impact on people's relationship. For example, men being more dominant towards women. Like, oh, I'm the man, like, you have to do this, you have to do that. Like, I'm in control, I'm in charge. And these type of things, they can actually inspire them even more. And actually can influence them to be more like strict and to be more like, I would say the word disgusting towards women. So yeah. It's not, it's not the best commercials out there, so.

Interviewer:

Yeah. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Well, they're different men, of course. Like, it's always about cultural things as well. Like if we talk about people in the Netherlands, they're a different culture, they're advanced, they know so much about respecting women. But people from my country, let's say from Syria or Armenia, they're very culturuous, so it's always the man is the best of the house who controls you. We do this, we say whatever you do. But if they go through these commercials, I believe they'll be like, oh, this is what it should be. Even worse, because this is not right, it should be even worse. I think it's about different cultures and different men. Yeah, I think that's all.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I think I covered that somewhere between the other ones, but probably I believe it will have even a slight impact on every man after watching the first commercial, because you can see the good-looking man walking into a crowded room, very confident, showing his own skills, looking very smart, and you can see people really liking him. People are offering him drinks. People are offering to play around with him. Can you repeat the question? I wanna give the answer, but I don't, I wanna be wrong.

Interviewer:

What effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Yeah. So in the first one, I think, let's go the second one first. On the second one, of course, men will behave like more like sassy, bold behaviors. Like, they can be like, they might have like reassurance, and this commercial is like what could have been their reinsurance for their behavior. And seeing it could be like, oh, okay, wellI should be more confident, maybe like in

my behavior, because it could help some people in a good way, but it could also help people in a bad way. So it could have two impact on men's behavior. So for example, when I was young, I used to watch commercials like this, and I used to be inspired by them to get a good looking body, to take care of myself, to look very smart. That's good, in a good way. But some people might take it the wrong way and they feel bad about themselves, they'd be like, they're not good enough. So it, it can be both ways.

Interviewer:

Right, okay. Then I will now show you the second compilation. Again, if there's anything wrong with the sound, just let me know.

Interviewer:

So, first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewer:

I think the second one actually did hit me because it's sad. It's, it was kind of sad that men actually have to question themselves if it's okay, if it's normal. And it seemed to be a British, and it actually hit me. But on the first one.. What was the question?

Interviewer:

How is masculinity portrayed, and can you describe the male characters and their behavior?

Interviewer:

I think in the first one there wasn't much of a masculinity out there. I just feel like there was just like a bunch of random guys and there was not nothing in the first one. So in the first one, they were, I think, no, I don't think there was any problem with masculinity there. Like I think it was just okay an okay commercial, I believe. I'm not sure. I might watch a couple of times and pick some things out, but generally it was just normal.

Interviewer:

So how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewer:

I mean, in the second one, of course there are similarities, of course, men question, on daily basis, their life and their appearance and their looks. And me, myself, I question many times, like is it okay to actually change my hair color? Is it okay for men to do that? Before, now I don't question because I do whatever I wanna do, whatever makes me feel happy. But compared to nowadays society, you can see a lot of similarities that in the second commercial, men questioning their appearance, their life, their choices, and they always ask second opinion, or they doubt themselves whether it's right or wrong, and, or they never even do it because they always think it's wrong, so they never experience it and it's a lot. It's a lot now. It's a lot like from my friendship with friends that I have here, like throughout, they'll always be like, oh, I want to change my hair color, but I don't know, I'm not sure if I should. And they never do, because they're scared to be judged, they're scared to actually be accepted in society. That commercial was very deep. Maybe they didn't know, but it was very deep for some people, if not all. And the first one compared to now, wasn't it about the looks of men?

Interviewer:

It's basically like, you don't need good looks when you have this and that, or when you have that, or when you're good at this, or when you like doing this. So it was more like, you don't need one thing as long as you have your thing. That was kind of the message.

Interviewer:

Yeah. I think that works. But compared to nowadays society, people are not just going to go stay with one thing. If they're good at one thing, they're not gonna say if I'm like smart as hell, I'm not just gonna go outside unshowered or for example, given my example, I study and I'm just doing really good, but that's not enough for me. So I had a nose surgery, I have done things to actually look perfect for my own self, not for anybody else, for myself to feel confident, to feel happy. And in some ways, you can see similarities in nowadays in society, that some people actually.. In the street community mostly, they're like, oh, I have this... I have a car, I have a home, I have a job. I don't care about my looks because people are still gonna like me for what I am and who I am. But for some people it can be other way around, oh, I have this, I have that, let me get the rest as well. So there are some similarities and I just quite liked that there was like a lot of race differences there. Sexual differences. Like you could see like people, you could see black, white, I think there was some.. Whatever.. It was

like, the equality and diversity in that commercial was really good compared to the previous commercials we watched.

Interviewer:

Right. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewer:

I think they didn't.

Interviewer:

Okay. So you would say it didn't challenge them, but it also didn't reinforce them?

Interviewer:

Hmm. Let me just think about it. I mean, somewhere it did strengthen the kind of material of the support I was given in the second commercial from the first one. I think it did reinforce a bit for people to feel more calm, I think watching it saying, oh, yeah, that's true actually. We don't have to have everything to be perfect, let's say, if we have that, we are good with one thing, but it could also be, otherwise it could actually make someone more insecure. It could be like, it could actually be all the way around. Right? For me, it would be absolutely the other way around, because I have always been self-doubting myself. So I think I would be more depth doubting myself from the first commercial than the second. Because the second commercial, I think, is more like speaking about your insecurities. In the first one too, but the second one is more like questioning if you fit in society and if it's okay, but the first one, it's already saying, oh, if I have a big nose, I don't need to have a car. If I have a car, I don't need to have that.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewer:

I don't think I found anything problematic to be honest in these commercials.

Interviewer:

And in what ways did you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewer:

I think it is realistic for men to question themselves. It's actual real men questioning if it's okay to do this, and if it's okay, if it's not. And I didn't see them taking power or using their masculinity in a second commercial, I really didn't see that, it was just a general decent commercial. I think in the first commercial in the second half part of the commercial where it says why have a big nose if you have a suit, walking in the street, and women turning around looking at him, it reminds me of the previous commercial, where woman actually get attracted to men looking like clean or formal. And generally, it's a 50 to 60% decent commercial.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific images elicited those emotions?

Interviewer:

It did, yeah. Both of them did. I think in the first one, even the beginning who needs abs, if you have a big nose, that sentence has been part of my whole life for a very long time, <laugh>. And I just don't think it's right because people actually can believe that and rely on it. They don't work themselves. For example, me, I would work really hard to have a healthy and good looking body for myself and not for anybody else. I'll never. But I would also do the fun, do the everything in the commercial. I will do all of it, I will read a book, I will go out to do risky stuff with my partner, I will do all of it, but for them it's separating them individually. If you have this, you don't have to have that. It's just not it. And in the second commercial, I relate to it cause I've researched myself many times if it's okay for men to do this, if you're not gonna be judged by society, if it's gonna be okay, accepted by your family, by your friends. So I relate to it a lot.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements challenge your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewer:

Current me, absolutely nothing. If it was me five years ago, I would literally go depressed and I would just go to the gym after five minutes, it would've been crazy, cause I was... But now, nothing. No.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewer:

Hmm. That masculine man can also be insecure.

Interviewer:

Okay. All right. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewer:

Again, in both ways. It can help and it can make it worse. In a way of, it can help that. Let's say if I search all the time is it okay.. Is it okay seeing that someone else does it? Then I will feel like I fit in, I belong, like it's okay for men to search that, but in some other ways you can say, oh like why do I need to search this? Why do other people search as well? And from the first advertisement, it mostly would be like probably guys, I think, doubting themselves. It might have like on men.. On their mental health, thinking they are, maybe they're none of it. They don't have big noses, they are not good looking, they don't have abs. They don't do fun stuff or they don't read books. They're just somewhere very different. So it might play a role in people's mental health, but that might be rare nowadays.

Interviewer:

All right. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So, friendships of men?

Interviewer:

I don't think there'll be much of a change. Actually I can only give an opinion from myself and from my experience and of course, yeah, from my experience, nothing will happen. But

when I actually look from other people's perspective, it's a bit hard to judge and to say what they would feel or what would they do.

Interviewer:

And in your opinion, what effects could the portray of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men or sexual relationships in general?

Interviewer:

It can go horribly wrong because from the first commercial, because like, if they're in a relationship, they could be, oh, I have this, so that's enough. Just stay with it. Like, this is what this is. Like, they could even bring some stupid people, they could even bring the advertisement as an example. They'd be like, oh look, they say here, like, having this is enough. For example, they could have good looks and stuff, but they're like drinking and they don't even work or anything. They'd be like, oh, this is enough. I have the looks. That would limit them. And would be the bad impact. And the good impact, I think if women saw this commercial, they might kind of appreciate their men more. I wouldn't know <laugh>.

Interviewer:

I mean, from second commercial it wouldn't be huge impact because it's just men questioning, doubting their choices mm-hmm. <Affirmative>. So I don't think any, I don't think much of a change from the first second commercial.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewer:

Yeah. From the second commercial, some men would look.. They'd be like, oh, why would men even question, we are men, why would you question this? You shouldn't be coloring your hair. You shouldn't have a piercing, or you shouldn't do this. They'll be like, this is not even a question. We are men, we just need to stay men. And from the first commercial, it wouldn't make much of a difference. Maybe some people would say yes, it would, but from my opinion, I mean, for some men it would be like, oh, it doesn't matter what you have, how you look, the man stays a man, as long as, like, let's say if you're in your family, as long as

you look after your family, you are in a loving relationship or something, that's what matters. The looks, don't come first or having a car or reading a book, don't come first, just be the way you are.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewer:

From the second advertisement, I think the general behavior would be feeling safe maybe, because, you know, there are many lonely kids and young people that are starting to face the reality in this century and just live in a strict family, religious house. And they don't understand anything. They don't know if it's okay. And when they actually see this commercial, they'd be like, oh, so there are people out there who actually question themselves with the same things that are going through my head and I wanna do. So it could actually help some people who live in the villages and just away from the big cities and don't have much of an experience .

Interviewer:

How would that affect their behavior?

Interviewee:

They might have a courage to actually do it. They might say, oh, a lot of other people think this, let me just do it. I don't know, it might be both ways.

Interviewer:

Okay. Alright. And now I kind of wanna get into the comparison between the first compilation and the second compilation. So between the first compilation of ads that we just watched and the second one what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewer:

Absolutely nothing to be honest. <Laugh>.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what differences stood out the most to you?

Interviewer:

I think the difference was that, the first part, it was all about the man using their man power dominance. But the second part was more deep into men's insecurities and about how really men are and how they should be, like it's okay to be vulnerable. And it's okay to seek help and question yourself like everybody else. It's okay not to have everything, not to have the look or being talented like the first man was, being charming, like the first man was, because that man had everything, that man was charming, was good looking, was smart, he could entertain, he was accepted by everyone. But in the second one, it's like, you don't need all of it to fit.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you find the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in the first set to the second set representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general, and why or why not?

Interviewer:

I mean, I think the first one was a bit of an old commercial, like 15, 12, 13 years ago, but these commercials are a bit newer, so they actually fit into society. People actually see how masculinity works, like how it is, although it's not that true, but it did shift dramatically actually. And I'm sure every single person could see that clearly. I honestly didn't see any dominant masculinity or anything in the second two commercials.

