Sex sells - but should it?
The notion of using sex(ism) in tourism advertising

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Abstract

This thesis provides a discussion of the use of sex(ism) in advertisement and its implications for gender roles and values, with a focus on women’s status in society. We argue that women are being objectified and still considered second class citizens, even in such a gender equality forward country as Sweden. The harm of using sex(ism) in the advertising industry is shown by how it strongly implements and perpetuates antiquated gender stereotypes upon society. This limits women’s options in many regards, such as when it comes to career opportunities, and self-development as your own entity. It is through a critical understanding of the role advertising has on society, and vice versa, that comprehension of the issue and how to move forward towards a more gender equal society can be accomplished.

Key words:
Tourism advertisement, gender stereotypes, sex(ism), symbolism, social responsibility
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1. Introduction

The focus of this study was the social construct of gender roles and relations based on marketing and advertising in the tourism industry. We wanted to look at why it is normalised to use objectification and socially constructed gender roles when creating a picture-pleasing image in various forms of advertisement. We wanted to investigate how and why sexism and objectification in the marketing industry is a problem since it further implements outdated gender-stereotypes.

Using sex in advertising can arguably be seen as an easy short-cut to instil a commercial message in people's memories, be that a brand or a product. We wanted to investigate if that approach really is necessary and how the use of sex in advertising affects society. There are perhaps other just as efficient methods to achieve the same goal to be explored. As will be discussed further on in the thesis, we will explain that we as a society are trying to get away from old and outdated gender roles and stereotypes. Society wants to adopt a more equal playing field for men, women, and all genders, where everyone is accepted, has equal rights, and equal opportunities in life. By perpetuating the gender stereotypes of old and reusing them in today's society, there is a danger of society and humankind moving backwards in their evolutionary development, rather than forwards (Poon, 2021).

In this thesis we will explain the problems regarding sexism and use of sex and sexism in advertisement in the tourism industry. The background will explain the setting of research and paint a picture of what aspects will be discussed. In the problem discussion we dig deeper into the issues, and motivate why this research should be done, followed by the purpose of the study. In the methodology we describe how we conducted the research and the study, and what tools aided us in this endeavour. The literature review was used to further explain the complexity of the issues regarding sex(ism) in advertising and was used as an aid in the analysis of the results. In the discussion we highlighted the fact that the respondent and society do indeed find the use of sex(ism) in advertising to be an issue which needs to be addressed and taken seriously.
1.1 Aim and research question

The purpose of this thesis was to explain from a feminist perspective how sex(ism) and objectification is an issue in the advertisement and marketing industry - with a distinct focus on tourism. The focus of this thesis was sexism in marketing and advertising as a foundation. We were interested in exploring why sex sells in the advertisement industry. Although sex in advertisements and commercials could be seen more frequently in the past, it is still used today. Sexism and sexualisation of a product are common in advertisements. The interesting aspect was to scrutinise why it is a popular choice among different businesses, in this case within the tourism industry, and why the use of sexism in advertising is a problem (Hofmann 2016). We wanted to explain to advertisers and marketers that the use of sexism in advertising is indeed a problem, and that other options for communication of messages should be sought out.

To measure some aspect of a social phenomenon or trend and gather facts in order to answer our research question, we created a survey in the form of a structured questionnaire. While brainstorming ideas for the thesis we came across two of Vings’ commercials and one of Apollo’s commercials, which really intrigued us and made us want to more fully explore the subjects brought up in their commercials. The questionnaire was distributed online through various social media platforms. The respondents to the questionnaire watched three short video-commercials from the Swedish travel company Ving and Apollo. Thereafter, a set of questions followed to be answered regarding how the respondents experienced those commercials. The answers from the survey were analysed with the aid of the support gathered in an integrated, semi-systematic literature review. A discussion of the results followed, and comparisons were made to our hypothesis, and what connection between our claim and the research could be found. Finally, a conclusion was presented as a final step in the thesis.

Our research question which we wanted to try to answer is;

● To what extent do people care about the use of sexism in advertising?
1.2 Background

The use of symbolism and hidden messages in marketing has been around for as long as marketing has been around. Over time these messages have become more and more explicit, and marketers have arguably figured out the most optimal ways of advertising, through the use of sex (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). However, times are changing. Can and should marketers continue in the same manner, or is there a need for change? This thesis has a normative approach in terms of implementing argumentative statements, to have biassed discussions about the phenomenon of sexism in advertising (Holbert, 2013).

1.2.1 Social Responsibility and Sustainability

There are arguably a few responsibilities every advertiser has when it comes to their marketing. There is this concept called the societal marketing concept, which suggests that the decisions companies make regarding their marketing should have certain considerations in mind. They should consider the requirements of the company itself, the wants and long-time interest of the customers, as well as societies’ long-term interests and needs. “The Societal Marketing Concept holds that marketing strategy should deliver value to customers in a way that maintains or improves both the customer’s and society’s well being. It calls for sustainable marketing, as well as socially and environmentally responsible marketing that meets the present needs of consumers and businesses while also preserving or enhancing the ability for future generations to meet their needs.” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012 p. 11) We would argue that gender (in)equality is part of this social responsibility and sustainable marketing. Social sustainability, as well as economic sustainability are also part of the sustainability aspect, not just questions regarding the environment. Considering that advertisement influences the society, and society influences the advertising, it should be in the forefront of advertisers' plan to market in such a way to benefit the society long term, and in a way of pushing society towards a more gender equal position, not clinging on to, and perpetuating old thoughts and ideas (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

1.2.2 Gender (In)equality

Gender (in)equality has become more and more a topic of discussion in the Western World, especially so in the later parts of the 20th century until now (D’Enbeau, 2011). However, the issue of gender inequality is nowhere close to being solved and it is still a social problem to be tackled. Gender stereotyping is an integrated part of our society and
culture and affects every aspect of our lives to some extent. “Sexism seems to be rooted in our society, despite any efforts to overcome it. Sometimes it seems to be expressed subtly, sometimes rather obvious. It might be used as a provocation, often utilised as a tool to generate attention.” (Hofmann 2016, p.2) These gender stereotypes are clearly evident in media and marketing. The use of symbolism to communicate advertising messages to the public is often tainted by sex. This affects society at large and how we as people view each other. It affects how people are met and treated, in schools, at work, and other settings of life. By absorbing advertisement messages through a sexist lens our worldview is being skewed and twisted, and risks reflecting society incorrectly (Hofmann 2016).

2. Problem Discussion

We want to explain that sexism in media and advertisement is arguably a problem, and something that should be taken seriously and not be overlooked - because it is an issue in our opinion. Women are still considered second class citizens and objectified, to be handled by men however they see fit. Sexualising women from a young age is inappropriate and appalling, and simply should not be a tool to use to sell such mundane things as socks or computers (Poon, 2021).

The problematization of this thesis will focus on why objectification and sexualisation of people, especially women, is an issue in the marketing industry. Four problems will be presented, and the last one is our focus for this thesis.

2.1 Children and Gender norms

Children learn from a young age about the stereotypical gender roles and how they have to adapt in order to fit in society's gender stereotypes and expectations. Those stereotypes are most visible through media and advertisement. Therefore, feminism plays an important role as a countermovement since it has a critical look on how marketing in the patriarchal society have used, and still use, gender as well as sex to strengthen their brand or product that is presented to customers (Kacen et al, 2002). There are other factors that play into how children are raised to fit into gender stereotypes, parents for example. Even if parents try their best to disregard their child from the pressure of fitting the mould of gender, there is still going to be the media that has one of the biggest influences.
A study was made where a group of children between the ages of six and nine years old got to watch commercials with typical gender roles. The women in those commercials had an expression of being gentle, helpful, kind and beauty-oriented. The portrayal of the men were however strong, powerful and dominant. When the commercials had been watched, the children agreed on the stereotypes, that there was nothing that stood out regarding those stereotypes. However, when children are aware of stereotypes and try to behave in a certain stereotypical way, for example choosing toys that are explicitly made for girls and boys, a problem of bullying arises. If a boy chooses to play with a toy or wear clothing that is typically feminine, and that has been proven in a commercial where only girls play with that toy or wear those clothes, the child is most likely going to be seen as a deviation and therefore be excluded from the group. This is an issue that affects a child's self-esteem, which will follow them for the rest of their lives (Browne, 2013). It is therefore a societal problem, since the marketing industry and media keep implementing those norms and expectations.

2.2 Women and Self Esteem

One of our main perspectives is how women experience sexistic and normative commercials, how it affects them and their self esteem. When advertisements portray women, they usually pick models who follow a typical beauty ideal with a certain body image. Women who watch those commercials are most likely to compare themselves to those models, since the women portrayed in the advertisement are exposed to a mass-audience, it is easy to trick society into thinking that it is what one should aim to behave or look like - especially if you use the product that is presented (Rajagopal et al, 2002). “Advertisements have consistently confined women to the traditional role of a mother, or beauty, or sex symbol, and these do not represent women's diversity” (Rajagopal et al, 2002 p.3334). The misuse of those stereotypical roles does have an effect on women's self-esteem since they might not think their natural appearance or current living-situation is good enough, based on influential media. Being skinny and having a certain body-type that is usually achievable through surgery is often the type of model that is used as an attractive stereotype in commercials, which is misleading to women and affects their self-esteem. Those models are also often connected to sexual
Sex is one of the most common tools marketers use since it is the easiest way to implant a memory in consumers minds (Poon, 2021). However, this thesis shall explain the unnecessary usage of such exploitation since it is commonly portrayed as degrading and an outdated concept. D’Enbeau (2011) describes for example how using sexualisation can be a customer disappointment when it is connected to the purchasable product, “the association of sex with a product must always disappoint as sex is confused with the desire and possession of commodities. Indeed, one purpose of advertising is to convince consumers that products can replace human interaction. Ads also present women as the objects of sexual desire for men” (D'Enbeau, 2011 p.57). It can certainly be a boost to think a certain product will evolve the sense of self to the customer, but it falls flat when sex is solemnly used to enforce the product in top-of-mind.

### 2.3 Lack of education regarding sexism

There is also an issue with an uneducated audience regarding the phenomenon of sexism and objectification in marketing. If the viewers don’t know what to recognise as a problem with a distasteful sexist commercial, it is hard to make some sort of change or solution to the problem. If society is aware of discrimination of the underrepresented gender, then there is hope of actions and change within society and therefore the marketing industry as a whole (Poon, 2021). This could potentially be a possible suggestion of a solution for our thesis, as according with the critical theory from a feminist perspective. There is a need for politicians and other social segments to recognise that sexism, gender-norms and inequality between sexes as a societal problem. They could then make larger and more impactful changes, and enforce laws and legislation to reduce the use of sex in marketing.

There is a Swedish advertiser representative called *Reklamombudsmannen* (RO) where they have the right to ban and take down a commercial that has explicit content and fails to present the actual product. Other parts of the world could also establish a similar office (RO, 2022).
2.4 The need for advertising messages to change

Using sexism and sexist messages to communicate with the public enhances gender stereotypes and only perpetuates the negative connotations this brings onto society. If women are constantly shown as meek, weak, and sensual objects there is arguably a large risk people of society will continue to view women in such light. This despite the fact that we know better, that we in the Western society know that women have their own voices, opinions and rights, and are, put simply, human beings, not objects. There must be a better way for advertisers to communicate their intended message to their audiences, without involving topics and symbols which moves society backwards in development rather than forwards (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

The notion of social construct is the backbone of how our society is built and operates. It is instilled into the very essence of what our society represents. It is a complex, entangled cultural and social structure which defines and segments people into ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘accepted’ and ‘excluded’, and ‘men as superior’ and ‘women as inferior’ (Hall, Swain, and Kinnaird, 2003). Media and marketing plays an extremely influential role in mirroring and influencing public opinion and changes in societal norms and values. (Lawton, 2009; Sirakaya & Sonmez, 2000). This makes the use of stereotypical gender norms and portrayals of genders to have a huge impact on society, and its residents. Reports have shown that tv-commercials depict an older version of our society, and are often not a representation of what society looks like in the present. They do this by continuing to showcase and favour a masculine perspective and a male view of the tourism gaze. (Lovdal, 1989). This can have damaging long-term effects since all other genders will be underrepresented, or wrongly represented and portrayed in both advertising and in society.

As discussed by Hall, Swain, and Kinnaird (2003) a consequence of depicting stereotypical gender roles in advertising can lead to people accepting these stereotypes as the truth, enforcing gender stereotyped attitudes and social behaviour, as well as enabling the creation and sustainment of power relations (Signorelli 1989 through Chhabra et al. 2011). It can be argued that gendering of tourism marketing is informed by complex cultural and social structures prevailing in contemporary society and power, hegemony, and equality are reinforced through gender relations in tourism.
A critical feminist perspective is going to be the lens through which to view and question how society is constructed based on gender stereotypes and how they are portrayed in advertisements. The critical feminist perspective is a countermovement to societal injustice between genders, to criticise the patriarchal view on gender stereotypes and why it has to change (Dietz, 2003). It will be strongly connected to our main question ‘To what extent do people care about the use of sexism in advertising?’, to further investigate why the marketing industry and media choose to linger on something outdated as sex and sexism and how customers get affected by it.

3. Theoretical Frame of Reference

The three theoretical theories that are a basis for this thesis are Critical feminism, Social constructivism and Advertising in tourism. There are visible connections among those three since social constructivism is about how people socially exchange information about their perception of society, or a certain topic that is revolving around a social construct (Amineh et al, 2015). Advertising in tourism or advertising in general is based on psychological social aspects in terms of how humans react to commercials emotionally. The marketing industry tries to represent an accurate presentation of society, but often fails or excludes certain aspects of what reality of society looks like based on gender norms, ethnicity and age. Critical feminism tries to question gender in particular, why gender norms have a certain construction based on social attributes and why it has to change (Dietz, 2003).

3.1 Critical feminism

A critical feminist perspective was one of the main theoretical frameworks used to investigate the different aspects of this thesis. The portrayal of gender in advertisement is especially important, since both sex and sexism has such a strong connection to it. The critical feminist perspective exists to question how our society is constructed and what is in need of change, one of those constructions is gender norms and why they are problematic if holding on to them (Dietz, 2003).

As discussed, gender is something we learn from a very young age, and there have been studies made to investigate whether or not certain behaviours come naturally or if they are influenced by the surroundings one grows up in. For example, Martin (2005) discusses how boys as infants are more physically active and use their voice more, while girls are
quieter and more reactive to facial expressions and voices. It has nothing to do with how they will develop and adapt to stereotypical gender norms but rather more with personality, as well as how they are treated by their parents and relatives. It is also important to point out that babies might get handled differently based on their gender. Boys for example can get the response of not being as fragile as girls, even though they are still delicate babies no matter the gender. Critical feminists see gender as something that should be treated equal, without forcing the child to wear ‘opposite’ clothing, assigning them a gender-influenced colour such as blue or pink, or play with stereotypical toys assigned for either girls or boys. The idea is to raise the child as plain as possible without encouraging or enforcing ideas of what the child should wear or play with, the child should simply decide for themselves (Martin, 2005).

Although critical feminist parents try their best not to shape their child based on a normative society, the child will learn from their surroundings how they should behave and correct their appearance, which will follow them into adulthood. When growing into adulthood, the aspects of critical feminism become somewhat more complex.

As Dietz (2003, p. 401) explains “one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes one.”, which could be addressed the same for men, which is a basis of social construct regarding gender norms. “Feminist theorists today regularly, and often radically, disagree over the practical-normative significance of maintaining a conception of gender as, on the one hand, a binary configuration of masculine/feminine or male/female rooted in the idea of gender or sexual difference or, on the other hand, as a process or an effect of discourse that is constantly in production and therefore changeable and fluid.” (Dietz, 2003, p.402). Critical feminists try to dismantle what gender is and where it has its roots, why a normative patriarchal society so desperately tries to stick to it and why it has to change, since it causes harm to all genders in terms of lack of freedom and expression, which comes down to rooted psychological structures.

The construct of masculinity is the strongest concept of gender norms, which is associated with power. In order to seem powerful and taken seriously, both women and men would have to fall into the masculine sector in order to strengthen themselves in the eyes of a patriarchal society. However, the line is rather delicate towards women and harder to
achieve since a powerful woman could have negative reactions such as being perceived as bossy or challenging others with their dominance, the same goes for people who identify with being non-binary or gender fluid. The idea is to detach the concept of masculinity and power, to rethink and deform its connection in order to equalise femininity and masculinity (Buchholtz, 2014).

If all genders are seen as equal, no matter if the individual associates themselves with being masculine or feminine, it would take away the stigma of power structures, especially when there are expectations and media portrayals that men should perform in a masculine manner to be powerful while women should stick to being feminine and submissive. As discussed, this is early taught to children by limiting their choice of toys, freedom to express emotions and books they read (Martin, 2005).

In advertisements, it is common to use sexual preferences where women are usually the main object in those commercials. Why they are referred to as objects is because that is the recurring motive women are portrayed as. If advertising wants to use the trick of sex to sell a product, women are displayed as submissive, feminine, and seductive with an appearance that is easy on the eye. They are usually put there for the male gaze, with little to no power of their own sexuality. Liberal and critical feminists have the ideology that women should be free to express and own their sexuality, and being feminine without being seen as weak or objects for others to freely take advantage of (Buchholtz, 2014).

### 3.2 Social constructivism

Social constructivism is built on how humans perceive society in terms of language and knowledge, in order to create meaning to understand and interact with each other. The reality and construct of society looks different for each individual, based on their beliefs, gender and background. Everyone creates and influences each other’s reality or if there is a certain social structure that needs development, it can only mature with the help from others. Social constructivism is about people exchanging conversations and ideas with each other in order to expand their knowledge about a certain topic or to share external experiences in order to gain better understanding of the individual, or a group of people (Amineh et al, 2015).
Gender and the understanding of sex as well as sexism in advertising is a way of social construct, since it has been built up on social interaction between people, to make an understanding of how our society is constructed with the basis of gender stereotypes. Critical feminism theory exists to question social construction and therefore attempts to reshape it, due to the consequences it has on people as a whole in matters of power dynamics and repression (Locher, 2001).

