

Communicating Empowerment through Education:
Learning about Women's Health in *Chatelaine*

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Abstract:

To understand the ways in which Canadian women's health knowledge is influenced by media texts, this paper explores the presentation of women's health in Canada's longest running women's magazine, *Chatelaine*. Reflections on the positioning of women's bodies in Canadian society are explored to understand the evolution of the discussion of women's bodies throughout the 20th century. Perspectives on power, the body, and sexuality are traced to understand more recent discussions on women's health in the Canadian public sphere. Feminist theorizing on the evolution and emergence of the modern female body in Western society is relied upon to obtain contemporary perspectives on women's bodies and health. To study the ways in which such themes are presented in *Chatelaine*, a content analysis guided by frame theory is used to examine the ways in which *Chatelaine* frames information pertaining to women's health from 1928 to 2010. Findings demonstrate *Chatelaine's* growth in women's health content, as evidenced in the increase in the volume of health content in the magazine and the sophistication and diversification of discussions on women's bodies and wellness. It is suggested that *Chatelaine's* dedication to the coverage of women's health aids in the empowerment of women, as knowledge about their bodies and wellness is an essential tool necessary for bodily empowerment and female autonomy.

Keywords: Canadian Media; *Chatelaine*; Content Analysis; Feminism; Feminist Theory; Frame Analysis; Women's Health; Women's Magazines

Résumé:

Pour comprendre les sphères dans lesquelles la santé des femmes canadiennes est influencée par les textes des médias, cet article explore la présentation de la santé des femmes au Canada dans le plus vieux magazine féminin canadien soit *Châtelaine*. Les réflexions sur le positionnement du corps des femmes au Canada sont étudiées pour suivre l'évolution de la discussion du corps féminin tout au long du 20^{ème} siècle. Les perspectives sur le pouvoir, le corps et la sexualité sont esquissées pour mieux comprendre les récentes discussions sur la santé des femmes dans la sphère publique canadienne. Le féminisme émettant des théories sur l'évolution et l'émergence du corps féminin moderne dans la société occidentale se fie à obtenir des perspectives de notre époque sur la santé et le corps des femmes. Pour étudier les façons sur lesquelles de tels thèmes sont présentés dans *Châtelaine*, une analyse de contenu guidée dans un cadre théorique est utilisée pour examiner les manières dans lesquelles *Châtelaine* encadre l'information se rapportant à la santé des femmes entre 1928 et 2010. Les conclusions démontrent l'accroissement de *Châtelaine* sur le contenu de la santé des femmes, telle l'évidence de l'augmentation du volume du contenu santé dans le magazine et la sophistication et la diversification des discussions sur les corps féminins et le bien-être. Il est suggéré que l'attachement de *Châtelaine* pour la couverture au profit de la santé des femmes facilite les pleins pouvoirs des femmes, comme la découverte de leurs corps et bien-être comme étant un outil essentiel et nécessaire pour le pouvoir corporel et l'autonomie féminine.

Mots-clés: Analyse de cadres; Analyse de contenu; *Châtelaine*; Féminisme; Magazines pour les femmes; Médias canadiens; Santé des femmes; Théorie féministe

Introduction

The media are considered a pervasive tool in the dissemination of health information to female audiences. Although various media platforms capitalize on this activity, women's magazines are considered particularly lucrative products and communication tools in the modern world (e.g., Barnett, 2006; Stice & Shaw, 1994; Tiggemann & McGill, 2004). Despite this, women's magazines are commonly scrutinized, as they are accused of depicting women inaccurately or in a distorted manner (Railo, 2014). However, some scholars identify women's magazines as important, yet informal, channels through which females can be educated and empowered by content that focuses on women's health and wellness (e.g., Siddiqui, 2014; Twigg, 2006). The media—women's magazines included—are considered one of the most influential tools in society due to their impact on public-consciousness (e.g., Gauntlett, 2008; Philo, 2014). In Canada, women's magazines can be seen as social artifacts, as they participate in the public discussion of various changes in women's social status (Killoran, 1984).

To understand the ways in which Canadian women's health knowledge is influenced by media texts, this study explores the presentation of women's health in Canada's longest running women's magazine, *Chatelaine*. Reflections on the positioning of women's bodies in Canadian society are explored to understand the evolution of the discussion of women's bodies throughout the 20th century. Thus, perspectives on power, the body, and sexuality are traced to understand more recent discussions on women's health in the Canadian public sphere. Feminist theorizing on the evolution and emergence of the modern female body in Western society is relied upon to obtain a contemporary perspective on the role of women's bodies and health. To study the ways in which such themes are presented in the magazine, a content analysis guided by frame theory is used to examine the ways in which *Chatelaine* presents audiences with information pertaining to their health from 1928 to 2010.

