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More Than Skin Deep: An Examination Of The Negative Effects of Advertising On Women

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MORE THAN SKIN DEEP: AN EXAMINATION OF THE
NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING IMAGES ON WOMEN

by
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Dedication Page

This thesis is dedicated to all women who have ever felt insecure about themselves because of the unattainable and fictitious images seen in advertisements. I hope we can see the standard of beauty continue to evolve and that every woman's beauty will be celebrated.

Acknowledgments

There are several people I would like to thank, not only for their help in the completion of this thesis, but also for their constant encouragement along the way. First, I would like to thank my parents for their consistent love, support and guidance. Thank you for always pushing me to achieve my highest potential and teaching me to do everything to the best of my ability. Next, I would like to thank my outstanding advisor, Robin Street. Thank you for always being available to meet with me and your help with any issue that came up throughout this entire process. I greatly appreciate all of your advice and insights. This thesis would have been tremendously more difficult without you. Also, thank you to my two additional readers, Professor Scott Fiene and Dean Charles D. Mitchell, for taking the time to read my thesis and serve on my panel. I would like to thank Dr. Robert Magee for his contribution to this paper, as well as my peers who took part in interviews and participated in my survey. Finally, I would like to thank the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College for providing a stimulating learning environment these past four years. I would also like to thank the Honors College for awarding me a SMBHC fellowship my sophomore year, which allowed me to partake in an internship that helped spark the idea for this thesis topic.

ABSTRACT

ALLI BRIDGERS

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF ROBIN STREET

AN EXAMINATION OF HOW ADVERTISING CREATES AN UNATTAINABLE STANDARD OF BEAUTY AND NEGATIVELY AFFECTS THE SELF-IMAGE OF WOMEN.

This thesis will examine how the way women are portrayed in advertising creates an unattainable ideal standard of beauty and negatively affects the self-image of women. The first chapter will look back on the history of advertising to women. It will examine where this ideal standard of beauty originated from and how it was spread throughout American society. The next chapter explores how advertisers use specific psychological techniques to sell not only a product to consumers, but also sell an ideal, attitude or lifestyle. The third chapter examines trends in advertisements, such as objectifying and sexualizing women, stereotyping women and focusing on a specific and limited body type. This impossible ideal standard of beauty has negative effects on women. These effects will be explored in depth in chapter four. It has created a skewed and limited definition of beauty, which has only been intensified through Photoshop and other photo editing tools. This phenomenon has had a direct negative impact on how women view themselves. It has led to an increasing amount of eating disorders and has even caused some women to turn to plastic surgery. Women are not the only ones negatively impacted by beauty in advertising; it has influenced the way men think

about women. The final chapter concludes with how advertising and the media can be tools for change. It will examine what is currently being done to widen the ideal standard of beauty and what else needs to change.

In addition to secondary research, primary research was conducted to learn about the relationship between women, advertising and beauty at a local level by surveying and conducting face-to-face interviews with women students at the University of Mississippi. Both of these research methods were approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Mississippi. Conclusions from the research revealed that advertising does influence the way women feel about themselves and how beauty is defined.

Personal Preface

The average American woman is exposed to thousands of advertisements every single day. Turn on the TV or flip through a magazine and you will see countless advertisements telling women how to act, how to dress, how to behave and even how to think. The same advertisements tell men what to expect in women. These ads sell more than just products; they sell a warped version of reality. In this digital age it is almost impossible to escape the reach advertising has on society, whether we are receiving ads on our Instagram feed, Facebook timeline or directly to our email inboxes. These images are powerful.

Through advertising, women are surrounded by an ideal standard of beauty that is simply unattainable for most women to ever achieve. I remember being just 10 years old, constantly trying to straighten out my naturally wavy hair and tweezing my thick eyebrows down to a ridiculously thin line. Why do we do this? Because from a young age we are made to feel like we need to change to match a certain image in order to be accepted as beautiful. We are told we need to spend substantial amounts of time and money trying to fit a mold that is unrealistic for most. This cycle needs to end.

I have real life experience dealing with the complex relationship between women and the concept of beauty. My first job was in a women's clothing boutique, where I watched countless women walk out of the dressing room and say something negative about their bodies. Now, I work in a makeup store where I hear women complaining about everything from their droopy eyelids to their wrinkly forehead to their too-large nose. Why can't women be happy with themselves without always comparing themselves to the overly-edited models on the covers of magazines and in advertisements?

I spent two summers in New York working in the fashion industry. One summer I worked for Project Runway, a fashion design reality TV show, and the next summer I interned for Elle Magazine. In these roles, I heard judges and editors critique the appearance of models on a daily basis- too fat, too skinny, too plain, too ugly. It is no wonder so many women suffer from self-esteem issues and eating disorders.

A lover of fashion and beauty, I enjoy flipping through glossy magazines and keeping up with the latest trends. However, I realized there is a darker side to the industry- one that makes women feel bad if they can not fit into a size 0 jean or posses a flawless complexion. This unattainable standard is fueled by advertising. As a woman, I cannot sit back and accept this constant negativity and criticism

directed towards my gender about our bodies, our clothes and our way of thinking. Women are more than just their outward appearances. Beauty should not be defined to simply physical attractiveness. Why should we limit it? We need to be celebrating every woman and every form that beauty comes in.

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INTRODUCTION

The way women are portrayed in advertising and how advertisements define beauty creates unattainable standards for real women. Average, real-life women will never be able to achieve the air-brushed perfection found in ads. This unrealistic ideal is causing women to be unable to recognize their own beauty and posses a positive self-image. For example, one University of Mississippi female student said, "(advertisements) make me feel self-conscious about my body. I already don't like my body, so when I see models in skimpy swimsuits it really kills my self esteem (Appendix-II, Q13)." The problem is not just at Ole Miss. Indeed, the majority of women across the globe do not feel comfortable using the word "beautiful" to describe themselves (Etcoff, Orbach, Scott & D'Agostino, 2004). This paper will demonstrate the idea that advertising diminishes the definition of beauty and destroys self-esteem.

Women today cannot help but to measure themselves against an impossible standard of beauty created by advertising. *Webster's Dictionary* defines beauty as "the qualities in a person or a thing that give pleasure to the senses or the mind ("Beauty")." This definition has been altered and diminished over the years, becoming narrow and exclusive. Beauty and physical appearance are now interchangeable. The popular definition of beauty defined by today's advertisements and magazine covers is shallow and often confined to blonde hair, blue eyes, light skin and a thin body type. Another University of Mississippi

student said that advertisements make her "wish I was tall, skinny and blonde (Appendix-II, Q13)." This definition of beauty is widely accepted by society, but it excludes billions of women. Less than five percent of American women actually reflect this idealized look (Kilbourne 2010). The way women are portrayed in advertising negatively affects the self-image of real women.

The average American is exposed to an average of 2,000 ads every single day (Kilbourne 2010). Women are bombarded on a daily basis with advertisements telling them what is beautiful and what they need in order to try and achieve it. Advertisements are powerful. They sell more than just products. They sell ideas, values, normalcy and notions of what it means to be beautiful. Women are surrounded with this concept of ideal feminine beauty, which is generally impossible to achieve. From a young age, girls are made to feel like they need to change in order to be accepted as beautiful in today's society. Women are told they need to spend substantial amounts of time and money trying to fit a mold that is unrealistic for the majority of women. This thesis will explore how beauty is portrayed in advertisements, how ads have impacted women (and men) and how advertising can be used to change the status quo.