Interviewer:

Okay. So you'd say that the shift, like between the specific advertisements that I just showed is pretty representative of the shift that you can see kind of in general in advertisements?

Interviewer:

Not necessarily. They wouldn't bring this up in advertisement anymore I don't think, because there'll be so many people judging the advertisement. If you bring men's insecurities out there, a lot of men themselves having those insecurities will actually be boycotting saying why is this out there? Why do people need to see this, or like, they wouldn't be happy with it. Even with the first commercial.

Interviewer:

All right. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewer:

I'm sure you know which one I'm gonna say, I think the last one, of course. To actually show just one vulnerable side of men, actually feeling that it's okay to question, it's okay to not know. It's also okay not to have everything right. It's okay to have a big nose and not in a way to say, oh, you have a big nose, you have to be smart. No, not everything is gonna be perfect. So if you have that, just appreciate that and you don't have to fight to get the other one.

Interviewer:

Right. Mm-hmm. <Affirmative>. Okay. And do you believe that the advertising industry in general has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity and why?

Interviewer:

Absolutely. Because the world is watching, like people watch, it has impact on people's lives. They might not know it, and I'm sure they do, but it has impact. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> People can be inspired from it. People can be really upset from it, people can be offended from it. So yeah, it is really important.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewer:

I don't think it's gonna change anytime soon, because this is like a thing going on for centuries. So even from the olden days with masculinity, like kings taking powers, but it's getting better. It really is. Like, it wouldn't get better in the countries of not offense, but it wouldn't get better in like.. Middle East. It wouldn't, like, for example, look what's happening in Iran. Men have power over women, and that will never change. No matter how much we fight here, no matter how much, no matter what we do, it won't change. It's been there for so

many years, so hopefully in the future it will change, but right now we are in a very sad society.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what role do you think advertisements will play in the future, in the definition of masculinity?

Interviewer:

I don't think it will play a huge role. I think real life and everything in real.. Uh actually, it might in some countries. For example, if you have actually commercials that shows that masculinity is not everything, like the fourth commercial you showed me, they show that in the countries where men have power over women.. Actually, it wouldn't help. No, it wouldn't.

Interviewer:

Okay. Alright. Well, that was actually the last question. So is there anything else that comes to mind? Any more thoughts that you wanna share on the topic?

Interviewee:

I don't think men should have.. I don't think these Axe deodorants or whatever, they should do such an advertisement. I think they really need to change their concept. I know you have nothing to do with it, but as an opinion, I think like even the first one with the boat, it was about the deodorant now. I don't know why would they ever do that. Just put men out there and just, I don't know. I really don't know. Just leave it.

Interviewer:

The second one as well? Because the second compilation of advertisements were both from Axe as well.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah. I'm not using that again.

Interviewer:

All right. Well then, thank you so much. I will stop the recording now.

Transcript 11

Interviewer:

So I'm gonna start off by showing you the first compilation of advertisements. If you can't hear or see it, just let me know.

Interviewer:

All right. So, first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

I'm supposed to answer with my own opinions, right? Okay. So I think if we look at the pattern between the two advertisements, we can see that both male characters, or main characters in the advertisements are perceived as, first of all, good looking. And second, they do have some charming aspects. Like the first one, they are in suits and they are like lean and flexible. And the second one is more like masculine, like macho guy. I don't know if that's the word, but the third one, which intrigues me the most, is they're Western. Like the main characters are usually western, like caucasian, white guys. So these are three patterns that come in my mind, when saw those videos.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

Can you maybe give an example of masculinity? Or the portrayal of masculinity in society more broad?

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, yeah, for example how men approach women, how men feel a need to assert dominance, how men act towards other men, stuff like that.

Interviewee:

There, there are some similarities, which I tried to recognize. So between the society and the advertisements is like if you are charismatic people, like the first advertisement talks a lot about charismatic males, we are being specific about males, then yeah, you're likely to be charismatic. You get friends or you get all of the attention. And that could be the case. Not, not every time, but could be the case in also like in the more broad society.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Well, in some ways, they do reinforce the mindset of the society. What I mean by society is then, the people, like the population, like, because basically what is defined as masculine in this case is like based on what people look most like, for example, television, netflix, movies, advertisements. So yeah. In some ways they do reinforce the concept of masculinity. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you give specific examples of what exactly you found problematic and why you thought that was problematic?

Interviewee:

Well, especially in the first advertisement, I don't really see any like problematic portrayal of masculinity, but maybe it's more like in the second one, like, because it's a guy like, I don't know, the Jesus look like guy. And he's a male. And then he just used perfume thing and the women are just like coming and I mean I think that's most of the time like the problematic thing, because why is it the male, the main character, and then the women are like.. Yeah, just to compare it to a James Bond movie. Maybe you watch James Bond movies, it's always like, you have like Bond girls, like you, you don't have Bond men, but then you have Bond girls. So just like the women are always like kind of the object or the price instead of the other way around.

Interviewer:

Okay. And that goes for both advertisements you would say that you just watched?

Interviewee:

Well, like I said, it's more portrayed in the second one. I mean, the first one is more like neutral, because the guy is just, just being friendly and it's other males as well, like fat male, old guy, or people from other cultures, females from other culture. But in the second one, it's more clear. Like, why does it have to be the man that attracts, instead of the other way around?

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific expectations of what you found realistic or what you maybe found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah. I found the first one more realistic, because the guy.. I don't really think from the first advertisement that the guy, the main character, is like very masculine, like compared to the concept of masculinity in the society, because, when the first time I look at it, what comes in my mind is like, oh yeah, the guy is just like friendly, he's charismatic, he has skills, he can do this and that, and he has human skills and stuff, but not about like, or discuss the example of masculinity. Everybody has to be like that. So that's not the thing that I came up. But that again, with the second one, it's more like the realistic thing is, yeah, I don't know. It's more if you smell good, women will come to you. I don't know, maybe things like this, I don't know. I'm not really sure.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did you notice any unrealistic aspects in the second one?

Interviewee:

Unrealistic aspect is besides of the ridiculous advertisement, I think it's more like the masculinity portrayals, like back to the first question or the second question, like it has to be the male that acts as the power of radar, and then women will just come. I think that's it.

Interviewer:

And how did watching these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up and did any specific moments or images elicit those emotions?

Interviewee:

Not really because first of all, because you told me that I had to look at the videos and then think about it, so I already, like, in my mind, subconsciously I think, oh yeah, I just have to watch it and then think, but not emotionally, but, let's say if I watch that kind of advertisements, then maybe for the first advertisement, I would feel like I just get to be a better person. I get to dress up better and be good at something and be good at social skill and stuff. But then for the second one, maybe more like, oh, it's the man is like, the man is the man, like the man is more, the man is the lion, you know what I mean? That would be the kind of feeling that I would get. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And have you ever in general felt pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within those advertisements led you to feel this pressure to live up to that image?

Interviewee:

Well in the Netherlands, not really, but it's related to my background because I come from Indonesia, I was born there, I grew up there. So the perception is different. So if I'm here, if I looked through that kind of masculinity and stuff in advertisement, then it doesn't really intrigue me in some ways, no.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? Or did, did they affect you at all in that way?

Interviewee:

Well, not in my case. It's also, again, related to my background, because I know consciously that I am not from here. It's a different culture, different point of view of the people. So no, not really. Doesn't have really like big effects. No.

Interviewer:

And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept of masculinity in general in any way?

Interviewee:

Again, the second one not really, no, because the second one does reinforce the concept that I know from the society. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects do you think that the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements we just watched could have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I mean, it could go both way. Like for the first one, for example, it could make men more depressive. If they're depressed already, they are maybe obese or something, or, I don't know, they're not healthy. And that when they look at the advertisement they will feel even worse. But then, it could also be that that guy inspires me and I have to do better. But for the second advertisement, I don't really know, because it's purely marketing for the second one. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Right. Okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men? Meaning just relationships between friends or like any social type of relationships?

Interviewee:

You mean specifically between male friends or also in general?

Interviewer:

Just in general.

Interviewee:

I'm not sure. Maybe it's not the masculinity itself that will affect the the friendship, for example. Like, not about the masculinity itself, but more like the brand itself. Like the brand of the product they're talking about, besides the masculinity thing. No, I don't really think so.

Interviewer:

Okay. I'm sorry. By the way, if you hear any background noise, I think they're starting construction around here,

Interviewee:

And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

It could affect in some ways, maybe subconsciously, that the ideal man has to be like that, so it could make the demands, but also like the standards or criteria, it could affect in some way from advertisements that, oh man, ideal man has to be like that. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how would that specifically then impact how men pursue romantic relationships?

Interviewee:

Not everybody, but then maybe most or number of that are affected. It would be like having the mindset of, okay, in order to reach this ideal relationship, I have to be this ideal man that is portrayed in the media or in the advertisement.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men in general towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

It could affect again the mindset, the standards it could affect, it could change men's standards because for example, in Netherlands, the Netherlands specifically because it's a feminine country according to Hofstede cultural managements. But yeah, I mean with that kind of advertisements, it could subconsciously make people or men specifically like think, okay, so that is actually ideal man in general, or concept of male.

Interviewer:

And what effects do you think could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements then have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Well, talking about general behaviors is difficult, but let's say if I make it specific, like the effect of it to the behavior of a man that is already masculine in their perception, is that for those kind of groups, it will just reinforce their concept of, okay, so masculinity is like that. Masculinity has got to be assertive dominance. You got to be in control, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. Then I will now show you the second set of advertisements. Again, if there's any issues with the picture or sound, just let me know.

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how was masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ad and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Well yeah. The first one is, I mean, Axe.. In their advertisement they always have the straightforward masculinity stuff. So yeah, the first one it only talks about men, but also we kind of understand because the whole point of the product is to attract men to buy it. But then if you think about the reason why they make it specific for men, why would they make the advertisement like that to attract men? So we can conclude that they believe that most men think that way. Like they have to be like the guy in the first advertisement, you talk about skinny guy or guy who can dance, or guy who was athletic and talented or maybe abs. So that's how masculinity is portrayed in the first advertisement and the second one. What kind of advertisement was the second one actually?

Interviewer:

It was also from the same brand although I think in the UK it's called lynx.

Interviewee:

Oh, also perfume stuff.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Interviewee:

But the second one is not.. I don't really see the strong definition of masculinity in the second one. It's more like. Like you said, it's more campaigns, so it's more like make you think. Because when I saw the second one, it indeed makes me think because for example the advertising of Axe is also in Indonesia where I came from and growing up, when I looked at that advertisement, it never made me think, oh, should a man be like that? Because it's like naturally, oh man is like that, so it's not that I have to think like this. But second one's more, I don't know, makes you think actually in instead of portraying a masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? And are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

The first one has strong similarities, actually. The first one, because yeah, you can be skinny guy, but you still have something, I didn't recall what he said about the skinny guy, but also like the chef guy and then you have guy with abs and stuff and then, yeah. So the similarities between that and the society is more like, yeah, it doesn't have to be like the one buff guy Joey Rogan style, and that is the man. So that's I think the similarity. But then from the second one, it doesn't talk more about masculinity, it's more like to make you think. Yeah. So maybe it makes society rethink about what is the definition of masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

The first one could challenge the concept of masculinity being strong buff guy and having to be the alpha male. That all of the little lion or the weak lions, to fit all of the rules over them. So the diverse advertisement is against that idea. And the second one, yeah, I don't know. It's difficult, but the second one, because they don't really put the message of what of the definition of masculinity. They just make you think.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you think of specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Well, from the first one, not really, because it shows a mixture of diversity, so it's not problematic. I mean, kind of realistic actually. And for the second one, if it's problematic, no, the second one is also not problematic because they just like zoom in, like the reality. So no, I don't really see any problems or problematic things. Yeah.