Femininity and masculinity is one social construct of which is built upon social expectations of what one should correctly shape themselves after, meaning men being masculine and women being feminine, this also excludes non-binary and gender-fluid people. Gender is described by Locher (2001, p.115) not as something you are born with, but rather “systematic social construction that dichotomizes identities, behaviours, and expectations as masculine and feminine”. It is something you learn due to expectations and social interactions. Advertisements and media is one of the massive influences to those structures, since it is what managers want us to perceive as reality and a picture of what our society looks like.

3.3 Advertising in Tourism
In its most basic role advertising is an economic investment for any leisure, tourism or travel organisation, whether it is in the public, private or not-for-profit sector. (Nigel and Pritchard, 2001) Advertising can be defined as either mass communication through magazines, billboards, television, and the Internet, to name a few, or more direct communication to the consumer via direct mail. A key component is that these are all paid for and non-personal, meaning that there is a clearly identifiable advertiser or sponsor, and that the message is sent out to the masses rather than being delivered more personally by for example a salesperson conversing with a few individuals. (Nigel and Pritchard, 2001)

In tourism and leisure marketing advertising is of extra importance due to the special circumstances of their product, which in most cases are a service, and the two words will be used interchangeably in this thesis. The tourist product is defined as intangible, inseparable, variable and perishable where it can arguably be said that what is actually promoted is the notion of the service or experience, rather than the service itself. People
buy a preconceived expectation of an experience, based on the image planted in the customers mind by the advertisement of the tourism organisation. Promotions are aimed at influencing the attitudes and behaviours of the audiences in three main ways: 1. To confirm and reinforce. 2. To create new patterns of behaviour and attitude, 3. To change attitudes and behaviours. To achieve this tourism and leisure operators as well as destinations and others involved in the industry, uses imaging to portray their messages in advertising, eventually leading to some kind of purchasing decision. (Nigel and Pritchard, 2001)

Advertisers also need the audience to engage in the advertisement, which is difficult to achieve as people only pay attention to advertisements for a few reasons. Either the product being advertised is different, the ad is unusual, the ad is relevant to the customer, or if the ad is seen often enough. Since there is so much advertising happening at the same time, all competing for the customers attention, noise and clutter can occur, where the audience is overwhelmed with all the information. Advertising fatigue and misunderstanding of messages can then easily become factors, which risk making the message interpreted in a completely different way than intended. Advertisers must do all they can to make sure the message reaches the target group as intended to reach the planned outcome. The danger here lies in the notion of trying to do something unique to stand out to the customer. What the advertiser might consider a unique way of portraying the message, can completely backfire and be interpreted in a completely different way. Attention grabbing is not always a good thing, which we will explain further in the Discussion section. (Nigel and Pritchard, 2001)

4. Methodology
The methodology and method were the foundations for our search process. Presented below is our reasoning regarding choice of methods and how we achieved our results.

4.1 Critical theory and feminist research
To better understand the phenomenon, we were inspired by the ‘critical theory’ along with feminist research. Critical theory acknowledges that there are social injustices and power structures that need to be investigated before taking a political stance in order to make a social change (Smith, 2017). Why we were only inspired by critical theory is
because we were biassed in our argumentations and discussions. Since this thesis was written from a woman’s perspective and both of the authors are women which focuses on the issue that first and foremost affects women at large. We have also researched social constructions and power dynamics through the basis of gender and why feminism exists to question it. However we gathered such information through empirical data to form a basis of our arguments and discussions, which differs from the critical theory's subjective approach that is about personal political agenda to make a change (Smith, 2017). However, we did support our position through extensive research, as shown in the literature review.

4.2 Research approach
The thesis has followed a deductive research approach and the study design is explanatory-sequential, meaning that we had a mix-method approach with a quantitative survey and a qualitative study design when analysing empirical data and results from our survey (Smith, 2017). The theories used to strengthen the background of the thesis were Critical feminism, Social constructivism and Advertising in tourism through the means of a content analysis, meaning that we used already existing written, empirical data to understand social constructs around sexism and advertisements in order to form valuable arguments and discussions (Smith, 2017). We started with an integrative, semi-structured literature review. A deductive approach of the literature review was utilised where we explained why our phenomenon is relevant and should be researched through the work of already existing works of literature, for example articles, studies and books (Smith, 2017).

The focus was to collect data regarding the phenomenon of sexism in advertising, such as the main concepts of social construct, critical feminist theory and tourism advertisement. Our standpoint in regards to the topics in the literature review is presented and our own analysis of the tv-commercials was presented which we compared with our respondents experiences and tested through a quantitative, deductive study in the form of an internet survey. In the survey, the respondents viewed three different tv-commercials from the Swedish travelling agencies Ving and Apollo, and answered standardised questions showcasing their thoughts and opinions regarding the topics presented above. However, the answers from the survey were analysed with a qualitative approach where we explained the results in forms of textual data (Bergin, 2018). The categories and questions
for the questionnaire were derived from the data collected in the literature review. The survey was then analysed with the aid of the empirical data from the literature review using a qualitative approach, in order to form an explanatory result in forms of written text. We used a deductive means of drawing logical conclusions by a process of reasoning. We also used general premises to form a specific conclusion. Since we used general premises we know these to be established in society and true to society at large, therefore our conclusions had a small possibility of being incorrect (Smith, 2017).

While the survey was being answered by respondents, we made our own analysis of the commercials with the help of the knowledge we gained by making the literature review. Our own analysis of the tv-commercials was then compared with that of the respondents, and a discussion followed, ending with a short conclusion.

4.3 Method
The method of choice was a combination of a semi-structured literature review and a quantitative survey with qualitative questions and analysis which will be presented in the following section.

4.3.1 Overview
The data for the literature review was secondary data collected through bibliographic research, derived from online sources such as Google scholar, Communication Abstracts and OneSearch,. Keywords used to find the data were; sexism, advertising, gender (in)equality, symbolism, social responsibility, critical feminist theory, third wave feminism, tourism advertising, children in advertising, children and gender.

The survey contained a mixture of open and close ended questions. The questions had a quantitative approach. Also included in the survey were three tv-commercials from the Swedish travelling agencies, Ving and Apollo. We shared the survey, a internet-based questionnaire, through social media in order to reach out to as many respondents as possible in a short amount of time. The questions were both derived from the categories of the literature review, where we took inspiration from how the psychological aspects of marketing are constructed, since the survey focused on the emotional and psychological reactions we got from respondents. However, the questions mainly centred around the
topics presented in the tv-commercials, with a focus on sexism and how the respondents experienced said tv-commercials. We strived to attain a cumulative approach to sample size. We “continued to add to the size of the sample until a point is reached where there is sufficient information and where no benefit is derived from adding any more to the sample”. (Denscombe, 2010 p. 41) which we achieved to an extent until we ran out of time.

The idea was to compare our own opinions about the use of sexism in advertising, as people who are interested, aware, and knowledgeable about the topic, and compare this to that of the opinions of society, using the respondents as a sample size.

### 4.3.2 Literature Review

A literature review is a systematic way of collecting and synthesising previous research. Gathering information from previously written literature creates a summary of the most important concepts of theories regarding a chosen topic. By having a summary in a more gathered and formatted manner the topic and its key points become more comprehensive and it is easier to understand the bigger picture and how all the parts are connected. The information can then be analysed, to be used as support in research, to find disagreements in research, and to fill gaps in research, as well as suggest further research in the field (Smith, 2017).

An integrative review creates a summary of past theoretical and empirical literature, as an aid to understanding the main concepts and theories of a phenomenon. The integrative review enables more diverse research and can include methodological and theoretical literature (Torraco, 2016). This literature review can arguably be seen as a semi-systematic review where an overview of a research area has been conducted. A semi-structured review is a type of literature review which also aids in summarising and forming a picture of the history of the research field in question, in forms of theoretical perspectives and identifying different themes around the phenomenon. Through such an overview themes and common theories and definitions could be found (Snyder, 2019).

Initially we conducted a literature review which was used to describe the background of the phenomenon. Through the literature review, we also gained the knowledge necessary to be able to do our own analysis of the chosen tv-commercials, aiding us in knowing what type of questions to ask, and how to analyse and interpret the answers of the
respondents. The literature review covered different social aspects of marketing, how it is constructed and how it affects people’s minds as well as how it influences their everyday lives. The literature review also included the topics of symbolism, third wave feminism, advertising in tourism and societal responsibility in order to question and discuss how sex and sexism is used in the marketing industry.

4.3.3 Questionnaire

The travel companies, Ving and Apollo were chosen for our thesis as we thought they had tv-commercials which clearly showcased the issues about advertisement we wanted to highlight and discuss. The questionnaire was from a customer's point of view. The questionnaire was formed by inspecting three of the travelling agencies' tv-commercials, two contrasting tv-commercials from Ving, and one tv-commercial from Apollo. The questionnaire was a digital, empirical-based online questionnaire. The respondents first answered basic, segmenting questions regarding age, gender, place of birth, religious background, etc. In the second section of the survey the respondents watched the first tv-commercial from Ving and answered standardised questions regarding their first impressions of the commercial, understanding of the message of the commercial, and whether or not this affected their opinion regarding the travelling agency. In the third section they watched the Apollo’s tv-commercial, answering the same standardised questions, as was the same with the third and final tv-commercial from Ving.

A decent amount of time was spent on the questions for our survey. We tried to the best of our abilities to make sure that the questions were comprehensible, and answerable within the premises we have given, (scale, yes/no, open answers, etc.) The questions also needed to be relevant to our thesis, and that they provided answers which were relevant to the thesis (Bergin, 2018). Some examples of questions used in the questionnaire were: ‘What are your first impressions watching this tv-commercial? Did you understand the message of the commercial? Would you travel with them after seeing this video? In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in?’

The questions for the survey were written and reformulated multiple times to make sure we fulfilled all requirements we set for the survey (Smith, 2017)). The questionnaire was in both English and Swedish, and the respondents had the option to answer in either language. With the aid of a licensed teacher from Sweden we made sure the questions were raised in
Swedish in a proper manner, and that all spelling were correct. With the aid of a native English speaker, with high intelligence and knowledge about the English language we made sure that the questions were framed properly in English and all spelling was correct. Extra care was spent on making sure the meaning of the questions were as similar as possible in both languages. The questionnaire was tested on a few selected people which consisted of friends and family to make sure all functions of the online questionnaire worked, and that they understood and could respond to the questionnaire properly (Smith, 2017).

The three video-commercials chosen had a range from 2004, 2018 and 2022. The different year-ranges were to show how the development of travel advertisements has looked throughout the years, using the Scandinavian travel agencies Ving and Apollo, and how sexism has developed and somewhat changed with the pace of global awareness and development.

We distributed the survey through social media platforms and we expected a certain snowball effect (Bergin, 2018) which was achieved. The respondents had the possibility to share the questionnaire with others, which they did. The questionnaire was available for five days and most of the replies occurred during the first 24-36 hours.

4.3.4 Respondents

Considering that Ving and Apollo are Swedish companies, and two of the leading travelling agencies in Sweden, and that both of the authors are from Sweden, the people we reached through the social media platforms were mostly of Swedish heritage. Another factor taken into consideration is that both Ving and Apollo are the leading travelling agencies in Sweden, (Apollo, 2022; Ving, 2022c) making it very likely that a large enough group of people in our contacts had come in contact with Ving or Apollo in one way or another. Concluding that even though the most optimal group of people for the survey would possibly not be contacted directly, we would still be able to find enough people with the right criteria through other means of connections. Since the questionnaire was both in Swedish and English we ensured that as many people as possible were able to understand and answer the survey (Smith, 2017). With the aid of our mentor we decided that a minimum of 30 respondents was required to be able to do a proper analysis of the data.
through the questionnaire. Seeing as the minimum was 30 we set our own minimum of 40 to have some more data to analyse.

4.3.5 Research Ethics

Research ethics refers to a set of guidelines to follow when conducting social research. One of the core principles these guidelines are based upon is that no one should suffer harm by participating in the research (Denscombe, 2010). The word ‘harm’ can mean many things and we as researchers needed to consider the unique context of our research when passing judgments regarding this.

Some precautions we took to minimise risk of harm to the participants of this research were:

1. Ensured the respondents of the survey that they would be anonymous
2. Put a disclaimer/trigger warning at the beginning of the questionnaire that subjects regarding sex, sexism, and sexualisation of people would be discussed.
3. Asked the participants to preferably be above a certain age, considering the nature of the research and the topics involved
4. We, to the best of our abilities presented all data collected in a fair manner, and tried not to be too biased, despite the fact that we were writing using feminist research.
5. Personal or identifiable data regarding participants and respondents was not publicised.
6. We knowingly and willingly did not put ourselves in harms way to collect data.

4.3.6 Limitations

Considering our choice of critical theory with feminist research, we were biased towards a predetermined conclusion. This research was motivated by the values of the researchers which will also direct our research activities and conclusions drawn, that is the basis of critical theory (Smith, 2017). However, we showed all the replies of the survey not to exclude any important data. When researching the development of sexism in advertising in the tourism industry, the objective was to explain how sexualisation is an issue and if any progress can be seen to prevent it. The discussion-analysis of answers from respondents was however narrowed down. Gender and age was the main focus to see whether or not there were any differences in respondents' opinions regarding the use of
sexism in advertising, if they are able to spot it as well as question it. Why we chose to segment only age and gender from other questions in the survey, was due to relevance and time limit. Gender and age was also most visible in terms of valuing how they replied. We also chose to focus on three main questions in the survey, which was “What are your first impressions watching this tv-commercial?”, “What do you think the message was?” and “In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in?”.

As discussed, we were limited by the type of people and the number of people answering the survey (Smith, 2017). Time was also a limitation, and the risk of not achieving saturation. Another limitation was that respondents of the survey were not educated on the matter of sexism and objectification, which therefore led us to a weaker result regarding the answers.

Traditional ways of describing and portraying the literature often lack thoroughness and are not undertaken systematically (Tranfield et al., 2003). This results in a lack of knowledge of what the collection of studies is actually trying to say or to what it is indicating. As a result, there was the risk of building research on flawed assumptions. However, this, to our knowledge, was not an issue in conducting our research.

An optimal group to participate in the survey was current customers of Ving and Apollo. However, considering that GDPR is in place, asking Ving and Apollo for any contact information about their customers is expected to be a large hurdle to overcome and we did not pursue this endeavour.

5. Literature Review

This literature review was extensive yet covers only the surface of the different aspects which correlates to sexism in advertising, as this is a broad and complex topic. However, we have in this literature review highlighted some of the most relevant aspects to our phenomenon.

The literature review was presented from a number of different perspectives which all correlated to the aspects of sexism in advertising. The first section was communication through advertisement. It described how the marketing industry tries to communicate to a
mass audience through psychological aspects, to create selling value and making a brand or product top-of-mind. Advertising in tourism and the segmentation of the first tourists is a description of how the portrayal of women and men can be dated back for hundreds of years and show how this segmentation has influenced our society, and been influenced by society.

Symbolism plays an important role in advertising, since advertisers can affect the unconscious mind and feelings by using certain colours and symbols correlating with each other. There was also a social responsibility that had to be considered. If creating a commercial that is too distasteful or portraying a brand or product in a wrong light, controversial reactions are more likely to happen, putting the company at risk for less selling value. Important aspects of social responsibility is to not exclude various ethnicities or stick to gender stereotyping, which also is discussed.

Third wave feminism is included to question the stereotypical usage of gender and how women in particular are being sexualised in advertisements, especially when they are portrayed as not owning their sexuality. Casting children in advertising is also a social responsibility since they are most likely going to be unaware of what they are participating in, needing legal guardians to agree on certain terms connected to the company. We have therefore also chosen to include a description of pedophilia and laws and legislation of sexual offenders since children are easily put in context which at a first glance seem innocent. Just by taking a second to consider whether the use of children is appropriate or not, new light can be drawn to such exploitation which has helped us with our analysis as well.

5.1 Communication through Advertisement

Advertisement is a great form of communication. It can convey a broad spectrum of messages to a vast audience. Communication is one of the core activities in marketing. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012) An advertisement can be directed to various people. It can be a public message to the masses or something more specific to a certain targeted group. By conducting market segmentation, customers are divided into different segments, or groups. These segments are divided into different categories, which can be based on certain criteria, for example, age, gender, income level, ethnicity, geographic location, hobbies and other interests. These groups of people are called target groups. The advertisers choose what segment of people and what target group to focus on with their
communication. Although advertisers can choose to communicate with the masses it usually strengthens the brand or product if a target group is chosen in advance, and a specific message with certain language is planned out beforehand. By having a specified target group, the advertisers can use a specific language adapted to that target group, and create a sense of belonging for the customers and build a connection with them, hence making the brand or product more top of mind (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

5.1.1 Creating appeal in advertisement

When advertising or coming up with a commercial for a certain product or brand, the basic procedure is creating “Attention - Interest - Desire - Action” (Vakratsas et al, p.26 1999). To create a reputation and a message true to the brand is also important, one must know their own culture of the product to be able to build a strong concept and selling value, along with implanting a memorable and purchase-effective strategy. It can be tricky, since consumers are bombarded with different brands and commercials on a daily basis, they are already consciously or unconsciously aware of how brands work to make themselves stand out or try to create an attractive value for themselves. There is a background of psychology that plays a huge role in this. Everything from the usage of symbols, colour and different communication styles. When creating a story behind a product or brand, the goal is wanting the customer to feel something. Feelings move people in a certain direction, and it is a helpful tool when wanting customers to purchase the desired product (Vakratsas et al, 1999).