CHAPTER ONE: THE HISTORY OF ADVERTISING TO WOMEN

This chapter will take a look at the history of advertising to women. It will reveal how the idealized American beauty came to exist in advertising. The birth of the advertising industry marks the beginning of a society dominated by consumerism and the emergence of stereotyping consumers- most of these consumers being women, who are responsible for making over 85 percent of all purchases (Holland 2016). J. Walter Thompson was the first U.S. advertising agency to realize the importance of women consumers (Sutton 3).

The development of the Women's Editorial Department at J. Walter Thompson, one of the largest and best international advertising agencies, in the early 1900s, signified a huge turning point in advertising. Recognizing that women made up the majority of the consumer market, JWT executives decided they needed to be able to specifically identify, target and address the needs of women. In order to effectively advertise to women, JWT created a department consisting of only women: The Women's Editorial Department. The conception of this new department was built on the idea that women knew what other women wanted, and all women were basically after the same thing- sensuality, romance, social status, and a modern feminine beauty (Sutton 3).

Copywriter Helen Lansdowne headed the department. Born in rural Kentucky, Lansdowne rose in the advertising ranks, eventually making her way to the boardrooms of Proctor & Gamble to present her iconic ad campaign for the new product known as Crisco, which revolutionized kitchens across the country in the early twentieth century (Sutton 2). Lansdowne led a talented team of women from a variety of backgrounds, including leaders in

suffrage organizations, social workers, teachers and advocators for social reform movements. These women were intelligent and ambitious, holding impressive degrees from schools including Vassar, Barnard, Columbia and the University of Chicago. However, once they entered into the world of advertising, they promoted the same stereotypical imagery that they worked hard to battle against in their former roles (Ibid 16). This is not to belittle the influence of these women. They worked hard for their own place in the male-dominated industry of advertising, as well as paving the way for future generations of women in the business. Also, they made a lot of money for JWT, raking in half of the company's revenue by 1918 (Ibid 18).

Many of these women considered themselves feminists, and passionately took part in the women's suffrage movement. Suffragists were ahead of their time, utilizing modern methods of advertising, public relations, event marketing and mass merchandising in their efforts to win the vote. Little did they know that these skills would help them immensely in their future careers (Sutton 39). The most iconic Women's Editorial Department campaigns were for the revolutionary products directed at women including Crisco shortening, Woodbury's Facial Soap and Pond's Cold Cream. These products glorified the attractive and feminine homemaker and the the ultimate modern and efficient kitchen, where she was expected to spend her time (Ibid 17). These campaigns relied on psychological appeals. By making these purchases, women believed they could tap into the attributes of the product whether it be romance, social status, femininity, or "ideal beauty (Ibid 3)." Their innovative strategies apparently worked. Crisco, which sold only 10,000 cases in 1915, soared to selling over 1 million in 1918 (Ibid 17). The Women's Editorial Department proved that women are powerful. The revenue they brought in helped to establish JWT as the most powerful advertising agency in the United States.

Under the direction of Landsdowne, the Women's Editorial Department at JWT was the first to utilize sex appeal in advertising. Their ad campaign for Woodbury Soap included the slogan, "A Skin You Love to Touch," depicting a man touching a woman's bare skin (Sutton 8). Although this seems relatively mild compared to the slogans and images used in today's advertisements, it was revolutionary for the time. This campaign was particularly modern because it incorporated both sexual appeal and science. It not only promised touchable skin, it also provided scientific proof that it worked for a variety of skin conditions (Ibid 100). The campaign was also innovative for its use of differentiation. It was marketed to different people for different reasons. It was a cure for oily skin, large pores, sensitive skin or redness and was all said to be backed by scientific evidence (Ibid 108). Woodbury Soap's sales increased 1,000 percent in only 8 years (Ibid 17).

The Women's Editorial Department did not just generate money. It also contributed greatly to the creation of the modern feminine woman and the ideal beauty standard still seen in advertising today. National advertising began to emerge in the 1880s due to new standardized production techniques, the opening of large department stores and the circulation of mail-order catalogues. Total advertising volume in the U.S. grew from about $200 million in 1880 to almost $3 billion in 1920 (Lears 64). The collaboration of manufacturers, advertisers, retailers and mass media outlets circulated the notion of the modern American woman, who portrayed a specific ideal beauty with a force and scale never before seen. Without the advertising industry the images of ideal feminine beauty would never have had the impact that they did (Sutton 6).

Magazines such as the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post took the place of newspapers as the primary outlet for commercial messages (Sutton 7). These magazines,

which became the main vehicle for reaching female consumers, were filled with advertisements for cosmetics and other women's products. The Women's Editorial Department placed most ads in the Ladies' Home Journal in the 1920s (Ibid 6). Their advertisements for new cosmetics such as Woodbury Facial Soap, Pond's Cold Cream and Cutex nail polish relied on psychological appeals that drew on women's emotions (Sutton 3). They warned women against embarrassing their husbands by not appearing fresh. The ads promoted smooth and delicate skin, while promising a femininity that would associate female consumers with a higher social class (Ibid 8). These advertisements promoted ideas of how women should act, look, care for themselves and behave.

Women bought into the promise and hope these advertisements offered. They believed they could create a better self by buying certain products. Advertisers connected an image to a certain product (Sutton 69), a technique still taught in advertising classrooms today. Advertisements for Lux Flakes, a brand of soap, featured beautiful clothing and people, often sophisticated celebrities. Not only were they selling Lux Flakes, they were selling the idea of what this certain brand said about the purchaser (Sutton 60). Cutex ads featured images of delicate white hands, spreading the notion that the modern woman paid attention to her hands and purchased nail products that would help to achieve this look. Cutex sales nearly doubled in the first year the Women's Editorial Department at JWT took the account in 1916. By 1920 sales totaled more that 2 million, further proving how fast the beauty industry was growing in the twentieth century. In 1912, one-fourth of women used nail and hand care products. In 1936, three-fourths of women bought these products (Ibid 60). The beauty industry grew quickly.

The ideal standard of beauty that was first created by these early advertisements has been altered over time. During the 19th century, Victorian ideas of femininity centered around motherhood, reproduction and the cult of domesticity (Sutton 64). This does not mean that women were not judged on outward physical appearance, but they were not solely judged on their physical beauty. There was redemption for the maybe not so attractive "good and moral mother," who spent her days inside the home caring for her children (Ibid 64). These Victorian ideals started to change as women began being admitted to higher institutions of learning during the twentieth century (Ibid 65). At the same time, the concept of body image began to take shape because of the hyperactive focus on women's bodies due to the belief that academics would interfere with reproduction (Ibid 46). The rise of mass media contributed greatly to the spreading of changing ideals.

During the boom of consumerism in the second decade of the twentieth century, a more modern female beauty began to emerge. The "New Woman" was born. She was portrayed in advertisements as a college student, an athlete, drove cars and socialized with friends in public places. The Victorian limitations on behavior and dress still existed but were losing influence (Sutton 47). The New Woman stood for change not only in women's lives, but also in the U.S. Although the New Woman presented a change in perception of what women were capable of doing, she still looked relatively the same as the so-called beautiful women before her (Ibid 51). She was white, slender with Northern European features- blonde hair, blue eyes, small eyes and nose.

The criteria of beauty has changed throughout the decades, but the method of manipulating and influencing feminine beauty through advertising has not (Sutton 65). The

changing criteria of beauty represents the power that advertising has to control and alter what it

means to be beautiful. From the moral and good mother of the nineteenth century, to the modern,

urban woman of the twentieth century, society's interpretation of what beauty is has been refined

over and over. Based on advertisements today, the definition of ideal beauty appears to be

sexualized yet innocent, wrinkle-free, silicone injected, and extremely thin, which is impossible

for most women to achieve.