Thus, a brief discussion of women in the media, specifically, female's health and wellness in women's magazines is first presented. While a large body of research suggests that women's magazines include content that can be detrimental to women (e.g., through the depiction of unattainable beauty ideals), this section provides insight on how women's magazines can provide women with useful information about their health and wellness. Being that this study explores health in *Chatelaine*, the next section provides an overview of this Canadian magazine. The next section discusses the positioning of women's bodies in society and the ways in which social structures assert power over the female physical existence. A survey of relevant feminist theorizing is provided. The methodology of the study of women's health in *Chatelaine* (1928-2010) is presented, which is followed by a detailed description of the findings. The ways in which health content in women's magazines can act as a tool of empowerment for females is presented. Findings of this study demonstrate the increase in the volume of health content and the diversification and sophistication of the discussion of women's health throughout the sample. Such trends are thought to participate in the empowerment of women through the provision of health knowledge in *Chatelaine*.

Women's Health in the Media

Related to questions of biological determinism, reproductive rights, bodily integrity, beauty, and fashion (to name a few), the female body is considered to be a highly sought after commodity within political, economic, and social spheres. While various aspects of society contribute to women's understandings of their bodies, the media are considered highly influential variables in this process. Various scholars agree that the media present the female body in a distorted manner, plagued with unattainable standards and expectations (e.g., Korinek, 2000; MacDonald, 1995; Robinson, 2005; Smith, 1993; Thornham, 2007). In fact, studies are dedicated to studying the ways in which the media's depictions of women, femininity, and the female body continue to be detrimental to females, resulting in issues such as negative body image and eating disorders (e.g., Dittmar & Howard, 2004; Grabe, Ward & Hyde, 2008; Heinberg & Thompson, 1995; Irving, 1990; Monro & Huon, 2005; Musaiger & Al-Mannai, 2014; Tiggemann, 2004; 2014). While women's magazines are not exempt from these problems, they can also be viewed as a useful platform through which women can gain useful knowledge (Barnett, 2006).

Feminist scholars argue that women's magazines play a significant role in shaping women's health debates and understandings (Barnett, 2006). Many health concerns associated with women first find public attention through publication in women's magazines, allowing for accessible and understandable healthcare advice and information to readers (Ibid). However,

while women's magazines are praised as an important source of health information for females, they are also criticized for their superficial treatment of health topics and failure to cover a multifaceted range of medical issues relevant to a diverse audience (Woodstock, 2001). Women's magazines are also accused of constructing the body as a work zone, encouraging women to perpetuate the objectification of their bodies (MacDonald, 1995). Therefore, although these publications can contain educational components, they also commonly fail to challenge patriarchal and commercial ideologies (Barnett, 2006). Despite such criticism, women's magazines have also become a daily how-to-guide for some, and in many ways act as useful resources for information on health and wellness (Brodie et al., 2001). In fact, some feminist scholars argue that women's magazines have the ability to improve women's health through the instigation of discussions on various topics and issues (Ibid).

Chatelaine

Launching its first edition in March 1928 under Maclean's Publishing, *Chatelaine* is Canada's longest running women's magazine, continuing to publish a print version monthly, in addition to an active online component (Korinek, 2000). The success of *Chatelaine* is demonstrated in its longevity, and also in its evolution as a unique media text for Canadian women (Nett, 1991). Similar to mainstream women's periodicals, *Chatelaine* offers readers useful content, including recipes, lifestyle advice, beauty tips, and fashion trends; however, it is also known for publishing content contrary to mainstream etiquette (Korinek, 1998). *Chatelaine* has broken the mold of mainstream women's magazines, covering stories about political movements involved in the development of women's rights in Canada and also through the provision of extensive information related to women's bodies and health (e.g., Clarke, 2013; Grove, 2011; Korinek, 2000; 2007; Mendes, 2010; Roy, 2008; Spencer, 2007).

To analyze how *Chatelaine* actively participates in the transformation of Canadian women in relation to the discussion and presentation of health topics, a quantitative content analysis guided by framing theory is employed. This method of analysis allows for an examination of the health topics discussed in *Chatelaine* between 1928 and 2010 to understand how this publication contributes to women's health knowledge, which in turn, empowers women through education. Health content is deemed an accurate indicator of the rise of women's empowerment in Canada due to the important role of women's bodies in a social and cultural context. Health information allows women the opportunity to take control of their bodies, which have traditionally been dominated by social, political, religious, and economic structures that inhibit females' autonomy. Thus, in measuring the framing of women's health in *Chatelaine* it is possible to extrapolate findings with regards to the ways in which this publication participates in the development and empowerment of Canadian women.