Two different approaches are common to use when starting to plan out the structure of a commercial or advertisement, which is either the hedonic dimension or the utilitarian dimension. The two different dimensions can collaborate with each other, but it is common to pick either one of them. The hedonic dimension is about the feeling customers access when using the product, and the utilitarian dimension is the functions presented by the product (Melgar et al, p.67 2016). By using the hedonic dimension the advertisers want the customers to feel a certain way about the product. If they have used the right type of language, symbolism and means of communications which are catered to the target group, the customer will indeed feel the intended feelings and the advertisers have achieved their goal, and communicated correctly with the customers. With successful communication the customer will have received a positive message regarding the brand and will likely think positively of them in the future. By communicating in this
manner successfully multiple times, the customer will most likely keep coming back to that specific brand, becoming a returning customer, which will eventually lead to brand loyalty.

It is important for advertisers to market their product or service in an attractive manner to reach their target market and sell their products or services. Great attention needs to be put in all aspects of the product, such as design, packaging, and prices, as well as making it easily accessible for the customers. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012) However, despite all that effort it could be for naught if the advertisers don’t manage to catch the attention of their customers. This is why communication is so important, and why it is necessary to understand the language of the target segment, and as advertisers utilise this to its fullest potential. In an endeavour to reach this optimal way of communicating with the customers, certain language, topics, and symbols can be used by the advertisers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

5.2 Advertisement in Tourism

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world. Though the Tourist industry is considered one sector by some, it can also be argued that the tourism industry is a complex combination of a number of sectors, intertwined and dependent on each other to function as a whole. The tourism industry is not separated from society, but is rather indirectly and directly affected by the events of the world. The tourist sector is dependent on all the other sectors combined, and is a reflection of society. (Clevenger & Singh, 2013., Freund and Hernandez-Maskivker, 2021)

Communication through advertisement in the Tourism industry is performed in the same manner as any other business. What is unique about tourism though, is that they do indeed sell products, but especially services. These services are in a way intangible and cannot be brought back home as souvenirs, or kept as memorabilia. (Löfgren, 2012) It is the interaction between the host and the guest that is the important aspect. Here the people working in the tourism sector are trying to convey the need and want of the tourist to do and experience these tangible as well as intangible products and services. Just as with the advertisers in other sectors one has to have the knowledge and consider the use of the right language and symbols, suitable for the target group, to convey the message and get the desired result out of the tourist.
“language and imagery of tourism promotion privileges the male, heterosexual gaze.” (Pritchard and Morgan 2000a p. 884). and it is argued that tourism marketing is gendered since it showcases the power relations between women and men which are often in the favour of the perspective of men. (Scott, 1986; Wearing & Wearing, 1996).

5.2.1 Segmentation of the first Tourists
Originally travelling and tourism was solely for men. One of the starting points was when Upper-class young men went on the Grand Tour as a way of completing their studies. The journey was considered a rite of passage to becoming a ‘proper’ gentleman (Löfgren, 2002). Other journeys with the same approach of proving one’s manliness were the original trips to the Niagara Falls, before it became commercialised and easily accessible for the masses. The notion of becoming one with nature, and overcoming nature was an important aspect of being a man. Women on the other hand, were considered too fragile in both mind and body to do any such thing. The segmentation of what was typically manly and feminine travels became distinct where the men were to conquer nature, and overcome hurdles. They were to explore nature, climb mountains and overcome great seaside storms, while the women were to spend time in meadows and around still, calm waters. The notion of gendering emotions became a factor and “the strong, sublime experience was for men, while the meeker picturesque views suited the sensibilities of women.” (Löfgren, 2012 p. 30) This can still be seen reflected in tourism, travel and adventure advertisements to this day, where men are seen in advertisements regarding outdoor activities, climbing mountains, surfing and other more ‘extreme’ outdoor activities. While women are depicted in more sensual and relaxing situations such as spa weekends, or lounging on the beach or by a pool. This stereotypical portrayal of women and men has been used for centuries and is thoroughly ingrained in society as part of our culture and customs. (Löfgren, 2012) This emphasises and supports these societal gender norms, solidifying that women are inferior, and objectified, which should not, and could not have any important positions in society. (Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995, Morrison, et. al. 1992, Eagly and Karau, 2002)

However, just because something is the way it is, or just because something has already been done in a particular way doesn't mean that it should be that way, or that it is okay for it to be that way. What has been shown for the past few years with several movements
and protests occurring all over the globe. #MeToo (Me Too, 2022), the protests in Iran, which was sparked by the brutal death of Mahsa Amini who didn’t wear her hijab ‘correctly’ (Iran Human Rights, 2022. Fassihi and Engelbrecht, 2022). Pro-choice protests in the U.S.A. were ramped up in 2021 after the overturning of Roe v. Wade, where women were fighting for their rights to have bodily autonomy and the right to abortions (Honderich, 2022). There are also a number of protests from everyday women and others on social media platforms. Some of the topics that are brought up are, my body - my choice, the right of bodily autonomy, rape culture, sexual harrasment, survivor’s rights, reproductive freedom, and equal pay to name a few. This shows that we as a society are trying to get away from these old and outdated gender roles and norms. Society wants to adopt a more equal playing field for men, women, and all genders, where everyone is accepted, has equal rights, and equal opportunities in life. Scandinavia is arguably considered at the forefront of this movement, however there is still a long way to go.

5.3 Symbolism
Symbolism can be used to investigate the different messages advertisements want to present, especially using sexual preferences which can both consciously or unconsciously be planted into the minds of customers for brand recognition. To be able to scrutinise sexism in advertisements, it is essential to look into symbols regarding social constructs in gender-roles and sexism as an influencing aspect (Hoffman, 2016).

5.3.1 How sex is used in symbolism
To be able to analyse sexism in advertisements, it is essential to look into symbols regarding social constructs in gender-norms and sexism as an influencing aspect. Gender is often connected to objectification and sex, which is something that is used frequently in both past and modern media. It can be targeted to the general audience or a specific target group. One common recurring event with the difference of the genders in advertisement, is for example through perfume commercials. While make-up and personal hygiene is usually largely targeted towards women in modern media, men also use these types of products of course, but it is a distinct separation visually when it comes to what types of symbols are used in the advertisements. Women tend to be represented as delicate, sexual, and feminine while men are portrayed as powerful, strong, and masculine. Not only are these symbols used for the hygiene sector of advertisement, but rather for any type of product (Hofmann, 2016).
The discussion of how sexism, objectification and sex is portrayed in advertising and how it is used is based on norms and cultural aspects. Sex is often used to implant the advertisement in the viewer's memory, to create some sort of interest since humans are arguably more or less drawn to sex. However, it has the tendency to backlash if the commercial is too tasteless or does not succeed to convey a clear message of what the company is trying to sell through the advertisement. The company therefore proceeds to aimlessly use sex or objectification to create attention and something that will be ‘easy’ to remember. It usually does not matter what a business tries to sell when using sex as a form of communication, it could be everything from fashion, a soft drink, to leisure marketing (Poon 2021).

One common recurring event with the difference of the genders in advertisement, is through humour. Using humour is a strong asset when creating a commercial, it is also where stereotypes of gender can be applied. The stereotypes for men are more frequently used as a humorous standing point, while women stereotypes are used in a rather serious manner. Women can also often be shown in commercials where there is an indoor environment, where they are to solve a problem, participate in social gatherings or have a fear of something. Another type of symbolism for women is that they tend to be represented as delicate, sexual, and feminine. Men on the other hand can frequently be shown in settings such as an outdoor environment, driving a car or being at work and displaying characteristics such as being powerful, strong, and masculine (Melgar et al, 2016).

When men are placed in a commercial that is typically an environment for women, it has a humorous touch to it - not to risk customer resistance. The typical gender roles can however clash with modern society and its morals, the advertising industry has to follow how society and the world changes, in order to not experience a backlash or reactions of controversy (Melgar et al, 2016).
5.3.2 The unconscious response to sexual symbols

When using symbolism, it can increase the purchasing behaviour from consumers. For example, the Freudian sexual symbolism theory was used for experimental purposes in advertising. In this case, it was used in liquor commercials. As discussed, sex is a natural appeal for humans, no matter if it is conscious or not. The study on liquor took their main aim with the Freudian Sexual Symbolism theory. Freud claimed that there are certain symbols that are associated with genitalia, of which can be used as a subconscious tool in marketing or other story-telling aspects (Ruth et al, 1989).

“Common phallic symbols include knife, stick, fountain, hose, snake, necktie, aeroplane, and zeppelin. Vaginal symbols include objects representing entrance, passage, enclosure, and encircling space. Common vaginal symbols include doorway, corridor, tunnel, mouth, cupboard, pocket, slipper, and jar. Copulatory symbolism, that is, phallic and vaginal symbols in combination, includes objects representing insertion, ingestion, penetration, and coital motion. Copulatory symbolism includes the acts of inserting one's hand in a pocket or a key into a keyhole, or the processes of fang a vessel from a faucet, walking through a corridor or a train entering a tunnel.” (Ruth et al, 1989, p.1132). The aim was to investigate however these symbols that were used in the commercials could encourage the physiological aspects in the purchaser's willingness to buy. The study showed that advertisements about alcoholic containers that included Freud's symbols in the scenery had a higher rate of sales than the ones that did not. Of course, these symbols on their own do not necessarily refer to sex, but they can contribute to the unconscious mind of purchasing behaviour. (Ruth et al, 1989)

5.4 Third Wave feminism

When women are sexualised in media and advertisement, they usually do not own their sexuality, they are not the ones projecting the ownership of their sexuality. Rather sexuality is put on them through the gaze of men. Women's sexuality is often objectified and projected onto them (D’Enbeau, 2011). The ownership of one’s sexuality is connected to the concept of ‘third wave feminism’, which is partly about feminists wanting positive representation of powerful women in media and advertisement. Third wave feminism also differs somewhat from second wave feminism. The second wave, as discussed by Snyder (2008), started around the 1960s and 1970’s where women demanded equal rights between the sexes with a desire to break free from expectations
society had on women. Second-wave feminism wants women “to give up ‘heterosexual privilege’ by not marrying, instead of extending civil rights; to give up beauty, instead of expanding the definition. It believes sensuality cannot coincide with seriousness and fears that to have too much fun poses a threat to the revolution” (Snyder, 2008 p.179). Second wave feminism has such strong ideologies about what women have to do in order to break the patriarchy, they can simply not choose to follow the patriarchy’s view of a typical feminine woman without being called a non-feminist. The third wave feminists however, started in the 1990’s, have the strong belief women can choose how they want to explore their femininity, take charge of their own sexual desire and still want equal rights. A Feminist viewpoint is therefore needed when problematizing this thesis, since we want to investigate how sex in advertisement is portrayed and how it is an irrelevant way for brands to market themselves if sex has nothing to do with the product.

5.5 Advertisement and Societal responsibility

With this our ever more rapidly changing market companies need to be able to adapt to the current and future markets, and where “the ability to change now has become a competitive advantage” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012 p. 22). Those that change and keep up with society, should then more fully accept that women, and men, no longer wish to be depicted in gender stereotypical ways, that we as a society, have moved past such thinking, or at least are trying to. Advertisers should be intune with the social values of today, and tomorrow. Some companies resist movements of change when it comes to social responsibility and will only change when pushed by law and legislation. However there are also those on the other side of the spectrum, who do accept responsibility and their role to play in the larger setting of the globe. Some companies might have followed the norms of 10, 15 or even 20 years ago, but along the way have come to realise that they cannot utilise these old ways of thinking anymore. They have seen a need for change, to better represent themselves with today's standards and reflect the norms of contemporary society (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

5.5.1 Representation of ethnicity in advertisement

Using a diverse representation of ethnicities gives a commercial a varied and true representation of the socially constructed society we live in. This includes the important aspects of rejecting stereotypes. Advertising and media is connected to us through our
everyday lives, it therefore holds a responsibility of presenting society in a respectful, true and diverse manner (Bang et al. 2003).

This is of course not always the case, especially when it comes to gender, but the marketing industry in the later 21st century has come a rather long way in understanding how to represent ethnicities in a respectful way which results socially how we perceive and treat people, children are especially the audience who are influenced the most. Bang et al. (2003) explains that a study was made on how children reacted to different commercials where a variety of ethnicities was represented. The important factor was how those ethnicities were portrayed and what sort of response the children had to those commercials. Both the children and the actors were people of colour from different ethnicities, as well as caucasians from various ethnicities (Bang et al. 2003, p.43). They were all set in a positive light and the children had a strong reaction to it and they felt seen, explaining that it felt important and empowering to get positive representation of their own ethnicities, since the majority of people represented in commercials are usually caucasian which are typically portrayed in power positions.

If wanting to improve the variety of ethnicities in commercials, one must be cautious in what kind of role the actor or influencer has and how they are interacting with others in the commercial. “The rationale is that it is not just quantitative representation (i.e., how many are present), but more importantly qualitative representation (i.e., how important the featured one is) influences the perceptions of certain ethnic groups. In other words, representation is for recognition while featured roles are for respect” (Bang et al. 2003, p.50, Bowen and Schmid 1997). It is important to have interactions with people from different ethnicities in commercials to get recognition from society, a correct representation without portraying people with stereotypical labels (Bang et al. 2003).

5.5.2 Children in advertisement
One of the main objectives to why children are used in advertisements is because of ‘cuteness value’ and to tell a story. It is a trick to strengthen a brand or a product by putting innocence to it, making it easier for the audience to connect and relate to it, since everyone has been a child or maybe have children of their own. It can certainly be cute and innocent when a child presents a product, the issue is whether or not the child understands what advertising is and what it means to be presented in it. The child needs to have legal guardians that agree to the terms of what their child is going to be starring in
and what the commercial is about, the child can therefore not fully understand what is being agreed to or how their life will be affected by it. The child is most likely not acquainted with the value of money either, and is solemnly participating in the commercial because they think it is fun. It would make the most sense to have a child in a child-friendly commercial, for example selling toys or a product that is aimed for kids. However, children do not have any purchasing power, but they can influence their parents to buy a product, for example a toy. Therefore, using a kid in a commercial could increase the selling value (Nair, 2016).

Again, using child actors would be beneficial for companies selling products for kids, but that is unfortunately not always the case. Children can get affected later in adulthood, where they feel the fame has harmed them or that they argue for not having a voice when the guardians agreed on the terms of the child being participating in a certain commercial or ad. That happened to Spencer Elden when he was on the cover of Nirvana's album “Nevermind” in 1991. The cover displays Spencer as a baby swimming underwater, where he is completely naked with his genitalia exposed while his eyes are focused on a dollar bill. In 2021, Spencer went through with a lawsuit against the band Nirvana, accusing them of “commercial child sexual exploitation.”. He explained that this cover has cost him his mental health and not feeling life is worth living because of all the unwanted attention he has gotten from it, still being sexualised for his naked appearance on the album. In the beginning of September, 2022, the lawsuit was dismissed due to Spencer's 10-year statute of limitations having expired (Guy, 2022). There are arguably many factors that play a part whether or not it is wrong to star a child in an advertisement, but the main objective is to by any means prevent a child being exploited to sexualisation.

**5.6 Laws and Legislations of Sexual Offences**

There is a need to understand Swedish laws in regard to sexual offences, against adults and children, to fully comprehend how a message in a commercial can affect or be affected by the interpretation of the receiver of the commercial. This will be more clear when doing our own analysis of the commercials used in the questionnaire.

When looking at the Swedish Crime Victim Authorities’ website (Brottsoffermyndigheten, n.y) regarding sexcrimes (chapter 6) there are a few ways sexual crimes are defined and divided into categories. What is most important to note is
that in 2018 Sweden added into the law that sex always needs to be consensual, and a person mustn't ever initiate or perform any sexual actions or actions that could be interpreted as sexual, without the consent of the other person. It was also specifically stated that it is impossible to gain consent during certain circumstances such as during duress or unconsciousness. The perpetrator is always the person who is in the wrong and it is solely their responsibility if a crime is committed. What the person being assaulted was wearing, doing, saying or what had happened leading up to the assault is completely irrelevant. Even if consent was obtained for a certain action, that doesn’t mean that consent was obtained for other actions. A person has the full right to change their mind at any time after giving consent (Brottsoffermyndigheten, n.y.).

Something that arguably many people are unaware of but is of great importance to note is the fact that speaking in or looking at someone in a sexual manner which can be experienced as uncomfortable and unpleasant by the receiver, can be classified as a crime. (jagvillveta n.y.) This is something society arguably has to take more consideration to, especially when looking at what is considered ‘acceptable’ behaviour towards women. There is also a need to educate women about this law so that they know they are in the right to report unpleasant behaviour received by others, be that a stranger on the street or from family and friends.

There is also a need for media and advertisement to more in detail scrutinise the laws to more accurately represent society and its norms and values. As discussed previously, advertisement is a reflection of society, and has a great impact on how we perceive society to be (Kotelar and Armstrong, 2012). If then in an advertisement we see behaviour that a large number of women would find uncomfortable, and most likely already have first hand experience with, the advertisers are arguably not taking into consideration the experiences of these women, and what the law clearly states to be unacceptable, unless the advertiser want to purposely cause a negative reaction. That choice could for example have to do with what kind of target group and message the advertiser wants to convey. However, typically advertisers seek to entreature and attract customers, not scare them off.

The need to more carefully consider the messaging in media and advertisement is also
correlated to children and young adults. Looking at the examples of the luxury brand Balenciaga’s use of children with bdsm-dressed teddy bears to promote their latest launch (Cartner-Morley, 2022) is a clear discrepancy of what is considered to be according to social norms, and could arguably fall under the law of sexual acts against children (Brottsoffermyndigheten, n.y; Jagvillveta, n.y).

To perform sexual acts against children under the age of 15 is always considered a crime according to Swedish law. Whether the child was consensual or not is of no relevance and it is always the perpetrators responsibility to confirm the age of the child before acting. Sexual assault crimes specifically performed on children can be classified as acts of pedophilia or as child sexual assault (Brottsoffermyndigheten, n.y; Jagvillveta, n.y, Karolinska Institutet n.y).

