

MEDIA EDUCATION
FOUNDATION
TRANSCRIPT



Challenging media

WHAT A GIRL WANTS

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Produced by: **Elizabeth Massie**

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Featuring interviews with:

Amanda age 11

Analise age 13

Autumn age 12

Celine age 12

Kate age 10

Kristen age 13

Lindsay age 15

Michelle age 11

Samantha age 14

Sienna age 16

Taurina age 11

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INTRODUCTION

[Montage of Media clips]

... And the clothes that came out tonight are really the clothes that I think you need...

... New express makeup three in one...

... To look narrower turn your shoulders...

... Legs, arms, back, stomach...

... Treat your hair like you treat your hips and thighs...

[Text on Screen] In the Spring of 2000, eleven girls and two classrooms of students were interviewed about the impact of media culture on their lives. These are their thoughts.

KATE: I think I definitely want to have something to do with horses, you know be a horse trainer or a teacher. I mean 'cause horses are basically my life.

ANALISE: I would like to be a zoologist and work with animals. I have two guinea pigs named Maggie and Zoey, they are sisters, and we think Maggie might be a boy, and we think Zoey might be pregnant.

LINDSAY: Ever since I was little I wanted to be a teacher. And now that I've gotten more into volleyball I think I might want to be a coach.

CELINE: What I like about softball is when you hit a good ball or catch a ball or throw a good ball and get a person out, you like, get this really good, like, feeling throughout your body, you know just like, I did this good, I did this.

AMANDA: My future would look like I'd be painting a nice picture, on a nice canvas, because I want to be an artist when I grow up.

SIENNA: I do think I have a tough exterior but if you were to read my poetry you would see that I'm like every wishing dreaming girl, dreaming about what I can be, what I can get, the love I hope to receive.

TAURINA: When I try to you know, talk my feelings, its kinda hard, and I get kinda shy. But then when I write down on paper, my mind goes free and I can do anything on paper.

MICHELLE: They say that I'm a good writer, I should become a poet. And I said, no, I don't know about being a poet. What about dancing and singing and acting?

KRISTEN: (laughter). I kinda want to be a singer, acting sounds like fun. Just a job that I'd enjoy doing that I wouldn't really get tired of, something fun.

Oh yeah, I know a lot of girls that skinny!

AUTUMN: Mostly, I want to be a teacher but really, the thing that I'm really looking at is singing. Not because my mom is a singer but I like to sing, I think its cool.

SAMANTHA: I wanna be a dancer more than anything in the world. And, oh gosh I just wish I could be a dancer, I wish I could like be – I don't care what kind of dancer, I don't care. As long as I'm dancing and having fun, you know? I just wanna be a dancer so bad.

[TV: Britney Spears concert] *You drive me crazy, I just can't sleep. I'm so excited I'm in too deep. Crazy, but it feels alright...*

TEEN PRODUCTS

KATE: Britney Spears. There's a conversation.

[TV: Britney Spears Video] *Oh Baby Baby. Oh Baby, Baby. Oh Baby, baby...*

AMANDA: (singing)...how was I supposed to know...?

SAMANTHA, 14: I think Britney Spears is a role model just because maybe the age. Because she's so close in the age, and she's become so popular these last couple of years, and like I see all these like eleven year olds and ten year olds dancing to *Hit Me Baby One More Time*. I remember going to my brother – my little brother's talent show and I see all these sixth grade girls dancing to it in their little school uniforms with their shirts, like tied.

[TV: Britney Spears Video] *Hit me baby, one more time.*

AMANDA, 11: I like her hair. I like her um, her eyes and her lips. I think most girls would want to be Britney Spears, want to be in the exact position that she is in.

ANALISE, 13: Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Jessica Simpson, Mandy Moore. You think those girls are perfect and they have everything and they're so lucky and you wish you were them and you kind of lose confidence for who *you* are.

[TV: VH1 show]

Hello my name is Gregory Dark...

-- (voiceover) In the past year Dark's been directing some of the hottest names in teen pop. Britney Spears' video From the Bottom of My Broken Heart and Mandy Moore's Walk Me Home.

This is Mandy Moore

-- This is Gregory Dark and we're doing a video today.

-- Greg Dark's directed more than forty adult films, including 1996 Sex Freaks and Shocking Truth and 1997 PsychoSexual

[Interviewer, Marshall High School] *Why do you think they'd get a porno director to direct ...*

[Student, Marshall High School] *Because they know what everybody wants. They're gonna make it seem kind of sexual because that's what, like they say sex sells.*

[TV: Mandy Moore music video] *Give it to me... ooh, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.*

ANALISE: She's really young. She is like really young.