Interviewer:

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and maybe what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, what's realistic from the first one is just diversity again, so that it doesn't have to be always about the buff guy,, the strong gym rat, but then like a mixture of people with their own skill and stuff. And then from second one, it's realistic about.. Yeah, despite all of the concept of masculinity that we see compared to the first set of advertisement that you showed me, there are really those people men that shave and men that wear pink, or, I don't know what the examples from the second one were.

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for with you? And did any specific moments or images elicit those emotions?

Interviewee:

Well, from the first one not really, but from the second one, it does make me rethink. So what is masculinity? What I mean, like what is, and then how we define it and why we define it. All questions that come up, of the kind of feeling that come up here.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? Or did they in any way?

Interviewee:

Not that much. Again, also they portrayed in the Western society, and so it doesn't affect me like directly in some ways, no.

Interviewer:

Okay. Watching these advertisements, did they have any effect on your definition of the concept of masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Yeah, from the second one, it, it does change a little bit, maybe not change, but like, make me rethink it again. So I don't, now my concept is a bit like taken, you know, it's not yet solid, but then a little bit shaken from the second one. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

On the mental health of men? Well, maybe both of these advertisements could get men in general to think, which could indirectly cause their concept of their mindset about masculinity, about themselves.

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships or non-romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I think the second one embraced it more because yeah, then people think like both men and women think like, oh, so doesn't have to be like that. Yeah. But I think from the second one more aspect of the platonic relationship between or in the society.

Interviewer:

And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

The first one reinforces the idea which is possessed by people or by men, or group of men that already has that strong idea about masculinity, but then the second one maybe is more preferred or it affects more of a message to people that are against the strong or the traditional masculinity concept.

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

The first one is just indifference, so it's not really that big. It gives indeed a little bit of diversion, but the second one maybe it could give like a little bit of new perspective or maybe a whole new perspective.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Not that much now. First advertisements doesn't do anything much or influence much. But the second one, yeah, maybe if it does reinforce thei idea of, okay, so my concept of maculinity has been wronged the whole time, then probably it could affect their behavior in general, like trying to become less assertive or dominant and stuff.

Interviewer:

Okay. Now I kind of wanna get into a comparison between the first and the second compilation that we watched, so, between those two sets of advertisements that we just watched, what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

Oh, yeah, they mainly talk about men and how men manage the main character of the thing.
Yeah

Interviewer:

Okay. And between the first and the second set of advertisements, what differences stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

The storytelling is more different. Yeah. The first more well, especially the Axe advertisement, actually, the Axe is always the being masculinity stuff and, yeah. The difference is only like how they tell the story about to define masculinity and also engage the audience to think about masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. And you think that's similar in the first set as well as the second set? Or do you think there's a specific difference in how masculinity is portrayed within the different sets?

Interviewee:

I think it's more different. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you describe how exactly it is different?

Interviewee:

Well, for the first set and the first advertisement, the Heineken advertisement is more yeah, it doesn't really engage the audience into the concept of masculinity in society. It's more like, yeah, it's the guy, it's a male, coincidentally, and then he's charming and then he's likable. And then the second one is more like the male, and then all of this bunch of females that are attracted to him. But then from the second compilation, it's more like, okay, so you have this diversity of males instead of just one male. Because that's the main difference. Cause the, the first one is more like one person and storytelling about him. And the second one is more like diverse, like more different kind of males, but still male, but different kind. That's the thing actually, like from the second set is more like from different perspective and from different character, but then the same storytelling.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertisements, representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general?

Interviewee:

I don't think so. I mean, there is indeed a shift within the first compilation and Second compilation, because we handpicked it ourself. But no, I don't think it's really a shift. It's more like diversity in opinion. Yeah. So I don't think it represents almost all of the advertisements that I have seen in my life or recently. Maybe I should be more specific. I don't think there's actually a shift, but it's more like different kind of perspectives.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you think the different type of perspectives, do you think there's a trend that a different type of perspective is like more commonly visible than maybe during a bit older times?

Interviewee:

Well, yeah, the different perspectives are definitely more visible compared to the older times because now you have like not to get the traditional masculinity like the set of advertisement that you showed me. For example, I just to mentioned like nowadays you have the advertising where in the main character is like an obese guy or an obese woman or girl, and trying to tell the story about it because from that we can learn, we can conclude that they are against the concept of traditional masculinity. So yeah, the various perspectives are definitely more visible. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity? And what specific elements within this compilation caused you to prefer this one?

Interviewee:

I think the second one is more, I think the second compilation is more.. I prefer that more to represent more in the society. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you specify what exact elements caused you to prefer this one?

Interviewee:

Yeah, the diversity, like it doesn't have to be the perfect one example, like, the main standards of, because that already happens in the modeling world. Like men have to be like this to become an actor or women have to be like this in order to become models, be skinny as hell and stuff. But then in advertisement I would prefer like, okay, so maybe put a little bit of diversity in the mindset, because that's the whole point of advertising, of marketing. Like, you put something in the mindset of the people we thought they're realizing it's perhaps, yeah. So I prefer this the second compilation here.

Interviewer:

Okay. and do you believe that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

They do have it and I'm solid with that reason. And why is because, about promoting the product that includes the marketing stuff. And like if we try to look 200 years before it started as propaganda, like the government were also advertising about war and stuff like America in Japan. And to mention one example, the American government, they have the propaganda of Japanese people are being the bad guy and they kind of advertising it, and that comes and that goes through the mind of most American, and it leads to the belief that Asian people are evil. And then until nowadays we still have the whole thing of advertisement to put something in the mind of the people. Yeah. So they are not a hundred percent responsible, but they do have a big or major responsibility in the concept of people. Like in Indonesia we have soap for females and in advertising, they always make it like, if you have white skin, if you're white, you have light skin, you are beautiful, but not contrary. If you are dark or black even, then you are not that pretty, that is the concept that advertising made in in my country. Yeah.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

It's difficult to say because I'm not an observer for that kind of stuff, but I think it will not shift again. I will not use the word shift, because now you have a lot of modern stuff, you have a lot of more like working at home husband concept that is more common, but then on the other side you have still the side of Andrew Tate, for example, who has a lot of followers, like millions of people that agree with him, with his masculinity points of view. So I don't think there will be really a shift. Diversity and variability are definitely becoming visible, but not really a shift, that people will abandon the masculinity. I think there will be still two sides, or maybe a lot of sides. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in how it continues in the future?

Interviewee:

Well, yeah. The responsibility of advertisement is still to promote anything they want, their products to be promoted. They could affect directly the negative concept or positive concepts. Like again, I mentioned the example of the advertisements that are often being done in my country, they always make it like if you're white skinned, you're beautiful, but otherwise you're ugly. So yeah, they should contribute more to positive sides. Like, hey, being dark is not that bad, or something like that. Yeah. So that is the responsibility that I believe about advertising. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And you believe that advertisements have a strong impact on how exactly people will view masculinity in the future? Or do you think that other factors have more impact on that?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I mean, but like in this digital zone, you can see a lot of things. You don't see television anymore maybe, but maybe you see ads on YouTube, if you don't have YouTube premium. Maybe it might not change people mind, but it only reinforces the idea of people that already has it. Like if we have group of people that are already strong with your masculinity is traditional, like the man is dominant and stuff, and then you get those ads and it only reinforces them, it'll not change their mind. But also the same with the like, yeah, men at

home, men working at home is fine, like, no homophobic. And the idea of any advertisements that are targeting those segments, then it will only reinforce them. It'll not make them think like the second compilation of advertisements. Most of them, it will not make them think, okay, maybe you should rethink your concepts. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. Well that was the last question. So is there anything else you would like to share in regards to your thoughts about the portrayal of masculinity? Either in those specific advertisements or just in general?

Interviewee:

No, not really. No.

Interviewer:

Okay. Perfect then. Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it and I hope you have a great rest of the day. And if any more questions come up in the future in regards to the study just let me know and I'm happy to answer them for you.

Interviewee:

Okay. Well, good luck.

Interviewer:

Thank you. I'm gonna stop the recording then.

Transcript 12

Interviewer:

Okay, great. So then I will start off by showing you the first compilation. If there's anything wrong with the sound or the image, just let me know.

Interviewer:

Alright. So first of all, I'd like to know, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Alright. Well, the main guy in the first ad was, I would say, just a normal guy, not really particularly manly, just having a good time with everybody. And then toward the end he was like sort of fighting, I don't know. But I don't think it was necessary for that person to be a man or a woman. So I don't think it's particularly masculine. And then in the second, he was building something, that's also something sort of masculine. And then all the women came when he put on the deodorant and yeah, but I don't know, it wasn't like he was particularly buff really, mostly it was more.. The focus was definitely on the deodorant.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I don't know. I think it's pretty in line with normal. Of course, people don't really come running at deodorant, but..

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Well, the traditional general of men being like, or women lusting after men or just wanting to get lots of women that's definitely reinforced by the second advertisement. And the first one, not so much I think actually.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

The first one, I didn't find problematic at all actually. And then the second one was slightly, with the focus on the lots of people coming instead of just one, or whatever. But it's not mega problematic.

Interviewer:

And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

I think the first one was pretty realistic when he came into the room and everybody was like, hey! That was nice. I think that's pretty normal. And the second one was not realistic at all.

Interviewer:

Can you specify what exactly was unrealistic in the second one?

Interviewee:

Well building that much, of course it's not something that's possible. And people don't come running for miles when you put on deodorant, so that's pretty unrealistic.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

I thought it was fun. So I guess joy, when I saw the first one, the different greetings were fun to watch. And the fight was kinda cool, but also weird. And the second one, it just felt weird because first I was like, okay, he's building an arc. I didn't really know what to do with that. And then he put on the deodorant, and I was, not really disgusted, but I was like, here we go again. Like kinda disappointed I guess.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And have you ever felt any pressures to conform to traditional masculine norms depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within these advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

Well in other advertisements, of course there's always really toned guys and then you can think like, oh, I wish I would have a more toned body or something. And for me personally, my beard doesn't really grow well. So that's always when there's a beard, I think that would be nice.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements reinforce or challenge these pressures for you in any way?

Interviewee:

Not really.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

No, I don't think so.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

No, I don't think so. Sorry, <laugh>.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

Well I hope none. Maybe some people that are less extroverted that watch the first video think I should be more outgoing. That's the only thing I can think of. And of course the second one is like you want to have a lot of women, but yeah, that's the only thing I think.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So for example, friendships of men?

Interviewee:

Well, if you think about every woman as someone you might be able to have whatever with, then that's not healthy for their friendships of course. But the first advertisement was pretty healthy. I think it was fun to see him be friends with everybody.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Well again, the first one, not really, and then the second, I think yeah, again, thinking you have a lot of options or something, always scouting out for more instead of just being satisfied. I think that's unhealthy.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Good questions. Well again, I don't think the first advertisement has a lot of impacts. And the second one, well being masculine is being able to build stuff and being able to track of women. I think that's it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Waring deodorant. That might be nice. Maybe trying to be a little bit more outgoing, Stuff like that.