5.6.1 Paedophilia and Perpetrators

Pedophilia is defined by the an adult’s (a person 16 and older) recurent and sustained sexual attraction to children (Karolinska Institutet n.y). The words to take note of here are ‘recurrent and sustained’. Pedophilia is in Sweden considered a psychiatric diagnosis and is, when acted upon, punishable by law. (Nationalencyklopedin n.y). People with pedophilia can show symptoms by having fantasies or impulses to perform sexual acts on children. They can also act upon their fantasies and urges and actually assault children. (ECPAT, 202, Lanning, 1992)

Phedofilia is under the umbrella of Cronophilic orientations (Lievesley and Lapworth. 2022) and can be divided into several categories. The three segments of most relevance for this thesis are;

1. Pedophilia: Adults’ sexual attraction to pre pubecent children
2. Hebefilia: Adults’ sexual attraction to pubecent children
3. Ephebophilia: Adults’ sexual attraction to post pubescent teenagers, typically between 15 and 19 years of age.

A distinction can be made between pedophiliacs and other perpetrators who harm or sexually assault children. People who assault children can do so for other reasons than a sustained sexual attraction to children. It can be based on a temporary sexual attraction to children, which can be unconnected to or combined with for example alcohol abuse,
personality disorders, anger management issues, power relations etc, can also explain the assaults taking place. Some people - adults and young adults alike - perform acts of assault on children simply because there was an opportunity to do so (ECPAT, 2021).

**Pedophilia and society**

Pedophilia is considered one of the worst crimes a person can commit, and is one of the most stigmatised topics of society (Lievesley and Lapworth. 2022, Elchuk et al. 2021). Most paedophiles are men, however, contrary to popular belief, there do exist women pedofiles as well. They have however been mis and underrepresented or thought not to even exist for a long time, both by people in the Medical profession, as well as male pedofiles. The image of a ‘predatory male paedophile’ depicted in the media has done little to contradict these beliefs (Lievesley and Lapworth. 2022).

According to Lievesley and Lapworth’s research (2022) women who turn to websites and forums for support from peers often face marginalisation and stigmatisation from their own community, largely from men who do not believe in the existence of female paedophiles. The men either deny the existence of female paedophiles, or believe the women to be men pretending to be women. Since most research about the various kinds of paedophilia have been conducted on men, female paedophiles often think themself to be the exception to the norm, or even doubting their own validity when doing research in the topic. This lack of awareness of the real possibility that women also can be sexually attracted to children and adolescents can arguably pose a threat to unsuspecting victims.

The misrepresentation and misinterpretation from media and advertisement of who can be a paedophile can, as discussed previously, arguably be seen as influencing society, leading to lulling society into a false sense of safety when it comes to the existence of female paedophiles. This could also lead to victims of female paedophiles not speaking out or reporting misconduct since they A. don’t believe it to be a valid crime or B. don’t believe they will be taken seriously by medical staff and law enforcement considering the accepted premise that female paedophiles don’t exist (Stelzmann et al. 2020). A more accurate depiction of female paedophiles, paedophiles in general and the difference between these and child sexual abusers could lead to the dispersion of common myths and
bring awareness and acceptance to society. This could in turn aid in the prevention of child sexual abuse. (Stelzmann et al. 2020, Malinen et al. 2014)

6. Analysis

This chapter begins with an introduction to the two travelling agencies used in our research. Secondly a summary of the three commercials is presented, infused by and followed by our, the authors own perspective of the commercials.

6.1 Introduction of the Swedish travelling agencies Ving and Apollo

Ving

The Swedish travel agency Ving was established in 1956 with the intent of creating charter flights and eventually became a leading actor within the travel agency field. (Ving, 2022b) The mother company is Nordic Leisure Travel Group AB (NLTG) which is a Nordic travel agency group. Ving has their own hotels, Sunwing Family Resort and Sunprime Hotels, both mainly situated around the Mediterranean sea. Sunwing Family Resort, as the name suggests, targets families and offers child-adapted amenities and activities, and uses the mascots Lollo & Bernie as a form of entertainment for the children. Sunprime Hotels targets adults travelling without children and offer more adult activities such as gym and spa. 1979-2002 two hotels also existed in Sweden, Sunwing Resort was in Åre in the northern mountains near one of the most popular ski destinations in the country, and one on the second to largest Island of the country, Öland, at Ekerum. (Ving, 2022c) Ving offers travels by charter, crouses and packaged tours with regular flights, as well as single flight tickets or hotel room bookings to almost 400 destinations in over 60 countries. Ving is now one of the largest travel agencies in Sweden. (Ving, 2022c)

Apollo

Apollo is one of the biggest travel agencies in Scandinavia being Sweden's third most popular travel company, which started up in 1986. When the company was established, they specialised in Greece, only offering trips to Aten, Atens riviera, Poros and Naxo, which can be an indication to Apollo's choice of name - Apollo, the Greece god of sun and light (George, 2013). In 2022, they have expanded their travelling choices all over the world, working with charter trips, physical health trips, cruises, group trips and
combination trips. If the customer does not want to book an entire package, they can also choose to simply book a hotel or flight to decide themselves how they want to customise their dream vacation. Apollo also has a strong ideology of sustainable travel, being Scandinavia's first travel agency that joined Travelife’s criterias of sustainable travel, working with their cooperation partners “Greenseat”, “World Animal Protection” and “ECPAT - End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes” to name a few. In 2015, they got a new owner from the German retail and tourism co-operating REWE, with 300 000 employees. It was the same year Apollo introduced a new concept favouring families and couples called Apollo Mondo with four subcategories - Family resorts, Selected, Local and Duo. (Apollo, 2022)

6.2 Commercial No. 1 - Ving 2004

Setting: Palm trees suggesting a tropical destination. A large public pool, sunny, warm colours, a mixed bag of different kinds of people. Two seconds later a woman comes out of the pool, dressed in a white two-piece bikini. A bartender at the outdoor bar quickly notices the woman and the bartender starts showing off his bartender skills, flipping bottles in an attempt to impress the woman, all while smiling goofily at her.

Shortly thereafter the woman walks past a heavy set man lying in a sun lounger next to the pool. The man is wearing stereotypical Swedish clothes, short sleeved shirt, completely open showing his heavy belly and hairy chest. The man is also wearing capri shorts, cut off right at the shin. The man is lying relaxed on the chair with widely spread legs. He is balding with very thin hair, which he tries to smooth over his forehead as the woman walks by, in an attempt to make himself look presentable. He has a hungry look in his eyes.

The woman is laying down in her sun lounger when an elderly couple walks by. The man has a bit of a pouch of a stomach, which he quickly pulls in, and he puffs up his chest in an attempt to look more fit to try to impress the woman. The man’s wife is looking disapprovingly at her husband. The younger woman has her eyes closed, enjoying the sun and notices nothing of what just occurred.

Next in frame is a man playing ping pong with what is presumably his daughter, who seems to be between 7 and 9 years of age. The man is wearing a well worn baseball cap, a
sweatband on his wrist, a yellow t-shirt with an indistinct print on it and beige shorts. The man spots the woman and hits a hard serve to impress the woman with his ping pong skills. The serve is impossible for the little girl to return. After hitting the serve the man is looking at the woman, smiling, satisfied with his performance, while swirling his racket in his hand, another attempt to impress the woman. His smile is conveying superiority.

During the whole commercial the woman never notices any of the advancements of the men, she just has her eyes closed enjoying the sun.

The woman receives a luxurious ice cream drink served by a staff member who says “From the gentleman, over there” nodding his head at the direction of the gentleman. The woman looks over while taking off her sunglasses. The woman spots a young boy, under the age of 12 (Ving, 2022a), who is sitting in a pool ring, wearing swim trunks and sunglasses. The boy is also holding the same type of ice cream drink. They smile at each other and cheer with their glasses from a distance. The boy is smiling triumphantly. He has ‘won’ her attention. At the end of the commercial a sign with the message “On Sunwings resorts children have their own currency - the ice cream and soda card” The card is available for purchase for children under the age of 12 (Ving, 2022a). In the background children are swimming and jumping into the communal pool. (Ving, 2004)

6.2.1 The Authors’ perception of commercial No. 1

The woman
The woman has not noticed anything occurring around her, but has rather been minding her own business. She is just there to enjoy her vacation and have a relaxing time at the resort. To her she is just getting out of the pool, walking over to her sunchair and having a seat in her chair. She is just laying down in her chair enjoying the sun. The most mundane things ever (Ving, 2004). The tv-commercial is shown from a male perspective, how men react to seeing her. It is assumed that since they see her, she will also see and notice them. Why can’t the woman just be left alone to do her own thing? Mind your own business like she is minding hers. If anyone actually wants to talk to her, do so in a more proper manner, following more acceptable social behaviours.
The Bartender
The bartender is through his bartender juggling skills trying to impress the women and catch her attention. This seems silly and childish, like the act of being able to flip a bottle will make a woman swoon. It is a good party trick, or a conversation starter, but it will not make a regular person who is just on vacation, minding their own business, suddenly stop in their tracks and become intrigued by a person.

The man in the lounge chair
The second person, the guy in the sun chair is to us by far the most creepy. Chills run down the spine, and flashbacks occur to all the times we have met these people in our own lives, heard of stories and encounters from friends, or seen depicted in movies and tv-shows. This is not a positive image at all, but rather triggering. The man seems to have no idea of what type of image they are portraying and no self awareness. They are clearly sexualising the women, pictured here with the gaze, and would presumably be very pushy and not take a no for an answer. The act of trying to fix his hair is what is the most triggering to us.

The fact that he so openly stares in such a creepy manner is violating. How can a person think it is okay to stare at someone in such a manner? You can clearly see in the way he looks at the women that he considers her an ‘it’, an object, to be gawked at. According to the Swedish crime victim authorities’ Brottsoffermyndigheten website Jag vill veta (n.y.) it can be considered a crime if a person is looking at you in a sexual manner. The women in this commercial seem unaware of the looks she is receiving, however, how many times have not a woman in the street, in a club, at a restaurant or at a beach felt and seen unwanted gazes on them?

The older couple
Insinuating that older men and younger women are ok, and that women in general would be interested. It is also extremely rude to the wife. If the couple is monogamous, as can be presumed by their age. How can the old man think it is acceptable to flirt or attempt to flirt with someone? Is it better or worse that he is doing it in front of his wife? He clearly has no respect for his wife. To appreciate a stranger or any person for a trait they possess is one thing, when it is done respectfully. However, since the message of the commercial
is that all the men want to impress and get the attention of the woman, one must presume that the old man is doing the same thing. There is also this notion that men can be with younger women, but an older woman being with a younger man is viewed differently by society. There is still the stigma of a couple with a vast age difference, if it is considered more ok today?

The Dad

Very childish behaviour. Who would ever think that a woman being seriously interested in you would find it impressive that you are winning against a child in table tennis? The intention from Ving is that it should be taken as a humorous manner, but it falls flat just like everything else.

Flirting in front of his daughter, is that really appropriate? Is it in the best interest of the daughter to see her father behave in such a manner? Presumably the man can also be said to be cheating on the mother of the child, right in front of the daughter. That is in our opinion very inappropriate and showcases a twisted view of what a relationship is. Even if the parents are not together it is still not okay for a parent to be so openly flirting, and to the expense of the child non the less.

The man's behaviour shows the daughter that this is okay behaviour to expect of men. That this is what she should expect in the future as well when she grows up. She is being taught that women should be sexualised and viewed as an object which she will most likely learn from interactions with other men later in life, or being influenced by it from media. She is already at such a young age being indoctrinated to believe that this is okay and normal behaviour between women and men, and that this is how people flirt with each other and behave as adults.

We are also concerned with the girl playing the daughter in the commercial. Did the parents fully understand what they were consenting to when signing their daughter up to shoot this tv-commercial? Did and could a child of the girls age actually consent and recognise what type of commercial she was in? What impact did this commercial have on the girl's view of relationships, and how did that experience contribute to her view of society?
The Boy

It is rather disturbing to see that a young boy is the ‘winner’ of the attention of an adult woman. The same concern for the young boy as we had with the young girls is brought up. Did the child and the parents actually fully understand what they were signing him up for and the messages that were portrayed in the commercial? Considering that the card is directed towards children under the age of 12 the commercial implies that the boy is portraying one of those children. Since the men of the commercial is viewing the woman as an sexobject to conquer, the child must assume to view the woman in the same manner.

The Children

Not until the very end of the commercial the focus is drawn to the children, which can only be seen in the background, behind the sign. Shouldn’t children be in focus during the entire duration of the tv-commercial seeing as the ice-cream and soda card is for them?

When looking on Ving’s website for information regarding the kids’ card, Ving states that it is a card where the children get 10 free ice creams and 10 free sodas, and the children can choose freely when to order them. What is of note here is that the card is specifically offered to children aged 12 and below (Ving, 2022a). Since the commercial has such a sexist view, and all the men are trying to impress the woman in hopes of getting her attention, and presumably be interested in them as partners, one has to make the same assumption for the boy child. That a child, under the age of 12 is trying to woo the adult women. This to us is appalling, as it insinuates pedophilia, normalising such behaviour and making it seem that pedophilia, in this case between an adult woman and a boy child is okay in some way. Had it been the opposite way around we don’t think it would have been as ok. It is difficult to imagine a world where the opposite would have been portrayed, that a girl under the age of 12 would try to impress an adult man in the same manner. That would have in our society been seen as repulsive, wrong, and a criminal act to insinuate that the man and the young girl might have some sort of connection, relationship, especially sexual relationship. Considering that women paedophiles are by some seen as non-existent, (Lievesley and Lapworth, 2022) perhaps this could explain
why the choice of a woman and a young boy was chosen in the advertisement, and why no one in the marketing team saw any potential harm in the setting of the advertisement?

This also normalises for children and young boys that they also should try to impress women in this type of manner. In a sexual manner. It also raises the question of underage sex and relationships. According to Swedish law it is not allowed for anyone above the age of 15 under the age of 18 to have sex with someone under the age of 15. It is also the same with adults over the age of 18 is not allowed to have sex with young adults under 18 years of age. (Brottsoffermndigheten, n.y)

The message of the commercial is inherently that children have a ice cream and soda card with their own currency so they can purchase this for themselves. (Ving, 2022a) However the messages that are actually portrayed are far from hitting the target. You only see children in the commercial at the start in the foreground and then at the very end, in the background, half hidden by the sign. This commercial should be advertised to families with children and to the children themselves. Instead it is in some weird, twisted way advertised to men.

In our opinion Ving has clearly missed who their target audience is. Should it not be the children themselves who are the target group? If a child understands the message of the commercial and the benefits of the ice cream card, the child can talk with their parents about this, and even nag if the child is so disposed. Another target group should obviously be the parents of children under the age of 12 (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). The parents see that there is a great benefit for the child, it is a relatively cheap option for children to get some snacks. The parents then don’t have to worry about giving the child cash, or a bankcard to be responsible for, but just the ice cream and soda card. This could potentially lead to a more relaxed experience for everyone involved.

If we were parents of young children we would not find this commercial appealing at all. The commercial has nothing to do with children and everything to do with creepy guys trying to hit on a woman. Such a tv-advertisement would rather deter us from wanting to travel with the company, for fear of ourselves be hit on by creepy guys, or that our children would be in danger of potential sexual abuse.
6.3 Commercial No. 2 - Apollo 2018

The first thing one is introduced to is a calm pool-area with little activity, it gives the impression that it takes place in someone's home since you do not see much from the pool and there is more focus on the garden on the side. The people presented are standing by the pool and are dressed in light summer-clothing except for two children who have swimwear on. The woman in focus has a white oversized shirt which she peels off her body to reveal a navy blue bikini under it. She gazes over the area and breathes in the relaxing environment. Besides the family by the pool, there is a waiter serving drinks and two other women who lay on two sun chairs which are placed in the shade, they overview the scene with relaxed half-closed eyes. The woman with the blue bikini is now standing by the pool and she takes a deep breath and exhalates intensely to reveal her somewhat bloated stomach. The focus stays on the stomach for a bit before a zoomed-out scene takes place. A woman in a white sun hat discretely smiles encouragingly towards the other woman in focus. The woman in the blue bikini then starts to walk out of frame while she corrects her bottom half of the bikini with a sassy flick. Shortly after, a text shows up on the screen with the message “Live a Little!” (Apollo, 2018).

6.3.1 The Authors’ perception of commercial No. 2

There is nothing wrong in including different body-types in commercials, especially typical vacation advertisements. Everyone should have the right to look however they prefer and be represented in commercials without getting discriminated against or receiving negative attention. However, it can easily go wrong, which is a fine line with the commercial from Apollo. When people, especially women, who do not typically have a flat stomach or the expected model body-type shows up on screen, it is common to put a filter of humour on it to lighten the mood or ease in the viewer to what they are seeing, which is unnecessary to say the least (Whitbourne, 2015).

Humour is typically used by advertisers to make a commercial more top-of-mind or to awake a certain emotion towards the viewer. It could also ease the viewer into what they are seeing, disguising what is actually happening and making it easier to accept if it is possible to laugh at (Eisend, 2018). The comedy could be appreciated if the person in focus is there to make a point with their body, that there is nothing wrong with representing diversity and different sizes. However, when the humour is put on a ‘diverse’
body-type it is usually to avoid customer-resistance, since a skinny model is usually represented and is easy on the eye for most gazes.