Control and Power over Women's Bodies

The work of Susan Bordo (1993b) recognizes the female body as the central site of power struggles, emphasizing the ways in which society participates in the control of women's physical existence (e.g., Bayer & Malone, 1996; Bernick, 1992). Her theoretical framework for evaluating the body in relation to societal influences, power relations, and consumer culture is an extension of the rigorous questioning and protests that emerged from the women's movement in North America. Second wave feminism in Canada originated around the beginning of the 1960s,

focusing on a broad range of issues associated with women's rights, including inequalities in the home, workplace, and broader society (Vickers, 1992). Some of the key struggles that fuelled this movement included affirmative action, pay equity, rape, domestic violence, sexism in the media, and reproductive choice (Blackhouse & Flaherty, 1992). Among a variety of issues, a unique strand of this movement instigated concern and debate surrounding the rights associated with women's bodies (Wine & Ristock, 1991). Some activists identified the female body as the primary point of contention through which control and inequalities were exercised upon women (e.g., Conboy, Medina & Stanbury, 1997; Hayes, McAllister & Studlar, 2000).

Postmodern feminist theory related to the body is informed to a great extent by the work of Michel Foucault (1979; 1980), specifically his thoughts on self-surveillance, which serve as a springboard for feminist discourse about the docile body and gendered power (e.g., Amigot & Pujal, 2009; Bartky, 1988; King, 2004; Martin, 1988; McWhorter, 2004; Phelan, 1990; Sawicki, 1991; Tyner & Ogle, 2008). Bordo's (1993b) exploration of the female body demonstrates the unique ways in which women understand and relate to their physical existence. While contemporary Western culture places a harsh emphasis on the visual themes associated with women's bodies, an important element related to the ritual of maintenance is the upkeep of one's health. Women commonly associate ideal health and well-being as an important factor in their ability to perform as a successful female. Females constantly face the burden of taking care of their bodies, whether related to their appearance or personal health. Bordo's (1993a) analysis of the female physical existence illuminates the pertinence of women's bodies in society. Moreover, it necessitates the provision of information about women's bodies to instigate independence and female bodily empowerment. At present, the level of accessibility to information about women's bodies and health in contemporary Western society is relatively high (Barnett, 2006). The mass media play a particularly large role in the dissemination of health information, particularly to women.

Framing in the Media

The ways in which the media frame health content is central to understanding how *Chatelaine* discusses women's bodies and wellness. Framing theory is a multi-disciplinary social science research tool commonly attributed to the work of Erving Goffman (1974) in *Frame Analysis*. Goffman has contributed significantly to media studies, particularly in relation to his development of the frame metaphor, which informs framing theory (Ytreberg, 2002). The frame analysis technique allows the researcher to discover the process of framing, which can spotlight, emphasize, and also circumscribe ideologies and messages (Baptista, 2003). The notion of framing ideas in the media draws attention to how media practitioners organize information in accordance to their interaction with sources and their motives in the promotion of particular perspectives (e.g., Reese, 2003; Stolte & Fender, 2007). Media practitioners make conscious and unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, which is guided by frames that organize their belief systems (e.g., Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 2006). The majority of frames are defined by what they preclude as well as incorporate (Entman, 2004). Although framing can be used as a control or censorship mechanism in some situations (e.g., biased news coverage of a global event), it can also be used to synthesize and simplify complicated information to create a "reader-friendly" version of an issue (e.g., describing a complex disease in a general interest magazine) (Andsager & Powers, 2001; Barr, 1989; Wilson, 2007). Frame analysis also affords the ability to understand how media coverage changes and evolves (Barnett, 2006). In

investigating the framing methods of content in a historical context, it is possible to evaluate the changes in the presentation and discussion of certain topics (Ibid).

Studying Health in *Chatelaine*

Scholarly inquiry of women's magazines in Canada in both a historical and contemporary context is limited by comparison to other aspects of the mass media by communication and media researchers (Korinek, 2000). Although numerous studies focus on magazine content, advertising, and audiences, there remains a paucity of institutional research on the structure and roles of women's magazines. While many explanations for this lagging exist, it is suspected that this is due to the fact that women's magazines are not easy to define, nor it is simple to assign definitive figures to the industry of which they are a part (Johnson, 1993).