CHAPTER TWO: SELLING MORE THAN JUST PRODUCTS

Chapter two will discuss how advertising sells much more than just a product. Advertising is complex, positioning products alongside certain behaviors or ways of life. This chapter will demonstrate how advertisers utilize psychological techniques to appeal to the consumer, selling a lifestyle, an attitude or an idea. Advertising does not only attack consumers from a visual perspective, but also from a mental one.

Advertising is a $250 billion dollar industry in the United States. It is almost impossible to escape it. The average American will spend two years of his or her life watching TV commercials (Kilbourne 2010). As touched on in the previous chapter, advertising and selling quickly adopted modern psychology techniques. The psychological appeal was used to develop effective selling techniques and to better understand the desires of the consumer and track buying behaviors. For example, women believed they could be perceived as being better housewives by buying a certain brand of laundry detergent. As demonstrated by the campaigns of the Women's Editorial Department at JWT, these psychological strategies worked. They still do today. Consumers are spending more money than ever before in an attempt to be beautiful. The cosmetics industry was worth $460 billion in 2014, and is expected to reach $675 billion by 2020 (Wood 2015). Americans spend more money on beauty each year than on education (Ibid). These facts alone prove that beauty and physical appearance are very important to consumers, and they are willing to pay for it.

University of Mississippi Integrated Marketing Communications professor Robert Magee conducts experimental research on persuasion and the media. Magee is the author of *Persuasion: A Social Science Approach*, and his award-winning research has appeared in multiple academic

journals. Magee explains one technique called the advertising paradox, which occurs when advertisers offer what people think they do not have. "For example, if someone thinks she is not beautiful, advertisers say, 'use this product and you will be beautiful (Magee 2016).'" The goal of advertisers, according to Magee, is to evoke emotional, thinking or behavior responses. "They want you to feel a certain way. or think a certain way, either attitudes or beliefs, or they want you to do some kind of behavior, like word of mouth or trying a sample (Ibid)."

Advertisers achieve these goals through a variety of methods. One is transference, when someone with a desired attribute, such as pretty skin or an adventurous personality, is associated with a product in hopes their desired attribute will rub off on the product or brand (Magee 2016). "Sometimes it has to do with people's identity- who they think they are, and who they want to be (Ibid)." Another technique to reach consumers is through the functional attitude hypothesis. This holds that different people like a product for different reasons (Ibid). For example, someone may like a skin cream simply because it is effective. Someone else may like it because someone who is important to them, like a mom or best friend, uses the product, and that person wants to be accepted by a certain person or group. A different person can buy the product because it aligns with a their values, such as being environmentally friendly. Another reason is ego-defensive, meaning a person likes a product because it boosts his or her self-esteem. Magee points out that "the most effective advertising will match with the attitude of a consumer (Ibid)."

Advertisements do more than simply advocate a product. According to Magee, advertisements can sell an identity, a lifestyle and values (Magee 2016). They tell consumers what is considered beautiful. Magee believes that because ideal beauty varies from one society to another, advertisers match their ads to the existing ideals of beauty (Ibid). However, he says it

works both ways: "As people grow up they are cultivated into ideals of what is valuable in a society, but the more it is used by advertising, it is reinforced, becoming even stronger in a society (Ibid)." The idea of being beautiful is highly valued in today's society, but is held to a standard that is impossible for most to achieve and continuously embedded and repeated to the to consumers.

According to the "The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report" commissioned by Dove, women all over the world see beauty and physical attractiveness as increasingly socially expected and rewarded. The study found that 63 percent of women agree that women today are expected to be more physically attractive than their mother's generation was expected to be. Sixty percent of women said that society expect women to enhance their physical attractiveness. Forty-five percent of women strongly agree that women who are thought to be beautiful have greater opportunities in life (Etcoff, Orbach, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). Advertising gives people a way to achieve whatever it is they want. For the majority of women who do not quite measure up to society's ideal beauty standard, advertisements for beauty products offer a solution. If a woman has frizzy hair, there is a shampoo for that. If a woman is not a size 0, there is a diet pill for that. If a woman does not have the flawless skin seen on magazine covers, there is cover-up and foundation for that. Advertisements sell an ideal image of beauty and what is needed to achieve it.

Regardless, many women say they do not feel they are influenced by advertising (Kilbourne 2010). However, these women are wrong. Jean Kilbourne is an author, speaker and filmmaker, who is internationally recognized for her studies on women and advertising. In her documentary *Killing Us Softly 4,* Kilbourne says "we (women) feel we aren't influenced by

advertising because it's quick, cumulative and for the most part, subconscious." Kilbourne says, although people do not realize it, they are replaying advertising images over and over again in their minds. While only eight percent of females in the University of Mississippi survey said that the appearance of models and celebrities in advertising affects them very much, 69 percent admitted that they are somewhat affected (Appendix-II, Q4). Magee points out that people who think they are invulnerable to advertising or persuasion are often the most vulnerable: "People who say 'Oh I'm vulnerable; I better watch out,' these are the people who process things defensively and they keep their guard up. Consequently they are less affected. People who say they are not affected do not even bother to defend against the ads that they see (Magee 2016)." Many women in today's society are constantly bombarded with images of unattainable beauty and are completely defenseless.

Maggie Durnien, a senior at the University of Mississippi, is not afraid to admit that she feels affected by advertising: "I think models in advertising have affected my self image deeply. I feel like that look the models have is the standard of beauty. I feel like my image doesn't match that (Durnien 2016)." Respondents in the survey conducted among females at the University of Mississippi echoed Durnien's feelings, saying: "(models in advertisements) make me feel like I am not pretty enough (Appendix-II, Q13)," "I see beautiful people and I think 'I'll never look like that.' I guess that makes me a little sad (Ibid)," and "It gives us unrealistic expectations to live up to. It gives off the impression that everyone should look like that and if you aren't then you are inferior (Ibid)." Advertisements are killing girls' self-esteems. Even though some may not admit it, it is easy to tell that many girls are left feeling badly about themselves after seeing how models are portrayed in advertisements.

Certain trends seen in advertising contribute to these negative feelings women are experiencing. These trends include sexualizing and objectifying women, stereotyping them as the weaker sex and emphasizing a particular ideal body type. Advertising is powerful, especially to young girls who are exposed to such images at a young and vulnerable age. Too many of these advertisements are sending the wrong kinds of messages.

In her documentary, Jean Kilbourne reveals some disturbing and impactful ads that have been seen over previous years. One ad for diet pills reads, "I'd probably never be married if I hadn't lost 49 pounds" (Kilbourne 2010). This ad tells females that unless they are a certain size or lose a certain amount of weight, they can forget about getting married. Another ad by Pantene in 1974 says, "If your hair isn't beautiful the rest hardly matters." Needless to say, this ad is spreading the idea that the only thing that matters is having beautiful hair. An ad for cigarettes says, "My boyfriend said he loved me for my mind. I was never so insulted in my life (Kilbourne 2010)." These ads are appalling, yet they get attention. Advertising is a powerful tool for educating the minds of consumers. The most concerning issue to many activists, such as Kilbourne, is the fact that young girls at an impressionable age are seeing ads similar to those previously mentioned. Advertising communicates what it means to be a female in today's society. Instead of empowering young women, the message most ads seem to convey is that they need to use certain products to help them measure up to an unrealistic beauty standard. Ever since the conception of the Woodbury Soap campaign, advertisers have realized that sex sells. What is particularly disturbing is how women's bodies are being turned into objects in many ad campaigns, especially advertisements targeting men. An ad for Michelob beer literally turns a woman's body into an object, a beer bottle (Kilbourne 2010). In a shockingly sexist Heineken

commercial, a woman's uterus is portrayed as a keg (Dvreclama 2007). Cropping in advertisements is also an issue. Advertisements use women's body parts, such as their breasts or legs, to sell unrelated products such a beer and trucks. Jean Kilbourne believes that cropping of women's bodies utilized by advertising objectifies women as well and even signifies dismembering them (Kilbourne 2010). Advertisers are able to pick and choose which part of the woman is desirable and which can be cut off and cast away.