Interviewer:

Okay, cool. Then I will now show you the second compilation of advertisements.

Interviewer:

All right. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Right. Yeah, the first one was trying to tell the viewer to interpret the thing is something that can be anything, not really has to be the standard masculine type thing. And the second one was challenging that even more. But I guess in a different way, it addresses the issues more head on.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

No, I think it actually showed more broadly the spectrum of masculinity, what it can entail. Especially the first one, the second one more challenges what masculinity even is.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

The only problematic thing I found with the first one was that it promotes still finding your magic to be with someone. And that should not always be the goal of course and the second one, I think it's okay.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, in the first one what I found pretty realistic was that everybody has their own thing. Of course it was nice to focus on and the second one was also realistic cause every guy has been doing stuff sometimes when they're thinking like, can I really do this as a guy?

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel, did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

In the first one I was curious what was gonna come next. Cause they were pretty interesting examples, but I'm not sure of really any other emotions particularly. And then in the second one, I guess I felt a little bit understood, but it was also confronting, because, well, I'm a pretty regular guy. I do like sports and I do stuff that's mainly masculine, so seeing that some of these things trouble other guys, I feel for them because it doesn't really bother me a lot.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

I guess I can think more about what I do sometimes and if it's really necessary or if I really should be judging or yeah, judging those people for the way they behave.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general, and if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

I don't think it did. Yeah, it more reinforced what I already thought.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men?

Interviewee:

I think it might be pretty healthy. The first one might give some confidence and the second one yeah, makes them feel understood and know that they're not alone.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effect could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Maybe that they support each other more in the way they are.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Also that they're not afraid to be themselves more. I think that's pretty healthy. Yeah.

Interviewer:

And how could that then impact romantic relationships exactly?

Interviewee:

Well it could benefit the self-confidence, which is always good if you want to initiate a romantic relationship. And if you're feeling better, then of course every relationship you're in also goes better.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

I'm not sure if guys that are really rigid in their beliefs will change their mind because of an advertisement, but they might be challenged a bit because of these advertisements.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and challenged in what ways?

Interviewee:

Well some things in the first video, I think there was a guy really dancing with his hips or something that was pretty out there and not everybody will support that as masculine. And in the second video, of course a lot of guys were still thinking, like, guys can't do that or, yeah, and then might change their idea.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I think they might just judge less and think more about what they should do themselves. Maybe that's okay more.

Interviewer:

Okay, now I kind of wanna get into the similarities and differences between the first compilation and the second compilation. So in your opinion, what similarities stood out the most to you between the first compilation and the second compilation?

Interviewee:

The main theme of course being a man and, well then again, I think in the first ads, in the first compilation, it's not really about being a man, but the second one more so. I think it kind of stops there.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what differences stood out the most to you between the first compilation and the second compilation?

Interviewee:

I think the first compilation was more focused on really selling product and portraying something that helps for the selling of the product. And the second compilation was more focused on like societal problems and as a bonus, maybe try to enforce their brand.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set to the second set representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Personally, I really don't watch advertisements anymore, so I'm not really sure how it's portrayed currently, but of course I watched a lot of advertisement as I was growing up and I think it has shifted a little bit if the last compilation is more in the current shifts, I guess current advertisement era, I think that it's definitely a big change. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer this one?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think the focus on being yourself in the second population was really nice. So I do really prefer those.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And do you believe that the advertising industry in general has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

I'm not sure if they have a responsibility, but it's definitely a good thing that they do take it now.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

Mm, I think either it will come back more, not necessarily toxic, but like organically masculine or it might completely fade away. We might lose all concept of gender roles in general.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

Well, they will adapt along of course with the status quo. If you watch advertisements from the sixties, they are also very on the nose with some of the things that we would never say now. So advertisements will change along.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And do you think they will have a big impact on this change? So will they have a lot of power in leading that change in a way?

Interviewee:

I think, I think that the change has to come from society. I don't think advertisements really make the change, but I think as soon as the advertisements take the change as well or make the change, then it will help in the normalization.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. Well that was the last question, so is there anything else you'd like to share?

Interviewee:

No.

Interviewer:

Okay. Great. Then I would like to thank you for your participation and if you have any more questions about the study either now or in the future just let me know and I will answer them for you.

Interviewee:

Alright.

Interviewer:

Then I will now stop the recording.

Transcript 13

Interviewer:

Alright. So first of all in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

So in the first one, the guy, he wasn't self-conscious at all. Like he knew what he was doing, and he was, well, kind of looked like he was able to do anything. And everybody loved him and wanted to be his friends, kind of I would say so. And in the second one it was portrayed as yeah, like a, as a carpenter, which is fairly typical man or well, a male job. And it was also kind of sexist, I guess, because there were many women that wanted to go to his arc because of the smell he had, I guess, as well. Which is nowadays kind of seen as well, maybe weird because he could also have been gay or whatever, but, yeah. Also, I guess not at all self-conscious, the second one, and he wanted to attract women with the odor he had.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

There are many similarities that they shouldn't be self-conscious at all, or show many.. Well, feelings weren't really a big job in the advertisement, but that they weren't self-conscious at all and that they wanted to attract people, well mainly women in this case. So that's also quite common in society, at least it's seen quite commonly and that they can, well be a carpenter that's also, like I said, very manly seen. In the first one, the guy was basically the life of the party. So, yeah, I think that's also often seen as well. The male is seen as the life of the party often, I guess. Yeah, they talk to everyone. Everyone knows that person. Yeah. I'd say so then.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Yeah, like I said the second one, like being a carpenter, it's often seen as manly attracting women is also, I guess, still the default instead of, well, men attracting men. So yeah, I guess being a hero is seen as the default. And not being self-conscious is also important for men or at least stereotypically, that's also quite important that you can show that you know what to do. No matter what it is. So, yeah. I would say so, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what exactly you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I honestly don't think it's problematic, per se. I just think that it's supposed to target a certain kind of audience, and well, it can be as seen as sexist, at least the second one. But well, I guess that could be problematic for me. Yeah, it's a hard question, but that's a good question. Yeah, I do not see it per se as problematic. I just think maybe it could be sexist. The second one and the first one, I didn't really see a problem with it. Maybe you could have also chosen a woman for the main character, but I mean, you cannot make everyone happy. That's how I look at it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic?

Interviewee:

I think in the first one, unrealistic is that, well, that a person is generally liked by everyone, because also the people in the ads, at least with whom he interacted, they were very different. So that's also a big unrealistic aspect of it. And I mean, it's just like in a movie, there's one main character many people know him or her, and I guess that's unrealistic. Just a too big diversity of people liking you, also people who look kind of like a gangster or whatever. The woman was also a random woman who eventually liked the main guy. And the first advertisement, I think I recall or recognize also a bunch of women in the second advertisement, just because of the odor or because of the arc just coming to that guy is very unrealistic. I mean, it's an arc, sure. But why only women would go to the arc, and it kind of looks like it's only because of the odor. So I think portraying the women as the animals, because in the arc only the animals enter the arc, or at least I think, and it was only female models, I'd say, that's also very unrealistic. They were portrayed as animals, which is also kind of sexist, I guess, but yeah. That would be it. Yeah.

Interviewer:

And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up, and what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

I mean an advertisement, it's supposed to target a certain kind of audience. I personally do not feel persuaded per se, by the advertisement, at least that kind of advertisement. I did not resent the advertisement because, yeah, it's just people that want to sell a product, and they think that with a certain kind of motivation they want to persuade people into buying the product. I didn't have any specific emotion. I just looked at it and thought, man, I, I'm happy. I don't feel like I need that persuasion or yeah <laugh>.

Interviewer:

And have you ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within this advertisement or those advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

Well, feeling confident in every kind of situation I think is something that happened to me, or at least I feel pressure to, which is, I mean, kind of normal. I mean, you also fake it until you make it, but I think that's not something supposed to be only for male people, but also just for anyone. I do have the feeling that men should not always show their feelings, but I'm not sure if I saw specifically that aspect in the advertisements.

Interviewer:

It can also be just advertisements in general.

Interviewee:

Okay. Well, just showing feelings. I think that's something pretty terrible to make men do, or not do, because I believe that you should just be able to show your emotions and it's fine to be sad or not be happy. Definitely be happy and whatever. Yeah. I think that's something that should change if I may say so. And I think everyone should just do whatever they want, and I would hope that there is a balance of everything that's good for everyone, and that people will go slowly towards that direction. But everyone can do whatever they want. And that's something I think that not only male, but only also female would be able to do, if that makes sense.

Interviewer:

Makes sense. Yeah. And going back to those pressures of feeling confident and showing emotions, do you think watching these specific advertisements reinforced or challenged these pressures for you in any way?

Interviewee:

Well, the first advertisement, I didn't feel pressured into anything into feeling anything or, yeah, behaving a certain way. But I do think that the first one would pressure certain people to feel confident no matter what. And also in the second one, just having that specific odor, so

females will feel attracted to you, so that may like pressure people into buying that product because of that. And yeah, I'd say that's it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity in any way? And if so, in what ways?

Interviewee:

It did not change my way of thinking as a man. I did not feel pressured into thinking in a certain direction. I don't feel persuaded by advertisement, at least that kind of advertisement. And yeah, I do believe that some people who are a little bit more self-conscious or whatever would feel pressure into thinking that way and both feeling less good about themselves because of it, because they think that's real, what they're showing in the ads.

Interviewer:

And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept of masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

I mean, I have been aware of masculinity or at least a stereotypical way of thinking of masculinity, so yeah, just attracting females and feeling confident. So I think it didn't change that much, but I do think that is also one extreme part how people think about masculinity. Yeah, that's it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

Well, especially for a self-conscious man, it would be bad, because he will feel pressure into changing into not a necessarily better version of themselves. And I do think that feeling confident is always good, but it kind of shows that you need to be liked by everyone in the first advertisement, which is not something I like, because if you want to be liked by everyone, you need to change for everyone. And I think that's also not really good for your

mental health, because I think you should just have one personality and if people don't like you, then too bad. But yeah I think being liked by everyone is not necessary, but being good towards other people is a good thing to do. But it wasn't portrayed in the advertisement, so I think for self-conscious men, it would be bad. And for a more confident men, it wouldn't really matter, or it would just reinforce that toxic masculinity in some cases.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So yeah, friendships or any type of social relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Well, I think if you are affected a lot by the advertisements, I would believe that male people would look a little bit down on their female friends. And they would look at them like not like an actual person, but more as something to win over or so, something that you want to acquire. It has been sexualized in that case a little bit, I guess. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Right. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic or sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Well, like I said before, if it's for more self-conscious men, or well, in this case, more people who feel persuaded, I would believe that just with the platonic friendships, it would be more looking down on your partner, the male, looking down at the female and yeah, being more something that you want to acquire, like a person to acquire. Well, it's not healthy.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Yeah. So I mean, if people are persuaded by that, then male people should be more confident, should have a goal of acquiring women smelling good, being more confident with everyone

and being liked by everyone, being the life of the party and have any kind of skills and being a good carpenter. So being good with tools. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

If people are self-conscious then I do believe that they will feel even more self-conscious based on the first advertisement, because they will feel like, oh, man, I will never be like that person, so why even bother? And guys that can acquire models as a girlfriend or whatever, are the cool guys because they finally made it. So yeah, being more confident about yourself, even though that can be hard. They should be liked by everyone. That is definitely a goal of the ads.