SAMANTHA: She is fifteen.

KATE, 10: I think she's a little bit too young, to be you know, dressing that way. I mean, and its her choice but she's giving you know, girls the message that you know, be sexy as early as you can, I mean, and then you'll eb totally great.

[TV: Mandy Moore music video] *I'm missing you like candy...now give it to me.*

[TV: Christina Aguilera music video] *What a girl wants, what a girl needs, what a girl wants, what a girl needs.*

LINDSAY, 15: What a girl wants is about...what she thinks a girl wants, and I don't know, I guess what she wants. She wants a guy's there for her and who waits around for her and is, like, respectful of her, but its just about guys, that's all its about.

[Student, Marshall High School] The Christina Aguilera music video, its like, we, we're girls and we want something too – well that's what it gave me.

[Student, Marshall High School] And in that video What a Girl Wants, its part attention but its also part control. Because if you see the video you notice that she pushes the guy down, and they're standing up and the guys are sitting down, so I guess girls want control, also.

[TV: MTV TRL] *My name is Ron, I'm from Rhode Island, and I requested Christina Aguilera's What a Girl Wants because I'd show her what a girl wants anytime.*

[Student, Marshall High School] The whole song is about respect and I heard her say that – that what a girl wants is respect, that song is not about anything sexual, its about respect.

[Student, Marshall High School] What about the song *Genie in a Bottle*?

[TV: Christina Aguilera music video] *I'm a genie in a bottle, you gotta rub me the right way.*

[Student, Marshall High School] That one's about respect too.

[Student, Marshall High School] How is that about respect?

[Student, Marshall High School] Yes, it is. Rub me the right way means treat me the right way.

[Student, Marshall High School] Look at the way she dances. She dances very sexual.

[Interviewer, Marshall High School] You're a guy, what, what are they telling you, they're saying respect me, what else are they saying?

[Student, Marshall High School] Touch me

[Student, Marshall High School] Love me.

[Student, Marshall High School] Give me some.

(laughter)

[Student, Marshall High School] Like, yeah, like you said, at the same time they're saying two things, like in one word. It's like saying, like respect me and touch me at the same time. Like ok, I'll respect you and I'll touch you, like blindfolded or something (laughter).

[Student, Marshall High School] Its to attract two different groups, you know, you got the guys who say rub me the right way, and they're like ok, and the girls are looking like, oh she's powerful. Trying to get two groups to like her.

[Student, Marshall High School] Like Christina, Britney, and Mandy, they're all teen products, they're told what to do, you know, by their managers, oh you have to wear this sexy dress to get attention, ok? So you have to also sing this song.

PREMATURE TOOTHPICKS

CELINE, 12: I think it gives girls really low self-esteem to have to look that way and they can't.

KRISTEN, 13: They wanna look the way the people in the magazines look, the models look, because they think that's how they're supposed to look. Because in the magazine they give an image of that's how girls are supposed to be.

ANALISE, 13: So all the models and all these people that you see, they're, they're skinny. They, they look like a premature toothpick. I am underweight for my age, and I feel like ok, that's how I'm supposed to look like? You know, I'm supposed to be even skinnier than I am already?

MICHELLE, 11: When I see those runway models and how they're so skinny and they're so pretty, and, and like, woah, I wish, but I can't.

TAURINA, 11: They're really skinny and sometimes I wish I could be like that when I get older.

[Text on Screen]

30% of nine year-old girls think they are too fat. (Children Now Foundation)

One third of 12-13 year-olds are actively trying to lose weight. (Boston Globe)

CELINE, 12: We talk about dieting a little bit because some of my friends and I are a little bit overweight. So we talk about it and then we try one and then we don't like it so we don't follow through on it, and then we get depressed and we eat.

TAURINA, 11: I know a lot of girls that worry about their weight. They'll probably go on diets for like, a long time and they don't eat for a long time and then I get scared of what's gonna happen to them.

[TV: Change of Heart]

Tom wants Louisa to tighten up.

-- She needs a butt master.

So he went out with Mary Lou.

-- Mary Lou is the butt master.

[TV: Home Shopping Network] *Legs, arms, back, stomach...*

SIENNA, 16: The media defines sexy as a woman with a great butt, great -- great stomach, perfect body.

AUTUMN, 12: Nice figure, slim thighs, nice size butt I guess, nice size boobs, and I guess a nice face. Not too big of legs, or something. Nice legs, nice firm legs. No flabby arms, that's out of the question. You don't have to be too skinny, but you can't be that fat, so I guess, medium size, is, that's good.

