

OBJECT

Women not
Sex Objects



Teen Mags to Lads Mags



What they show girls
What they show boys

2005

Teen Mags vs Lads Mags - Summary

What they show girls

Girls Teen Mags

Relatively responsible on sex

Strong respect towards boys ('lads')

Strong suggestion that lads respect girls

What they show boys

Lads Mags

Graphic covers and contents

Porn mobile logos / sex chat line ads

Irresponsible portrayal of sex

Sexually demeaning attitudes to women

Teen Mags vs Lads Mags?

- **Teen girl magazines are tightly regulated - why aren't 'teen boy mags'?**

Introduction

'Teen Mags' ?

Teen Mags are magazines marketed, displayed, viewed and bought predominately by teenage girls. We have focussed on those marketed to younger teen girls - 15 or younger - as these are regulated by TMAP, the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel. This was specifically set up by the Home Office to ensure the sexual content of these magazines comprised a responsible educator.

Lads' Mags?

Men's Lifestyle Magazines, including the weeklies such as NUTS and ZOO, are generally termed lads' mags. Publishers of Lads' Mags say these magazines are intended for boys and men of 16 years or over.

Are Lads Mags Teen Boy's Mags?

NUTS and ZOO in particular are typically sold on the mid and bottom shelves and even at the counter. We therefore contend that they are clearly displayed to, and available for viewing by, teenage boys. NUTS and ZOO are sold for pocket money prices (at one time 60p) - they're pricing is clearly affordable to teen boys.

Furthermore, these magazines hold additional teen attraction with their 'fun' nature, focus on footballers and other teen boy role models (squeezed around naked women on the covers). The emphasis on women and sex will clearly also attract readers striving to be 'more grown up' - yet another reason for such magazines to be displayed responsibly.

The absence of publications specifically aimed at the teen boy market effectively makes these magazines the *only* lifestyle option magazine available to teen boys.

For these reasons we do not believe it is unreasonable to suggest Lads Mags, specifically NUTS and ZOO are currently the male teen equivalent to teen (girl) magazines.

Lastly, it has to be acknowledged that simply the widespread display of their graphic covers plays its part in educating young boys about sex and women.

Lads Mags - *should* they be teen boy mags?

This snap shot review shows the total unsuitability of this material for teen boys as a form of sexual educator and reveals the demeaning attitudes it perpetuates towards the young women to whom they relate.

We call on TMAP to ensure responsible regulation of *all* material displayed or sold to children- including lads mags, which have become considerably more graphic since TMAP was founded. Clearly it is time for a review of TMAP's role.

Teen Mags vs Lads



'Pulling Power'

Teen Mags Attract girls on the basis of 'freebies' (make up, perfume)

Lads Mags uses 'female sex' on the front covers - barely covered female bodies, celebrities and 'real women' interspersed with football

Teen girl magazines' marketing factor are the free samples - as witnessed by their use as a sales device on the cover of seemingly every publication of every teen mag. Boys are marketed to by being presented with the 'Playboy philosophy' of viewing (and purchasing) an abundance of 'female sex', cheaply.



The 'Pin Ups'

Teen Mags

Male Pin ups usually fully clothed
Bliss had some topless 'lads'
No images particularly sexual

Lads Mags

Objectifying imagery of naked and barely clothed young women. This is the only way women are

'Pin Ups' - Teen Mags vs Lads
Mags - Spot the Difference



The contrast between the 'pin ups' could not be greater. Teen mags are positively coy when referring to the male body, protecting girls from 'male sex' and boys from the female gaze.

The Girls - how teen mags show them

All models are very thin

Female celebrities are often subject to Sun-style mockery

Bliss: Mockery of female celebrities underarm sweat or hair

Sugar: The first few key pages were lad mag-like in their mockery of female celebrities exposing their g-string, nipples or apparent stupidity. There is no such sexual/body mockery of men

Teen mags for girls actually show more female nudity than they do male with sexual images of women but not men seemingly being acceptable, hip and empowering. *Mizz*'s cover even promoted Playboy stationery - this is to underage girls - normalising and marketing pornography to teen girls.