Interviewer:

Okay. Then I will now show you the second compilation of advertisements. Again, if there's anything wrong with the image or audio, please just let me know.

Interviewer:

Alright. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

I think at least in the first one, everyone was self-confident and masculinity is seen as, well, being whatever you want to be, and own it. And the second one, it's more a question about is it okay to be yourself, like it said there, and I think it was more for self-conscious people, or they portrayed more self-conscious people because they weren't sure if it was okay to be like that. But some people were confident about how they were in the second advertisement. So yeah, it was more the person talking that was questioning himself, or well I assume it was him, if it was okay to do or to be whatever they were showing in the second ad.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly, are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

Well, it depends where you are and who you hang out with. Butwell, there is a mix of both the first compilation and the second compilation. I am more for the second compilation just to be whatever he wants. I mean, of course there's always gonna be some extremes, butyeah. I think it's something I might have to get used to. I'm happy if everyone else is happy with it or not everyone else, but just if the other person is happy. I would say that's it. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements could either challenge or reinforce traditional generals or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

I think for the stereotypical way it's not okay to like other men which I do not agree with. What else? It's okay to be a virgin, it's okay to do whatever you want. But in this stereotypical way of thinking most of the second compilation, people would not agree with. It's not really stereotypical men, I would say

Interviewer:

And would you say that those stereotypes or generals that you can see, do you think in those, in this advertisement, are they more challenged or reinforced?

Interviewee:

The stereotypes are challenged in the second compilation. I think the stereotypes are definitely challenged in the first ad and in the second one, are being questioned.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Everyone seemed happy with what they were doing. Well I think it's better to become healthier and eat well than the other way around. But other than that, I don't think it really affected me in a bad way.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found maybe unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

I think everything was realistic. I do think literally everything. I do think that some people do hide it more than others. And, well, I say everything about it, so nothing specific.

Interviewer:

So how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And if so, what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

Well, I was happy that people were accepting and like I said, I do think that being healthy, maybe doing some sports is good for you, but it's not needed. It's just my own opinion, not because I'm a man, but because I want to be a healthy person. And, yeah. Well, I felt overall happy that people were happy and accepting, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

Nothing changed, because I felt like that before. I want to be accepting of everyone. Yeah, I'm still the same person. Nothing has changed. I am not gay or whatever, but I'm fine with gay people. I mean, I have friends that are gay and I don't know, it's just a given for me now.

Interviewer:

And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept, masculinity in general in any way? And if so, how?

Interviewee:

Well, I don't think there should be a specific definition for masculinity, but it did change the stereotypical way of thinking about men in more or less every sense. Everything that they were talking about. I think it kind of challenged the way of thinking of men. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

Well, they will be more accepting. I think it's definitely a good way to portray men mm-hmm and be accepting of yourself and other people. But like I said before I would prefer that people are more healthy because it's good for you and yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I think it would be a positive influence yeah, just being accepting of everyone and not like in the first compilation necessarily looking for good looking people or well friends or well, a girlfriend in this case, I think is more the focus. I think there's a good and equal balance for both, if that makes sense.

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships or sexual relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Like the latter, I think it's definitely a good influence and being more accepting of each other letting the other person do whatever. I don't think we're talking about monogamy in this case, so I won't go further into that, but yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Based on those ads? I think it's, again, just being accepting of everyone. There's no specific definition of masculinity, just being yourself is important. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I think, again, being more accepting of each other and yourself and letting everyone do whatever they want to do.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. All right, perfect. So now I kind of wanna get into the similarities and differences and just kind of the comparisons between the first compilation and the second compilation of advertisements. So between the first set of advertisements and the second set of advertisements what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

That it's about men. And confidence, at least from the first compilation to the first ad from the second compilation. Just being confident, just being accepting of yourself in the second compilation, but in the first compilation, just, yeah, being confident overall.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. And what differences stood out the most to you between the first set and the second set?

Interviewee:

Well, in the first set, it's more about going into one extreme of masculinity and the second set, just going anywhere you want to go, any direction of masculinity, it be being more healthy than the first set.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertisements, representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity and advertisements in general, and why or why not?

Interviewee:

So before we had the first set, and nowadays it's more the second set. I'd say most cultures, at least that I experience, at least more in the Western cultures, I'd say it is the case, because we are being more aware that, well, it's good for the mental health being, doing whatever you want. Of course, in some cases it doesn't go well because some people are not okay with people doing whatever they want.

Interviewer:

And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity, and what specific elements caused you to prefer this one?

Interviewee:

The second set. Being open and accepting of yourself and others. However, I do want to be healthy and all. That is the only maybe masculine part.. Yeah, I would definitely prefer the second set.

Interviewer:

Okay. And just in general, do you believe that the advertising industry has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yes. They do have a certain responsibility because they have a big reach, especially the bigger companies. And well, they can affect, especially the people who are easily persuaded

by ads. Yeah. That is also the case by politicians, for example. I mean, they're also trying to persuade people into thinking a certain way or they're informing people and yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

I think it's gonna go more towards the direction of the second set being more accepting. I do think there's gonna be a certain rollercoaster ride, about that, because there's also different cultures that are not okay with the second set of ads. Probably would also be illegal in some occasions. But yeah I think it's gonna be eventually more towards the second set. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change specifically?

Interviewee:

The role that they already have now, that they want to persuade people into thinking a certain way to sell some more products. And well, in that case, they just wanna reach out to the biggest audience.

Interviewer:

Okay. That was actually the last question. So is there anything else that you'd like to share? Any thoughts or anything else that comes to mind in regards to either the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements that we just watched, or just in advertisements in general, and the potential effects on the views of masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Great. Well, I definitely liked the questions and your topic. I think it's pretty important nowadays. It is changing more towards the second set, at least in the Western culture, at least in the Netherlands. So I do think that it's gonna become a bigger and bigger role in the world, because at least from my point of view, people are becoming more accepting and with becoming more accepting, there can also be some challenges. So, maybe those kinds of ads can ease the switch of being old school to being more modern. So yeah, I think it's a pretty good topic to talk about.

Interviewer:

Well, yeah, thank you so much. And if you have any more questions about this study, either now or in the future, you can always contact me and ask them.

Interviewee:

All right.

Interviewer:

Then I'm gonna stop the recording.

Transcript 14

Interviewer:

So I am first gonna start off by showing you the first compilation of advertisements. If there's anything wrong with the screen or the sound, just let me know.

Interviewee:

Yeah, will do. It's all good.

Interviewer:

Alright. Okay. So first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Well, in the first advertisement, in my opinion, it wasn't a lot of masculinity. It was just one guy. He was open to a party and he just greeted everyone. And in my opinion, it wasn't really necessarily a prescription of masculinity. That was just a guy's personality, he's just extremely extroverted and he knows everyone. And he was just acting tough. He was acting cool. Well, that could be sort of masculinity, but like, for example, I would do the same when I was at such a party and I knew everyone. And yeah, in my opinion, he treated everyone with respect. He didn't necessarily act cool or whatever. On the other end, on advertisement two, of course he sprays Axe, he's using his cologne and there's a lot of women coming after him. So in that way, masculinity probably is shown there. He has to build something, he has to act cool. He

sprays cologne and there will be women coming after him. So yeah, basically that. In the first advertisement, there was a lot going on. And for me, it seemed as if he treated the women as well with respect, cause he got a little towel and wiped her lips. I don't know what he was exactly doing, but.. And yeah, the second advertisement, it was more like, it's one man, he built something cool, his body is in shape. He used a little nice perfume and it's like 100 women going after him.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in those two advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

Yeah, for me I think the first advertisement of the Heineken one is like more similar to what is nowadays, in my opinion for what I've experienced at parties or even in life. It's just more respectful, more gentle. And the other one with Axe advertisement, it's also from 2012, I haven't experienced something like that in life. It's not like, okay, I'm gonna spray this little bottle of perfume, and everyone's coming, running after me. Although I sort of in the first advertisement as well, it's like, this guy is acting all cool and tough and it could portray something similar like what's happening right now. Cuz they're like, in my age, I'm 18 right now, everyone wants to be the cool guy. Everyone would wanna be tough. Everyone be wanna be that guy. So, in some way, it does portray what's happening in my life as well right now, because you know, you gotta step up. You gotta be the cool guy. For example, if you wanna get attention from girls, you want to get attention from the boys, you wanna be cool, gotta do something. And for me right now, that doesn't happen with the second advertisement as well. It's like, I'm not gonna build a big ship and everyone's gonna come after me.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Well, the second advertisement is pretty clear. The guy, he's building something, he's using his hands. He's building a big boat. Like, it's basically like what happened back in the days.

The women don't do the hard labor and the man just works his way up there and they're basically coming after him. In the first advertisement, I think it's more like, yeah, the men's there and the woman is with him, but it's, I don't necessarily think that's something to do with masculinity. It's just for me, the way it works. You're going to a prom or whatever, you got your plus one with you, so, okay. I mean, that could portray the roles of genders. I mean, it could also have been a woman right there in the main character, trying to act all tough, but it doesn't happen, so.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? Can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

I didn't find anything problematic in the first advertisement, because, as I said, it was all just, in my opinion, just cool and relaxed and gentle. And in the second one, it's in my opinion kind of problematic that someone sprays some cologne and everyone is gonna run after him. Like, I don't know, that's not how it's supposed to work.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. Okay. And in what ways did you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic or what you found realistic and why?

Interviewee:

In the second advertisement, like this guy had his physique built up and, although I don't wanna necessarily point out that you gotta have a good physique or you gotta smell good or just gotta be healthy in any other way that that means that you're gonna get girls or that you're gonna get attention, whatever. But I kind of do agree in some way that you do gotta build yourself up. Like, you don't necessarily have to go to gym and get to be a body builder, but you gotta be fit, you gotta look healthy, you gotta take care of yourself and I think that those are really important factors and we should implement them nowadays and we shouldn't be that soft, but like I said before, it doesn't for me have to be like I'm gonna spray this perfume and everyone is gonna be running after me. I don't have to build this big boat, I don't gotta do the hard working labor. Like it really depends.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. Yeah. And how did these two advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you or did any specific moments or images elicited specific emotions?

Interviewee:

Well, not really specific emotions. It was just like the first advertisement was really energetic for me, a lot was going on. It kind of made me, in some sense happy, it was just cool. It was just cool to watch like, you know, I'm a really extrovert person so I like to talk, I like to be getting a lot of attention. So I was kind of looking up to him as well, like, wow, that's quite cool. And then the second advertisement, I was just more like, kind of embarrassed, like, okay, cool, you got a boat, gonna spray your little perfume. Okay, now what? Yeah.

Interviewer:

And have you ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within those advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

Yeah, <laugh>I haven't necessarily felt like a pressure, but probably like, I think I speak for a lot of men, it was just.. Indirectly it does something to you. Like, I'm not directly thinking right now, oh, I gotta be like him, I gotta do this, I gotta do that. But it just still, I think it does something to you. And it was just a buildup of those little impulses that you get, that will lead up to you eventually making a change. Like of course online and then in many advertisements for, for example, for boxer shorts or whatever, you always see these big dudes, they got the best physique ever and they're gonna spray this little perfume and everyone is gonna go after them, like right now I'm saying like, that doesn't work for me. But still in some sense it does get to you, although it's like small and indirectly, I think those, those impulses can build up and eventually, for example, me going into the gym seeking a better physique seeking to take better care for myself to smell good, you know, so it's not necessarily one prime example that gives me the great instinct, but I think it's just small buildups, so it does something.

