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Lindsey Conlin Maxwell, Coral Rae, Richard A. Lewis

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I Want to be Like Her: Celebrity Lifestyle Brands on Pinterest

Lindsey Conlin Maxwell, Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi

lindsey.conlin@usm.edu

Coral Rae, Ph.D., University of Alabama

marshall@apr.ua.edu

Richard A. Lewis, Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi

tony.a.lewis@usm.edu

Abstract

The current study analyzed celebrity lifestyle brands' Pinterest pages in order to determine how they framed their brands to users. Pinterest features a strong female user base, and users employ the site to collect items that they aspire to purchase, or aspire to be like. Results indicate that celebrities use their lifestyle brands to promote their celebrity status, give advice on home décor and design, and tell audiences what clothes they should buy and wear. Interestingly, purchasable items were not more likely to be repinned or liked, contradicting the idea that celebrity lifestyle brands are “aspirational” places for women, as users do not seem to be interested in purchasable items any more than do-it-yourself crafting projects or food.

Keywords: Pinterest, celebrity, women, lifestyle brands

Lindsey Maxwell is an assistant professor of broadcast journalism at the University of Southern Mississippi. Her research interests include media effects and the role and portrayal of women in media.

Coral Rae is an instructor in sports communication at the University of Alabama. Her research interests focus on athlete off-field deviance.

Richard Anthony Lewis is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Southern Mississippi, and also holds a doctorate in Art History. His research focuses on historic photography, disaster and memory, and museum exhibition development.

Pinterest is a social media site devoted to the online collecting of objects related to food, drink, weddings, home, exercise, and myriad other topics. Every month, 87 million people use Pinterest in the United States, most of them women.¹ Between 75 and 82 percent of Pinterest users are female,² and 92 percent of the pins saved on Pinterest are pinned by women, more than 15 times the number of pins pinned by men.³ As of early 2017, Pinterest boasts 176 million registered users, 100 million of which are active users from around the globe.⁴ Fifty-five percent of U.S. online shoppers name Pinterest as their favorite social media site,⁵ blurring the lines between traditional social media and sales platforms such as Amazon.

While Pinterest is defined as a site for personal collecting, the aspect of sharing makes it a social activity for users to engage in. Although users do not interact directly, through interpersonal means, the act of pinning, repinning, and commenting on images implies the building of a community of like-minded individuals who are potential followers. Pinterest's President, Tim Kendall, says that people seek out things to purchase on Pinterest, often looking for specific things or brands: "They're receptive to brands, they're even looking for them."⁶

Because users can directly save and collect items that they aspire to purchase, Pinterest may also be considered a marketer's dream as they can easily identify what a consumer is interested in. Many of the items may be defined as purchasable, though direct links to sites where items may be bought are not the only way in which Pinterest serves to further consumption. Researchers⁷ contend that Pinterest is much more controlled than users may recognize. For example, about 80% of pins are "repinned"—saving something another user has already saved—as opposed to being based on new content. In short, Pinterest voluntarily enlists people to demonstrate their individual and collective preferences (insofar as members become "subject to the tyranny of majority tastes") in ways that are convenient to be "surveilled and used by outside parties."⁸

Several celebrities, most notably Gwyneth Paltrow, have founded lifestyle brands to celebrate and share information that reflect their interests, lifestyles, and preferences for products. They have thus merged individual preference with branding as a marketing gambit. Celebrity lifestyle initiatives seek to reach a target audience considered as peers, primarily a female demographic that is presumed to share their taste or be receptive to receiving guidance from a trusted source. As a social media site that caters to women, and building collections of images that reflect personal preferences, Pinterest aligns with the goals of celebrity lifestyle brands and thus become an ideal format to "push" these brands. This study examines 1.) How celebrities use Pinterest to advance their lifestyle brand; 2.) to what degree these brands are accepted by audiences—measured through 'repinning' of images posted by celebrity lifestyle brands on Pinterest.