For this study, a quantitative content analysis of the discussion of health was conducted. Women's health was categorized into four main elements: physical health, psychological health, reproductive health, and disease/illness. For a more detailed understanding of the discussion of health, this study also looked at the specific health topics within these main themes. Topics could be categorized in relation to one or multiple health elements, depending on the contextual nature of the discussion in which the topic is situated.

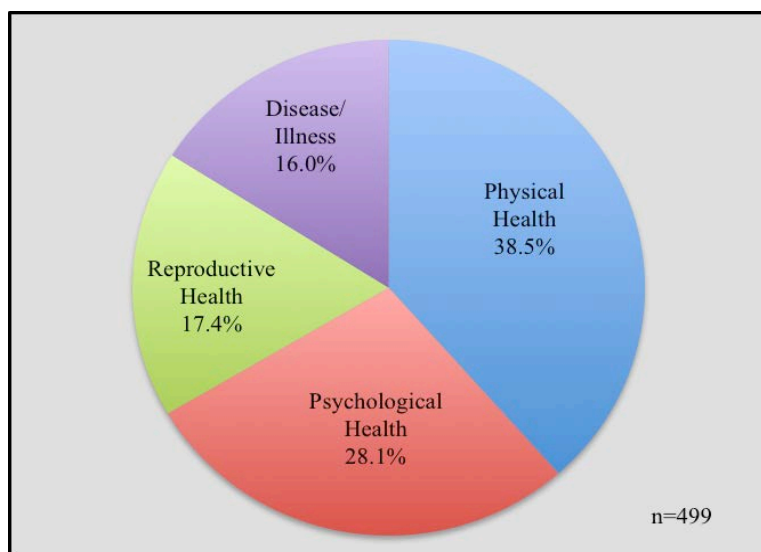
Using the categorization of health elements (i.e., main themes) and health topics (i.e., sub-themes), the quantitative media content analysis for this study employed a probability sampling method; specifically a stratified random sampling technique. *Chatelaine* began circulation in March 1928 and has been publishing issues on a monthly basis since its launch. To ensure a representative sample, the years in which the magazine had been in existence were broken down into decades; two years from each decade were selected (1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, etc.); three months (issues) from each year were selected; each issue was surveyed manually; and all coverage that demonstrated a primary focus on health was extracted for coding. The final sample size was 466 units that demonstrated a primary focus on women's health, this included all news articles, editorials, features, health-specific articles, columns, health-specific columns, and any collaborative textual piece produced by *Chatelaine* contributors that demonstrated a primary focus on women's health. This did not include advertisements and sponsored pieces. Upon completing the extraction of all content that demonstrated a primary focus on women's health, each unit was coded for its presentation of women's health. More specifically, each unit's main health element was identified and coded and the top three health topics were identified and coded. For instance, an article on breast cancer and prevention methods of this disease, with a specific focus on diet and cancer correlations would be coded "disease/illness" for the main health element, and the top three health topics would be "breast cancer", "disease prevention", and "nutrition". Using SPSS, the frequencies and cross-tabulation testing of relevant variables was run to determine relationships between variables.

The Framing of Women's Health in *Chatelaine*

Across time and generation this magazine demonstrates the ability to withstand seemingly diametrical changes in society with regards to women's roles and rights, while simultaneously captivating, intriguing, and educating readers. The findings of this study demonstrate *Chatelaine's* ambitious efforts to cultivate an empowered vision of contemporary feminist dialectics. In tracing the inclusion of health content, it is possible to uncover the evolution of

feminist values expressed in *Chatelaine*. While this magazine has conquered various achievements with regards to the publication of materials associated with women's rights and freedoms, its content related to women's bodies and health manifest powerful capacities. Health information enters a crowded media environment, filled with messages originating from a seemingly endless list of competing sources (Randolf & Viswanath, 2004). Media practitioners must capture not only the attention of audiences amid such competition, but also engage and motivate people to trust and absorb the knowledge within the content (Ibid). Upon breaking through the clutter, health media have the ability to interact with audiences depending on the ways in which topics and ideas are presented (Ibid). *Chatelaine* provides readers with health information that covers a multitude of issues, framing health from a variety of differing perspectives. While the health content in *Chatelaine* is considered diversified, the measurement of the health elements and topics discussed is of specific importance to this study.

Figure 1: Distribution of Health Elements in *Chatelaine* (1928-2010)



The study revealed that most articles cover physical health (38.5%), followed by psychological health (28.1%), reproductive health (17.4%), and disease/illness (16.0%). Physical health is understood as the most popular due to the importance of perceived attractiveness and beauty that is commonly linked with one's physical health.