Interviewer:

Okay. I think that makes sense. Would you say that's more of a positive pressure that you feel or more of a negative pressure?

Interviewee:

Yeah, in my opinion, mostly that's just positive. But nowadays a lot of people interpret it as negative, but for me, unless it doesn't bother you in real life or it doesn't challenge your mental state, that you've gotta become better, you've gotta become good, like you're not good enough. And so it does that for me and it's positive and there's just a changing point whether it's gonna affect your mental health, whether it's gonna affect your daily routines. Like if you're not talking to anyone anymore, you're only focused on getting your money up, getting your physique up, if it's affecting your relations with your family, friends, whatever, for me, then it's gonna start becoming a negative. But for me it's positive unless you still can do your other things and it doesn't affect you that much. Because for me, there's nothing wrong with building yourself up, getting stronger just overall just becoming a better person.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these specific advertisements that I just showed you reinforce or challenge these pressures that you talked about?

Interviewee:

No, not at all. For me, not at all. Like the first one is just like, okay, cool. Like it could have been a scene from a movie or whatever, and the second one I was like, nah, that just ain't it. <Laugh>, you know. It could also have been that I've been like the last three years I've been kind of masculine I would say, cause I've been going to the gym, I've been taking care of myself, I've been working, you know, I've already started doing those masculine things, if you wanna call it so, so it might have been if you showed me three or four years ago that it would've, but like right now not at all.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways does watching this advertisement change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Well, for me, not at all, because, I've already kind of defined my prescription of masculinity and as I said before, it's kind of hard to change that. But I think it may have become a bit more gentle because of the first one. Just like right now a lot with the social media, TikTok, Andrew Tate, whatever, there's a lot of toxicity going on in it. And this might be, like I said, in the first advertisement, it was just more of a gentle way, more pleasant, not that harsh, like you gotta get up, you gotta do this, but more in gentle way, soft.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

These advertisements in specific, I don't think they would have a bad effect of the mental health. But like for example, the second advertisement from 2012 it could have, cause you know, he's doing his thing while there's hundreds of girls coming after him. I think that may have a little impact as I said before, not a full prime impact as I said before, I think it's just a buildup of more little indirect impulses. And it also has to do probably something with your state yourself. Like if you're already insecure, if you're already doubting about something you are, you're not sure whether it's your body or that you're broke, you don't have any money for example, then it may, but these advertisements in specific, I don't think they would.

Interviewer:

Okay. Then what effect could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So non-romantic relationships, but just between friends or any type of social connections of men?

Interviewee:

I think just the first advertisement has a lot to do with that Second one, I don't think so a lot. So it's just nothing at all. First advertisement, it like kind of urges you to make a cool entry with everyone. Like, okay, he's my friend, he's my friend, I've gotta do something special with all of them. Although like in real life for me it is just maybe one or two friends that I've got a cool entry with and the rest is just like, yo, what's up? Okay. We cool. It might portray that someone has the urge now to make a cool impression or a cool start with someone in

there. But like for me, I'm not that influential. So for me personally, I wouldn't feel any urge or any needs to change something in my relations right now, but it could to someone else.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Like between men, men or female or just in general? <Laugh>.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Any relationships.

Interviewee:

I mean in the first advertisement you don't see any gay couple for example. So it could portray that you've gotta be with a woman there cause you know you've gotta have a plus one, you've gotta be combined together. You are a duo, you are a set. And it is in the advertisement that a lot of the male characters are basically the main characters. The women are in the background. Like they're also catching the guy who is almost pretending like he's falling. So I mean that could portray something like that. But yeah, overall it just gives me the image that the men are still the men of the women are women. The men are above the women right now. Although it, like for me, I don't really think that is how it works, but someone could interpret it like that.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you think it could specifically impact how men approach romantic relationships or women or any type of partners in general?

Interviewee:

Well, that was kind of unclear in this advertisement for me. There was of course a lot going on and yeah, the only thing I saw someone approaching their partner was by wiping their lips, which I remember. So I think that was still a nice gesture. For me that's still a positive thing. The second ad does have portrayed maybe some negative things, cause it was just this one guy and everyone is running up to him. Like, for me, nobody should be treated like that. We

can't treat women like that. Like, you know, okay, there's one cool guy, okay, whatever. He can't just have 200 girls standing in front of him and just acting like they're all just nothing to him.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Well, I think in the first advertisement the beliefs could be to be gentle, to be nice, but to still make an impression, still be cool. I think that's quite okay. Rather, you don't necessarily have to be cool, you don't have to make such an entrance whatever. And the second advertisement, it will make men believe that you've gotta be strong, you've gotta be handsome, you've gotta smell great. You've gotta be able to build a big arc. You know, like, I don't think that's of this time anymore, but it does portray in that ad.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portray of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Well, as I said before, for me it doesn't necessarily impact me that much that I would change my behavior at all. But still it could affect someone, for example, in the second advertisement to act tough, to get all tough to feel like, oh wow, I'm the main character in my life. Wow, look at me. I'm so cool. Well in the first advertisement it's kind of the same but still in a more gentle way, more softly. Just more like, okay, just more to the norm, whereas the second advertisement is just all crazy.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. Then I will now show you a second compilation of advertisements. Again, if there's anything wrong with the sound or image, just let me know,

Speaker 3:

Will do.

Interviewer:

Alright, so yeah, first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements and can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

Well of course in the first advertisement it's quite clear, you're literally stating what you can do to, you know, be masculine. You rather have a six pack, you'd rather got the moves, you'd rather have this big suit and, you know, the main character there portrays all of those traits. But they say that you don't have to have all of them, just one of them, you just gotta be yourself. The second advertisement also shows a lot of elements of masculinity and really makes an impact for me. Cause it's kind of confronting like you gotta do all this, you gotta be this, is it okay to be yourself? The main character is more like set away, put away set in the dark, whereas the first advertisement is more like hyping up, put in a positive light.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

Yeah, in the second advertisement it was kind of similar to what's happening in real life right now. I don't know if it's just something we humans do, but like there is some role model that you gotta fit into to be accepted. And in my opinion, if you're not accepted the way you are, you either got the wrong friends or you're in the wrong area of people at that moment, but it's still happening right now. Like if you got long hair, you are weird. If you don't like sports, you're weird. If you're wearing pink, you're gay. Like those are real prime examples that's happening right now. I've experienced it myself as well. Some people would make fun of me when I was skinny, whatever. And at the time like it didn't bother me at all, but like three years ago, I would look back and like, wow, I was skinny.

Interviewer:

And in regards to the first advertisement, do you think that, how do you think that goes in line with society in general right now?

Interviewee:

It would be perfect if that would go in line with society right now, but for me it doesn't, cause you know, it's all positive. You don't have to have all this, you can just be yourself.

Everything is okay, but that doesn't work like that roght now. It's not okay if you don't have all of it. It's not okay if you're missing out on one of them. If you don't have a six pack, it's not okay, but it comes down to the same thing.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles of stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Yeah. The first advertisement actually challenges the way we look at men right now, cause for methe way they describe menhow we have to beis pretty positive and basically the best thing that could be like you don't have to have all of this just be yourself and we all have something that makes us special. Like I would prefer to have that right now<laugh> in real life than have what we have right now. In the second one, Of course it basically portrays how it is right now. All these questions we have as men and basically what we all have to be and that's basically reality right now.

Interviewer:

And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you think of specific examples of what exactly you found problematic ?

Interviewee:

In the first advertisement I didn't find anything problematic. It basically says yeah everything is okay. In the second advertisement everything that was called is problematic. Because he basically said, yeah, you're not accepted if you don't fit in the role model of being a man. Yeah. It's basically just whole advertisement, making examples of what was wrong with you.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found unrealistic or realistic?

Interviewee:

Like in the first advertisement it said, well if you don't have a six pack, you got this or you got that, that's basically unrealistic. Cause like for me it's okay to just have one thing that makes you special. Like okay, you got big nose, cool, you got good dance moves. Okay. But that doesn't work in society right now. Like okay cool, you got good dance moves but do you have six back? No. So why are you talking <laugh>? And the second advertisement, all the elements that are called are realistic.

Interviewer:

And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up and what moments or images specifically elicited those feelings or emotions?

Interviewee:

The first advertisement actually quite made me happy, it was encouraging. It all was just giving me good hope that it's okay if you don't have everything, it's okay to be yourself. And the second advertisement was more confronting, scaring specifically the one where they call it okay to be skinny, cause I was really skinny three years ago. So yeah, that was kind of confronting.

Interviewer:

And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity?

Interviewee:

I think, first advertisement kind of encouraged me to accept that I don't have everything, that I can't have everything. And the second advertisement was really confronting so it gave me just like a feeling like okay, I've already changed enough, it's okay the way I am right now and I don't have to challenge myself or anyone else to become this.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm <affirmative>. Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general?

Interviewee:

Like for me, I kind of had a harsh definition of masculinity before, but maybe I've realized now that it's okay to not have everything, especially from the second advertisement. It was like, okay, yeah, we don't have to be so harsh on ourselves. Like it's okay to be harsh sometimes and you know, strive for a better person becoming a better person, but it's not okay to put everyone away like that.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general?

Interviewee:

I think the first advertisement could be very encouraging. It gives a lot of people hope, mainly positive. The second one probably will also positively affect mental health, cause maybe it encourages people to feel okay about themselves, have all these questions that they're feeling heard. Okay. I'm not the only one with this problem. There are many other people, because most men don't talk about their real emotions a lot of times and this could encourage them to speak up or to feel basically not feel alone.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

I think it could have a positive effect cause it basically says you're okay the way you are, you're accepted. Just be like, you wanna be, you don't have to be the tough guy. We don't have to have all these internal fights with each other. Well I'm better, I'm cooler whatever. You're the way that you are, I'm the way that I am.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Haven't really seen any big romantic relationships in these advertisements, but it could be that you're probably less scared to do something, cause a lot of men, they're like, oh wow, I don't have a six pack. I I don't have good dance moves. I'm afraid to approach a girl, for example, or a man if you would like <laugh>. So it could indirectly encouraged some men to just do it and go for it.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

I think this could be more softening cause like my perception of what I had before is like basically pretty harsh. And I think a lot of men have it right now. They have to be strong, they have to have a lot of money, they have to be thst guy and this kind of states it's okay the way you are right now. You don't have to necessarily make up or do things which is not yourself.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

I think this could have a big effect on the behavior, in a way that we accept each other more. We may feel more accepted may feel more free to do things that you like that basically portray that you can be and are yourself. But realistically, I don't think this has really any effect on it in real life, because, it's just one advertisement. I've seen it now one time and next day or two days I think I'm gonna forget about it. So a real big impact I don't think it will have, but if maybe you keep repeating this, we will see a change in the future.

Interviewer:

And now I kind of wanna get into the comparison between the first compilation and the second compilation. Sowhat similarities would you say stood out the most to you between the first compilation of advertisements compared to the second one?

Interviewee:

The first compilation of advertisements basically portrayed a way that we have to be to check all the boxes, you have to have good physique, you gotta smell good, you gotta be all cool. And the second set of advertisements basically showed it's okay to not have all of it. It's okay to be yourself. It's okay to basically only have one or even nothing that fits in being a masculine man. That's basically the main difference.

Interviewer:

And now if you compare the first compilation to the second one, what was most similar between those two compilations?