Literature Review

Framing Theory

From a media perspective, framing theory offers the best understanding of what is taking place on Pinterest when a media outlet—such as a celebrity lifestyle brand—posts and frames content for users. Framing theory addresses how messages are portrayed by a media source and how they can potentially be interpreted by audiences. Frames provide a means for individuals and groups to help organize their world.⁹ Todd Gitlin posits that there are three basic types of frames- selection, emphasis, and exclusion.¹⁰ Pinterest allows brands to frame their ideas utilizing categorization, text, and most importantly, photo representations. In keeping with Gitlin's notion of framing, Pinterest users set up boards (much like a traditional bulletin board) where they can select, emphasize, and exclude ideas that they see on the platform. Therefore, celebrity lifestyle brands are framing themselves to users when they select items and photos to share with their followers. Furthermore, Robert Entman contends that “framing essentially involves selection and salience.”¹¹ For Entman,

“to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”¹²

Celebrity lifestyle brands that use Pinterest can frame their online brands by selecting certain pins to place on a board they categorize to appeal their social media following. For example, people interested in dermatology on Pinterest can catalog pins around information, home remedies, and advocacy. Jacob Whitsitt et al. found that these categories were utilized not only by Pinterest advocates, but doctors as well, providing a social media forum for doctors to emphasize particular pieces of information.¹³ Additionally, Charles Soukup found that “fansite designer[s used a] celebrity as a way of identifying and representing her/his values and interests.”¹⁴ Furthermore, Conlin, McLemore and Rush found that major American sports franchises utilize framing within Pinterest boards. Specifically, those boards that were framed with purchasable items such as jerseys frames are more likely to be placed higher (i.e. easiest for users to find).¹⁵

The current study examined how female celebrity lifestyle brands (such as Gwyneth Paltrow's *Goop* or Reese Witherspoon's *Draper James*) utilize frames to promote their brand with female users across Pinterest. These lifestyle brands provide women with advice on how to dress, eat, and live like the celebrities who they wish to emulate. According to Entman, frames have the ability to work as “the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture.”¹⁶ As these lifestyle brands serve as influencers to women who consume their brands on Pinterest, discovering the frames they communicate culture through to promote their brands via rapidly growing social media.

Pinterest

Pinterest, a social media site devoted to collecting online content, has grown in popularity in recent years. Beloved by women, Pinterest features a largely female user base;¹⁷ forty-two percent of U.S. women use Pinterest, as compared to only 13 percent of U.S. men.¹⁸ Pinterest was among the first sites to “[frame] its content as re-appropriation of womanhood, separated along gendered lines.”¹⁹

Within the social media site, “93 percent of pinners (male and female) shopped online in the last six months,”²⁰ indicating that Pinterest is a stopover for people interested in buying products they see on the internet. Pinterest is ideal for marketers, who can target a female audience by using the site to highlight their products; this is especially important considering “women generally make 85% of household purchases and women use Pinterest to track things they like.”²¹ In addition, Pinterest seems to result in more merchandise revenue than other social media sites, as “the average sale resulting from a Pinterest user following an image back to its source and then buying the item is \$180, according to research from e-commerce firm RichRelevance, compared with \$80 for Facebook users and \$70 for Twitter users.”²²

Users can either repin content that other users have already saved (pinned), or pin their own new content from external websites. Pins (individual pieces of content) are organized onto boards, like an online bulletin board, that is sorted by categories like *Health & Fitness*, *Weddings*, or *Food & Drink*. Within content on Pinterest, there is a “strong focus on material related to food and drink, décor and design, and DIY and crafts.”²³ When users pin content on Pinterest, it supports the concept of aspiration; users’ pins “often represent a physical object that people want to have.”²⁴ The idea of aspiration is prominent on Pinterest, where actions may be “less a product of purchase intent, and more of future aspiration.”²⁵