To further analyze the discussion of health in *Chatelaine*, the frequency of topics discussed within each unique health element is presented in relation to the ways in which coverage changes between 1928 and 2010. Physical health is first explored, as it is the most commonly discussed health element in *Chatelaine*. The distribution of topics within this element is as follows: nutrition (19.1%), the general discussion of disease/illness (16.0%), women's appearance (15.4%), healthcare services (14.3%), physical activities (10.9%), risk factors (5.6%), treatment measures (5.3%), mental emotional health (5.1%), the general discussion of reproductive health (2.8%), prevention measures (2.5%), disease symptoms (1.7%), family/relationships (0.5%), and other (0.8%).

Psychological health is the second most commonly discussed health element found in this publication. The distribution of topics within this element is as follows: mental emotional health (45.6%), family/relationships (30.2%), the general discussion of reproductive health (8.1%), the

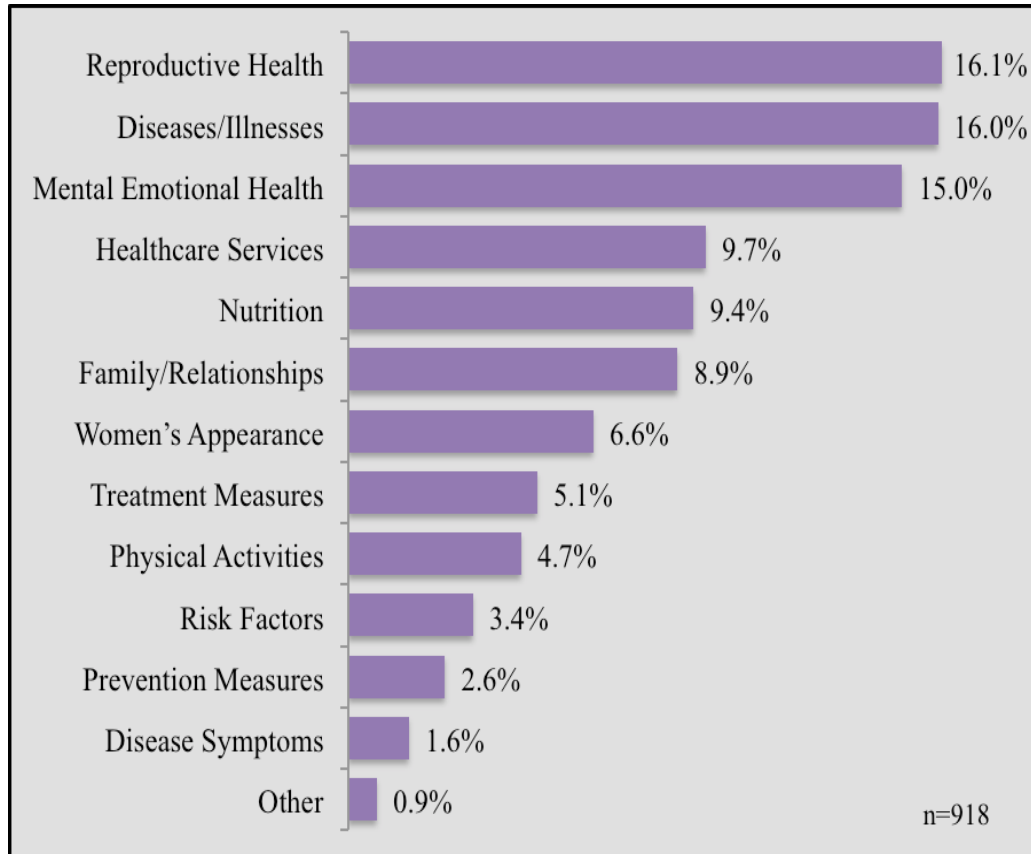
general discussion of disease/illness (6.1%), healthcare services (3.2%), treatment measures (1.6%), risk factors (1.2%), women's appearance (0.8%), nutrition (0.8%), disease symptoms (0.4%), and other (1.2%).

Reproductive health is the third most commonly discussed health element found in *Chatelaine*. The distribution of topics within this element is as follows: the general discussion of reproductive health (67.5%), the general discussion of disease/illness (8.8%), healthcare services (6.3%), nutrition (3.8%), family/relationships (3.1%), risk factors (2.5%), mental emotional health (2.5%), prevention measures (1.9%), women's appearance (1.3%), treatment measures (0.6%), physical activities (0.6%), disease symptoms (0.6%), and other (0.6%). A particularly unique finding of this research is the minimal amount of content covering reproductive health prior to 1960. While the majority of the health elements surveyed indicate minimal coverage between 1928 and 1955, the discussion of reproductive health remains particularly barren. This finding is attributed to social norms and ideals that repelled the discussion of women's reproductive capabilities and sexuality in society prior to the social movements that began around 1960. Second wave feminism targeted this lack of discussion, working to motivate public awareness of the importance of women's reproductive rights and freedoms (Vickers, 1992). These efforts are reflected in *Chatelaine*, as reproductive health coverage increases throughout the sample, especially following 1960.

