

Gender Stereotypes in Advertising to Children

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Resumo

This study focuses on understanding the use of gender stereotypes on what toy companies are saying to children (advertising appeals and complexity of advertising copy), how this message is transmitted (actors and voice-overs), and in which context (location of ads and interactions). The content analysis of 452 television ads demonstrates that the Brazilian institutional environment allows for the intensive use of gender stereotypes in diverse aspects of the ads. These ads tend to push girls into non-dominant and domestic roles and boys into more dominant, active, and adventurous roles. Readability analysis of advertising copy demonstrates that ads for girls are made more simply, contradicting extant theory on girls' early development. These ads prime a less challenging and cognitively stimulating mindset for female children, replicating historical gender stereotypes rooted in several characteristics of the institutional environment.