BIG ONES

ANALISE, 13: A big thing at school is the size of your breasts. And if they're big or small...

KRISTEN, 13: I know a couple of girls that are considering trying to get plastic surgery done. I don't know any that have done it. But I know some that are planning, they – I – one was telling me yesterday actually, they're like, yeah I wanna get my breasts enlarged. And I said why, you look fine. She's like, oh, its not for guys its just for me. It'd make me feel more confident.

[TV: Jenny Jones Show] Breasts, lips, nose, all redone by a plastic surgeon, come on out Tendre

KRISTEN, 13: I think it makes them feel more confident. Because like, the, pictures that they see in magazines, a lot of the girls probably have bigger boobs, and they, they wanna see, they wanna look like that, they think they'd probably look more like a model if they had that and they might become more successful.

[Text on Screen]

Cosmetic surgeries for girls 18 and under have doubled since 1992. (Newsweek)

AMANDA, 11: I don't think I'd like any plastic surgery, um, if I was eighteen and I had no boobs, well, uh, I'd try, maybe I'd do plastic surgery, but you know, that could never happen, you know? My cousin, has boobs. And she's like, only 360 days older than me, and she's got big ones.

GET THE GUY

MICHELLE, 11: The only way I could have good self esteem is like if um, a guy flirts with me, I'd be like oh ok, I feel good today. But when they don't, and they just make fun of me, I'm like ugh, like I feel so bad.

[TV dating show]

What's the most important characteristic that you look for in a girl?

-- A lot, obviously, obviously I mean, people look at looks. I mean, if you're at a mall, you're not gonna look around the mall and be like, I'm looking for a girl with a nice personality. You know, you're looking around for someone who catches your eye.

[Montage of Movie clips]

[Interviewer] *How do you feel when boys tell you you're pretty?*

TAURINA, 11: I feel really good and, that they say I'm pretty and I actually feel that I am pretty when they tell me that, I'm flattered.

[Interviewer] *Then why don't you think you're pretty? Do you not believe them?*

TAURINA, 11: It only lasts for like a short period of time. That's why I don't really want a boyfriend. It just, my self esteem, it only stays for a period of time, it doesn't really last that long.

AMANDA, 11: Girls want to be sexy, and I think they want to um, try to be sexy to get the guy.

AUTUMN, 12: They try to wear like tight bellbottoms that are like, tight in the thighs, like, blue bellbottoms for our uniform. And when they think it doesn't look right they probably try to borrow someone else's pants that are a little bit baggier. And I'm always like, why did you take it off, they look fine? And they're like, no it's too fat, and here comes Darryl or Steve or you know, Pablo, or something like that. And I'm like, why are you trying to impress them? They're like, because, you know, I haven't had a boyfriend in like two months. And all that stuff. And I'm like, you're twelve or eleven.

SAMANTHA, 14: The number one thing I think that guys look for is definitely not personality, whatever they say, whatever the magazines say, whatever anything says, it is their looks. It is how they look. And I know that.

[Movie: She's All That]

Take her for example, short, decent rack, kind of a Chelsea Clinton thing going on, but given the right look, the right boyfriend, bam, in six weeks, she's the one being crowned prom queen.

TAURINA, 11: Oh, “She’s All That”, that was, I like, I really liked that movie, that was personally my favorite.

AUTUMN, 12: Its like um, a 1990s Cinderella, its about a girl who’s in high school and she’s like very dorky and everything and they make a bet.

[Movie: She’s All That] A bet?

AUTUMN, 12: He’s the most popular guy in school, he and his friends make a bet.

[Movie: She’s All That] I’ll pick the girl. And you’ve got six weeks to turn her into the prom queen.

AUTUMN, 12: ... To get an ugly girl, you know, the school’s dorkiest girl and everything. And he takes her to parties and to the beach and with his friends.

[Movie: She’s All That] Go get dressed.

-- I can’t. I mean, look at you. You look great, I, I have nothing ... oh god.

TAURINA, 11: It was exciting to me and it seemed really cool how they you know, changed the way, the way the girls looked. I don’t know, it was just really exciting to me, the movie.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

[Montage of ads]

- New Neutrogena Skin Clearing make up
- New Express make-up three in one.
- New Clean and Clear, oil absorbing sheets.
- Its beautiful, its beneficial, its cool, its refreshing.

ANALISE, 13: Jennifer Love Hewitt is the um, spokesperson for Neutrogena. She's a very pretty girl, and she has perfect skin and very skinny, beautiful hair.