The concept of a perfect ‘beach body’ is usually portrayed in leisure advertising. Which is a flat stomach, shaved body, flowy, glossy hair and a perfect tan. This implants how a summer body should look like, what is accepted and normalised in an environment such as a beach or a pool. All genders can be used to sexualisation and objectification in this matter, but it has shown in a study that ninety six percent of images in media that is sexualised is focused on women (Chochinov, 2015). The portrayal of a sexualised picture-perfect woman could therefore affect women's self-esteem, and even trying to achieve the close to impossible perfect body ideal. “The consequences of self-objectification on a large scale are significant and far-reaching. In correlation with a rise in sexualized media images, there has also been a rise in depression, body monitoring, eating disorders, sexual dysfunction, lower GPA and even lower political efficacy” (Chochinov, 2015 p.54). A solution could be to simply have a diversity in people on screen without making it such a big deal, to show the viewer that it is no controversy to show yourself in swimwear at a leisure destination, you have just as much right to be there as anyone else (Chochinov, 2015).

In Apollo's commercial, there is first a mild approach to exposing the woman's body. She is taking in the view in a relaxed manner while she takes off her oversized white shirt, she is later showing her dark blue bikini and takes a deep relaxing breath to expose her stomach. The focus stays on her stomach for a bit before she exits the screen by slowly and confidently walking as she corrects her bottom part of the bikini with a flick, which brings a sense of humour to the commercial. Right after, the text “Live a little!” shows up, as a message to the viewer (Apollo, 2018).

The comedic touch with the bikini bottom was an enlightening detail with the tendency to most likely make the viewer smile, feel empowered and care-free. The positive aspect to look at is that the woman in the commercial was there for nobody else but herself and she got no reactions from her surroundings, except the woman in the white hat who lightly smiled encouragingly towards her. If she on the other hand would have gotten reactions from the environment around her, no matter if they are negative or positive, it could easily
fall into the wrong focus. Creating controversy and reactions from viewers could be positive in the aspects of triggering a discussion or wake-up call of what society actually looks like. However, if one is to include people with different sizes, flaws or appearances, it could be important to simply show them as they are without trying to create a reaction from it, to normalise it and go further in the development of advertisement since it has such a big influence on our society (Rajagopal et al, 2002).

6.4 Commercial No. 3 - Ving 2022

The commercial starts with three individuals of what can be assumed is two women and one man, all from different ethnicities. They are all dressed in warmer clothes, giving the impression it is autumn. The clothes are all in earth colours such as dark green, brown, beige and dark red. It is a dimmed light or filter, which brings out beige tones throughout the commercial, everyone is also moving in a slower pace, giving the emotion of calmness or contentment. Shortly after, they slowly start to take off their jackets and view out over a calm ocean with light waves. There are surfboards in front of them at the shore, and the weather looks chilly as if it is either early morning or late evening.

In the next scene, there is another environment taking place at a tennis court. Of what can be assumed, a woman of colour in autumn clothes walks in, wearing a beige trench coat and a beige hat along with a grey scarf. Her body-language is confident and goal-oriented, but the face expression does not say much. There are also three other women on the court that have already started a game of tennis, but their faces are blurred hence the focus on the woman that just walked in.

The third individual that is introduced is an east-asian child dressed in a yellow raincoat, yellow boots and a yellow rain-hat. She happily runs across a green lawn surrounded by tropical plants and trees covered in shades except for a few sunbeams of light hitting the leaves. Just like everything else in the commercial, it happens in slow motion. The child has excitement written all over her as she takes off her coat while running. A pastel purple bathing suit is revealed under her clothes, and as she takes off her yellow hat, it quickly transitions to the next scene with the woman on the tennis court who is also taking off her hat and scarf. Right after, the scene with the child is back where she runs off her yellow
boots in pure happiness. Then the scene with the surfers is back and they are still in the process of undressing as they are slowly but steadily approaching the water.

The woman on the tennis court quickly backhands of her coat as she is in the game with the other three women. She looks physically strong, now dressed in a tennis uniform with a dark blue top and a coral-pink skirt. There is an engagement right away with her head in the game, with the impression that she is set on winning.

The surfers are now placed in the water and are ready to take on the ocean with their surfboards. It looks very cold, as if it is scandinavian waters, but the surfers seem to enjoy the calm environment and continue to paddle out in the water dressed in light swimwear, although it might suit better in wetsuits.

It transitions again to the child in her bathing suit, she has all of the sudden pink crocs on her feet as she runs into a pool-area, where she happily waves to both of Vings mascots that greets her. She jumps in the pool in the form of a cannonball which results in her splashing her family with water as she lands. The assumed mother in the family looks caucasian while the father seems to have the same east-asian heritage as the daughter, so there is diversity in the family.

The last scene presented is the surfers who wrap up the commercial. They are now calmly standing on their surfboards in the water where clear sunlight hits their face. One of the women's appearance is better presented in the light, and she looks older with a few wrinkles in her face and a high ponytail with grey highlights in her hairline, with a gentle smile. Right in front of her eyesight, a message shows up saying “More you”. It cuts where you once again only can see the surfers back as they are paddling away into the horizon with another message right above them saying “Find more personal experiences at ving.se”. A sail boat is also visible on the horizon. (Ving 2022d)

6.4.1 The Authors’ perception of commercial No. 3

The commercial does not seem to have any specific target audience. There is a wide age range shown with the three surfers, the woman playing tennis and the child with her family. A mix of different ethnicities is also taken to great consideration in this commercial, which is usually not so typical in leisure advertising. It normally focuses on
a caucasian family or a single person ready to explore the new environment (Scott, 2018).

In Ving’s (2022d) commercial, the focus jumps several times between the actors, with clean cuts and a delicate slow pace has been set on the environment and actors. There is also a lot of interaction between the actors in the different sets and environments. The three surfers are all from different ethnicities and age groups, the physically strong woman of colour with a goal-oriented mindset playing tennis and the east-asian child interacting with her mixed-ethnicity family. All of this is an indication of a more trustworthy and accurate version of society (Bang, 2003). Although the actors do not talk at all, but rather use their facial expressions, it still gives off a strong emotion hence to the music, filter, and pace. Soothing to the eye and the mind with the earth and beige colours and dimmed filter, almost making it a dream sequence where the audience can imagine themselves being at one of Vings leisure resorts (Singh et al, 2011).

Although there is a lot of focus on the different actors with varied ethnicities, the final emotional connection ends with one of the surfers - a caucasian older woman. She is staring into the sunset and ends the scene with Ving’s only and final written message “Find more personal experiences at ving.se " (Ving, 2022d). There does not necessarily have to be a thought behind this particular choice of her being the one closing the scene, but she was the only one getting a closeup on her face and being presented with the message. The message is incredibly important since it is the thing that wraps up the whole commercial, and is most likely going to be one of the clearest things implanted in people's minds. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012)

Overall, Ving has shown that they are moving forward in their way of marketing themselves with this commercial, having diverse representation of ethnicities, and portraying strong women that do not only want to engage in a calm leisure environment (Löfgren, 2012). Although there are a variety of ethnicities acting in this commercial, there is not much variety of body appearances. None of the actors was considerably plus size for example, they all lived up to society's beauty standards of being skinny or physically fit - looking almost too perfect, which people being in a tourism advertisement usually do (Chochinov, 2015). However, this is still considerably a huge step away from their other commercial from 2004. In 2022, they are keeping up with representation of
different ethnicities and strong women, where no one is sexualised nor sticking to certain normative gender stereotypes.

7. Analysis and Results of Internet Questionnaire

Presented in this chapter are the results of the responses from the internet questionnaire. It was open for responses for four days and 74 people took the survey.

7.1 Presentation of fundamental results

The majority of respondents are from the ages 18-25 (36,4%) and overall most of the respondents were under the age of 30 years of age.

The majority of respondents were from sweden (77 %) and are currently living in sweden (90%)

The majority of respondents were women (78,4%)

The majority of respondents are either christian (39,8% ) or atheists (37,8%)

The majority of respondents are not practising believers (78,4%)

The majority of respondents are single (41,8%)

The majority of respondents does not have any children (70,2%)

The majority of respondents earn between 1001 € and 4001 € (52,6%).

Ving 2004

1. The majority felt confused (32,4%), amused (25,7%), and disgusted (24,3%)

2. The majority of people had heard of Ving (83,6%)

3. The majority of people had not travelled with Ving (58,1%)

4. The majority of people thought they had understood the message in Ving’s tv-commercial (42,3%) followed by No (37,8%) and Maybe (18,9%)
6. The majority of people couldn't remember if they had seen a similar tv-commercial from other travelling companies (54,1%)

7. The majority of people have not had their opinion of Ving as a company changed by having seen the commercial (48,6%), followed closely by people whose opinion has changed negatively (47,2%).

8. The majority of people have not changed their willingness to travel with Ving after having seen the tv-commercial. (63,5%)

9. The majority of people thought that the commercial did not accurately represent the values and norms of the society they live in (41,9%).

**Apollo 2018**

1. The majority felt amused (28,4 %), confused (37,8%) and entertained (18,9%)

2. The majority of respondents had heard of Apollo (82,4%).

3. The majority of respondents had not previously travelled with Apollo (67,6%)

4. The majority of respondents thought they understood the message (62,2%)

5. The majority of respondents said they had not seen any similar commercial before (50%)

6. The majority of respondents opinion about Apollo had not changed at all after seeing this commercial (75,6%)

7. The majority of respondents interest in travelling with Apollo remained unchanged (78,3%)

8. The majority of respondents said that the commercial “maybe” accurately portrayed the values and norms of the society the respondent live in (44,5%)

9. The majority of respondents opinion about Apollo had not changed at all after seeing the commercial (63,5%)

**Ving 2022**
1. A large number of people felt Entertained (33,8%) or Confused (14,9%), however the majority did not have an opinion (35,1%)

2. The majority of respondents had heard of Ving before (83,6%)

3. The majority of respondents had not previously travelled with Ving (58,1%)

4. The majority of respondents though they understood the message (66,2%)

5. The majority of respondents said they had seen similar commercial before (56,8%)

6. The majority of respondents opinion about Ving had not changed at all after seeing this commercial (75,6%)

7. The majority of respondents interest in travelling with Ving remained unchanged (78%)

8. The majority of respondents said that the commercial accurately portrayed the values and norms of the society the respondent live in (59,5%)

9. The majority of respondents opinion about Ving had not changed at all after seeing the commercial (75,6%)

The majority of people who chose to elaborate their answers towards the commercials were mostly women around the ages 18-25. The respondents who identified as men and who were around ages 50+ either did not have any elaborated answers, or certain emotions to the commercials. Either “Amused”, “Entertained” or “Don’t have an opinion” were the most popular options regarding first impressions of the commercials. Men around ages 22-50 (50%) had more opinions but not as many negative emotions compared to the women. When it came to elaborate your answer, overall, for example what they thought the message was and if the commercials were a correct representation of their societies norms and values - the majority of respondents who chose to express their opinions more thoroughly were women (43,9 % out of the total respondents.) Half of the male respondents (8 out of 16 men, 10,8% of the total number of respondents) chose to express negative emotion or mention that they recalled the commercials as sexist. Half of the female respondents (28 out of 57, 37, 8% out of the total respondents)
chose to express negative emotion or mention that they recalled the commercials as sexist. A comparison can be made between women and men. Half of the respondents from both genders saw the commercial as negative or with sexist connotations.

Since the majority of the respondents were female (78,4%) it is hard to draw an accurate conclusion whether or not the respondents' opinions differ based on the respondents' gender. However, one could conclude that the women and men who did elaborate their answers were most likely either educated on the matter of sexism or had experienced the sexism that was presented in the videos - which comes down to the matter of the effect sexism has on people, that it in fact exists and makes people respond to it.

Some educated guesses can be made in regard to the division of men vs. women respondents. One option could be that since we distributed the questionnaire through our personal social media accounts most of the respondents would be women, since the authors both are women and have a majority of women in our social contacts. Another option could be that women have more personal experience with sexism in general and thus are more willing to participate in a questionnaire regarding that topic. A third option could be that men are less willing to discuss the topic of sexism and will then be more unwilling to participate in a questionnaire.

7.2 Commercial No 1. Ving 2004

First Impressions
The majority of respondents were confused by the tv-commercial (32,4%), which can be explained by the mixed messages in the commercial, and by the fact that what is actually occurring in the commercial has very little to do with the product. Some people also thought the commercial was too weird to be a tv-commercial about travelling. The confusion can be tied together with the results from the question What do you think the message was

What do you think the message was?
Many respondents indeed did understand that the tv-commercial was about an ice cream and soda card for children. However, as equality shown by the respondents was that they thought the commercial was marketed towards men, with a promise from Ving that if you travel with them to their resorts you will be able to at least look at, if not hit on beautiful
women. Some respondents also pointed out that this was not the first time they have seen women portrayed in this sexualised manner, and that they are not surprised by it, but that they are tired of seeing it. A few respondents also thought that the commercial was probably created by men, for men, as a means of attracting them to travel with Ving. One respondent summarised it quite clearly “- Men want to correct their appearance when they see a woman who fulfils the ideal of a beautiful body. The men wanted to buy her a drink, but the thing that went wrong in the end was that a little boy won her attention.”

A large part of the respondents also thought of the tv-commercial as Amusing (25,7%) which can be understood by the way humour is used in the commercial. People initially thought it funny to see all the men trying to make themselves appealing to the woman. The men in the tv-commercial represent many different stereotypes of men, making them recognisable to people. However, when comparing this to the respondents thoughts about the commercial and what they believed the message was about in question x, the respondents talk much more about their negative feelings about the commercial than finding it funny. This can perhaps then instead be tied into the third most represented answer when it comes to first impressions, which was Disgusted (24,3%). What is to be noted here is that most of the ‘free form’ responses were from people who thought of the tv-commercial in a negative light and pointed out why they thought so, or in combination of finding certain parts amusing or funny but the overall tv-commercial as negative. No respondents who thought of the tv-commercial in a purely positive light chose to discuss this further.

What do you think the message was about?
The majority of respondents pointed out that they thought the message was to attract men to travel with Ving, with the promise of seeing, interacting and engaging with beautiful women. This will provide the men with a good experience and a good vacation. That you can expect to experience what is presented in the tv-commercial if you travel with Ving, both from the perspective of being a man being able to meet beautiful women, as well from the perspective of being a woman of being hit on by men.

The respondents also reacted strongly negatively to the fact that the product sold in the commercial was something targeted towards children, but that sex was so prevalent in the
commercial in several ways. Both in the way the men are acting, and how the woman is portrayed as a sexified object. The notion of ‘sex sells - no matter the product or service in question’ was also brought up.

Several respondents also did understand the basic message of an ice cream and soda card for children and that the children through this card have their own currency. They also understood that the commercial is targeted to children or parents of children and that Ving is trying to show that they have child-friendly resorts, where both the parents and the children can enjoy their vacation.

*In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? Please elaborate on your answer*

In answer to this question 41,9% replied that they did not think the tv-commercial accurately portrayed the values and norms of the society they lived in. Maybe and Yes was close to a tie with 29,7 % and 28,4% respectively.

People who answered yes said that they saw the way the woman was portrayed, as sexist, beautiful, a non-realistic standard, all the time in other types of commercials, and in the values and norms of their society.

The respondent also reacted to the fact that a child was sexualised, or at least involved in a heavily sexualised commercial. They did not think that was appropriate at all, even though it is something that still happens today.

No matter their replies the majority of respondents brought up the notion of the woman being in focus as a sex object and the men being allowed to view her as such. The respondents thought that they commercial seemed dated, and conveyed the disappointment in realising that much of what was portrayed in the commercial still could be seen today. Many of the respondents also talked about the pressure from society to fulfil impossible beauty standards, and that more representation from ordinary people was needed.
7.3 Commercial No. 2 Apollo 2018

First Impressions
The overall attitude towards the commercial was confusion (37,8%) and entertainment (33,8%), many seemed to believe it was unnecessary to have such an overplayed focus on the woman's appearance, hence the confusion. The tone of the commercial was supposed to have humour in it, something to laugh at, which many of the respondents did as well.

What do you think the message was about?
The question if they understood the message as well as if the commercial was an accurate representation of the society they live in, it gave similar responses. The majority seemed agitated that the focus is always circling around women's appearance, and if a model with a normal body appears in a commercial, it usually has some sort of statement. She can not appear as she is without a message, it is an unnecessary approach from Apollo's side according to respondents. However, the message itself is supposed to be something empowering “be yourself on your vacation”, which many understood as well. Although Apollo tried to create an empowering statement representing a woman with a “normal” body type, it still fell somewhat flat.

Respondents argued that women, or people overall, should be able to relax no matter where they are and there should not be a focus on a bloated stomach. It can have the opposite effect if an advertisement tries to be body-positive when using humour over it, which many of the respondents argued for. One could conclude that there were about half of the respondents that thought it was a positive approach of Apollo to include a woman with a normal body. The other half had strong opinions that it was weird and distasteful to present the woman’s stomach with humour to sort of make it easier to look at, or that there could have been more body-diversity without the statement “live a little”. It should simply be more diverse bodies in commercials and exclude any unnecessary messaging. According to the majority of respondents, people should solemnly be able to exist as they are.

7.4. Commercial No. 3 - Ving 2022

First impressions
The majority of respondents were either entertained (33.8%) or did not have an opinion (35.1%). Which later was further explained by their individual overall reactions to the commercial. They perceived it as a cozy atmosphere and that Ving had succeeded in portraying their leisure travelling as something that awakens positive temptation to travel with them. Their answers were more elaborated when the question regarding if they understood the message was asked.

What do you think the message was about?

According to the respondents, Ving had an easy message to understand and many of the answers were strikingly similar. The majority answered that the commercial portrayed the liberating feeling of leaving the boring everyday life and experiencing a sun resort where they have activities that suit every individual, that it was just like any other travelling commercial.

In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? Please elaborate on your answer

There were somewhat diverse answers when the question “In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? Please elaborate on your answer” was asked. Still, many responded that they could not associate this commercial with any values or norms of the society they live in, that there was nothing that stood out other than it was a travelling commercial. Overall, respondents thought there was nothing that particularly stood out or awoke negative emotions.