Interviewee:

Yeah, it's most similar that they both portray a way of masculinity. They both showed what we all should be or what we all should have, but as I said before, the second one is more encouraging and it's okay to not have all of it in the first one. Yeah. Basically, they all portray masculinity.

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. You've already kind of mentioned it, but what were the most prominent differences that stood out to you between the first set and the second set?

Interviewee:

The first set was basically telling us, indirectly showing us, what we all should be. That we should all have all these factors, we gotta be cool, we gotta have an entrance, we gotta be looking good. And the second set of advertisements basically was encouraging us, telling us it's okay to not have all of it, be more soft.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertisements representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity in advertisements in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I don't necessarily focus that much on advertisements and masculinity itself. So I really don't have any idea.

Interviewer:

That's okay. And which compilation did you prefer in their representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer that one?

Interviewee:

Like of course the answer here to give is the second one, cause it makes me feel more welcome, more accepted. But on the other hand, the first one could encourage some men to just step up and be a better self, cause like the problem right now is okay, we gotta accept everyone how they are, but it's also not okay to have a lot of weak and and soft people in this generation. Like, I don't wanna put it like that way, but you know what I mean, it's okay if you can't dance. It's okay if you don't have a sixpack, but it's not okay to sit on your butt all day and do nothing with your life. So I'm basically polarizing in between of them.

Interviewer:

Okay. And do you believe that advertising in general, so not specifically just those advertisements, but just in general, do you think that advertising has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why do you not think so?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I think kind of. You do have to give a healthy portrayal of masculinity, but on the other end you're free of speech here and it's basically your opinion that you want to share. If you think we gotta be harsh on masculinity, you gotta show what you wanna show. Of course the best thing is just to search something in between. Like we don't gotta be that soft, but we don't gotta be that harsh. It's difficult for me to say, cause, you know, all in all the one who's putting out these advertisements, it's his own opinion. He can do whatever he want.

Interviewer:

And how do you think the definition of masculinity will change in the future?

Interviewee:

Like right now as I'm seeing the definition is getting harder and harder, it's getting just more harsh, more toxic in a sense. It depends though, cause like right now it's just an upward trend for me personally. It is becoming more toxic, more harsh and eventually there's gonna be a

turning point, where we're gonna say, okay, this is not good enough, it's gonna stop now and I think it's just gonna plateau. Might as well decrease as well. But I think right now it's just an upward trend becoming more toxic and toxic.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can you elaborate with what exactly within this portrayal is toxic?

Interviewee:

Like for example, right now all you're seeing on social media, all you're seeing is on TikTok, like get out of bed, go to the gym, get your money up, do all those things. And I don't necessarily think that is a bad thing, but it could get out of hand, cause as I said earlier before, if it's gonna affect your mental health, it's gonna affect your other relationships. If it's, for example, gonna affect your school grades, then it's gonna become a bad thing and it's up to a certain extent that it's okay and it's acceptable. But if you're constantly seeing 24/7, every day, every video you see on social media is about that. You gotta get up, you gotta be better. You gotta do this, you gotta do that. It's not good.

Interviewer:

Okay. And this change that you think is gonna happen in the future, what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

Like advertisements in specific, I don't think there's gonna be that big of a role. The biggest role I think is just social media in general. Like, not even advertisements, but yeah, you could kind of put social media in a box with advertisements as well, but it's just gonna be the main influence, that's gonna make a big of a change.

Interviewer:

Okay. Well, that was the last question. Is there anything else that you have thoughts about or that you want to share in regards to the portrayal of masculinity? Either in those specific advertisements I showed you or just in general in advertisements and the potential effects that these could have?

Interviewee:

No, not specifically, it's just that we don't gotta get too soft within those advertisements. Like it's okay that we say you're okay as you are, but on the other hand we do gotta, you know, kind of portray something that it's not okay to sit on your butt all day and do nothing with your life. Like it's okay if you don't tick all the boxes, but for me it's also not okay to just do nothing at all. You gotta do something, whether it is working out, whether it is getting your money up, or whether it's getting your dance moves together, you know, just something.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. Alright then. I hope you have a good rest of your day and if there's any more questions in regards to the study, you can always contact me and let me know. All right. I'm gonna stop the recording. Yes. And uh,

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Interviewer:

So, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? Can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

So the male characters are very manly. They do a lot of manly activities. In the first one, it's like sports and physical fun pushing around. Having a beer, of course, is very mainly interacting with women in a certain way. And in the second one, one man can build a whole wooden ship and then all the women come to one man, that's, that's masculine, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I guess in the first one, the Heineken ad I would say most parts are like very realistic, like the interactions the guy has with everyone around him. I see that as well with a lot of male friends, that's a way of interacting that a lot of guys have, especially the pushing around, just

having fun in that way. I guess the second one is a little bit more like an older kind of thing. I don't think nowadays one man can build a whole wooden ship on his own <laugh>. Maybe a while back everyone would know how to work wood and stuff, but now I don't think most men could do even a fraction. So I guess that's not realistic anymore. And of course, the body of the man, like having a naked chest and then having good abs and whatever I guess that's realistic for some, and maybe not realistic for others.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements either challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Well, definitely the second one it reinforces the one man and a lot of women kind of stereotype, which I believe is not realistic at all, but maybe something that is perceived, and in the first, I guess those, as I said, are realistic. They reinforce that boys like to have fun, a little bit more rough fun than girls might have. They drink beer, I guess that's a stereotype, I wouldn't necessarily say a wrong stereotype. I think it's quite common that those things are things that boys do. So, yeah, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the meal portrayal in these advertisements problematic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah. That one man can have a lot of girls attracted to them, that might be problematic, not including other sexualities. Portraying one man with a lot of women instead of just one traditional woman might be a little bit problematic. I don't know. It's kind of a vague subject. I guess the man with a very good body as well could be problematic with painting an unrealistic picture for some people. For the first one, I have a little bit more trouble finding something that is very problematic, I guess if you're a man who doesn't drink beer <laugh>, it might make you feel left out or something. But no, I, I think those things in the first one are realistic to most and not necessarily a thing that is bad if you don't do those things, or if you don't want to do those things. I don't think that's bad nowadays. But yeah, it's, it's a portrayal

of a very manly man. Maybe that gives a feeling of I have to behave like that, but I think the second one is worse.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

So, yeah, definitely the first one is very realistic. A guy throwing a basketball at a hoop, I think if one of my male friends saw a basketball hoop and a basketball there, they would have a shot <laugh>, I definitely think so. Drinking beer, I think most men still mostly drink beer if they drink alcohol. Yeah, pushing, around those things are quite realistic for most even though there are definitely boys and men who don't like that stuff. But it does apply to the majority, I would say. And then, yeah, the second one a man being very crafty with like wood and other materials and stuff, I don't think that's very realistic anymore. So yeah, a while back maybe, maybe most men could do that. I would guess that in my grandpa's generation, most of the guys would know how to build something out of wood, but I would have no clue. And I think most of my friends would have no clue. So I guess that's less realistic. Yeah, those are the most important I would say.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

The first one, the Heineken ad, definitely gave me emotions, like feelings of recognition, kind of like, oh yeah, that's, what I would do, that's what my friends would do. Nothing too bad in there, no bad emotions. The second one, I wouldn't necessarily say I had bad emotions either. My thought process goes like, oh, maybe it's a little bit of an older ad, or guess actually my very first thought was like, oh yeah, this is an Axe commercial, and they always have those, like men and women interacting in very traditional ways. So I just wasn't surprised anymore. But yeah, that's maybe for Axe specifically, but yeah, no, I didn't have very strong emotions for the second one.

Interviewer:

Okay. And have you ever felt any pressure to conform to traditional norms that were depicted in advertising? And if so, can you specify what elements within these advertisements led you to feel this pressure?

Interviewee:

Well, that's a difficult question. <Laugh>, I'm not sure. So, I don't drink beer. I don't like beer. That's, that's definitely a thing that comes back in your life as a guy. I would say nowadays most girls drink beer as well, so that's not really.. I guess it's still a masculinity topic because it's still a stereotype. So yeah, because of ads, like the Heineken ad and just other beer ads, it doesn't really matter which beer ads because of those, I would guess most people expect just any guy to drink beer. People do act surprised when I say, oh, no, I don't drink beer. I don't know if it's because of the ads. I don't know if I feel like that because of ads. I think it's more the people around me and their interactions that make me feel that way than ads specifically and I don't think I have any other experiences with ads all that much. I don't really pay attention to a lot of ads, so, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these specific advertisements either reinforce or challenge these pressures for you in any way?

Interviewee:

I mean, yeah. The second one is like, men drink beer, I guess that's it, but yeah, I guess you can't really avoid the kind of pressure to drink alcohol nowadays. It's just, I don't see a way in which you make an alcohol ad, without giving the vibe that everyone drinks alcohol everyone drinks beer. But yeah, not specifically that it reinforces my pressures, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity? And what specific elements impacted this change? If there was a change?

Interviewee:

I don't think it changed my perspective all that much. The first one reinforced maybe a little bit, like I recognized most of the things happening, so there it felt like, oh, yeah, I guess I fit in the stereotypical male behavior.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements change your definition of the concept masculinity in general in any ways? And if so, how, and what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewee:

No, I think these two are perfect examples of masculine men. Like the first man didn't drink the martini, I guess. So yeah, that's a man, and that's a view of masculinity that I guess I have, but my view of masculinity is also that it's the stereotype of masculinity and not necessarily what masculinity should be. So yeah, the ads did a good job of portraying the masculine stereotype.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men in general? And why do you think so?

Interviewee:

I guess if you're a man who definitely doesn't do these manly things, especially from the first ad, like you don't like sports, you don't like pushing your friends around, you do like martinis those kind of things, then I guess you could feel left out. You could feel like you are not doing the manly thing, and I guess that could impact your mental health. Yeah, I guess so. And the second one I feel like just looking at it feels very unrealistic in just a lot of ways. So I think the second one has less impact on mental health than the first one.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships? So non-romantic relationships, for example, friendships or any other type of social relationships of men?

Interviewee:

Yeah, so the pushing around the rough having fun kind of things, those are portrayed as common and normal there, which is fine. And if you don't like it, you might start doing it because you see it in a lot of ads and you see it in a lot of movies, et cetera. I guess that could have an impact. I still found the guy in the first ad pretty open and kind. He pushed that one man, he was caught and they laughed it off, which is a good kind of rough and not a kind of rough that you also encounter as a guy, that is also sometimes seen as normal among guys. So I guess it's not too bad, but yeah, maybe the more rough attitude of guy relations.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these ads have on romantic relationships of men or sexual relationships in general?

Interviewee:

Yeah, the second one really gives the vibe one man can get a lot of women with the right body, with the right wooden ship with the right skills, I guess. So if you're very manly, then you can get women lining up for you. I think that's very unrealistic. And with that thought in mind, going into the world for romantic relationships is not gonna be beneficial for either the man or the woman. The man is going to throw a woman away, like it's nothing. And no, that's not it. It's a pretty bad image the second one, and I think the first one had a lot less to do with romantic situations, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

As I said, the first one feels realistic, and it feels realistic because that's what I see in my environment. So I would guess that the ad doesn't necessarily impact that image too much for most men, because they see it in their environment either way. Of course, if from birth on you get to see those videos, those advertisements, then there's no way that this kind of attitude is gonna change at some point. But I think that even without ads like these, just the environment keeps it that way. And yeah, again, the second one feels so unrealistic that I don't feel like a lot of people are gonna think I can build a wooden ship so that's not great. But yeah, I guess

some men could think, hey, I'm not really crafty with the wood, or tools, et cetera. So that's not great. Yeah, maybe a little bit, but not too much the second one.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

So yeah, the first one, again, the rough playing, the pushing, the throwing a basketball every opportunity they get. And in that case also succeeding. The more I think about it, the more there is to that ad, that ad has a lot of elements like the drive to success in throwing the basketball in the basket in one go. And the second one, yeah, as I said with the romantic stuff behavior towards women is in the second one, maybe most influenced, yeah. And the first one maybe drinking beer is what you're supposed to do, but yeah, I guess that's it.

