

# Magazine Advertisements Target Teens



Image courtesy of Steve Stewart

By Rebecca Ferrie

We have all heard that tweens and teens are the richest generation in history. Part of this is explained by couples who are having fewer children later in life, resulting in parents being financially established and spending more on their fewer children (Grant & Steven, 2006). The consumer power of young people is growing in importance, and it has been shown that teens have power to influence their parent's spending (Grant & Steven, 2006). All of this has led to teenagers being bombarded with advertisements as many of the traditional taboos on advertising directly to children and teens are being eroded away (Grant & Steven, 2006).

What does this mean for magazines? Teen

magazines are loaded with ads and editorials and these are often difficult to distinguish. The articles themselves are full of merchandise plugs. From beauty products to the latest fashion, product placement is huge in teen magazines. Teens are aware that they are being targeted, but that does not mean that they are not influenced. Some magazines such as *Blue Jean Magazine* published no advertisements (Blue Jean magazine, 2007). Unfortunately this magazine had a short life surviving for only two years, 1996-1998 (Blue Jean magazine, 2007).

For librarians, it is impossible to avoid stocking ad-heavy magazines, but as a balance these magazines could be used in a programming exercise. Raising awareness and shining a light on ads targeted to teens would be a great group discussion topic. For more programming ideas and resources on media literacy see this website.

## Media Literacy Clearinghouse

<http://www.frankwbakcr.com/magazines.htm>

## References

Blue Jean magazine. (2007). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved April 8, 2007, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue\\_Jean\\_Magazine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_Jean_Magazine)

Grant, I.J. & Steven, G.R. (2006). Communicating culture: An examination of the buying behaviour of 'tweenage' girls and the key societal communicating factors influencing the buying process of fashion clothing. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 14(2), 101-115. Retrieved April 7, 2007, from ABI Inform Global database.