In addition to cropping and sexualizing women, there is another trend that is raising eyebrows in advertising. Women are constantly portrayed as being weak or not as successful as men. Durnien points out, "I don't like how women are portrayed as not being as hard working as men. Women are portrayed as 'soft' (Durnien 2016)." A combined analysis of 64 different studies on gender roles and advertising published in the Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science proved that stereotyping of women is prevalent in advertising (Eisend 2010). Women are portrayed differently in advertising that men, often conforming to traditional female stereotypes. The analysis showed that women are 3.5 times more likely to be shown at home or in a domestic setting versus being portrayed in a work environment (Ibid). Women are two times more likely to be shown promoting domestic products such as home goods, whereas men are shown in more authoritative roles promoting products for use outside the home (Ibid). Stereotyping in advertising is dangerous. In *The Media and Body Image,* authors Wykes and Gunter write: "Repeated exposure to media stereotyping can create illusions that representations are the truth simply through familiarity (216)." These repeated images shape beliefs, therefore making a false basis for judgements.

Most of the advertisements seen today feature a very limited body type, which excludes

millions and millions of women. Dove's study also revealed that 57 percent of women strongly

believe that "the attributes of female beauty have become very narrowly defined in today's world

(Etcoff, Orbach, Scott & D'Agostino 2004)." More than 60 percent of women surveyed said they

strongly agreed that "the media and advertising sets an unrealistic standard of beauty that most

women can't ever achieve (Ibid)." Almost half of the women surveyed believe only the most

physically attractive women are portrayed in popular culture (Ibid). 83 percent of Ole Miss

students surveyed said they wish to see a wider variety of women portrayed in advertisements

(Appendix-II, Q8).

Magazine covers also demonstrate how beauty is defined. In her book *Globalizing Ideal*

Beauty, Denise H. Sutton explains the impact of magazine covers. She writes, "the cover art of a

magazine is its most prominent advertisement for ideal beauty, and the images and text within

the magazine in articles and ads supports and echoes the cover art (Sutton 49)." Historian

Carolyn Kitch researched the origins of visual stereotyping in mass media and determined that

female illustrators were responsible for the majority of the cover art in women's magazines. She

claims that a "visual vocabulary" of feminine beauty was created during the late nineteenth

century (Ibid). Similar to how Helen Lansdowne and her team of female copywriters at J. Walter

Thompson contributed to the American concept of ideal beauty through their text and

advertising images, women illustrators created cover art that portrayed what beauty should look

like and set the tone for the entire magazine. These notable illustrators include Alice Barber

Stephens (*Ladies' Home Journal, Scribner's, Cosmopolitiain, Life, Century, Ladies' Weekly and*

Harpers), Jessie Willcox Smith (*Good Housekeeping*) and Neysa McMein (*Saturday Evening*

Post, Woman's Home Companion, McCall's) (Ibid). Magazine cover artists, along with

advertisers, created images of what ideal beauty should look like based on beliefs and values held by their clients (Ibid 50). Together, advertisements and women's magazines set a standard of beauty that average women aim to achieve. They demonstrated what beauty should look like and how to get it.

The covers of magazines are still very impactful today. It is almost impossible to stand in line at a grocery store without seeing images of ideal beauty reflecting from magazine covers. Women turn to magazines to define what is considered "beautiful" or "ideal." They give women something to strive for, and their pages are filled with advertisements for products promising to help achieve this beauty. However, there seems to be a discontinuity in the women portrayed on the covers and average real-life women. The images on magazine covers are exclusive, appearing to stick closely with a specific look that a large part of the female population does not possess. In a study of popular magazine covers, 86 percent of cover girls were white. The majority of girls were white and blonde with either blue or brown eyes. Out of 65 cover girls, there were only 7 black and 2 Hispanic women featured on the cover. No Asian women appeared on any of the covers studied. (Appendix-I).

Christine Pham, a junior Asian-American student at the University of Mississippi, feels that a lot of Asian-American celebrities are rarely recognized in the U.S. (Pham 2016). Although she says it does not bother her too much that Asian-Americans do not appear on many magazine covers, she would like for magazines to do a better job of writing features about them: "I would love for a magazine to do a spread on Asian makeup or beauty products. We have such different skin, hair, and facial structures from Caucasian and African-American people, and it's hard to find something that's "just right" for us (Ibid)." Pham believes that over the past decade,

advertisements have done a better job of featuring more diversity in both race and size, but she

thinks more can be done. She said, "I do think that there should be more diversity in

advertisements for other people, especially teenagers who are very impressionable (Ibid)."

Seventy-five percent of women participating in the Dove survey said they wish the media

did a better job of portraying women of diverse physical attractiveness, shape and size (Etcoff,

Orbach, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). Younger women especially, ages 18 through 29 and 30

through 44 are most interested in seeing women of various body weights and shapes, where older

women are more likely to have an interest in seeing women of different ages as well as various

body weights and shapes (Ibid). Because of the study's revealing findings, Dove launched the

Campaign For Real Beauty in September of 2004. The campaign featured women whose

appearances were not included in the typical stereotypes of beauty- wrinkled, gray-haired and

freckled. The second and most iconic phase of the campaign in 2005 featured a variety of

women, curvy, ethnic, tall, short and even tattooed, stripped down to their underwear. The

purpose was to contradict the popular stereotype that only a certain type of body is beautiful.

This sparked a national discussion about beauty. Dove has also created multiple short films and

commercials, such as "Evolution," over the years promoting positive self-image in women of all

ages ("The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty").

CHAPTER THREE: NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING

Despite growing efforts by brands and organizations like Dove, advertising and the mass media can have negative effects on women's perception of beauty and body image. This chapter will dive deeper into what these negative effects are and how they are created. Jean Kilboune says women today are "living in a toxic cultural environment (Kilbourne 2010)." She even compares the ideas of beauty promoted by the advertising industry to breathing in carbon monoxide. It is not a coincidence that the three most common mental health disorders among women are depression, eating disorders and low self-esteem (Ibid). Advertising has led to a skewed definition of beauty in today's society, a negative self-image among women, an alarming rate of eating disorders, and a growing tendency to turn to plastic surgery and cosmetic procedures (Ibid).

The relationship between women and beauty is not a simple one. It has been the subject of studies, books, documentaries and conversation. The Dove study revealed that women judge beauty as a crucial factor to successfully navigate today's world. Women often see beauty and physical attractiveness as interchangeable. However, because the popular ideal standard of beauty is nearly impossible to attain, most women come to find it is difficult to consider themselves beautiful. Because of this, women often find themselves unhappy and with low self-esteem and self-worth. Unsurprisingly, this is most commonly found in younger women, who are most likely to be impacted by popular culture and media ("The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty"). All of the females surveyed from the University of Mississippi agreed with the statement that "when I feel pretty. I feel better about myself in general (Appendix-II, Q3)." The

inverse can be true as well. When women do not feel good about their appearance, it can affect how they feel about life in general.