However, female sexual imagery and nudity is most clearly used as a form of 'put down' and mockery.

The other noticeable feature is the extremely thin nature of all models and almost every single young woman featured. This is despite, for instance, *Elle Girl*'s claims that its reader's are not 'ashamed of our bodies, whatever their shape' and are 'sick of having to conform to the emaciated, airbrush model stereotype'. This is despite *Bliss*'s surveys showing the overwhelming pressure young girls feel under over their body image and the role they believe the media plays in perpetuating that.

Occasionally the stereotype is broken. *Elle Girl* included features on a female roller balder and a female asylum seeker writer



Sugar normalises the same mockery of women to girls as lads mags do to boys, and many newspapers do to both

Mizz magazine Cover. Normalising Playboy to 'barely legal' teen girls helps ensure the supply of porn's consumables - 'barely legal' teen girls



The Girls - How lads mags show them



Some of the sexual imagery from one edition of Nuts - this is not deemed pornography, it is not age restricted. It is sold at the counter for pocket money prices

Zoo's sex chat lines ads

Girls are essentially represented purely as crude nudes with unsophisticated, sexual and demeaning language, such as 'totty'.

The Lads - how are they shown?

Teen Mags

Lads are the agony aunts (except for more intimate issues)

Bliss featured young fathers taking responsibility

Bliss Lads write in concerned for their girlfriends

Underlying message is that boys are not just interested in girls for sex/appearances

Lads' Mags

Lads are only interested in women for sex and mostly only interested in sex. Sex is a purely physical non-emotional act

Teen Mags portray lads' as considerate, multi-faceted human beings, respectful of women. This definition of 'lad' is very much at odds with that according to lads' mags - where lads are uni-dimensional and are to view women in purely sexual terms - even their 'agony aunts'.



Zoo's 'Agony Aunt', captioned: "I haven't had sex in a while so seven inches inside me right now would be wonderful!"

Teen Mags vs Lads Mags - Regulation and double standards

TMAP adjudication

'Zoo uncensored'

Mad about Boys, Sugar and Smash Hits

Complaint about *Mad about Boys* magazine upheld by the Teenage Magazine Arbitration Panel (TMAP). The Panel felt that teenage magazine editors are responsible for offering a balance in magazine editorial, and that this balance had not been achieved by the **emphasis on boys in the magazine**. In particular, one of the boys' chat-up lines: "Your clothes look good on you but they'd look better on my bedroom floor", was neither **relevant, nor responsible, and should have been subject to some editorial intervention**.

" I took his cock out and tossed him off in the hallway "

" he had me bent over the bed .. he was rock-hard and he pounded away at me "

Teen mags are regulated by TMAP with highly responsible guidelines regarding sex. Consequently Teen mags *are* responsible - encouraging 'wait till you're ready', *not* suggesting 'all 14 year olds are at it' and including reminders that sex under 16 years old is illegal.

Lads' mags generally push the 'barely legal' teen image and are soft porn in their description of sex. The examples above perhaps best illustrate these double standards.

TMAP guidelines:

It is recognised that magazines have an important role to play in the field of sex education for, and emotional development of, teenagers

Conclusions and recommendations

- **Pornographic publications such as lads' mags should either be displayed and sold responsibly as 'for adults' or regulated to the same standard as teen mags by TMAP or equivalent**
- **A total lack of regulation of material viewed by boys undermines TMAP's work to sexually educate and empower**

girls - since it is boys/men, and their views, who hold power in most relationships and in society at large

Notes on this report

Teen Mags

The Teen Mags considered, published on or around Feb 2005 were :

Elle Girl
Sugar

Bliss
Mizz

Lads Mags

The Lads Mags depicted here :

Zoo
Nuts

Both published weekly and sold for £1.20

Zoo and Nuts were chosen as they are sold at the counter for pocket money prices (at one stage selling for as little as 60p). With their 'fun' nature and focus on football heroes and other teen boy role models they are seemingly aimed at the teen/tweenie boy market.

It should be noted however that all lads mags are non-age restricted, displayed at mid-shelf or lower levels, including 'at the counter', and can be readily viewed, flicked through and purchased by teenage boys, and younger.