However, there were still some that pointed out that it had an unrealistic portrayal of what families look like, trying to paint the picture of the ‘perfect’ family or that the people presented looked too perfect and were not an accurate representation of real people in society. The respondents also thought that Ving perhaps should have included even more diversity in age and body types. One particular response that stood out was that “exercise and working out is something you ‘should’ be doing”, causing people to feel pressured to exercise, and that other options for activities the people in the commercial were doing should have been included.

Another thing that was pointed out by a few respondents was that the little girl at least
got to wear a one piece bathing suit instead of a two piece bikini, even though it was pink. One respondent thought it was inappropriate to ever display children so lightly dressed at all.

One last factor that was pointed out by the respondents was that they reacted to the fact that it is always the women that have to be the ones wearing the least amount of clothes, while the men are typically wearing more clothing.

8. Discussion

Presented below is a discussion regarding the results of the survey in comparison to our own opinions of the commercials, divided into Commercial 1, 2 and 3.

8.1. Commercial No. 1 - Ving 2004

The majority of the respondents were confused by the message and were either amused or triggered by the tv-commercial. The confusion corresponds with our view because what occurs in the tv-commercials doesn’t seem to have anything to do with the actual product being sold. The respondents and we both agree that the commercial is triggering due to the nature of what is being presented in the tv-commercial. We, just like the respondents, found the commercial triggering because the woman was viewed as an object to be stared and ogled at by the men. The men were representing a number of stereotypes of different kinds of men, which we and the respondents have met in real life.

When having a woman model with a ‘perfect body’ that has a focus on being sexual and sexualised it is close to a given that she will be objectified. It causes harm to society and especially women because other women seeing a commercial such as this one might think they have to look like her and change their appearance in order to get validation from men, which harms their self esteem (Rajagopal et al, 2002).

Another large part of the respondents thought the commercial amusing, which we can understand to a certain sense when only looking at the tv-commercial at surface level, or only looking at certain sections of the commercial. However, we personally didn’t think the commercial was amusing as a whole.

Using humour as a way of deflecting and making a serious topic more easy to accept or laugh at. It can take away the serious stigma around the topic or make the viewer
overlook certain aspects (Eisend, 2018). In this case it is sexism and the various men who try to impress the woman, which is more or less for the adult audience with adult humour when the commercial should be targeted for children. Children can arguably not be consumers themselves but rather just influence the purchasing behaviour of the parents so the commercial is to be targeted towards adults with families. However, since the commercial's message is that children can have their own currency to buy ice cream or soda it is rather distasteful to make it about adult men who try to impress a woman who simply wants to enjoy her vacation, where it ends with a child finally winning her attention.

The respondents also took note that they remember watching the tv-commercial when it first aired on tv. One of the authors of this thesis also remembered the commercial, showing that it left such an impression on us that we can still recognize it to this day. At the time of airing one of the authors was around 12 years of age and most likely influenced by the undercurrents of messages showcased in the commercial.

Overall the respondents reacted the most strongly to this tv-commercial out of all three. They responded with the most strong negative feelings towards the commercials. The respondents thought the commercial was dated, with old fashioned views of people. The respondents didn’t think this was behaviour which is okay to present and that the commercial would not be accepted if it was shown today. We agree with this wholeheartedly.

When involving children in a commercial this can have a cuteness concept, causing the viewer to disregard heavier topics presented in the commercial simply because of the symbol of a child, being cute and innocent and the notion that no heavy topics can be associated with them. The respondents also expressed concern with having children part of the commercial at all, since the commercial was so sexist and filled with ‘hidden’ messages of sex (Nair, 2016).

Through the male gaze and a patriarchal society, most men over the age of 50 saw little to no problem with the commercial, they did not care at all or were rather amused by the concept of men trying to sheepishly impress the woman. However, there were a majority of respondents who did see the issue of sexism in the commercial and reacted accordingly.
This shows that the respondents, and the representation of society they are, correlates with our own opinion that the commercial is sexist. We are moving towards a society that will start to feel reluctance towards companies that are portraying sexist messages or sexist views of people.

### 8.2 Commercial No. 2 - Apollo 2018

As it has been discussed, when including body diversity in a commercial, it usually follows some sort of message connected to that body. Rarely is it seen people of diverse body types to exist in a commercial solemnly as they are. Humour or a distinct focus is also displayed along with those bodies, which is rather unnecessary (Whitbourne, 2015). It can of course be empowering and important to present a model with a diverse body where a message of body positivity is implemented, but masking it with humour to make it easier to look at is just plainly unneeded. In tourism advertising, it is common to see models with a perfect physique and if bodies who do not hold the same measurements make an appearance, it is typically connected with a humorous touch (Chochinov, 2015).

The majority of respondents from our internet survey agreed with our opinions and the backup from our literature review. Many commented that the focus on the woman's stomach was unnecessary and rather distasteful. There were also respondents who argued that people who 'have a stomach' should be able to exist as they are, just like a 'normal’ model would. Another thing the respondents and we noticed was that the woman was alone in being ‘imperfect’, while the other women portrayed in the commercial had a typical ‘models’ body. To add to this, the only one who was subjected to humour was the woman with the ‘imperfect’ body, which both the respondents and we viewed as negative. One of the comments from respondents that stood out were “The main thought is probably not to be so fixated on bodies - but for me this commercial had the opposite effect.” which indicated it had the same opinions as us as researchers. Another comment that stood out and seemed agitated by the commercial was “I guess they are trying to be ‘woke’ but their take on this topic is a bit clumsy. I don't need a travel agency to tell me that I can take my body on a vacation no matter the shape it is in.”.

However, many also commented that the message was to simply relax and enjoy themselves no matter what they look like, just like Apollo's message indicated “Live a little!”’. Humour was also spotted among many of the respondents and they could laugh
and feel like they could relate to the commercial, that they indeed felt empowered by the commercial and thought it held a positive message.

Commercials such as this one could be provocative and should be in order to create discussions and question how society looks like, but it could have been done differently. If having even more body diversity among the actors and not just the woman in focus without putting humour on it, it could have been a better representation of society and people who are in vacation environments (Rajagopal et al, 2002).

8.3. Commercial No. 3 - Ving 2022

According to respondents, this commercial did not stand out in particular compared to Vings commercial from 2004 and Apollos' commercial from 2018. Many of the respondents did not have a certain opinion of this commercial and had mostly positive comments about it, that it had a cosy feeling over it and succeeded in trying to sell itself as a travelling company. They thought the message was clear and was similar to any other travel commercial. It is also a rather neutral tone of the commercial, where it is noticeable Ving has chosen to play on deeper emotions. The music, pace and filter in the commercial has a toned down vibe to it making it inviting for viewers to dream themselves away to one of Vings resorts. This tv-commercial seems to be the most ‘with the times’ as you can see it is trying to be more inclusive when it comes to different ethnicities and ages.

This tv-commercial was overall the least controversial of the three, however it was not without its flaws. Something both we and the respondents took note of was the fact that we could spot not enough diversity in what a family looks like, Only a typical ‘nuclear family’ was present that showed how a normative family looks like - two kids and one mother and one father. Although there was a diversity in ethnicities in that family, there could still be shown differently or included another family that looks different. Although the commercial tries to be as inclusive as possible when it comes to age and ethnicities, they could have done a better job in portraying even more family constellations or just simply changed the family in focus a little more. For example, only having the dad and the daughter or an LGBTQ+ family for further developed representation, which would put the advertising industry in the right path of the future and show people that this is a correct representation of what a big part of modern society looks like (Reed, 2018).
The women in the commercial were portrayed differently to what women stereotypically are associated with. In travel commercials, it is more common to see women portrayed in calm environments, doing more serene activities such as sunbathing, relaxing at a spa or sitting by a still pool of water (Löfgren, 2012). In this tv-commercial the women had much more physical activities and took on more of the stereotypically ‘male’ roles. The women were physically active in fast action shots, and entering a vast open sea on their paddle boards.

Some of the actors in the commercial are undressing themselves in different scenes of the commercial, which can be a symbol for freedom and leaving everyday life behind when travelling with Ving. However, the respondents reacted negatively to the fact that many of the women had to get undressed, and only be wearing swimsuits. Even the little girl had to get undressed. Is there an actual need for undressing, or could the same message have been portrayed in another way? Of course it is a warm leisure resort so people are most likely going to have swimwear, but because the women in focus in the commercial did more sport activities the surfers for example could have worn wetsuits to give the impression that they are about to take on the sea - the unknown (Löfgren, 2012). This is not to say that there should never be people in bikinis, undressed, however there is a need to be more mindful of when, where, and why such depictions are used, and advertisers must take more into considerations the affects their commercials can have on society and its inhabitants.

Respondents also thought that Ving portrayed certain expectations of being physically active, that you had to be or look a certain way to travel with them. The tone set was that the norm was that you had to be physically active on your vacation, whether you liked it or not. This brings on the pressure of being active on your vacation, that you have to do some type of sport and that you are not allowed to just relax and enjoy some quiet time. A better mix of activities, or lack of activities would have been more appropriate to fully portray the message of a personalised vacation.

Little to no body diversity could be seen among the actors in the tv-commercial. Everyone had more or less ‘model’ bodies with great physique, which to us and the respondents is not an accurate representation of what tourists at leisure destinations or
people in society look like. In society there are a myriad of different body types, no matter the gender and there is arguably only a smaller percentage which can recognise themselves in the body shapes of the models. Again, this is a similar argument to Apollos commercial from 2018, the difference is that Ving had no body diversity whatsoever. People are going to want to see bodies that look similar to theirs - that those bodies also can participate in different activities than just sunbathing on the beach. It would have been more accurate if travel companies could include different bodies no matter what gender, in order for people to feel seen and validated (Chochinov, 2015). The misrepresentation of the body image could arguably be very harmful to people’s mental health, especially among women. Society is arguably a reflection of society and people expect it to be so. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012) Through advertisements people create an understanding of what society looks like, and by only seeing perfect ‘beach bodies’ women grow up to expect that that is the way they should look like, and if they don’t, they will not fit into the norms and standards of society. By striving to achieve a ‘model’ body, it can cause a lot of harm both on women’s bodies, health and mental health (Rajagopal et al, 2002). This can be particularly harmful when women try to achieve this perfect body and fail to do so. (Abokhoza et al. 2019)

8.4 Method discussion/criticism

Overview
Overall we are happy with our choice of methods and we think we managed to follow our plan almost to a tee. We achieved basically everything we wanted to and are happy with the outcome.

The only major change we did was that we added a second travelling company as we noticed that the options for tv-commercials available to us were a bit limiting by only using the one travelling agency.

Literature Review
The use of a literature review was for us a good choice of method as it provided us with the necessary background to be able to explain our point of view and explain to the reader in a more indepth way the phenomenon of the use of sexism in advertising and the problems connected to the phenomenon. The literature review was a good aid for us in
the analysis as it gave us the information needed to be able to analyse the commercials for ourselves and the questionnaire. Seeing as the literature review was semi-structured it gave us the freedom to add extra chapters of relevance to the thesis as we dived deeper into the phenomenon.

**Questionnaire**
The use of a questionnaire was in our opinion a good choice of method for the study. It was easy to reach respondents through social media and we gathered more respondents than expected this way. We spent quite some time reviewing the questions and using the two people to aid us with grammar and spelling was of great help to us. The questions gave us the responses we were aiming for and we think the respondents clearly understood the meaning behind the questions asked.

We found one great example of a commercial from the tourism industry that clearly highlighted the phenomenon and the discussion we wanted to have. Being that we were limited by the field of tourism we had some difficulty finding other commercials easily available to us that complemented the first commercial we used. Had we been able to widen our field of research beyond that of the tourism industry we had a whole platter of other commercials which were current, and complemented the initial commercial. We were also limited by the fact that we chose to only use Swedish and Scandinavian tv-commercials.

**Sample and Respondents**
Despite our method of reaching the respondents through a convenience sample (Smith, 2017) we still managed to reach the type of respondents that we initially sought after. The optimal group of people we were aiming towards reaching were Swedish people, who had in one way or another heard or come into contact with the travelling agencies. We also had more respondents answer the questionnaire than we were aiming for (74 compared to 40)

**Research ethics**
Since our topic for the thesis could be considered triggering to many people, we took certain precautions into consideration when creating questions for the survey. Being anonymous was one of the most important factors, so respondents could feel as safe as possible when expressing their true feelings and opinions, which was highly appreciated.
both for us as researchers and from respondents since we got more elaborated answers than expected. Instead of being judgemental or biassed when analysing the answers, we chose to go deeper with answers that stood out or could give us something in forms of discussions.

Limitations
We predicted that we were going to be limited mainly by time to get enough data for our questionnaire due to the restrictions of this thesis. This proved to be true. We only had time to have the questionnaire open for responses for a few days before we had to analyse, which resulted in a limited respondent pool, however we did despite this manage to get more respondents than we were aiming at. Another limitation was that, despite having women and men respectively answer the questionnaire it was still a majority of women answering, making the results not optimally gender representative.

Despite being partial to our own point of view throughout this thesis we did as planned present all results of the questionnaire in the appendix and aimed to the best of our abilities to present the majority’s responses in the analysis, disregarding whether they correlated to our own opinions or not.

In our opinion we provided sample data with support from research to support our thesis., therefore not building research on flawed assumptions. (Tranfield et al., 2003) This was also supported by our means of drawing logical conclusions by a process of reasoning. The use of general premises to form a specific conclusion was used to ensure that these general premises were established in society and true to society at large, therefore our conclusions had a small possibility of being incorrect (Smith, 2017).

9. Conclusion

Sexism and gender stereotypes
The focus of this investigation was to see to what extent people care about sexism and the usage of sex in tourism advertising. As it has been discussed, sexism and portraying imbalance between genders in forms of stereotypes is a problematic issue. Implementing stereotypes of women and men is a way of keeping power dynamics in a patriarchal
society, where women usually are presented as feminine, delicate and seductive while men are portrayed as masculine, powerful and strong (Melgar et al, 2016).

The societal power dynamics of masculine and feminine representation is influencing people's everyday lives through media and advertising, where we trust advertisements to be a correct representation of our society. However, if trying to hold on to gender stereotyping, people are going to get hurt in one way or another - especially women, which has been the perspective of this thesis. If women continue to be displayed as weak and lustful beings through the lens of advertising, then society is more or less going to keep accepting this as reality (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). As discussed, children are the ones who get shaped the easiest into those stereotypes, which will follow them into adulthood where power dynamics is further implanted and they learn how society is socially constructed with deeply rooted gender roles (Browne, 2013).

**Tourism advertising**

In tourism advertising, it is common that there is little to no body diversity. Models, both women and men, are physically fit with a perfect tan which sets unrealistic expectations of what one should look like on vacation (Chochinov, 2015). If one would include a model where body diversity is presented, it usually follows with a message that focuses on their body and not the product or service the company is selling. One can argue it would be better to simply include diverse bodies as they are to present an accurate image of society at large (Rajagopal et al, 2002).

Women and men are also placed in different settings when it comes to tourism advertisement. Women can be more frequently seen in a calm environment such as a spa, while men are exploring the outdoors or doing something adventurous, which again comes down to gender stereotyping (Löfgren, 2022). Women are also more frequently used as sexual objects than men when selling a product that has nothing to do with sex at all, because of the simple reason - sex sells (D’Enbeau, 2011). This does not only affect women's self esteem and expectations of themselves in terms of how they should act and look, but it further enforces that women's sexuality does not belong to themselves but rather men and the male gaze. It also depends on how the woman is presented in terms of being feminine or masculine, meaning if her body language represents power or not (Signorelli 1989 through Chhabra et al. 2011).
The marketing industry is aware of psychological factors and often plays on emotions when wanting to create top-of-mind recognition for a brand or product, but sometimes it does not succeed if using sexual references or having a model who is solemnly used to sexually pose or present a product. It can cause controversy and negative reactions from viewers and the outcome will be angry customers and a bad look for the company (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

**Gender and Age**

The internet survey was created to investigate whether or not people care about sexist content shown in tourism advertising. Our main focus was on gender and age since those two factors played the biggest role when investigating the responses we got from the survey. When we looked into the answers and especially the elaborated answers from respondents, the majority that had stronger opinions and could directly spot the sexism were women. The age of women did not seem to be a factor for diversity of opinions, but the women rather had the same negative perspective of the use of sexist advertising. The men, who did not seem to find the commercial sexist, or as sexist as the women, saw less problems with the commercials’ content.

The women especially, explicitly argued that the sexism and sexual content shown in the videos were completely unnecessary and awoke reactions that were important for our study. Shown from our survey, it is an issue that needs to be dealt with. It is an outdated concept to use sexism and sex as an easy selling trick. More and more people are most likely going to be educated in the matter and notice such unnecessary ways of marketing untrue pictures of society or continuous ways of trying to stick to various gender stereotypes.

Concluding that the use of sex and sexism in tv-commercials is a problem which keeps society from moving forwards and perpetuates antiquated, stereotypical, normative gender roles. As shown by this research, people of society want to move forwards to a more equal society. This is most prevalent from women who personally see and experience sexism on a daily basis.

**Further research:**

Extensive research into the fields of advertising, gender (in)equality, social responsibility
and sustainability, is needed to further point out the negative effects of the use of sex(ism) in advertising, media, and social media. This to have people in power recognise and act upon to improve the status of women in society.
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Appendix I - Questionnaire

Age

Country of Origin

What country are you currently residing in?
Are you a practicing believer?

Yes 21.0%
No 78.4%

Do you have any Children?