The action which makes up almost the entirety of the communication on Pinterest is defined as social collecting. Many of the most popular pins on Pinterest are sourced from sites that one can make purchases on, and sometimes feature direct links to sales.²⁶ This is especially important because of the social curation function of Pinterest, described as “a process where the general public, rather than web publishers and providers themselves, tag, organize, and share content with others.”²⁷ Therefore, other users have the ability to directly gauge what an individual wants to buy, share, eat, participate in, or wear. Pinterest users have a high level of emotional attachment to the images that they pin and that these images represented how they wished to be perceived, or a general conception of an ideal self.²⁸ Researchers have called attention to Pinterest’s function as an outlet to express “fantasy lifestyles” and engage with style leaders.²⁹ The high degree of regulation—what is often called curated taste—is one of the site’s principal attractions. An identifiable group of style leaders has emerged among celebrities.

Celebrity Lifestyle Brands and Influence

In recent years, many (particularly female) celebrities have been extending their reach as public figures into the realm of lifestyle brands. Modeled after the original successful lifestyle brand, Martha Stewart, modern celebrity lifestyle brands promote everything from food and drink to parenting advice and products for the home. These lifestyle brands sometimes promote a specific line of products—such as Kate Hudson using her lifestyle brand to promote her clothing brand *Fabletics*—but more frequently they are started by celebrities who have a large fan base and an affinity for clothing, home décor, and other lifestyle topics.

Often, these lifestyle brands espouse a standard that is largely unrealistic to attain for the audience. For example, Gwyneth Paltrow has often received criticism for promoting products that are far too expensive for the average person to afford, such as \$4,700 juicer or a \$12,000 vase.³⁰ Paltrow has found success since 2008 with her lifestyle brand *Goop*, despite the criticism she has often faced for promoting things that are unattainable for her followers. In 2015, Paltrow was panned for her attempt to draw attention to how difficult it was for SNAP (Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Plan) recipients to feed their families.³¹ Her lifestyle brand *Goop* has become a lightning rod for criticism of celebrities who are out of touch with their fans.

While celebrities try to expand their reach and lengthen their careers through lifestyle brands, they are not always successful. Blake Lively's now-defunct lifestyle brand *Preserve* is an example of how trying to translate fame as an actress into a successful lifestyle brand does not always work. After a little over a year, the actress had to shut down the site and sell the remaining merchandise.³²

There is a purposeful blurring-of-lines between what constitutes a purchasable line of products and the lifestyle promoted by the celebrity. For example, the *Fabletics* Pinterest page features not only the clothing, but clear references to Kate Hudson's personal life and celebrity status. A celebrity lifestyle brand is defined as a personal brand associated with or created by a celebrity who achieved fame *outside* of lifestyle or brand promotion first. This primarily refers to actresses who have achieved success in promoting their lifestyle as achievable for all women. Celebrity lifestyle brands include both lifestyle-only brands (such as Gwyneth Paltrow's *Goop* and Elizabeth Banks' self-titled brand) and celebrity brands that promote a specific line of products (like Kate Hudson's *Fabletics* and Reese Witherspoon's *Draper James*) but whose Pinterest pages promote a specific lifestyle associated with the product line. Regardless of whether there is a specific line of products associated with the celebrity lifestyle brand, their Pinterest pages must focus not only on purchasable product lines, but on overall lifestyle information such as food, health, clothing, parenting, and personal information.

Studies show that celebrities do serve as influencers over the general public.³³ Fraser and Brown contend “that impersonating a celebrity is one of the strongest evidences of celebrity identification.”³⁴ Through following celebrity lifestyle brands on Pinterest, and repining pieces of the celebrity brand that interest them onto one's own boards, women are

enacting a type of celebrity impersonation. As Soukup points out, fans may “chose to align themselves with a celebrity” rather than “designing a personal Web site about themselves that express[es] their worldview and political positions.”³⁵ Similarly, rather than creating pins of their own that showcase the style, or craft ideas that they have Pinterest users who consume celebrity lifestyle brands choose to mimic these brands’ appeal by repining, liking, or commenting on the original pin posted by the brand. In short, Pinterest can serve as the “commodification of particular life moments of experiences... a dream home, a dream wedding, or dream fashion wardrobe.”³⁶ The celebrities that have lifestyle brands associated with them are often perceived as having it all by the women who follow their boards, and therefore repining or liking the commoditized content created on the celebrity’s original board serves to influence the consumer into what their “dream” life should consist of.