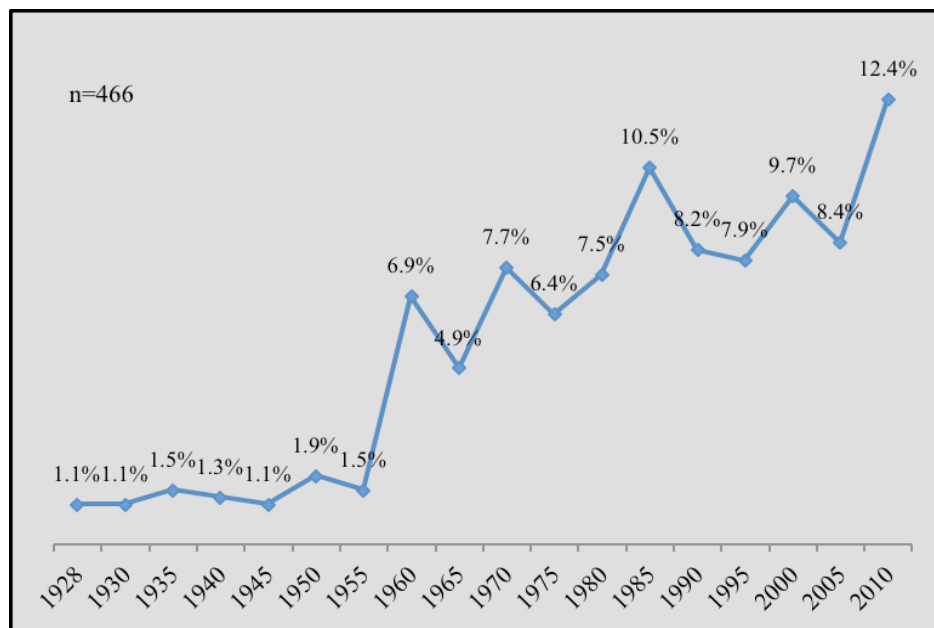
Disease/illness is the fourth most commonly discussed health element found in this publication. The distribution of topics within this element is as follows: the general discussion of disease/illness (39.6%), treatment measures (14.9%), healthcare services (13.0%), prevention measures (8.4%), nutrition (6.5%), the general discussion of reproductive health (6.5%), disease symptoms (4.5%), risk factors (2.6%), mental emotional health (2.0%), women's appearance (1.3%), and physical activities (0.7%). In sync with findings of the other health elements, the discussion of disease and illness remained minimal between 1928 and 1955, with the majority of the discussion of this health element during this time limited to topics such as prevention and treatment measures. In 1960, the discussion of this element demonstrated a significant increase, complimented by a diversified approach to the coverage of this health element.

While the most common health element discussed in *Chatelaine* is physical health, the most frequently discussed topic in relation to all health elements is the general discussion of reproductive health (16.1%), with the most common sub-themes within this topic being: sexual intimacy (19.8%), motherhood (18.5%), pregnancy (13.6%), contraceptives (8.6%), unplanned pregnancy (8.6%), menopause (7.4%), abortion (6.2%), heredity (6.2%), sexual fantasies (6.2%), and the combined oral contraceptive pill (COCP, "The Pill") (4.9%). These findings reveal *Chatelaine's* active participation in the communication of information regarding women's reproductive health in Canada. Through the discussion of such topics, women are able to learn about their reproductive health and become aware of emerging research and knowledge relevant to the betterment of this aspect of their existence. Although women's sexuality and reproductive health has struggled to find acceptance and equal treatment in the public sphere, the open and educational nature of the reproductive health content in *Chatelaine* is considered a positive asset within Canadian women's media (Ibid).