While turning pages in a magazine or flipping through TV channels, it is not difficult to see that the ideal beauty is young, thin, white, skinny, and flawless. As touched on in the previous chapter, this is an extremely inadequate and hollow definition of what it means to be beautiful. Women see beauty to be parallel with success. It seems that being considered "hot" is one of the most valuable measures of success in the life of some women, especially younger women. A large majority of Ole Miss females surveyed, 66 percent, agreed with the statement that girls who are considered attractive have more success in life overall (Appendix-II, Q7). Women today are often left feeling like failures when they are unable to achieve the popular standard of beauty.

Photoshop is a huge cause for this feeling of insecurity and vulnerability in women in regards to beauty. Photoshop and other photo editing tools create a completely false and unrealistic picture of beauty. Women can be made to look smaller in some places, bigger in others, blemish and wrinkle-free. Even Cindy Crawford has said, "I wish I looked like Cindy Crawford," in regard to airbrushing and retouching (Kilbourne 2010). Advertisements can consist of features of multiple women combined together to achieve the "perfect woman." Ads can endure up to twenty and even thirty rounds of retouching, going back and fourth between designers and retouchers until so-called "perfection" is achieved (Ibid). The average female consumer would never be able to realize that these images are completely fabricated. In her documentary, Kilbourne points out the fact that "you almost never see a photo of a women who

is considered to be beautiful who has not been Photoshopped." Women are seeing an unrealistic and altered image, yet measuring themselves up to it.

A 2009 Ralph Lauren ad featuring model Filippa Hamilton received severe backlash for its extreme use of photo-editing tools. The editing made the model's head appear to be bigger than her pelvis, which is physically impossible (Kilbourne 2010). Hamilton looks emaciated in the advertisement, which was only released in Japan, but received world-wide criticism (Melago 2009)." The 5-foot-10, 120 pound model was later fired for being "overweight" and for not being able to fit into clothing samples (Ibid). Hamilton was shocked by the advertisement. In a statement about Polo Ralph Lauren, Hamilton said, "I think they owe American women an apology, a big apology," she said. "I'm very proud of what I look like, and I think a role model should look healthy (Ibid)."

Other famous women are taking a stance against photo-editing, such as actress Kate Winslet, who was outraged after her photo was subjected to Photoshop for the November 2013 cover of *Vogue* and then earlier for the February 2003 cover of *GQ (*Leibowitz 2013)*. Winslet was 38 at the time of the *Vogue* shoot and a mother of three (Ibid). In her photo, her face appears completely flawless and free of the effects of nature. The actress publicly expressed her distaste for her heavily-edited image saying, "The retouching is excessive. I do not look like that and more importantly, I do not desire to look like that (Ibid)." In addition to speaking out against the process, her contract with L'Oréal even has a "no-Photoshop" clause (Ibid). Winslet hope other influential women will follow her example when it comes to photo shop. "I think (young women) do look to magazines. I think they do look to women who have been successful in their chosen careers and they want people to look up to," Winslet says. "I would always want to be

telling the truth about who I am to that generation because they've got to have strong leaders (Ibid)."

Recently, 19-year-old Disney Channel star Zendaya Coleman also spoke out against retouching after her body was edited to appear slimmer in a shoot for *Modeliste Magazine*. She took to Instagram to share the original untouched photos. Coleman chose to share the images mostly for her young and impressionable fans. She told *Us Weekly,* "You have no control over what the world is going to say, but like I was saying, if there's a young person out there that needed that message and got that, then that's who it was meant for (Torgerson 2015)."

Durnien, who is a journalism student, says in her classes she is constantly reminded about the importance of telling the truth. She said, "I think by showing real women in ads who aren't picture perfect tells the truth about society. Ads are so powerful and consumers need to see ads that won't make them feel so bad about themselves." Dove agreed that the Photoshop phenomenon needed to be exposed. The company produced a short film, *Evolution,* that reveals the unrealistic perceptions of beauty created by Photoshop and other editing tools. Dove was fed up with young girls and women comparing themselves to the edited photos of models in magazines. Thanks to clever lighting, Photoshop and airbrushing, these images are not even real. The 60-second video, created in 2007, shows just how easily it is to manipulate the perception of beauty and how it can be distorted by a few clicks of the mouse (Piper 2006). It takes one woman on a journey from being real to heavily retouched. The woman's image in the beginning looks completely different from the edited end result (Ibid). The video received over two million views on YouTube in the first two weeks. It sparked national conversation about the effects of photo editing tools used in the media ("The Dove® Campaign for Real Beauty").

These fictitious images created on a computer screen have contributed to a universal low self-image among women. In a survey (see Appendix-II, Q19), Ole Miss females responded to how this trend in advertising has affected their definition of beauty, saying, " (I) see perfect Photoshopped models everywhere and it creates an image that is practically unattainable," and "Photoshop has made it impossible to achieve the look that celebrities and models are portraying as a norm."

As a result of the editing and portrayals of women in advertising, the term "beautiful" is not one that most women tend to feel comfortable using in describing themselves. In the research conducted for "The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report", women were given a list of positive or neutral adjectives, used to describe their looks, such as "natural", "average", "beautiful", "cute", "sexy" and "gorgeous." Women around the world felt most comfortable using the word natural followed by average to describe their looks (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). These results aligned with the survey among Ole Miss females. The top adjectives respondents chose were "average" and "natural." Only 23 percent said they would use "beautiful" to describe their looks (Appendix-II, Q9).

As a result of a universal low self-image created by advertising, eating disorders among women are on the rise. "The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report" found that 47 percent, almost half of the women surveyed, rated their body weight as being "too high." This trend seem to increase with age. Looking primarily at the U.S., 60 percent of women believe their body weight is too high (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). Among females surveyed at the University of Mississippi, 69 percent of young women felt they are too heavy (Appendix-II, Q10) and 91 percent have dieted to lose weight (Appendix-II, Q11). Weight is a topic that causes

anxiety and insecurity for many women. In the same survey at the University of Mississippi, most respondents said that if they could change one thing about themselves it would be their weight (Appendix-II, Q15).

Today's culture seems to despise fat. Role models of fat women are rarely seen looking attractive, receiving love or attention, especially from men. Instead, heavier women are portrayed as the villain or the "funny fat girl (Shields & Heinecken 91)." Tabloid magazines often mock celebrities who appear to have gained weight. Because of these depictions, society views being fat as unacceptable or even lazy. When the majority of celebrities and models appear extremely thin, society loses perspective on what average, everyday women look like. Multiple studies have proven the dominance of appearing thin and its positive correlation with sex, success and happiness (Wykes & Gunter 216). Today's culture tells women that the normal weight is that of women in Hollywood, when in reality these women are far below normal. This leads more and more women to turn to dieting and eating disorders in order to achieve a weight they are tricked into thinking is normal and acceptable (Ibid).

In their book *Measuring Up: How Advertising Affects Self-Image,* Vickie Rutledge Shields and Dawn Heinecken conducted a study and found that a men and women considered "adverting images, especially in fashion magazines, major contributors to the problem of eating disorders (102)." In the 1990s advertisements began to emerge promoting a "frail femininity" as compared to previous images of feminine health and strength (Wykes & Gunter 65). This trend continues today, especially in fashion advertisements. One Armani Exchange ad reads, "The more you subtract, the more you add (Kilbourne 2010)." The company claims to be referring to

simplicity in fashion, but it seems to be talking about being thin. The model appears to be so folded up into herself that it looks like she is literally disappearing (Ibid).

