Why Diversity can Alleviate Society's Body Image Problem

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Overview of BI

- Body Image is Complex
    - Multidimensional
    - Gendered
- Body Image is important
    - Necessary symptom of eating disorders
    - Important component of other disorders
    - Core component of intervention
    - Risk factor for disordered eating, as well as lower life satisfaction, depression, anxiety, sexual dysfunction (e.g., Stice et al., 2000)

Sociocultural Theories

- **Dual-Pathway Model**
  - Eric Stice

- **Tripartite Influence Model**
  - Kevin Thompson and colleagues
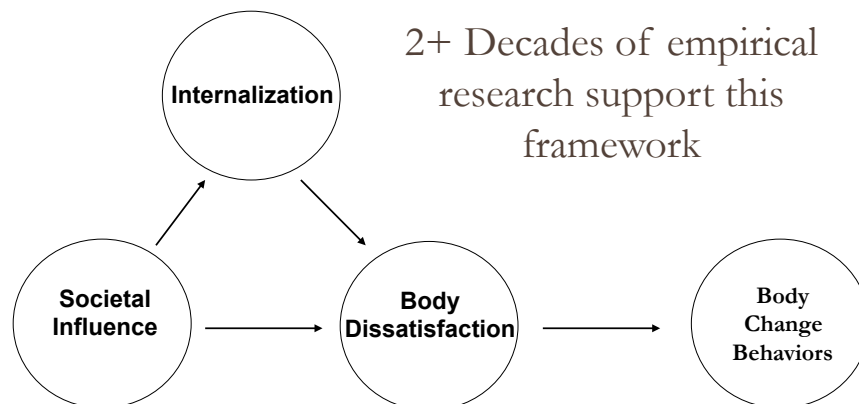
- **Objectification/Self-Objectification**
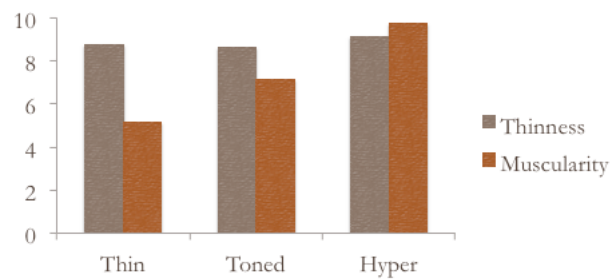 - Barbara Frederickson & Tomi-Ann Roberts
  - Rachel Calogero and colleagues

- **Elaborated Sociocultural Model**
  - Ellen Fitzsimmons-Craft and colleagues

Similarities across all…

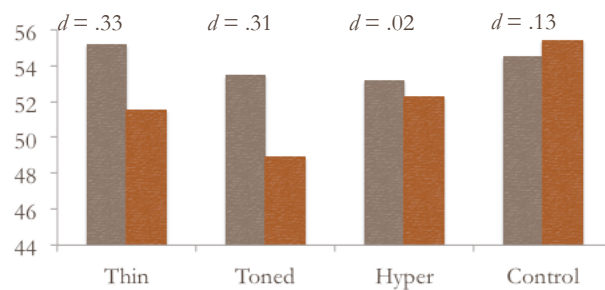2+ Decades of empirical research support this framework
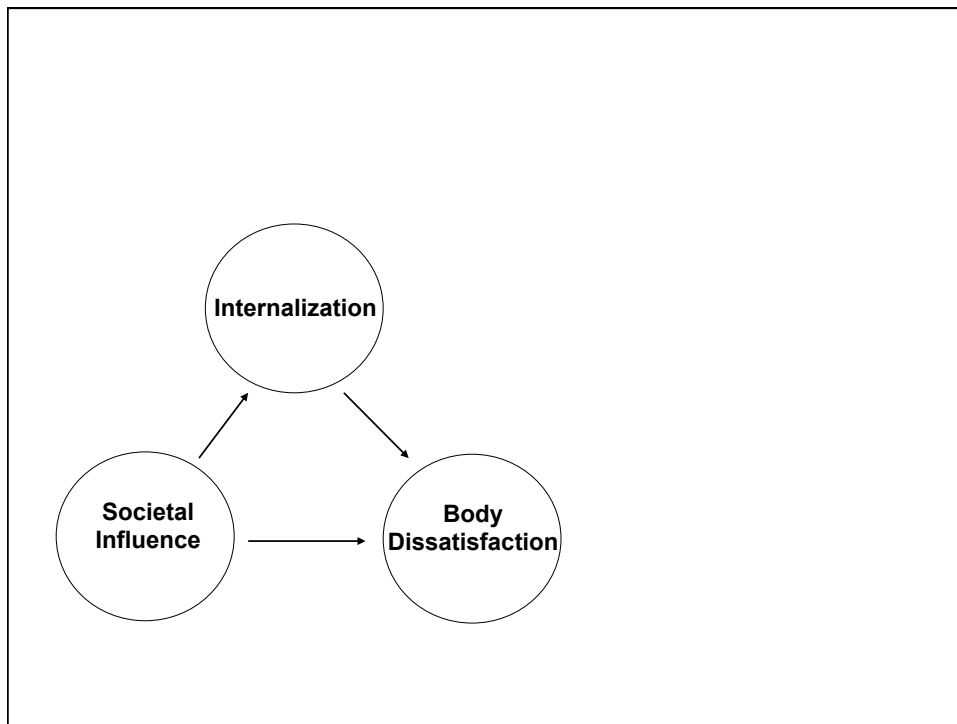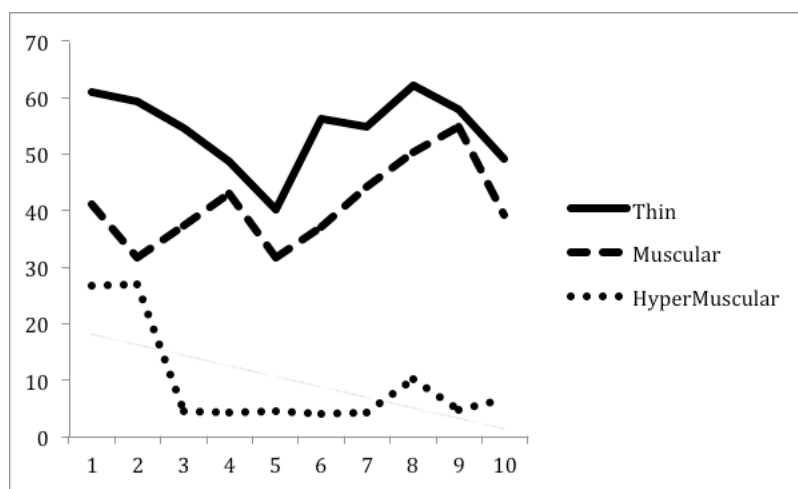
Emphasis on Toneness