Figure 2: All Health Topics in *Chatelaine* (1928-2010)



The analysis of *Chatelaine's* health content indicates this publication's active involvement in the discussion of women's health and bodies between 1928 and 2010. While *Chatelaine* has grown and developed throughout its existence, it acknowledges the importance of health knowledge as a tool for empowerment. The findings reveal that *Chatelaine* includes health coverage throughout the sample; however, between 1928 and 1955 minimal content of this nature is demonstrated. During this time, the health content published remains limited in nature, lacking diversity and breadth in the discussion of women's bodies and wellness. A significant influx is demonstrated in 1960, which steadily increases with minor fluctuations to 2010. The highest frequency of health content occurs in 2010, which is considered indicative of *Chatelaine's* current health-focused mandate. Complementary to the rise of health content between 1960 and 2010, the variety of topics demonstrates a significant expansion. Health elements are discussed in relation to a multitude of topics, covering the emergence of new aspects of women's health and wellness. The launch of second wave feminism in Canada that emerged around the beginning of the 1960s is considered a strong influencing factor in the growth of health content in *Chatelaine*.

Figure 3: Frequency of Health Content in *Chatelaine* (1928-2010)

Empowering Women through Education

Accredited by Korinek (2007) as a “closet feminist magazine”, this study reveals that *Chatelaine* discusses areas of women’s health that have not always been welcome in the public sphere. While *Chatelaine* may not be a self-proclaimed feminist magazine, the ways in which it frames women’s health issues are understood to be commonly loaded with feminist undertones that emphasize the importance of women’s understanding and control of their bodies and health. Women’s health surfaced as an imperative cynosure in the 20th century, garnering appeal due to the growing attention issues related to women’s bodies and health began to obtain. Despite animadversions and resistance among political, religious, and cultural groups, the women’s movement in Canada has forged issues of freedom and rights associated with women’s health into the public domain. The campaign for increasing access to women’s bodies is widely supported by *Chatelaine*, as demonstrated in the increased coverage of health topics in this publication.

Through the provision of knowledge about women’s health, *Chatelaine* is able to demystify various topics and concerns related to women’s health and strive to promote knowledge and ownership of one’s personal wellness. While various elements of society contribute to the women’s movement, the media are considered an important communication vehicle with regards to the dissemination of knowledge about women’s health and bodies. The media are involved in the promulgation of health issues, and also provide a platform for debate about emerging innovations and technologies. Women’s media, specifically *Chatelaine*, serve as an important base of knowledge for women to learn about their bodies and health in a friendly and trustworthy manner.

Since its beginning, *Chatelaine* has provided as a women’s general interest publication with a helpful reputation—one that empowers and encourages readers to learn about themselves and their communities. Further, *Chatelaine* demonstrates its ability to morph its material and

perspectives of women's health in accordance to societal growth and changes. This magazine's willingness to publish content about pressing women's issues related to health expresses the polysemic nature of this popular text, demonstrating its ability to produce multiple meanings throughout its existence. Therefore, *Chatelaine's* ability to participate in the empowerment of women in Canada is demonstrated in its coverage of emerging medical trends, its unconventional perspectives on women's health, and its dedication to the provision of knowledge as a tool for empowerment.

Women's health has grown tremendously throughout the existence of *Chatelaine*; the introduction of medical innovations and healthcare technologies has changed the way women understand and manage their bodies. *Chatelaine* strives to cover emerging health trends, which are evidenced in its coverage of contraceptive technologies, disease treatment methods, and pharmaceuticals (to name a few)—all in which participate in the modernization of women's healthcare and wellness. While some medical innovations and healthcare technologies are welcomed in public discussion, others struggle to gain acceptance due to the implications of their abilities.

The growth and expansion of women's health evidenced in *Chatelaine* is associated with its tendency to resist traditional standards and opinions of feminine health commonly communicated in women's general interest magazines. While this magazine offers readers information on emergent trends, it also covers topics in a manner that deviates from traditional methods employed in mainstream media. This is demonstrated in *Chatelaine's* dedication to the coverage of a wide variety of health issues, including many that are considered taboo or inappropriate for public discussion. *Chatelaine* capitalizes on the empowering abilities of health knowledge, providing a plethora of information. Although Canadian women are not completely free of oppression and inequalities, *Chatelaine* demonstrates its ability to aid in the creation of strong empowered women through the provision of health information that resists standards of the status quo. Various topics under the umbrella of female health continue to battle for public acknowledgement in mainstream media, making the presentation of clear and concise information about women's bodies of great importance. Although the discussion of women's health has garnered increasing momentum in women's magazines, *Chatelaine* provides a unique brand of coverage that motivates readers to take control of their bodies. This perspective on women's health spans beyond the limitations imposed by traditional health and wellness ideals, and provides discussions and coverage that stimulate readers to take personal initiative.

Further, *Chatelaine* demonstrates its recognition of the multifaceted nature of women's health through the coverage of topics that ignore traditional confines that encapsulate archaic definitions of this concept. For *Chatelaine*, women's health does not exist in a deodorized, airbrushed, heterosexual, medicalized, and patriarchal vacuum—it includes a diverse spectrum of wellness, which works to enhance women's understanding of their bodies and instigate learning and practices that facilitate and enhance healthy living.