Research Questions

The current study attempts to understand how celebrities are using Pinterest to promote their lifestyle brands, directly targeting female users with content that they aspire towards. Using framing theory, the following research question is proposed:

RQ₁: How do celebrity lifestyle brands frame themselves on Pinterest?

Previous research³⁷ indicated that sports brands are more likely feature boards of merchandise more prominently on their Pinterest pages. Therefore, the following research question is proposed in order to examine this relationship within celebrity lifestyle brands:

RQ₂: Which boards will be featured most prominently on celebrity lifestyle brand Pinterest pages?

In addition to brands framing their content in certain ways, Pinterest users give direct feedback through their actions, such as following a brand, repinning content, and liking content. The following research questions are proposed in order to examine users’ actions on Pinterest:

RQ_{3a}: Which boards will have the most pins?

RQ_{3b}: Which boards will have the most followers?

RQ_{4a}: Which pin categories will receive the most repins?

RQ_{4b}: Which pin categories will receive the most likes?

Additionally, this study will investigate whether users respond differently to purchasable items. The following research questions are proposed:

RQ_{5a}: Will purchasable items receive more repins?

RQ_{5b}: Will purchasable items receive more likes?

Method

Sampling

The current study employed a content analysis in order to investigate how female celebrities are using Pinterest to promote and frame their lifestyle brands to a largely female user base. The first step in sampling was to determine which celebrity lifestyle brands would be content analyzed. Brands were selected from several lists³⁸ of top celebrity lifestyle brands, resulting in a convenience sample based on popular lifestyle brands and the availability of their brand on Pinterest. The brands selected appeared repeatedly on these lists and are recognized as the top lifestyle brands promoted by celebrities, and fall within the definitions of a celebrity lifestyle brand outlined in the current study. The celebrity lifestyle brand must also have an active Pinterest page. Selected for inclusion in the current analysis were the following brands: Gwyneth Paltrow, *Goop*; Jessica Alba, *Honest Co.*; Lauren Conrad, *Lauren Conrad*; Reese Witherspoon, *Draper James*; Elizabeth Banks, *Elizabeth Banks*; Zooey Deschanel, *HelloGiggles*; Kate Hudson, *Fabletics*; and Tori Spelling, *editORial*. Each of the pages that was included in the sample must be “verified” by Pinterest, meaning that Pinterest moderators have indicated to users that the pages are the authentic ones developed and used by the celebrity they are purporting to represent. Additionally, brand Pinterest pages were differentiated from the personal Pinterest pages of the associated celebrity. For example, Reese Witherspoon had a personal Pinterest page that was present in addition to the *Draper James* page, but Witherspoon’s personal page was not included in the analysis. Pinterest pages were additionally verified by making sure the celebrity’s official Twitter, Facebook page, or website linked to the specific Pinterest page.

Units of Analysis

Two separate units of analysis were utilized in this study, a method which has been used in the study of Pinterest brand pages.³⁹ The first unit of analysis was the board; the second unit of analysis was individual pins. In order to analyze boards and pins in a systematic manner, both were analyzed separately. Every board that was part of a celebrity lifestyle brand Pinterest page was included in the sample, resulting in a sample of 269 boards. However, analyzing every individual pin would have resulted in a too-large sample to code, approximately 43 thousand pins. Therefore, a sample of five pins was drawn from the first 25 pins for each board. This was accomplished by using a random number generator to generate five numbers between one and 25, and sampling the corresponding pins. The first 25 pins on any board represented the pins that had been most recently saved, thus giving an up-to-date look at what was being pinned by the lifestyle brands. However, only five of the first 25 pins were coded; this was due to a too-large sample size and to counteract the effect of a brand that may have pinned a series of similar pins—this research sought to examine a wide variety of the pins that may be present in any brand’s Pinterest page. If a board had less than five pins, all of the pins were coded. Coders counted from the top left and coded the pins that appeared according to the random numbers that were generated. This resulted in a sample of 1319 pins.