[Student, LeMessa Jr. High School] I like Christina Aguilera's make up. I try to follow the latest fashion, um, and I like the kind of lipstick she uses because its not very bright but its like normal sort of. Kind of shiny...

[Interviewer, LeMessa Jr. High School] Kinda like the lipstick you're wearing right now?

[Student, LeMessa Jr. High School] Yeah.

[TV: MTV Fanatic with Sarah Michelle Gellar]

I've really like wanted to meet you since like I saw you in Buffy for the first time, the past four years I've wanted to meet you so badly. I've adored you since the first time I saw you and I just wish I could stop crying so I could talk to you right now...I just keep on crying.

-- Let's hear it for the waterproof Maybelline mascara.

[TV ad: Maybelline]

Mascara, love the look, hate the stiff brittle lashes that can come with it.

-- Maybe she's born with it, maybe its Maybelline.

AUTUMN, 12: It's kinda like saying follow the leader, the message from the leader.

ANALISE, 13: Well I wear foundation, and powder because I don't have a lot of zits, but I have blemishes, like, like skin different color in certain places, its really weird. So then I'll put a little bit of blush on, and I use a little bit of mascara and I use lipstick, and then to make my lips like they match my eye shadow, I use lipstick and I put it on my eyes also, and it's a good tool!

[Interviewer] You put lipstick on your eyes?

ANALISE, 13: I learned that on TV.

BOOTY VIDEOS

[TV: MTV Spring Break] (song) *girls, who like boys, who like boys...*

(Host) *Laura, her secret ambition is to marry a rich guy. Lana, she hates it when men ask her, "are those real?" Trish, she hates tighty-whitey boys, she loves a man in boxers!*

[Text on Screen]

MTV is the favorite station of 9-14 year olds in the United States. (New York Times)

KRISTEN, 13: The sex topic, well they'll put out a lot of sex things like to get kids attention because obviously if there's something sexual on TV, the kids gonna watch it.

[TV: MTV promo spot]

Jailbait, an MTV original TV movie.

-- *Don't you think we're overreacting here, I mean girls today are practically lining up to be --*

-- statutorily raped?

-- *Yes!*

[TV ad] *You're watching MTV's True Life, I'm a Porn Star, thanks to Target*

[TV: MTV promo spot] *On the next undressed:*

My girlfriend's been talking about having a threesome.

Hey, what's happening? -- A threesome.

SAMANTHA, 14: I dunno, I guess the media thinks like, oh yeah, if I put that, if I put sex in, people will be like, oh, what, huh? Yeah? Ok, yeah.

[TV: MTV music video] *Let me see that thong...*

SAMANTHA, 14: Oh, the thong song? (laughs) that was the funniest song.

AUTUMN, 12: *The Thong Song* by Sisco is mostly, have you ever heard of a booty video? A booty video?

[TV: MTV interview Joseph Kahn, video director] *It's basically just a booty video, that's really what it is, its like a full on booty video. I've never really dealt with so much booty before.*

[TV: MTV music video] *I like it when the booty go, baby make your booty go... that thong, thong, thong, thong.*

[Student, Marshall High School] They treat girls like sex toys, you know like in the thong video, they start degrading the girls, you know what I mean, its like one guy and a whole bunch of girls around him so like, that's basically like the guy is hiring the girl because it seems like they just want 'em for sex.

[TV: MTV interview with Sisco]

See how this is like no wrinkles, and then it like make the booty look smooth, and it just like kinda goes over the hips, that's what you wanna have going on, thank you so much – she's very beautiful as well.

MICHELLE, 11: *(singing)* guys like wh, wh, wh...baby move your bu, bu, butt.. I can sing it again, yeah, its cool, I like that song. Everybody sings it, I remember on the bus, um, this girl, she started singing it and everybody on the bus started singing it and it was so cute. And how do you call it -- they played, the whole choir, we were singing a song and then one of the guys said, oh man, this song is wack, lets sing another song, and then all of a sudden a girl said how about Sisco? And then, we all started singing, he's like, alright one two three, and how d'ya call it, the teacher was directing us. It was cool.

HEY, LET'S HAVE SEX

SAMANTHA, 14: I think sex comes up more like with TV shows than in like my real life I don't really talk about that much, I don't say, hey let's have sex, you know?

CELINE, 12: I think like spring break, and like, the media, really contribute to like the pressure of yeah, of like sex and like how everybody's like having sex at an early age, and how people say its cooler to do it early and I think there's more pressure when you're in middle school, like thirteen and fourteen than you are when you're fifteen and sixteen because you've already gotten it over with when you're younger and so there's not as much pressure to do it

[Interviewer] Do you feel like there's pressure for you to grow up? Fast?