Transformation is often measured based on dichotomous standards of growth—good or bad, better or worse, negative or positive. While these elements are useful in the quantification of change, it is also important to pay cognizance to the journey by which a transformation is facilitated. Systemic determinism as a method of metamorphic appraisal fails to incorporate a holistic comprehension of the true depth encapsulated in the venture of change. Thus, the analysis of the transformation of women's health in *Chatelaine* does not strive to provide conclusions related only to the outcome of change, but also the journey involved in the growth of this magazine. While many variables can be considered as a vehicle of change, it is argued that

the discussion of women's health in *Chatelaine* plays a specific role in the transformation of and empowerment of Canadian women. Throughout the history of *Chatelaine* women have experienced metamorphoses concerning how their bodies are understood and perceived by society. These alterations have fostered dialogue about women's health in the public sphere and also empowered women through knowledge and increased control of their physical existence. An investigation of the framing of health content in *Chatelaine* reveals this magazine's dedication to the discussion of women's bodies and wellness. Despite traditional acclimations of women's bodies in the public sphere, this publication strives to elucidate myths and tensions through the provision of clear and concise health information. In this, *Chatelaine* demonstrates its ability to resist traditional discussion and perspectives of women's health, which ultimately results in the empowerment of women through education and trust.

While women's liberation can be sanctioned by various mechanisms, knowledge is understood as an effectual vehicle of empowerment. The process through which *Chatelaine* configures and communicates women's health situates this magazine as a structure of knowledge that interacts with audiences, and promotes growth and change among women. In working to empower through the procurement of health knowledge, *Chatelaine* mobilizes women's status and abilities through bodily autonomy. This process is considered significant due to the traditional confines of power imposed on the female body throughout history. *Chatelaine's* promulgation of health knowledge challenges social control of the female body through the provision of content that instigates awareness and discussion among readers about various aspects of their physical existence. Traditional ideals and standards limit women's ability to decide their bodily destiny, which is contested by *Chatelaine* through the provision of health knowledge that can counteract the constraints that inhibit female bodily autonomy. Health coverage in *Chatelaine* interacts with the social mechanisms of power, challenging their abilities through the provision of knowledge. Upon gaining information about aspects of their bodies and health, women are able to participate in processes of decision making that impact their public and individual roles.

Chatelaine's growing involvement in the discussion of women's health through the provision of increasingly diversified coverage is indicative of this magazine's cognizance of the importance of bodily knowledge among women. Females constantly face the burden of taking care of their bodies, necessitating the importance of health information provision within pervasive communication tools. *Chatelaine's* prevalence and reputation in Canada as a trustworthy and popular women's periodical make it a particularly valuable media text in the dissemination of information useful to the betterment of women.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to reveal the ways in which *Chatelaine* has covered health from 1928 to 2010. In this, it was possible to understand the magazine's discussion of health and draw connections between the inclusion of women's health and the ways in which it can empower women through education. Through the exploration of women in the media and the ways in which the media participate in women's knowledge gathering techniques, this paper reveals the important role of women's magazines in women's understandings of various aspects of their lives. This paper strives to outline the important role of *Chatelaine* in the Canadian mediascape through the provision of information about this media text. The study of the discussion of health in *Chatelaine* reveals this magazine's dedication to the dissemination of information about

women's bodies and wellness. Although the inclusion of health content remained limited from 1928 to 1960, findings demonstrated the dramatic increase in the discussion of women's health in *Chatelaine* between 1960 and 2010. This influx is attributed to social change in Canadian society that occurred around 1960, as second wave feminism worked to propel women's rights forward at this time.

Chatelaine is deemed an important Canadian media text due to its participation in public discussions about women and women's health. It is believed that through the provision of health information, this magazine is able to offer women knowledge about their bodies and wellness. Knowledge about one's health can aid in their empowerment, which is paramount to the development of strong, autonomous women. While Canada continues to demonstrate progress with regards to gender equality, it is believed that education and knowledge are essential in the pursuit. Women's health knowledge is particularly important, as the female body is considered a focal point of many contentious issues pertaining to women's health. Thus, although women's magazines have often been critiqued for their distorted depictions of women's bodies, this study demonstrates that *Chatelaine*—a prominent Canadian media text—has participated in the empowerment of women through the discussion of women's health.

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Citing this paper:

McIntosh, Heather. (2014). Communicating empowerment through education: Learning about women's health in *Chatelaine*. *Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition*, 7(2), 5-21.