Coding Categories

In order to create and test the coding categories used in this study, researchers employed the *Martha Stewart Living* Pinterest page. This page fell outside of the sample because Martha Stewart is famous *because* of her lifestyle brand, and did not achieve fame before the brand. However, this lifestyle brand can be considered the benchmark in how modern celebrity lifestyle brands attempt to market themselves—as a mix of products, advice, and ideas.

Although Pinterest boards are categorized by the person who created them according to pre-determined categories, these categories—such as *Health & Fitness*, *Celebrities*, or *Products*—are not visible for users to see how a pinner has categorized her boards. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, researchers developed relevant categories similar to the ones assigned by Pinterest in order to examine how celebrity lifestyle brands were using Pinterest. Using the Martha Stewart page as a test model, researchers distilled the categories into six broad topics, each with smaller sub-categories that were used as the actual coding categories. Each will be outlined below:

Food

1. Recipes/food framed in terms of health: Used if the food or recipe was presented to the user as “healthy”
2. Recipes food not framed in terms of health: Used if the food or recipe was presented to the user, but not framed in terms of health
3. Desserts: Refers to cakes, cookies, sweet recipes and food that is intended to be consumed as dessert
4. Drinks: Either alcoholic or non-alcoholic drinks

Exercise and Health

1. Exercise instructions: Instructions or advice to the user about how to do exercises, how to tone a specific body part, or how to stay in shape using exercise
2. Stretching/flexibility/yoga: Refers to using yoga or other stretching techniques to enhance flexibility
3. General health: Pins that were presented as how to stay healthy other than diet or exercise, such as advice about vaccines, stress relief, anxiety cures, or cures for the common cold or other illnesses

Clothing and Merchandise

1. Clothing-Personal brand: Used when the celebrity was promoting her own personal brand of clothing, such as Fabletics or Draper James

2. Clothing- Not personal brand: Used when the celebrity was promoting clothing by another designer, not herself
3. Merchandise: Refers to purchasable items such as shoes, accessories, or other items that were not clothing

Personality and Celebrity

1. Quote or inspirational: Used when the pin is a quote or words used as inspirational content from the celebrity herself
2. Personality: Used when the pin is related to the celebrity herself, her personal life, or her family
3. Parenting: Refers to parenting advice from the lifestyle brand or celebrity directed at users

Beauty

1. Hair: Hairstyles or hair tips that are promoted by the lifestyle brand
2. Makeup: Makeup tips, advice, or products, such as a new lipstick color or method of application

Home

1. Organizing/cleaning: Refers to how to keep a clean house, cleaning tips, or tips on how to organize your home
2. Home design/color: How to arrange furniture, paint colors, or other permanent or semi-permanent home items
3. Decorating: Temporary home items, such as how to decorate for a party
4. DIY/crafting: How to make or craft something
5. Seasonal: Christmas, fall, holiday or advice on how to prepare for other seasonal themes

If a pin fell outside of these categories, it was coded as “other.”

In addition to these categories, boards were also coded for their placement within the account. For example, the first board presented to users in the top left of the account would be coded as “1,” and coding would continue left to right, and on subsequent rows. Boards were also coded for number of pins and number of followers.

Pins were coded for the same content categories as described above, as well as repins, likes, and whether the item was purchasable. A purchasable item is something that the

lifestyle brand is promoting as an item that could be purchased (such as an article of clothing or home decor)—it did not necessarily have to have a price or instructions to “buy this.”