In addition to fashion advertisements, the actual sizing of clothing has contributed to the amount of women going to extremes to fit into minute sizes. Size 0 and even 00 are relatively new sizes for women's clothing, that encourage a minuscule body type. Designer Nicole Miller introduced the size as a result of requests by her naturally petite customers (Stampler 2014). Zero is a number that represents nothing, so women are being told their body size should be nothing. The size 0 and 00 started appearing in the early 2000's as a result of vanity sizing or size inflation, which refer to the occurrence of women's clothing of the same nominal size becoming bigger in physical size over time (Ibid). For example, a size 14 in 1937 had a bust size of 32 inches, which was the same as a size 8 in 1967. This size eventually became a 0 in 2011 (Ibid). In most cases, this practice is used to encourage sales because women would rather buy a size 0 than a size 14.

Many fashion models have died as a result of trying to fit into these "nothing" sizes. Former Brazilian model Ana Carolina Reston died of severe anorexia in 2006, weighing only eighty-eight pounds (Rancano 2015). She had been told two-years earlier that she was "too fat" at a casting call, causing Reston to resort to a diet of only apples and tomatoes (Ibid). Before her death, Reston was hospitalized for kidney failure, as a result of her severe eating disorder. Sadly, this is not an uncommon story within the fashion industry. Horror stories circulate about models eating cotton balls and growing a layer of fuzz on their bodies to help provide body heat (Ibid).

Due to the rise in eating disorders, many designers and fashion editors have banned together in a movement against the size 0 and the emaciated model look. Madrid and Milan

Fashion Weeks banned size 0 models, and several Italian fashion houses, including Prada, Versace and Armani, banned size 0 models from their runways (Rancano 2015). In April 2015, France passed a law requiring fashion houses to pay a hefty fines and possibly face jail time for hiring models with a body mass index of less than 18 (Ibid). In her article for NPR, Vanessa Rancano reports, "the average international runway model has a BMI of 16- low enough to indicate starvation by the World Health Organization's standard." Experts are calling on government regulation of the fashion industry because of its influence on young girls especially. Seventy percent of girls ages 10 to 18 say they look to these models in fashion magazines to define the perfect body image (Ibid).

In addition to eating disorders, there are other body-altering methods to which women are increasingly turning to in an effort to obtain their ideal body type. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons reported in its annual plastic surgery procedural statistics that 15.6 million cosmetic procedures, both minimally invasive and surgical, were performed in the United States in 2014. This is up 3 percent from 2013. The top five surgical procedures in 2015 were breast augmentation, nose reshaping, liposuction, eyelid surgery and facelift. This trend is growing in younger generations, with increasingly more girls receiving breast implants or nose jobs for high school or college graduation gifts. Sixty-six percent of Ole Miss girls surveyed said they definitely or maybe would consider plastic surgery (Appendix-II, Q17).

Kelly*, a senior at the University of Mississippi, underwent a breast augmentation and a rhinoplasty, which is commonly referred to as a nose job, the summer after her freshman year of college at the age of only 18 ("Kelly" 2016). She said she constantly saw girls in magazines and advertisements with identical breasts and perfect noses, which is what she wanted. Kelly says her

two different breast sizes made her feel uncomfortable, and she thought she should just get the bump in her nose fixed while she was under anesthesia. In regards to her self-esteem, Kelly said, "It improved a little bit. I felt better in a bathing suit for a while, but it really wasn't a huge difference." Overall, Kelly thinks her surgery was "not really worth it." In fact, Kelly says she would only have surgery again to get her breast implants removed. "I just feel bigger in clothes now because my boobs are bigger."

Women are not the only ones affected by the images they see in advertising. Men are also influenced by advertisements and magazines in regards to how they feel about women. After being shown images of models in advertising, men found their significant other less attractive than before (Kilbourne 2010). "The Real Truth About Beauty:A Global Report" found that women place a high value in marriage and romantic relationships on their happiness and self-esteem, so it not difficult to understand how this negatively impacts women's satisfaction and overall well-being. Ninety-four percent of girls said they think advertising affects the way men view women (Appendix-II, Q20). One young woman surveyed said that, "Guys see models and how beautiful and skinny those women are, and so they tend to be more attracted to women who look like the girls they see in advertisements (Appendix-II, Q21)."

Many of these ads focus on telling women to change their appearances instead of men's opinions. One ad reads, "Does your husband wish you had bigger breasts?," implying that the woman should do something to make her breasts appear bigger as opposed to her husband accepting her for how she already looks (Kilbourne 2010). These ads make women feel guilty for not looking a certain way. In *The Media and Body Image,* the authors reference a study they conducted that revealed women who were exposed to sexist advertisements judged their current

body size as bigger and revealed a larger gap between their actual and ideal body size compared with women who viewed non-sexist advertising (Wykes & Gunter 185).

Most advertisers are familiar with the term "sex sells." Ever since the earliest sexualized advertisements, like for Woodbury's Soap "A Skin You Love to Touch," this mantra has proven true (Sutton 110). However, sexualized ads featuring women have reached extremes in today's society. Women are sexualized and objectified in wide range of ads from those selling trucks to beer to even perfume. One example of a particularly disturbing ad is for BMW, where a man is portrayed as making love to a woman, but her face is a photo of a BMW car. The copy reads: "The ultimate attraction (Kilbourne 2010)." Jean Kilbourne calls advertising's approach to sex as "pornographic," dehumanizing and reducing women to objects (Kilbourne 1990). In her documentary *"Killing Us Softly 4,"* Kilbourne highlights the degradation of cropping and objectifying female body parts, saying "Women's bodies are dismembered in ads, hacked apart – just one part of the body is focused upon...Everywhere we look, women's bodies have been turned into things and often just parts of things (Kilbourne 2010)."

Natalie Troubh is the managing director for Badger & Winters advertising agency, which has recently been in the news for its new campaign combating objectification of women in advertising. Troubh pointed out how the expansion of media today has resulted in more opportunities to weaken the position of women, portraying them as props, plastic and parts: "Props happen when women are portrayed as a think rather than a person. Plastic is imagery with extreme manipulation beyond human possibility. Parts happen when women are reduced to a sexually provocative body part (Troubh 2016)." Troubh also emphasized the danger of these

types of ads, saying, "Boys see that this is how we are to treat girls, and girls are accepting it (Ibid)."

Recently, Bloomingdales, a luxury department store, found itself in hot water over an ad supposedly encouraging date rape. Their 2015 Holiday ad for Rebecca Minkoff products featured a man seductively staring at a woman turned in the opposite direction. The print reads, "Spike your best friend's eggnog when they're not looking." Date rape is one of the most common sexual assault crimes against women (Paquette 2015). These sort of suggestive advertisements are not uncommon. In April 2015 a slogan for Bud Light received backlash, reading "The perfect beer for removing 'no' from your vocabulary for the night (Ibid)." These messages are unacceptable, especially considering advertising is often a vehicle for conveying proper social cues and acceptable behavior (Wykes & Gunter 45).