0 Biological stepchildren
1 Biological and 2 stepchildren
2 Biological stepchildren

Income:

0 - 500 €
501 - 1000 €
1001 - 2000 €
2001 - 4000 €
4001 - 6000 €
6000 € +
Do not want to specify
No. 1 First Impressions - Other: Respondents own opinions

- Recognisable. I have grown up with this sort of thing and it reminds me of the James Bond movies.
- Why such focus on the woman? Probably men who created this commercial.
- Disappointed.
- Bored.
- Weird take on a commercial where the message is about the children's own economy on the resort.
- I see nothing wrong to some part with the sexualisation of bodies, would maybe like to see more body-diversity.
- I feel tired that commercials such as this one exist, tired of society.
- Awkward.
- Men are dumb sheep.
- Bit old fashioned, advertisements are sometimes annoying so you will remember them
- Pathetic.
- Thought it was too weird to be a travelling-commercial.
- A mixture of amusement and annoyance. Sort of entertainment, as it seems to make for fun, but yeah trigger me a bit. It's too much in the middle. And a little disgusted by it, when it is too much. It's like old commercial, trend that men attracts to these. But when it is too excessive, we disgusted by it. But the last little boy is unexpected and remove disgusted feeling away, so it is a good twist and cant deny, you will remember this advertisement. People remember negative feeling better, but it's not unbearable anymore.
What do you think the message was?

- Men want to correct their appearance when they see a woman who fulfils the ideal of a beautiful body. The men wanted to buy her a drink, but the thing that went wrong in the end was that a little boy won her attention.

- The children can themselves have the opportunity to handle their own money and currency.

- Cheap trip with beautiful girls, men that try to impress on other women even though they already are in a relationship.

- I think that the commercial has two messages; the first is to tempt men with the promise (to at least look at) beautiful women if they go on vacation (with Ving). It seems on the other hand that the commercials say “go on vacation, see how much attention you will get from men”. The fact that they use a beautiful woman to be the focus is another thing. The commercial is very typical and it made me react with simply roll my eyes. The end was however very odd and it made me confused, so there maybe was no message at all.

- Temt old men to go to different leisure destinations?

- No idea.

- That children have their own currency.

- Ving offers an all inclusive experience that can be enjoyed by all ages

- That kids get their own card to use which gives them autonomy and control over their vacation

- No idea. All I understood was that the ad was most probably created by men.

- That kids have the freedom to purchase drinks and snacks as a part of the all-inclusive deal

- Commercial about children having their own currency that they can use.

- That you can experience beautiful ladies on vacation.

- Children are part of all inclusive

- Ice cream is sexy?? Lol

- From the last sign that is shown it seems to be about children and that they apparently have a “special card” of some kind. Did not think it was about children when watching, barely even when the kid was shown.

- That children can pay with their own Ving-money. But the main message was to show a revealing girl to tempt men to travel with Ving.

- That you can “win” on their all-inclusive card.
- That you can buy vacations from them that benefits the children.

- Well, not what i wished i could understand.

- What was the main idea with the commercial is to seduce people with a nice looking naked body that you will see on the beach, remind people of that etc. Then you can see it from another view and say that the message is that people can get attention for their bodies, so it depends how you look at it. So if you want to stare at bodies or show off your own body you can book your vacation with us. This commercial can also be used to provoke people, everyone is going to talk about it so it is a marketing strategy. Even if it is a commercial that shows children can use their own money, it is still meant for adults and to awake their interest to book a vacation at their resorts, the currency card for children is more of a bonus to why they should travel with Ving.

- To go on vacation so they can see women’s body and think they are hot so its a good vacation

- Strengthen family friendly prices and offers

- Really nothing more than that sex sells, no matter the product or service in question.

- Pleasant place to have their vacation on.

- Not really sure to be honest, it’s very confusing I don’t understand how a travel agency can have such a commercial. All I see is what one can say an attractive woman getting the attention of all the men around, though the actual message of Ving is very unclear I am not sure how they are advertising themselves, did not even feel like they were a travel agency.

- One can wonder, the woman is showing off for the men.

- the children get ice cream or soda with a special currency, like a coupon

- They wanted to use a naked woman to point out the message with the children card. What had the lady anything to do with the message? Far fetched and honestly a worthless commercial. Typical for the 80s 😱

- Come on vacation and look at girls in bikinis, the employees will flirt with you if you are a woman.

- that children has the opportunity to influence the vacation.

- Nothing

- There was a wide age difference between all the people you could see on the resort. So all ages are welcome, maybe a one way road to “impress” the girl but still relating and a little amusing.

- Not sure, maybe demonstrate a fun atmosphere?

- You can have fun if you travel with Ving.

- Children has their own currency.
- Take your kids with you. Lots of worth for the money.

- That beauties can not be impressed by men that try to impress when they are being chipper.

- No idea, apparently that it is okay for a grown woman to accept a gift from a child and that the child was the only one who won her attention.

- That you go on vacation to look at girls.

- Many, but with an investment for children.

- Jokes that men can watch revealing girls, and that a little boy now can buy girls/women on things because Ving offers a prepaid card for children.

- It was an ironic statement making fun of sexism. And advertising the "kid currency"

- That you can have a nice vacation with good service.

- That children can have their own currency on their resort.

- played with gender and age stereotypes and in a weard way promoted children friendly resorts

- Don’t really understand the purpose/message. Can it be that children can buy treats for others? Does it mean that there is something for everyone in the family if travelling to one of Vings resorts? Don’t understand it clearly, I can only see weird norms.

- Semester is fun, leave everyday life (but not sure, the message is unclear).

- Unsure if i understand.

- ?

- Children/youths can have access to their own currency for ice cream and soda.

- That it is pleasant to be a child if travelling with Ving.

- Focus on a child-invested resort.

- That children have free access to ice cream/soda?

- Beneficial with a card on the vacation.

- There is no message related to travelling in this video. The only message I got from this is men cannot control themselves or focus on their family if a beautiful woman is in a bathing suit.

- That all ages are welcome, there are plenty of activities, and also the insinuation that desirable women are present.

- Something with the children's own currency on Vings resorts, like a card of some sort.
- That it is reverse roles, the children gets to decide. (Marketing towards families).
- Looking for women, looking for holiday, luxurious hotel? For thirsty men i guess. doesn't like it.
- You can expect this if you travel with Ving.
- Children has access to sweets.

Have you seen any similar tv-commercials from other traveling agencies? / Har du sett liknande reklamfilmer från andra resebolag?

74 svar

In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? Please elaborate on your answer

- Synen på kvinnan behöver förändras. [The view of women needs to change]
Eftersom det är ett resebolag så vill de ju såklart måla upp en bild av den perfekta semestern som inte riktigt stämmer. Sedan är det nog inte så troligt att ett barn bjuder en okänd på en drink/dryck. [Since it’s a travelling agency they obviously want to paint a picture of the perfect vacation, which doesn’t really paint an accurate picture. It’s also not that likely that children would treat someone they don’t know to a drink.]
- Outdated
- Reklamen i sig är väl kanske inte den mest trovärdiga, men bara det att sådana här scener (behöver inte vara från en reklam kan vara från filmer också) är så otroligt
vanliga att de används av ett familje-vänligt reseföretag säger väll en del om det samhälle som jag lever i.

- Själva reklamen cirkulerar kring en kvinna som är väldigt attraktiv viket kan ge en skev bild för hur det faktiskt är på semesterorten. [The commercial in itself isn’t the most believable thing, but just the fact that these types of scenes (doesn’t necceccarily have to be from commercials, it can be in movies as well) är so unbelievably common that they are used by a family friendly traveling agency, says alot about the society I live in. The commercial in itself circulates around a women who is very attractive, which can lead to portrauing a skewed image of what it is actually like on the resort.]

--Trodde vi kommit längre i frågan om respekt inför varandra som människor. [Thought we had come further in regards to respect to one another as people]

Att vi lever i ett sexistiskt samhälle är definitivt sant, och jag tror att det som sker i reklamen (blickar, stirrande, göra sig snyggare/coolare för kvinnor) sker även i verkligheten. [That we live ina sexistic society is indeed true, but I think that what is happening in the commercial (the looks, stares, making oneself seem better looking/cooler to women) also is happening in reality.]

-The female form has always been treated differently than men. I think it's widely accepted in society as a sex symbol and way to sell products and services. I think the commercial utilized that in a humorous way and didn't glorify it, but instead was making fun of the men that were acting so stupidly. However, turning the boys autonomy into a way to attract women was potentially problematic. All that being said, it didn't offend me in the slightest.

-The ad is very 90s, the idea is outdated. It's not funny, rather it's embarrassing. There is more to women than their looks and to include a child in an sexist ad is just untasteful.

-Men don’t usually act like that in real life. Often far more discreet, especially at a family resort

-Till viss del så tror jag det. Normen att man jämför sig med andra utifrån utseende och att man får mycket uppmärksamhet från andra könet om man ser bra ut. Och att man försöker imponera genom utseende och pengar. [To some extent I believe so. The norm that you compare yourself with others based on appearance and that you get a lot of attention from the other sex of you are attractive. And that you try to impress through looks and money.]

-Jag uppfattar att detta sprider en gammaldags syn på kvinnor. [I think this is spreading an old fashioned view of women.]
-Hard to answer because there is no single value system in society I think. It does not portray my value and norm system however in almost all parts of society women are in some way sexualized and portrayed as sexual objects which would indicate that sexism lays in within the norm and value system of society (although this is slowly changing).

-Women normally seems to be sexualized and often looked at, and/or looked after

- Jättetöntigt och förlegat att exploatera en kvinna på detta sätt. Hoppas att filmen var gammal. [Really silly, uncool and antiquated to exploit a woman in this manner. Hope the film was old.]
- De borde titta över sitt jämställdhetsarbete. [They should consider reevaluating their gender equality work]

- Tycker den pekar på de normer som finns i samhället som ger män rätt att bedöma kvinnors kroppar. Tycker som helhet att det är en väldigt normativ och på gränsen till sexistisk reklamfilm. [I think it points out the norms that are in society that give men the right to judge women’s bodies. I think it as a whole is very normative and borderline sexistic.]

- Även om det finns sexism så finns det också tillätelse för människor med annan könstillhörighet att få plats. Däremot kan jag i filmen även uppfatta åldersdiskriminering vilket gör mig upprörd. [Even if there is sexism people with other gender identities are allowed some space. However, I do also see some age discrimination which is upsetting to me.]

- It does not matter which country it is, most of the people are gonna stare as well as want attention. And to use provoking in order to draw attention to the product they are selling. Let us be realistic. However, if you would have chosen a new commercial it would have been different. It is odd to talk about sexualisation from an old commercial from 2004 for example.

- Women’s bodies are consternation sexualised, and men are definitely not afraid of showing it and accentuate it. This ad just shows the little respect women get in the everyday society, they aren’t even ashamed of it

- Depends on view of the commercial, just a little fun or sexism

- Well, it is a sexist society we live in. Beautiful women sells.

- Why is it specifically a woman that draws attention to herself?

- In a way we live in a society where beauty has become very important in a negative way.. one should look a certain way and there’s a beauty trend going on but trends come and go so it is stupid, though humans tend to fall under certain beauty trends that affects one mentally.
- Have we not come further in questions about equality?
- Children should not be sexualised like that.
- It is very stereotypical and builds on the concept of what is male/female.
- It’s not a portrayal of reality
- An old concept, but it was years ago this commercial was made.
- I think these sorts of advances towards women are less apparent, and less aggressive.
- It is still stereotypes about the woman’s appearance and the men’s opinions about her.
- Unfortunately, yes.
- True that men are showing off to women. Families with low income can afford to bring their kids.
- It is a very common exaggeration but it’s still straight to the point.
- Well, unfortunately it is still common to sexualise children if I have understood it correctly.
- I definitely think our society has developed in equality regarding disgusting men that sexualises women.
- You have to be beautiful to be able to travel.
- The better you look, the more attention you get.

Age and gender stereotypes are still mainstream in commercials often with a twist like this one

- Partwise. The male gazes have I seen in real life, and the body ideals are unfortunately very true.
- It is true that an attractive woman can attract a lot of looks towards her, but I can also imagine many thinks this is sexist, and the commercial itself is not so well made.

Jag skulle känna obehag om folk kollade så på mig, så gör vi inte i Sverige på samma sätt

- No, I think it was supposed to be funny. But society has luckily changed a lot in the past 20 years. I guess this movie must be 15 years old, so I don’t think this type of
commercial would have been made today. BUT if it was a new commercial I would definitely changed my opinion on Ving.

- That it is human to be human. That you can see the fun of it without being so damn triggered by everything.

- Today i have a hard time to believe men are like cavemen. A bit of truth in it, but not so read into.

- It’s positive that the thing that attracts is a milkshake. But otherwise it is about a womans appearance. If you are fit and skinny the better, why not have a curvy model instead.

- I believe we are trying to change our society to base people’s worth based on more than looks. But we have been focused on unrealistic beauty standards and male chauvinism for a century now, and it’s hard to change.

- Sex and delusion are part and parcel to many societies

- Scattered sexism

- There is absolutely parts that is recognisable but at the same time much is different.

- Stand out in a bad way, but it doesn't convince to go travel at all. For Men might be differently. And if it portray values and norms, I guess it did? But i don't know, do men really that thirsty? Never look into history before. But might as well the norms to go on holiday and giving drink is a gesture.

- Partwise.

- It feels rather outdated.
Commercial No. 2 Apollo -

Respondents own opinions:
- Once again, what does the woman's body have anything to do with the commercial?
- I don’t know, it feels a bit exaggerated. It was better than Ving, but still way too overplayed.
- Meh. Embarrassing.
- It was a bit funny, but still uninteresting.
- An alright commercial, no big emotions from me.
- Funny.
- Better than Ving, but it still made me yawn.
- Happy.
- I’m tired that everything always circles around body-ideals, how to be and not to be.
Have you heard of them before / Har du hört talas om dem tidigare?
74 svar

- Yes / Ja: 82.4%
- No / Nej: 17.6%

Have you previously traveled with Apollo? / Har du rest med Apollo tidigare?
74 svar

- Yes / Ja: 67.6%
- No / Nej: 32.4%

Do you think you understood the message in Apollo's tv-commercial? / Upplever du att du förstod Apollos budskap med reklamfilmen?
74 svar

- Yes / Ja: 82.2%
- No / Nej: 17.6%
- Maybe / Kanske: 20.3%
What do you think the message was?
- Relax.
- Women should be able to look however they want to.

- To live a little. Go on vacation and be yourself and thereby live a little? To not fit societies expectations?
- No idea

- You can be yourself on the vacation and you do not have to care what others think, just relax. Or something like that.
- To relax.

- Unclear message or go on vacation and bathe in bikini even though you are fat?

- That everyone can be themselves with Apollo because people does not care about your appearance.

- Everyone should be able to enjoy themselves on their vacation.

- Vacation is where you can really relax and stop worrying about your image, etc...

- To relax?

- That you’re allowed to be bloated on vacation?? Lol

- That you should be able to live a little no matter what people think. Dare to do things you are a little frightened of.

- You can be fat and wear a bikini

- Go on holidays? Be happy in your own body?

- They want to present the image of when you’re on vacation you can just relax and don’t have to fit into any norms or expectations on how to look

- That a woman should be able to relax on her vacation. Behave like a man and not care about appearance.

- That you should be able to relax and be yourself on vacation.

- That you should enjoy life.

- Be you and do you!

- Everyone is welcome no matter if you are black or fat and you can relax.
- That women are encouraged to eat ice cream even though they have a little fat on their stomach? Or that they are still allowed to eat ice cream even though they have a little fat on their stomach? - Honestly idk

- Travel for all

- Every woman should “relax”.

- Hard to read.

- Eat and relax on vacation. That she relaxed because she was on vacation, that you can for one week a year enjoy yourself and relax your stomach. Horrible commercial

- Liberation while traveling

- Relax on vacation.

- Be Swedish and relax, don’t think about how you are supposed to be.

- Go on vacation and relax.

- Apollo lets you relax and be yourself?

- Live a little and relax your stomach.

- The main thought is probably not to be so fixated on bodies - but for me this commercial had the opposite effect.

- Relax

- That you don’t have to think about others opinions and instead live a little and relax in the body that you have.

- Apollo You should be able to relax fully if you travel with Apollo.

- Relax, be yourself.

- Come as you are.

- That you can be yourself and relax.

- That you can relax with Apollo.

- Att man inte behöver gå ner i vikt för att visa sig lättklädd. Dock med en viss ton av att göra sig lustig på kvinnors vikt. That you don’t have to lose weight to show yourself. But at the same time the commercial had a tone of making fun of women’s weight.

- Relax, enjoy life
- That it is possible to be yourself on vacation.

- You have vacation, push the limits.

- Do not have a clue

- That you can be yourself.

  - Kanske att man ska "släppa taget", andas och "leva lite". Sen tycker jag man hade kunnat visa det på 1000 andra sätt än med hjälp av specialisering av kvinnor… [Perhaps that you should ‘let go’ breath, and ‘live a little’. And I think that you could have shown that in 1000 other ways than using specialisation of women to portray the message]

  - Det är okej att inte oroa sig för mycket om sin kropp och "unna sig" ett avslappnat liv[It is okey not to worry about your body and treat “yourself” to a relaxed life.]

  - Att du kan känna dig "trygg" när du reser med Apollo. Du kan slappna av och vara dig själv var du än är [That you feel ‘safe’ when traveling with Apollo. You can relax and be yourself, wherever you are.]

  - Att man ska slappna av under sin resa, släppa allt runt omkring [That you should relax during your vacation, let go of everything around you.]

  - Att slappna av och vara sig själv [Relax and be yourself]

  - Slappna av och njut av semestern, älska din kropp precis som den är. [Relax and enjoy the vacation, love your body just the way it is.]

  - Enjoy yourself and don’t worry what others think

  - That everyone should let loose every once in a while

  - Alla får se ut som de vill och man behöver inte ha en "modellkropp" för att gå runt i bikini [Everyone are allow to look however they want and you don’t have to have ‘the body of a model’ to walk around wearing a bikini]

  - Att leva lite, inte följa kroppshets/kroppsideal [Live a little, not to follow body image ideals.]

  - Totally no clue, waer bikini, never the less of body shape?