Coder Training

Two experienced researchers were trained as coders for the above sample. The first round of coding was completed outside of the sample using the Martha Stewart lifestyle brand Pinterest page. Once coders had reached an acceptable level of intercoder reliability, they moved on to coding within the actual sample. Both coders were assigned the same three of the eight accounts to code, resulting in 63 boards and 313 pins coded by both coders, approximately one quarter of the sample. For boards within the sample, Cohen’s kappa for intercoder reliability was $\kappa = .93$, and for pins within the sample, Cohen’s kappa for intercoder reliability was $\kappa = .88$. The remaining sample was then divided between the two coders.

Results

The sampling described above resulted in a sample of 269 boards and 1319 pins.

The following table displays the celebrity lifestyle brand Pinterest accounts that were included in the sample, as well as their number of followers, boards, and pins that were included in the sample.

Table 1
Lifestyle Brand Pinterest Accounts Within Sample

Name of Account	Followers	Boards	Pins (in sample)
Goop	114,300	64	325
Honest Co.	83,000	45	225
Lauren Conrad	1,100,000	25	125
Draper James	2700	14	60
Elizabeth Banks	20,300	26	130
HelloGiggles	214,300	66	304
Fabletics	50,500	18	90
ediTORial	94,300	12	60

Research Question 1 (RQ₁) asked how celebrity lifestyle brands are framing themselves on Pinterest. To analyze this research question boards and number of pins were

examined. The following table displays the number of boards that were presented featuring each category, as well as the subcategories that they featured.

Table 2

Framing of Boards and Pins Within the Sample

Frame	Subcategory	Board Frequency	Pin Frequency
Food		26	219
	Healthy food	8	52
	Unhealthy food	13	65
	Desserts	3	60
	Drinks	2	42
Exercise/health		16	87
	Exercise instructions	3	28
	Stretching/flexibility	5	25
	Health	8	34
Clothing/merchandise		38	273
	Clothing- Personal brand	12	43
	Clothing- Not personal brand	12	91
	Merchandise	14	139
Personality/advice		67	239
	Quote/inspirational	14	75
	Personality/celebrity	43	112
	Parenting	10	52
Beauty		10	55
	Hair	5	27
	Makeup	5	28
Home		73	240
	Organizing/cleaning	0	4
	Design/color	32	71
	Decorating	10	42
	DIY/crafting	5	84
	Seasonal	26	39
Other		39	206

In order to more closely examine this relationship, a chi-square test was utilized for each of the boards and pins for the overall framing category. For boards, there was a significance in a chi-square goodness of fit test $\chi^2(6, N = 269) = 90.50, p < .001$. For pins, the goodness of fit test also revealed significance within the model $\chi^2(6, N = 1319) = 221.32, p < .001$. For boards, the most frequent categories, in order were home, personality/advice, and clothing/merchandise. For pins, the most frequent category was clothing/merchandise, followed by home and personality/advice.

Research Question 2 (RQ₂) asked which boards will be featured most prominently on celebrity lifestyle brand Pinterest pages. The following table displays where boards were placed within an account, with lower numbers indicating more prominence (the first board in the account was coded as “1”).

Table 3

Prominence of Boards within Accounts

Category	Mean Placement	Standard Deviation
Exercise/Health	10.81	9.66
Beauty	17.00	17.85
Clothing/Merchandise	17.66	16.15
Food	20.85	13.05
Personality/Advice	21.30	17.69
Home	31.97	19.72

An ANOVA was used to examine this research question, with category of board used as the independent variable, and placement as the dependent variable. A Levene's test was significant $p = .01$. There was significance within the model $F(2, 262) = 6.18, p < .001$. Post hoc tests revealed that exercise boards were more likely than home boards to be placed prominently $p < .001$. Clothing/merchandise boards were also more likely to be placed prominently than home boards $p < .001$. Celebrity/personality boards were placed more prominently than home boards $p = .01$.

Research Question 3a (RQ_{3a}) asked which boards will have the most pins. An ANOVA was used to analyze this research question. A Levene's test was significant $p < .001$. Within the ANOVA, there was no significance $F(6, 262) = 1.34, p = .24$. Therefore, the answer to RQ_{3a} is that there is no significant difference between the number of pins featured on different board categories.