CHAPTER FOUR: CHANGING THE STANDARD

This chapter will discuss how even though advertising has contributed to a negative self-image among women, it also holds the power to change it. Women, along with companies and advertising executives, are saying enough is enough and are calling for changes to the ideal standard of beauty. Stemmed from growing concern over the fake and unattainable portrayals of female beauty in the media, Dove commissioned a global report to further understand the relationship between women, beauty and well-being. Dove's mission was to "explore empirically what beauty means to women today and why that is (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004)." The study was conducted by Strategy One, an applied research firm based in New York, and Dr. Nancy Etcoff and the Massachusetts General Hospital-Harvard University, as well as with consultation with Susie Orbach of the London School of Economics. Researchers conducted interviews with 3,000 women ages 18-64 across ten countries (Ibid).

Sylvia Lagnado, Dove's global brand director, said in regards to the study that "Dove wants more women to feel beauty is within their reach (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004)." The study was a revolutionary step in reexamining beauty with a 21st-century perspective. The research showed that beauty has power in today's society. It also showed that the only thing women are less satisfied with than their beauty is their financial success, showing there is room for improvement in changing the standard way of thinking about beauty (Ibid). It is time to change the ideal- white, skinny and blonde- to a broader image that reflects more women. Seventy-five percent of women want more diversity in advertisements, proving that women want

to see a broader, expanded definition of beauty (Ibid). This is what drives change- giving people what they want.

The study revealed the interesting way women across the globe view beauty. Women regard being beautiful as the result of qualities and circumstances, such as being loved, being engaged in activities that one wants to do, having a close relationship, feeling happy, being kind to others, having confidence, exuding dignity and humor (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). Over half of girls surveyed at the University of Mississippi said they felt most beautiful when being in good physical shape, receiving compliments, being satisfied with what they see in the mirror, being loved, being asked on a date, having close friendships and doing something they enjoy (Appendix-II, Q16). The images reflected in magazines, advertisements and mass media are inauthentic and insufficient in defining what beauty really means.

The study shows that true beauty is a concept that lies in the hearts and minds of women and is rarely seen in advertisements or the media (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). Beauty comes from more than just the right lipstick or the perfect hair color. Women said that real beauty includes much more of who a person is than her looks. Women see beauty in a range of qualities and attributes, both inner and outer qualities, but they mostly rank inner qualities before physical ones (Ibid). In the study women rated qualities such as happiness, kindness, confidence, dignity and humor as powerful components of female beauty, along with physical qualities such as appearance of skin, physical and facial appearance and body weight and shape. Eighty-six percent of women agree that happiness is the primary element making a woman beautiful, but they strongly agree that they feel the most beautiful when they are happy and fulfilled with their life (Ibid). Over 86 percent of women said they want younger generations to

inherit this broader concept of beauty (Ibid). The study proved beauty is more complex and intricate than portrayed in popular culture's physical ideals.

"The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report" was the first study to attempt to "deconstruct" and then "reconstruct" women's perceptions of female beauty. It showed that even across 10 different countries, women held remarkable similar views about beauty (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). However, this idea of beauty seems to have been replaced by a narrower and more exclusive definition, mostly confined to physical appearance, seen in the media and advertisements. Unfortunately in today's society, the definition of beauty has been diminished and cheapened to mean merely physical attractiveness.

Based on their findings, Dove launched the Campaign for Real Beauty in 2004 as an effort to widen the definition of beauty. When Dove launched the campaign their sales totaled $2.5 billion. In 2014, the 10th year of the campaign, Dove reported sales of $4 billion, proving that the market embraced and supported Dove's mission. Dove's campaign continues to challenge the stereotypical physical standards of beauty by featuring women whose appearances are considered to be outside of the social norm. In 2006, Dove established the Dove Self-Esteem Fund to create change and inspire and educate girls and women about a wider definition of beauty ("The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty"). They released a Super Bowl commercial titled *Little Girls* and reached over 89 million viewers (Ibid). The video combated typical self-esteem hang-ups in young girls and called on people to celebrate real beauty (Ibid). In 2010, Dove took on a new vision, launching the Dove Movement for Self-Esteem, which provided women with opportunities to mentor the next generation. Partnering with other organizations such as Girl Scouts of America and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Dove created educational programs

and self-esteem boosting activities to inspire young girls. Dove has reached approximately 17 million girls so far (Ibid).

In 2011, Dove reexamined the results from its first study, releasing "The Real Truth About Beauty: Revisited." The new study showed that four percent of women around the world consider themselves beautiful ("The Dove® Campaign for Real Beauty"). This was an increase from the previous two percent, but not very much. It also found that in a study of over 1,200 10-to-17-year-olds across the globe, 72 percent of girls said they felt tremendous pressure to be beautiful (Ibid). Only 11 percent of girls surveyed felt comfortable using the word beautiful to describe their looks, proving there is a universal increase in the pressure to be beautiful and a decrease in girls' confidence as they grow older (Ibid). Dove has made tremendous strides in increasing self-esteem and widening the beauty gap, but there is still work to be done. Although women lay a portion of the blame for an unattainable ideal beauty standard on advertising and the mass media, women also believe they can also be used as a tool for fixing the problem and redefining beauty (Etcoff, Orback, Scott & D'Agostino 2004). They believe that true beauty can become the standard with the help of advertising and media campaigns such as the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty.

Advertising executive Madonna Badger is hoping to use the media as a tool for change. Badger, co-founder and chief creative officer of the Badger & Winters advertising agency in New York, is calling for an end to the objectification of women in advertising. In January 2016, Badger posted a video on YouTube called "We Are #WomenNotObjects." The two and-a-half minute video features a sequence of advertisements for famous brands that portray women in compromising positions, suggestive outfits and seductive poses all in an effort to sell a product.

Some of the ads highlighted in the video show women suggestively eating a hamburger, standing around a truck in bikinis and naked women in advertisements for perfume and alcohol. It has received millions of views to date. The campaign's mission is to draw attention to the problem and hopefully persuade advertising agencies and marketers to stop objectifying women in their advertisements (Badger 2016).

Badger has pledged that the Badger & Winters ad agency, who represents big fashion names such as Diane Von Furstenberg and Vera Wang, will not objectify women in their advertisements or overly re-touch women to the point of "unattainable perfection" or use women's body parts to sell products (Badger 2016). Managing Director of Badger & Winters, Natalie Troubh spoke in regards to the campaign, saying, "We feel that women cannot be valued as equals if they are not portrayed to their full humanity, and that men and women have been desensitized over years of imagery and bombardment in current media (Troubh 2016)."

The question now is how can society's standards of beauty continue to evolve and change. In "Killing Us Softly 4," Jean Kilbourne says, "The first step is to become aware, to pay attention, and to recognize that this affects all of us." Kilbourne believes this is more than just a self-esteem issue- it is a public health problem: "The obsession with thinness is a public health problem, the tyranny of the ideal image of beauty, violence against women. These are all public health problems that affect us all and public health problems can only be solved by changing the environment (Kilbourne 2010)."

Barbie is one brand that is trying to change the environment in regards to the evolving ideal beauty. On January 28, 2016, Mattel launched three new Barbie body types: petite, tall and

curvy, which are sold alongside the original Barbie. These new Barbies are a response to changing beauty ideals. In an article for Time, Eliana Docterman wrote:

> American beauty ideals have evolved. The curvaceous bodies of Kim Kardashian West, Beyonce and Christina Hendricks have become iconic, while millennial feminist leaders like Lena Dunham are deliberately bearing their un-Barbie-like figures on-screen, fueling a movement that promotes body acceptance. (46)

This is not the first time the brand has undergone revamping. In 2015, Mattel launched new dolls with diverse skin tones and hair textures (Docterman 45). However, the company is hoping this revolutionary new move will help boost their declining sales, which have plummeted 20 percent from 2012 to 2014 (Ibid 47). Barbie's makeover is important because the doll is considered a global advertisement for the ideal standard of American beauty. Ninety-two percent of American girls ages 3 to 12 have owned a Barbie doll (Ibid). Many studies have suggested that the doll does have some influence on how girls define ideal beauty. A 2006 study in *Developmental Psychology,* found that girls exposed to Barbie at a young age were more concerned with being thin than other girls who did not play with Barbie dolls (Ibid).