TAURINA, 11: Pressure? Yes, absolutely. I mean, my friends and other people they're like more grown up because like now-a-days, kids are growing up more faster. And they're learning about stuff, like nasty stuff more early, at an early age. And I feel like I am being pressured.

[Text on Screen]

62% of 10-16 year-olds say that sex in the media influences their peers to have sex when they're too young. (Parents Television Council)

KATE, 10: I think that sex will be an issue you know, when I'm thirteen or twelve.

[Interviewer] Why?

KATE, 10: Why will it be an issue? Um, because, you know, other, you know, when you think about it, and you've seen other movies you think wow, kids are like, like if one person's left out, its not any fun and you sort of wanna go along with everybody and just you know, sort of be in.

I COULD BE YOUR DAUGHTER

CELINE, 12: Its kinda weird, you know, thinking that some fifty year-old's coming just to watch younger people do it, you know, its like kinda, you know, like what are you doing, its kinda freaky.

[Text on Screen]

Teenagers used to go to the movies to see adults having sex. Now adults go to the movies to see teenagers having sex. (Roger Ebert)

LINDSAY, 15: They're selling, its just like sex. They're just selling it and that's why some people go to see the movies, for Jennifer Love Hewitt's like, cleavage or whatever.

SIENNA, 16: I think that a lot of adults are interested in teenagers being sexy, people think you're more appealing when you're younger. It's more sexy. Its something that is forbidden which always drives them crazy. Forbidden, oh I have to go after this.

Frankly some parts of it gets to the point where its kind of disgusting, its sickening, where they go to the ranks of being a pedophile, of actually wanting to go through with those emotions of, wow, she's really hot, sure she's twelve years old, but I don't care. It goes that far and that's where it gets disgusting, that's where you draw the line.

SAMANTHA, 14: I think that if an adult looks at me that way, I think that is very perverted and they have something wrong with them. Because you know, its horrible, you know, its like, I could be your daughter, and you're trying to like have a crush on me, you're trying to like, you know, hit on me? You know, that's pretty stupid, you know, and they have a mental problem if that's what they're thinking. Because its, disgusting.

ALL GIRLS GOT KILLED

AMANDA, 11: If someone wanted to murder someone sometimes I think they would go for the girl, and kill her or something.

CELINE, 12: Women are most likely people who get killed the most because they're less, they have less power and they're more defenseless than men.

[Movie: I Still Know What You Did Last Summer] (screaming)... What'd you do that for?

KRISTEN, 13: You know, I think, I think all girls got killed. I don't think, I don't know if there was a man. There might have been one male in the movie that got killed but a lot of them were girls like, teenage girls, maybe from like either sixteen to twenty.

CELINE, 12: I thought *Scream* was a really good movie.

TAURINA, 11: I liked it a lot. It was pretty cool.

MICHELLE, 11: It was tight, which one the first or the second?

[Interviewer] Any Scream.

MICHELLE, 11: I've seen all of 'em.

SIENNA, 16: It was repetitious – repetitive to the max. I mean it's the same scenario over and over again, some girl with – running away from the guy with knives, always going upstairs instead of out the door.

ANALISE, 13: Ooh, they're just – I don't see the point of them, personally, I don't know, I don't see the point of a lot of things. But just the whole main idea of everyone getting stabbed and in, kinda like, that is kind of sexual in a way, because you're stabbing someone, you know?

[Movie: Scream] Now you gotta die, those are the rules.

KRISTEN, 13: I don't think they care about girls, entertainment business people, not at all. I think they're just, they're more treated as objects to them than actual human beings.

AUTUMN, 12: Ugh, they don't care, they just think – they care about their body, that's all. They care about the girl being pretty, people will like 'em, she's popular in movies and videos, that's what they care about, they really don't care about girls, not really, that's what I think.

SIENNA, 16: Well I can't blame it on the media, or a TV show, or the government, or any particular magazine, because if people didn't want it, they wouldn't have it, people like it, and if people didn't like it they wouldn't have it still.

LINDSAY, 15: I think they need to think about what message they're sending out to people, because it really does have an impact on a lot of people.

[Student, Marshall High School] I think that the media can change a lot of the stuff that we are talking about, all the skinniness and the weight problems, everything that we were talking about, the sexuality. If they could change it, I think um, everything itself will change by itself if they will change.

[Interviewer, Marshall High School] *So you think they have that kind of power?*

[Student, Marshall High School] I think they have the power to stop it all.