Research Question 3b (RQ_{3b}) asked which boards will have the most followers. An ANOVA was used to assess this research question, and a Levene's test was not significant $p = .84$. However, there was no significance within the model $F(6, 262) = .13$, $p = .99$, indicating that there was no difference between the number of followers for different categories of boards.

Research Question 4 (RQ_{4a}) asked which pin categories will receive the most repins. The following table displays the mean amount of repins for each category of pin:

Table 4

Repins by Pin Category

Category	Mean Repins	Standard Deviation
Beauty	215.18	1010.98
Home	143.24	618.62
Personality/advice	114.34	396.47
Clothing/merchandise	66.21	194.84
Food	52.92	166.69
Exercise/health	37.56	84.10

An ANOVA was used to compare these means. A Levene's test was significant $p < .001$, but there was significance within the model $F(6, 1310) = 2.88$, $p = .01$. Post hoc tests did not indicate where the significance within the model was.

Research Question 4b (RQ_{4b}) asked which pin categories will receive the most likes. The following table displays the mean number of likes for each category:

Table 5*Likes by Category*

Category	Mean Likes	Standard Deviation
Beauty	46.85	195.80
Personality/advice	31.05	94.85
Home	29.54	114.17
Clothing/merchandise	16.32	36.48
Food	8.01	20.32
Exercise/health	7.42	14.54

An ANOVA indicated that there was significance within the model $F(6, 1310) = 3.65$, $p < .001$, however a Levene's test was significant $p < .001$. Post hoc tests indicated that personality/advice pins were more likely to be liked than food pins $p = .05$, and beauty pins were more likely to be liked than food pins $p = .03$.

Research Question 5a (RQ_{5a}) asked if purchasable items would receive more repins. An ANOVA was used to assess this research question, and a Levene's test was not significant $p = .49$. The mean repins for purchasable items was 76.29 ($SD = 427.11$), and the mean repins for nonpurchasable items was 92.57 ($SD = 389.63$). However, there was no significant difference in these means $F(1, 1316) = .43$, $p = .51$. Therefore, purchasable items were not more likely to receive repins.

Research Question 5b (RQ_{5b}) asked whether purchasable items would receive more likes. The mean likes for purchasable items was 17.59 ($SD = 81.47$) and the mean likes for nonpurchasable items was 21.81 ($SD = 81.01$). A Levene's test was not significant $p = .31$, however an ANOVA indicated that there was no significant difference between these means $F(1, 1316) = .71$, $p = .40$. This means that purchasable items were not more likely to be liked.

Discussion

Overall, the celebrity lifestyle brand Pinterest accounts that were analyzed in this study presented female audiences with a representation of female celebrities that focused on products for the home, information about the celebrity and advice about her lifestyle and parenting, and clothing or merchandise. This is not surprising, considering that celebrity lifestyle brands are devoted to selling the lifestyle of a particular celebrity to audiences. However, it is important to understand how celebrity women frame themselves to their audiences, as representations of celebrity lifestyles demonstrate "to an individual user what

other women see as a social norm: how women should look, how they should dress.”⁴⁰ This could affect the way that women think and act, and specifically the products they buy in order to attempt to emulate the lifestyle they see celebrity lifestyle brands espousing.

In regards to board location within a Pinterest account, information about exercise, clothing and merchandise, and celebrity were placed highly within accounts. There were many boards that were devoted to topics about the home, but these boards were buried behind other topics, often being placed with low priority in an account. Additionally, there were few exercise boards, which shows that although celebrity lifestyle brands featured boards about exercise prominently, there were few pins about it. This indicates that lifestyle brands wanted to appear to care about exercise while doing little to guide their audiences towards healthy exercise instructions. Beauty, personality/celebrity, and home pins consistently received the most repins and likes, indicating that audiences were seeking these topics and engaging more with these topics on Pinterest.