  - Du är fin som du är [You are nice the way you are]
In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? Please elaborate on your answer

- På grund av förlegade kvinnoideal. [Becuase of antiquated women ideals]
- Reklamen uppmärksammar hur man som individ försöker passa in. I detta sammanhang kroppsideal. [The commercial brings attntion to how you as an individual is trying to fit in. In this context, body ideals.]
- Sexistic
- Reklamen spelar, som jag ser det, på hur stressigt och krävande vardagen kan vara. Men när du är på semester kan du helt slappna av (är tanken i alla fall). Antar att reklamen därför säger något om hur vi lever våra liv när vi bara kan "Live a little!" när vi är på semester. [The commercial is playing at, in my point of view, hos stressful and demanding everyday life can be. But when you are on vacation to can relax completely (at least that is the thought). I assume then that the commercial then is saying something about how we live our livies when we only can ‘live a little’ when we are on vacation.]
- Majoriteten ser ut så [The majority looks like that]
- Återigen kvinnokroppen i fokus [Again, the woman body in focus]
- Den här reklamfilmen känns mer som dagens reklamfilmer. Där det ska göras tydligt att alla är okej som de är, allt accepteras. [This commercial feel more like the commercials of today.]
- Where it has to be made clear that everyone is okey the way they are, that everyone is accepted.]
- Vingslag reklamfilm kändes mer som en 90-tals/00-tals reklam, mer sexism. [Ving’s commercial felt more like a commercial from the 90’s/00’s, more sexistic]
- Depends on where you live in the USA. Conservative parts of the country don't think that women should ever be "sloppy" in public while more liberal parts would find no issues whatsoever with what's displayed here.
- I guess they are trying to be "woke" but their take on this topic is a bit clumssy. I don't need a travel agency to tell me that I can take my body on a vacation no matter the shape it is in.
- Why do they care about their clients' bodies? Just leave people and their bodies alone.

I like that the person in the commercial has a realistic body type, but why point it out and make it a big deal? Why can’t she just exist in her body without making it obvious and pointing it out. They’re trying too hard.
- Tycker att reklamens budskap når fram men inte på rätt sätt. Att våga gå utan sin komfort zon bör inte handla om hur man ser ut. Men idag är det mycket fokus på en
individs yttre och det är så vi valideras av andra. [I think the message from the commercial reaches the viewer, but not in the right way. To be able to get out of your comfort zone shouldn’t be about the way you look. But today a lot of focus is on an individual’s outside appearance and that is how we are validated by others.]

- You cant be fat in this society
- I don’t know what you mean by “society”. Body positivity is a thing but a being skinny is still the norm to be accepted in most settings. Also why are there only women? It’s still an advertisement made for straight guys in think lol
- Somewhat, people look like they do and should embrace it but it is not always so easy in today’s society
- De försöker vara lite skojiga, men filmen sa mig inte så mycket. [They are trying to be a bit funny, but the film didn't say much to me.]
- Tycker det är bra att den spegler kvinnors känslor av att behöva visa sig snygga och uppmnar att att slappna av, även om tjejens filmvisar en missvisande bild av hur de flesta tjejer ser ut. Tjejens är fortfarande smal och vältränad, hon bara spänner ut magen. [I think it is good that it shows women’s need to feel that they need to present themselves as attractive and look good, and that it encourages you to relax. Even if the woman in the commercial is showing a misleading picture of what most women look like. The woman is still slim and fit, she is just pushing her stomach outwards.

- Vi är olika o kroppnormen börjar justeras [We are all different and the body norms need to change]
- Inklusive
- Since i am not sure about what they mean i don’t really have an answer
- There is a place for all
- Att kvinnors kroppar ska se ut på ett visst sätt, och att vi ska förhålla oss till dem på ett visst sätt. [That women’s bodies should look a certain way, and that we need to perceive them in a certain way.]
- Reklamen anspelar på kvinnan som objekt [The commerical is impluying that women are objects]
- Horrible commercial that focuses on the woman’s body and to relax, it is somewhat connected to a vacation week, like it is only like it is only then you can completely relax. Otherwise she has to flatten her stomach if she is not on vacation. And the focus on the stomach was weird.

- Their complete arrangement makes me so confused because it is so weird. Why do women has to be exposed like that😢

- Not okay to not be skinny in society.

- They are implementing stereotypes around body fixation and use the female body in a weird way.

- I don’t know
- It is a lot about appearance, in media it is usually women that should look in a certain way or mirror the stereotype how women should look like. Sad.

- Women around me are concerned about their body type.

- Body activism are more accepted.

- Don’t think that you can be yourself and fit certain norms.

- I think everyone should be able to relax their stomach (and stress) no matter where they are, but I think it finally starts showing on commercial etc (different body type, sexualities etc etc)

- The norm says you should be skinny and tanned.

- Fixation on appearance, that you “should” always look perfect.

- I cannot get it. Is it supposed to be fun?

- I do think so unfortunately. It is perceived as outstanding when a woman who does not flatten her stomach can symbolise to let go.

- On one note, yes. But people don't generally care about how you look, which is not the message in the commercial.

- I feel like i can relax where i live.

- It is okay to be “bigger” when you are on vacation.

- In todays fixated world it does not fit the norm. But should do.

- In some weird way, we have learned that we only can relax on vacation and not in our everyday lives.

- You should learn to love your body and relax when you are on vacation.

- Women are feeling more confident in being authentically themselves. Commercials like this help us feel empowered and not alone.

- The USA is a place that encourages living in excess

- Most of commercial usually portrays skinny and fit bodies which the majority of people do not have.

- It is difficult. I directly thought no but a bug part of the majority can recognise themself in it, so what is the norm?
- Just do what you want? no one gonna care or look at you or remember anyway. You are away.

- And the previous one, the message is too abrupt, so not really stand out, but would make people wonder, what they mean by it. And i think it makes a positive impact here in making people think about it.

- Even though the girl is normal, it is still liberating to have somewhat of a norm critique.

Have you seen any similar tv commercials from other traveling agencies? / Har du sett liknande reklamfilmer från andra resebolag?

74 svar

- 41.9%
- 8.1%
- 50%

Commercial No. 3 Ving - 2022
Respondents own opinions:

- This was good!
- I don’t get it, haha.
- Happy.
- Nice commercial, cozy.
- Just another commercial in the flow.
- Bored.
- Cozy.
- Tempted to travel and being in the sun.
- Peace.
- Tempted.

What do you think the message was?

- Njut av din semester [Enjoy your vacation.]
- Lämna hösten/vintern hemma och res till värmen. Och gör vad du vill på semestern, personligen. [Leave fall/winter at home and travel to where it’s warm. And you what you want to do during the vacation.]
- The trips they offer are as unique as people
- Vacations are good lol
- Book a vacation that suits your wants and needs best?
- That you can cater your vacation towards your personal wants and needs
- Att man kan anpassa sin resa utifrån intressen och vad man gillar att göra. Att det finns möjligheten till att individanpassa sin semester. [That you can adapt your trip based on your interested and what you like to do. That there are options to individually customise your vacation.]
- Life is easier in a warm climate
- Escape you boring life at home (where it’s always raining) and take a vacation (where it’s always sun)
- Travel the way that suits you, ving has something that suits everyone
- Att man ska kunna göra det som passar en själv på semestern. Man ska vara aktiv,
sportig och hälsosam. Hela familjen ska ha kul. [That you should be able to do what suits you during the vacation. You should be active, sporty, and healthy.]
- Fly vardagen [Escape everyday life]
- Att släppa vardagsstessen och det grå vädret i Sverige och åka utomlands istället. [To escape everyday life and the gray whether in Sweden and go abroad instead.]
- That you can plan your trip as you want with different package deals
- Vem som helst kan resa med Ving o finna det de söker [Anyone can travel with Ving and find what they are looking for.]
- Kom med familjen, alla är välkomna. Ving gör bra resa som matchar era behov. [Come with your family, everyone is welcome Ving creates good trips that match your needs.]
- That people should travel more
- Buy a trip and relax
- Ingen aning. [No idea.]
- De har mycket att erbjuda i semestersyfte [They have a lot to offer when it comes to vacations]
- Att släppa alla måsten och bara vara ledig på semstern [To let go of all musts and just be free from obligations on your vacation.]
- Freedom
- Go travel somewhere you want to go
- Släpp vardagen och res med wing. Avkoppling och äventyr för hela familjen. [Let go of every day life and travel with Ving. Relaxation and adventure for the entire family.]
- Frihet? [Freedom]
- Slappna av och njut [Relax and enjoy the moment]
- Att man skall försöka ha en aktiv semester och prova olika aktiviteter [That you should try to have an active vacation and try new activities]
- Slippa kylan och åka till varmen [Escape the cold and go somewhere warm]
- Att resa med ving låter dig göra det på ditt eget sätt, med dina personliga preferenser [Traveling with Ving allows you to travel your own way, with your own personal preferences.]
- Byt det trista till ngt mer jag [Exchange the boring to something more me]
- Upplev naturen med oss. [Experience nature with us.]
- Vet ej [Don’t know]
- Att dom har flera olika resor och man kan hitta sin egen stil hos dom [That they offer several different trips and that you can find your style with them]
- Slappna av och var du [Relax and be you]
- Glöm vardagen och ut och resa [Forget about everyday life and go travel…!]
- Att deras resor går att individualisera eftef vad jag vill göra [That their trips can be individualised to what I want to do.]
- That the company tends to all kinds of holiday makers
- Att du ska ut och resa och utmana dig med nya saker [That you should go travel and challenge yourself with new things.]
- Att man kan boka något som passar en livsstil och intressen [That you can book something that suits your lifestyle and interests.]
- Come as you are. Ving has something for everyone
- Att släppa vardagen och uppleva annat [To let go of everyday life and experience something else.]
- Gå på semester, det är fint där [Go on vacation, it is nice there]
- "res med Ving för att hitta dig själv och för att känna dig fri" [Travel with Ving to find yourself and to feel free.]
- Att man ska hitta sin plats, man ska resa dit man vill, reklamen fokuserar på
välmående [That you should find your place, that you should travel where you want to go, the commercial focuses on well being.]
- Gör din resa DIN [Make your travel YOURS]
- Byt ut den gråa vintern med massa kläder till solig strand och ha roligt [Exchange the gary winter and a lot of clothes to a sunny beach and have fun.]
- Personanpassad resa [Personalised trip]
- It seemed like people were rushing to do something they loved
- Leaving the mundane behind and get away from the every day experience
- Ving vill representera avslappnade, familjevänliga resor [Ving wants to represent relaxed, family friendly resorts.]
- Åk på solsemester & Bada! [Go on vacation and swim!]
- no idea.
- Våga testa på något nytt [To dare to try something new]
- Att få kännas frihet [To feel free]

Have you seen any similar tv-commercials from other traveling agencies? / Har du sett liknande reklamfilmer från andra resebolag?
74 svar

In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? / Anser du att denna reklamfilm på ett...r de värden och normer som finns i ditt samhälle?
74 svar
In your opinion, does this tv-commercial accurately portray the values and norms of the society you live in? Please elaborate on your answer

- Den representerar en drömfamilj som ser ut på ett visst sätt, inte verklighetens olika familjekonstellationer. [They represent a dream family who look a certain way, not like the different family constellations of reality.]
- Möjligheten att anpassa sina resor efter egna önskemål tror jag har ökat de senaste åren. [The possibility to adapt you travles according to your own wishes is something I believe has increased during the past few years.]
- Maybe it’s reasonable to marked the trip like that
- Helt ärligt har jag ingen aning om vad den här reklamen säger om det samhälle jag lever i. [Frankly I have no idea what this commercial says about the society I live in.]
- Inte könsrelaterat handlar om semester [Not related to gender, is about vacations.]
- Dagens samhälle: gör det du vill! Låt inte andra påverka vad du gör, gö det du vill. [Todays world is more adapted to the individual and the market is trying to meet the individual’s needs and wants]
- It relates to me
- Literally no values and norms in the video
- People are traveling the way they want to and now (at least a bit more now compared to during the pandemic but not as much as before) people are having more options and possibilities to actually travel the way and where they want to
- Den visade olika aktiviteter som man ska kunna göra på deras semesterorter. [They show different activities you should do at their destinations.]
- Alla försöker satsa mot bra familjrelation, att ha bra tid tillsammans, att alla oavsett utseende, kön, ålder måste accepteras överallt [Everyone is trying to aim towards good family relations, to spend quality time together, that everyone, no matter their looks, gender, age has to be accepted everywhere.]
- I don’t understand why the women (and it was only women/little girl) had to be basically naked. Att the end you see a man but he isn’t in a bikini but during the entire things its women and they are half naked (as per usual)
- Average day commercial
- Tycker inte barn, som klär av sig, aldrig så lite ska visas i reklamen [Don’t think that children, who get undressed, never that small, would have been shown in the commercial.]
- Vi jobbar för mycket och det är dags att unna sig avkoppling. [We work too hard and it is time to indulge in relaxation]
- I denna reklam som syftar på frihet är plötsligt alla ”perfekta” och igen så ska kläderna åka av… men inget av det som visss kan ske på det sättet, för vem plockar upp?? [In this commercial which is talking about freedom, suddenly everyone is ‘perfect’ and again, the clothes have to come off… but non of that can happen that way, because who picks up afterwards?]
- Den ger ett alternativ till att sola på stranden och att dricka paraplydrinkar [They provide an alternative to suntanning at the beach and drinking drinks decorated with umbrellas]
- De flesta vill väl fly kylan? [Most people want to escape the cold, right?]
- Nuftiden gillar människor att ha en personlig produkt [Nowadays, people like having a personalised product.]
- Vet ej budskapet [Don’t know the message.]
- Ja alla vill att resor och allt i livet ska vara mer ”personliga”, och hitta nya erfarenheter [Yes, everyone wants to travel and everything in life should be more ‘personal’, and find new experiences.]
- Lite stereotyp vad gäller syn på resor. [A bit stereotypical way of looking at travels.]
- Det är vanligt att man ska ut och resa och uppleva nya saker. [It is common that you should go travelling and experience new things.]
- Motion och träning är något man ”ska” hålla på med [Exercise and working out is something you ‘should’ be doing.]
- It also tries to drive opinion on inclusivity which appeals to my mindset
- Tycker att det finns en norm om att vardagen ”ska vara”/ är jobbig samt att strävan är att komma bort därifrån. Sedan slänger de av sig kläderna vilket förmodligen ska vara en symbol för frihet. Coolt dock att den lilla tjejnen har baddräkt och inte bikini på sig. Visserligen rosa men ändå. Tycker inte denna var lika provocerande eftersom allt var mer subtilt, den är inte baserad på skämt/ att man ska skratta lite hånfullt över det/de man ser, vilket jag upplevde i de andra. Dock gör det mig arg att alla såg perfekta ut, mått med samhällets normer. [I think there is a norm that everyday life ‘should’/is hard, and that people are trying to escape and get away from it. Then they throw off their clothes, which is probably meant to be a symbol for freedom. It is cool that the small girls is wear a one piece bathing suit and not a two piece bikini. Sure it is pink, but still. Don’t think it was as provoking since everything was more subtle, it is not based on jokes/that you should laugh scornfully about it / what you are watching, which is what I thought about the other one. However, it makes be angry that everyone looked so perfect, based on the norms of society.]
- Det är ett tydligt budskap och alla gillar fina semesterställen* [It is a clear message and everyone likes nice vacation destinations]
- Man får göra vad man vill [You do whatever you want to]
- Det är grått och trist i sverige på vintern. [It is gray and dull in Sweden in the winter.]
- Allt ska ju vara individanpassat idag. I den liberala världen vi lever i. [Everything should be customised to the individual. In this liberal world we live in.]
- Vet inte [Why not]
- People do want to enjoy their lives as much as possible
- It sells the idea of getting the vacation that you need
- sport clothes underneath?

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Having done this survey, do you think that in the future you will reflect over the choice of traveling agency based on the

![Survey Results Chart]

- Reflect more
- Reflect the same
- Not at all
Is there anything you would like to add?

- Good job girls and good luck with the thesis <3
- Rolig Studie :) [Fun study]
- Very interesting survey. It’s cool to see how media is evolving!
- Interesting subject! Love to read your thesis :)
- Jag tittar nästan aldrig på reklam :-) [I hardly ever watch tv-commercials]
- Upplevde de två första filmerna som sexistiska men inte den tredje [Thought the first two videos where sexist but not the third one.]
- I strongly dislikes today’s society in regards with how women are portrayed on national tv
- Budskapet ska inte utgå från kvinnlig framtoning och definitivt inte ensamt barn i reklamen [The message shouldn’t be based on the picturing of women, and particularly not be emphasised on a single, lonely child in the commercial. ]
- Inte sett den reklamen från apollo förut, den förändrade verkligen mitt sätt att se på Apollo som företag, negativt [Haven’t seen the commercial from Apollo before, it really changed my way of viewing Apollo as a company, negatively.]
- Visa gärna upp er uppsats till berörda bolag. Jag gissar och hoppas filmerna är av äldre karaktär och inte skildrar den profil resebolagen vill ha idag [You could show your thesis for the traveling agencies mentioned here. My guess is, and hope, that the videos are elderly and don’t portray the profile the traveling agencies want to portray today.]
- Tack för att ni uppmärksammar detta. Viktigt inte bara för konsument o resebolag men också reklambyråerna som till sist är de som skapat reklamen [Thank you for bringing awareness to this. It is important not just for consumers and traveling agencies but also advertising agencies who are the ones creating these commercials in the first place]
- Det behövs mer studier i andra ämnesområden [There is a need for further studies in other subjects]
- Undviker att resa generellt [I generally avoid traveling]
- might would like to travel, if they constantly give off a good image of the destination, or activities. But all these 3 the second one might be the only one that give some positive encouragement. The last one.. again no affect. The first one a little disgust, and making it totally off the choice.
- Good luck with the thesis!
- Best of luck!