Interviewer:

Okay, great. Then I will now show you the second compilation. Again, if there's any issues with the sound or image or anything, just let me know.

Interviewer:

Alright, so first of all, in your opinion, how is masculinity portrayed in these advertisements? And can you describe the male characters in the ads and their behavior?

Interviewee:

So yeah, this ad definitely wants to portray the man like with masculinity in mind, because they want to challenge the idea of masculinity. This is great. There's a lot of male characters in these ads, and they all have something that doesn't necessarily fit with the masculine stereotype. So, yeah. The second one was just the questions about what is okay to do as a man. First one is just portraying a lot of men who lack at least one thing that is masculine, not liking sports, not having abs. Yeah. Those things.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in your opinion, how does the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements compare to the portrayal of masculinity in society more broadly? Are there any discrepancies or similarities that you noticed?

Interviewee:

I would say masculinity is getting better in the way of accepting more things that do not necessarily fit within masculinity. So I guess it's quite realistic to now say within masculinity, it's okay to not like sports, like cats. What else was there? Don't have a perfect body, be the small spoon, those kind of things. I guess that's more and more realistic. Nowadays, it doesn't feel like masculinity is being upheld actively by people. Like if you say something like, I don't like sports, a guy is not gonna say, oh, you're not a man. So I guess it's more realistic now. It's quite realistic that we accept deficiencies in masculinity, if I could say it like that.

Interviewer:

Okay. And can you provide specific examples of how these advertisements challenge or reinforce traditional gender roles or stereotypes?

Interviewee:

Yeah, they definitely challenge the masculinity. At one point they mentioned experimenting with other guys. That's definitely not a stereotypical masculine thing. Just the soft spots, being softer as a guy, it definitely challenges the stereotypes that everyone would have while feeling realistic to what is going on in the world right now.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And in what ways do you find the male portrayal in these advertisements problematic? Can you provide specific examples of what you found problematic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, in these ads, it's not problematic because they really paint a picture that masculinity is going on and we are slowly accepting, or we should be more accepting of less masculine men. So I think it's not problematic. It's more very nice.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways do you find the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements realistic? And can you provide specific examples of what you found realistic and what you found unrealistic and why?

Interviewee:

Yeah, so it's realistic that we have more tolerance. It's kind of a weird way of saying it, but yeah, more tolerance to less masculinity. And at the same time, the things that are mentioned are still things that fit within masculinity very well. Definitely sports being the tough guy just liking women, not liking men. Those things are still stereotypical masculine things, I guess. But the masculinity is less strict and less forceful, in a way, nowadays. So yeah, that's realistic.

Interviewer:

And how did these advertisements make you feel? Did any specific emotions come up for you? And what specific moments or images elicited those emotions?

Interviewee:

When I saw the first one was an Axe, I was like, oh, I just said that Axe commercials have this kind of masculine stereotype. Yeah, I was surprised that it was an Axe commercial. But I was in both ads thinking, oh, good job at portraying this in an ad, and showing this to everyone, bringing attention to it. Just a question, what is the second ad company?

Interviewer:

It's called lux, but it's basically the British version of Axe.

Interviewee:

Okay. That makes sense. Okay. So Axe is definitely campaigning for less toxic masculinity. That's great. Yeah, no I guess it's just positive emotions, emotions of, oh, great, that they're working on this. That's good.

Interviewer:

Okay. And in what ways did watching these advertisements change your feelings towards your own masculinity and what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewee:

I don't think there was a change in this case. It was like, I don't really like to think of masculinity as the standard in any way. So these advertisements just reinforced my thoughts, like, it's bad and I don't really want to force myself in masculinity or force my friends or people around me in masculinity. So, no, there was no change, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And did watching these advertisements in any way change your definition of the concept, masculinity in general? And if so, what specific elements impacted this change?

Interviewee:

I guess if you see enough of these ads, then the idea of masculinity is gonna change to a more tolerant or broader sense, instead of being one image of a guy that all men should strive for, I guess. For me, it didn't change that, because I already don't care about masculinity all that much. But yeah, think that it's shown on television quite often is a good thing to change the perspective on masculinity for a lot of people.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the mental health of men, and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

I think this is gonna be.. How would you say that? Just a way of support to the men who don't feel perfectly fit in the squares of masculinity, I guess. So if you don't feel like a masculine man, then ads like these could make you feel more accepted, or make you feel like we're going the right direction. And I guess that's good for your mental health.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on platonic relationships of men? And why do you think so?

Interviewee:

That might be difficult. I think in friendships, it still would still have.. If you have a group of guys and they're talking to each other, it's still pretty manly, it's still rough. And being a tough

guy, doing stuff like that. And making people more accepting of other things, might change the attitudes that the guys talk to each other with. It feels like it could do that, it could have an effect, but I'm very unsure if it's gonna have an effect.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And, in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on romantic relationships or sexual relationships of men, and why do you think so?

Interviewee:

So yeah, definitely more accepting of other relationships than just a man and a woman. And within the relationships of a man and a woman not having the man always be the big spoon, being the tough one, the protector and going the other way around. The man can cook nowadays, the man can stay at home and clean, instead of that always having to be the woman. I guess that it contributes to that change, to that direction.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the beliefs of men towards what masculinity should entail?

Interviewee:

Yeah, these ads definitely contribute to an evolution in the idea of what masculinity should be, that's gonna change the actual idea of masculinity. I feel like if someone says, this is masculine, this is not masculine, the word masculine has this load for most, I would say for me as well, that says it's a stereotype. The word is a stereotype on its own, it feels like. So for me, it doesn't matter what masculinity means, but what masculinity should entail gets more broader by advertisements like these.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And in your opinion, what effects could the portrayal of masculinity in these advertisements have on the general behavior of men?

Interviewee:

Yeah, acting more accepting towards other men towards the men who don't fit in with the masculinity necessarily, maybe I would still guess that the people who are within the bubbles of where masculinity is very important, that those people don't really care about advertisements like these, they just keep their masculine bubble and everyone in there fits within masculinity, or they want to fit in with masculinity. But yeah, for the other guys might maybe treat each other with more respect, more understanding, and then relationships between woman and men can be more equal instead of traditional with roles.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. Now I kind of wanna get into the differences and similarities and just the overall comparisons between the first compilation and the second compilation. So between the first compilation of advertisements and the second compilation what similarities stood out the most to you?

Interviewee:

I guess the very first advertisement of the first compilation, that one really checked most of the boxes of masculinity, and I would say that both advertisements in the second compilation also checked most of the boxes of masculinity by mentioning them, not by saying it's masculine. So I guess they both have the right idea of what the masculine image is, I guess that's the biggest similarity. Then the attitude of the advertisement is completely different, so, yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what differences stood out the most to you between the two compilations?

Interviewee:

Yeah, so the first compilation definitely reinforces the idea of masculinity and that you should act masculine as a man. And then the second one, definitely tries to challenge it and mentions that you can be just whoever you want.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Okay. And do you find the shift from the portrayal of masculinity in the first set of advertisements to the second set of advertisements representative of the shift in the portrayal of masculinity and advertisements in general? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I guess so. I guess in most ads that would previously be like connected with the men and not necessarily the women, those start to include more different men with other sexualities and women. So they definitely go out of their way to say it's not necessarily masculine, now it's for everyone. And then in ads that are specifically for women, traditionally, those start to include men as well. So I guess all those kind of little things in advertisements contribute to the shifts of masculinity being more broad or maybe disappearing at some point, even though I don't see that happening, but yeah, getting more tolerant, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what compilation of advertisements did you prefer in their representation of masculinity and what specific elements caused you to prefer this one?

Interviewee:

Yeah, definitely the second one, because the second one is more tolerant. It's more accepting, it's more fitting with the times now, saying you can be whoever you want to be. Then the very first ad of the first compilation was quite fun to watch because you recognize a lot of things being a guy. It just shows you, oh yeah, we do all do the same things kind of, but yeah, it's a good thing that they portray masculinity as something you don't have to adhere to. So yeah, definitely the second compilation. I would like to see more of those ads on television and then the first one, nowadays.

Interviewer:

Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative>. Okay. And do you believe that the advertising industry in general has a responsibility to provide a healthy and inclusive portrayal of masculinity? And why or why not?

Interviewee:

That's always a hard one. So I would say if they are completely ignorant, and even though masculinity, the idea is trying to change, people are trying to change it and they're ignoring that and they're still putting out ads from the first compilation, then I would say it's your responsibility to not act in that way. I don't think they necessarily have the responsibility to be the revolution themselves, kind of, to instigate to change themselves, but if they can

contribute to it or not damage the change, that is definitely a responsibility, I would say. But I guess it doesn't feel like a responsibility because it's just a bad idea for them to go against it. Even though most people are for it, it doesn't feel like a responsibility. It just feels like a smart thing to do for them, I guess.

Interviewer:

<Affirmative>. Okay. And how do you think, in your opinion, the definition of masculinity will change in future?

Interviewee:

It will get more broad, more tolerant, more accepting towards the men who don't fit within the picture of masculinity now. Even though I would hope for things like masculinity to disappear at some point, or to at least not play a big role, I would say in the near future, it's not gonna disappear that easily. Definitely in some regions of the world, but also even the Netherlands, I would say that specific parts of the Netherlands are a little bit behind on the revolution towards the less manly men, so, I don't think it's gonna disappear. I think it's gonna keep slowly getting to the right point and I'm hopeful for the change to accelerate a little bit, to go a little bit faster, but I would guess it's gonna take a few generations of people. I would say that the generation who's now around 10 years old, if they are about 30 or something, I would say we're pretty far, just because then everyone has gotten this upbringing of all different perspectives through social media and being woke, I guess <laugh>. So I guess at that point, you can look towards a better masculinity, I guess.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what role do you believe advertisements will play in this change?

Interviewee:

Yeah, so they should try to go with the flow. It would be amazing if one advertisement or multiple companies, who do advertisements in masculine topics take a leading role in the change. That would be amazing, if they actually go on and put a lot of ads in there with really revolutionary ideas, et cetera. I think the last two ads tried to do something like that, especially the second one. I think the first one still felt like an ad for their product, and the second one really felt like an ad against masculinity. So I guess more ads like those who just challenge the belief and do not necessarily seem to have an alternative motive, those are

great. Again, I wouldn't necessarily say it's their responsibility, but if they could take that role, it's a very good thing.

Interviewer:

Okay. Cool. Well, that was actually the last question. So is there anything else you would like to share?

Interviewee:

No, I think I mentioned all my thoughts in the questions you asked.

Interviewer:

Okay, perfect. Well then I would like to thank you for your participation and if you have any more questions about the study either now or in the future, always feel free to reach out and contact me and I will make sure to answer them for you.

Interviewee:

Okay, great.

Interviewer:

Perfect. Then I'm gonna stop the recording.