Benton & Karazsia (2015)

Emphasis on Toneness
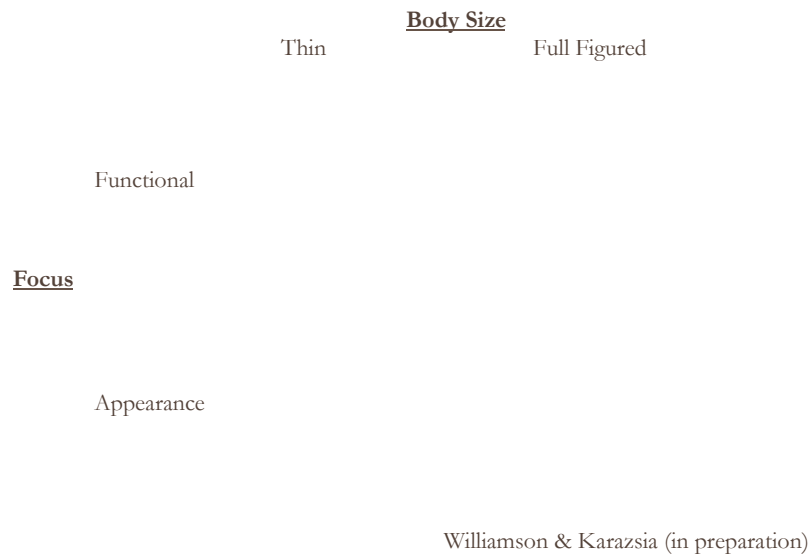

Benton & Karazsia (2015)

Emphasis on Toneness

Benton & Karazsia (under review)