It was also interesting to note that whether an item was purchasable or not did not determine if users would repin or like that item. This is at odds with the idea that celebrity lifestyle brands represent “aspirational” content,⁴¹ since users do not seem to be aspiring to buy these purchasable items any more than seek advice, tips about decorating, or do-it-yourself seasonal crafts. The data here seem to indicate that users are seeking out celebrity lifestyle brands for beauty and home tips rather than for aspirational, purchasable items. This eschewing of purchasable pins may be partly because of the visual nature of Pinterest, where the images associated with a product are more evident than actual information about the product. Brands may be able to attract more people to purchasable pins by providing more information, as “using Pinterest may be more effective when a brand describes its product in more detail.”⁴²

Clothing boards were likely to be placed highly within an account, which may be largely due to lifestyle brands that were associated with a specific clothing brand (like *Fabletics* and *Draper James*) who wanted people to see their merchandise and buy it. However, while social media marketers encourage purchasing behavior by placing boards affiliated with a lifestyle brand’s actual brand more prominently, this does not mean that purchasable pins are being repined more frequently by the consumer. This may speak to issues of celebrity influence; for today’s consumer, who is constantly bombarded with information about celebrities (from their latest television show, to their most recent brand) it may not be enough to simply purchase the brand affiliated with the celebrity- these consumers may want to mimic the celebrity by decorating their home in a similar fashion, or doing the same DIY crafts as the celebrity, or following the beauty regimens of the celebrity. This may be disheartening to celebrity lifestyle brand promoters who see Pinterest as the ideal place to sell their clothing or merchandise, as Pinterest has been seen as the social media platform which is “most in alignment with commerce.”⁴³ It may, though, speak to the power of using Pinterest to build the identities and brands of celebrities, and connect with fans through advice, tips, and desires rather than the direct marketing or selling of products.

Conclusions and Future Research

Celebrity lifestyle brands on Pinterest find themselves at the intersection of marketing, celebrity influence, feminine identity, and social media. Female celebrities use Pinterest to reach out to their fans in a way that has not been possible in the past—allowing Pinterest users to directly pin and save advice, tips, and products for future use. And in a world where “women control most of the household spending,”⁴⁴ celebrity lifestyle brands may have access to the women who make purchasing decisions for themselves and their families. Celebrities wield extraordinary influence with their fans, demonstrating their lifestyles in an attempt to persuade fans to buy their products. Lifestyle brands revolve not only around products, but around an image that the celebrities hope women aspire to be like. Content on Pinterest “show[s] thin, fit women who direct media consumers to act and be like them.”⁴⁵ Female users may aspire to these lifestyles, which is the goal of the celebrity who endorses products, ideas, and advice in an attempt to cultivate an almost-unachievable image.

In 2017, Pinterest introduced its Lens app, which allows users to take a picture of any item and be directed to a site to buy the item, or view similar items.⁴⁶ This new feature attempts to increase the purchasing and aspirational elements of Pinterest, blurring the lines between social media, marketing, and sales platforms. Future research could investigate whether these type of direct-to-product structures affect users’ willingness to buy a product, or how celebrity lifestyle brands could utilize this type of technology.

In short, celebrity lifestyle brands are using Pinterest to promote the personalities associated with the brands, and users seem to be excited to follow and mimic their favorite celebrities, although this may not directly contribute to sales of products. Female celebrities are framing themselves to users in terms of home décor and design, purchasable clothing and merchandise, and advice on parenting and celebrity status. However, users seem more interested in pinning and liking information about beauty, indicating that appearance is a primary, driving factor in audiences’ decision to follow celebrities.

Limitations

This research is limited by the small number of celebrity accounts that were analyzed. It is difficult to draw broad conclusions about celebrities based on the actions of eight lifestyle brands, although these brands did represent the most prominent celebrity lifestyle brands on the market. Future research could benefit from a larger sample size. Additionally, content analysis research can only demonstrate how users are interacting with content, not their emotions towards it, purchase intentions, or any other survey-style information. Future research should include coding categories for parenting and pet information, as there was an abundance of parenting information that was presented to users.

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