Body Appreciation Study

Body Size

Thin   Full Figured

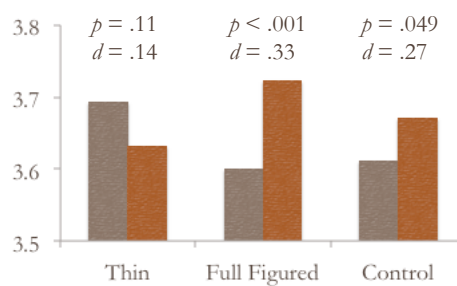Functional

Focus

Appearance

Williamson & Karazsia (in preparation)
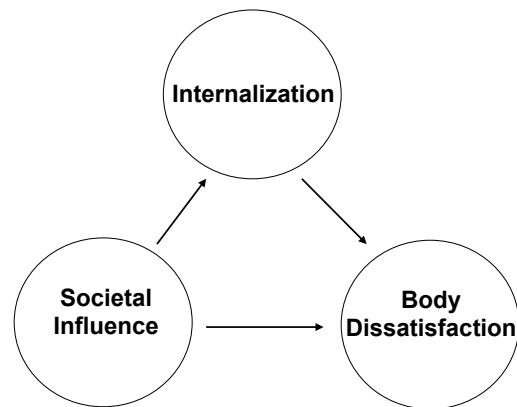

Body Appreciation Study

Results:
- Focus (functionality versus appearance) was irrelevant; no significant effect
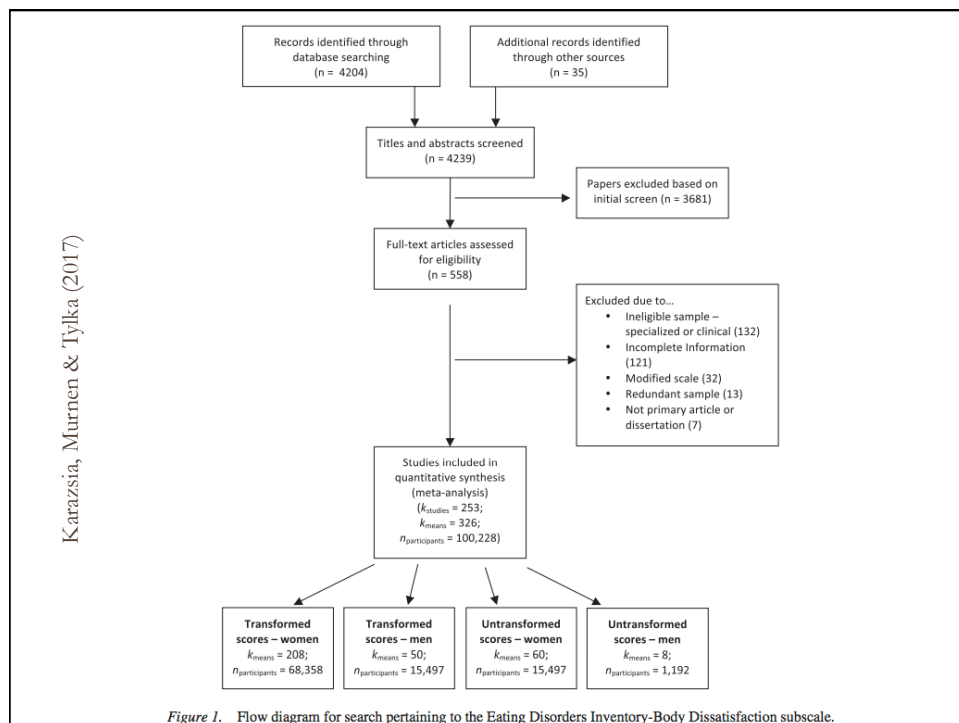- Body Size did influence Body Appreciation
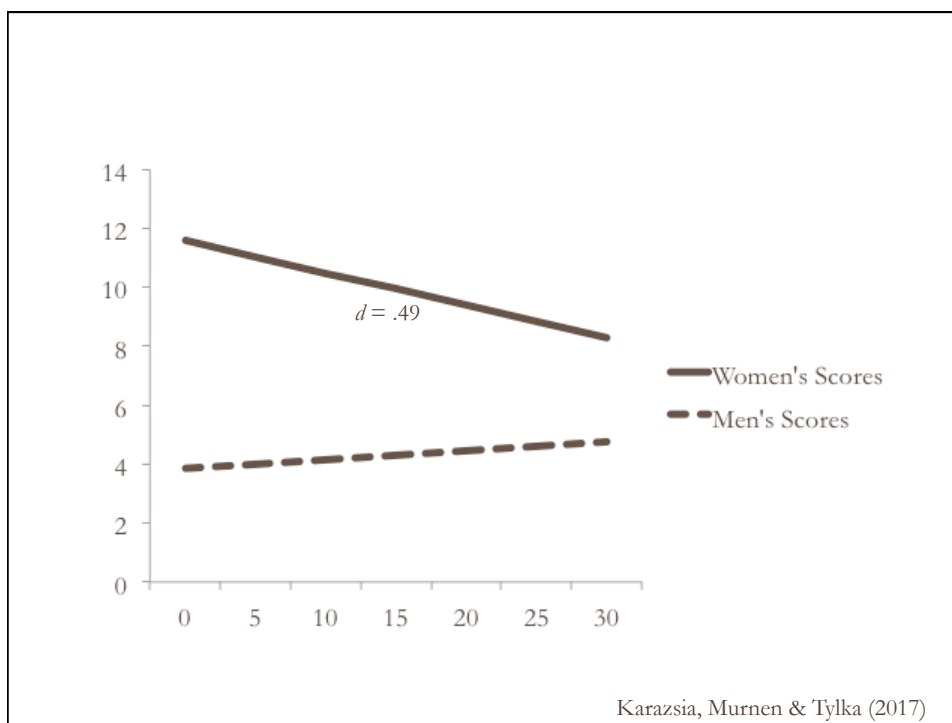

Williamson & Karazsia (in preparation)

Figure 1. Flow diagram for search pertaining to the Eating Disorders Inventory-Body Dissatisfaction subscale.

Karazsia, Murnen & Tylka (2017)

Role of Diversity

- Society has valued an unrealistic ideal
  - Preferring 'unreal'
  - Restricted portrayals (lack of diversity)
    - Size, shape, color
- If we critique the media, BD is prevented (Stice et al., 2009)
  - Think about that…we have to train people how to respond to something in their environment that is completely *unreal*

Role of Diversity

- What if there was no ideal?
  - Depictions of 'real'
  - What is real?
    - Real is thin, large, dark, light, big, round, disabled, abled
    - Real is freedom to not be focused on appearance unless we want to
  - Freedom to focus on **health**