Sports Illustrated has also been a recent hot topic in the discussion about body type and self-image. Their 2016 Swimsuit edition featured three covers, each portraying women with three different body types: plus-size model Ashley Graham, mixed martial artist Ronda Rousey and fashion model Hailey Clauson. Over the magazine's 52-year-old history, Graham is the first plus-size model ever to be featured on the cover (Hendrix 2016). She wrote on her Instagram account, "Truly speechless!!! This cover is for every woman who felt like she wasn't beautiful enough because of her size. You can do and achieve anything you put your mind to (@theashleygraham)." The magazine felt it was time to celebrate the beauty found in all body

types. "All three women are beautiful, sexy and strong. Beauty is not cookie cutter. Beauty is not 'one size fits all.' Beauty is all around us and that became especially obvious to me while shooting and editing this year's issue," said Sports Illustrated Assistant Managing Editor MJ Day in the 2016 swimsuit edition announcement (Hendrix 2016).

For young female millennials there seems to be hope on the horizon. Durnien said, "Campaigns like Dove Real Beauty and the recent cover of *Sports Illustrated* with plus-size model Ashley Graham have made me think the industry is changing. This makes me happy to see people of all different sizes, ages and colors be featured in these huge ads." Durnien said in an interview that she likes the "breakthrough" changes she has seen in advertising during 2015 and so far in 2016. She said, "I see more variety now in ads and more companies and celebrities are using real photos. I think this movement in the step in the right direction. I would love to see more, but I understand it will take a lot for more media platforms to catch on (Durnien 2016)."

From Barbie to the cover of *Sports Illustrated,* the body positivity movement is taking hold in the United States. However, there is still work to be done. In today's society where people are constantly bombarded by advertisements, it is more important now then ever before for men and women to understand the relationship between advertising images of the ideal feminine body with everyday thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Learning to decode destructive advertising messages and understanding the threats they pose is crucial. In this day and age, people need to be smart consumers of the media and advertising.

In one study, women who were the least affected by advertising images reported growing up in a home where their families consistently embedded the idea that they were more than just their appearance. Their families gave them messages that their outward appearance was only one

factor in what made them a human being (Sheilds & Heinecken 180). This socialization process should not only stop in the home. One way to promote a healthy relationship with advertising is to identify key influencers in children's lives outside of the family such as teachers, healthcare providers, coaches, and religious leaders, and to educate them on them on how harmful advertising messages about can be targeted at both males and females and can cause them to have body and self-esteem issues (Ibid). Being able to discern what messages children are receiving from the media and teaching them how to decode these messages will help produce a more media literate society. If too much emphasis is being placed on outward appearance by the media, then the focus can be changed by influencers in children's lives (Ibid).

Changing the relationship between advertising messages and the audiences is key in creating a media literate society. Media literacy is defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms (Sheilds & Heinecken 181). Many media experts are calling for media literacy courses to be taught in school. Justin Lewis, Professor of Communication at Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, and Dean of Research for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and Sut Jhally, Professor of Communication at the University of Massachusetts and founder and Executive Director of the Media Education Foundation are two experts that have written many books and articles on the importance of media literacy. In "The Struggle Over Media," they write, "Media literacy should be about helping people to become sophisticated citizens rather than sophisticated consumers (Lewis & Jhally 1998).

Lewis and Jhally believe the mass media should be understood as "a collection of texts to be deconstructed and analyzed (Lewis & Jhally 1998)." They promote media literacy and

education courses to be taught as early as kindergarten and throughout college to show students how to engage in the media and challenge the institutions (Ibid). Jhally's Media Education Foundation provides educational materials and resources, such as documentary films, to inspire intellectual conversation and thinking in regards to the impact of the American mass media on culture, politics and society as a whole. One of the primary goals of media literacy courses would be to "denaturalize" the media, and deconstruct the way advertising imparts particular cultural norms, such as women's subordination to men for example (Sheilds & Heinecken 181). David Shaw, a Pulitzer Prize winner media and technology columnist for the Los Angeles Times, writes:

> We live in increasingly complex times, and unless we teach our children how to read about, watch, interpret, understand and analyze the day's events, we risk raising a generation of civic illiterates, political ignoramuses and uncritical consumers, vulnerable not only to crackpot ideas, faulty reasoning and putative despots but fraudulent sales pitches and misleading advertising claims. (Shaw 2003)

Media literacy courses are not a new idea; they are embedded in educational systems of other countries such as Canada and throughout Europe. They have just not taken hold in the American educational system just yet. Although there have been strides made in recent years for media literacy courses in schools, there are still many hurdles to overcome when implementing these programs in American schools. America's public education system is very resistant to change, and media literacy courses are not considered to be part of the traditional "K-12 standards," not to mention the already tight school budgets (Shaw 2003)." Advocates of media literacy call for incorporating the subjects into other classes such as language arts. However, this still will require money in training teachers and classroom materials (Ibid). This movement will

take time, but with the help of advocate programs such as the Alliance for a Media Literate America and the Center for Media Literacy, it is a mission worth pursuing for future generations and society as a whole.

Many people believe that the growth of women in the advertising industry has played an important part in the improvement of representation of women in advertising images. There have been many campaigns in the past 20 years that have been headed by women, proving that feminine sensibility can lead to successful advertising campaigns. For example, Jane Champ led Nike advertising campaigns for women from 1990-1996 (Sheilds & Heinecken 184). The campaign, which included "Did You Ever Wish You Were A Boy" and "If You Let Me Play Ball," were revolutionary because they encouraged women to get in shape and be active not in order to slim down, but because women should like themselves enough to do so. Her campaigns encouraged a new self-image, promoting self-esteem and acceptance. These messages were not only marketed to girls, but also to dads, boys, teachers and mom (Ibid). Another example, is Madonna Badger, mentioned previously, and her campaign for Women Not Objects. Badger is using her position as an advertising executive to bring attention to the objectification of women in advertising and to reform the industry.

Women are aware of the ways their gender is traditionally presented in the media: sexual, weak, innocent, skinny, confined to the home. Any break from these patterns, no matter how small is noticed and recognized as a movement forward. Women consumers find empowerment and self-esteem in images that depict females as powerful and successful. Women should have the right to claim themselves as beautiful and not be dragged down by derogatory advertising images. Freeing women from the confines of self-hatred and body shaming will not only benefit

women, but society as a whole. Women can do incredible things when they feel strong and

empowered. It is time society comes together to band against negative advertising toward women

and celebrate all women in order to change the standard of beauty.

Conclusion

Demonstrated by this thesis, advertising images promote an unattainable standard of beauty that is impossible for *all* women to achieve. Not every woman is meant to be tall, blonde and a size 0. In summary, some of the main findings in this thesis were that first, advertising sells more than just a product. When people purchase a product they buy into the ideas or values that product promotes. Second, the unattainable and false images in advertising have negative effects on both men and women. They contribute to an overall low self-esteem in women, often leading to eating disorders, plastic surgery and depression. Also as a result, men expect women to live up to a standard that is just not possible. Third, advertising not only stereotypes women, but it also can sexualize and objectify them.

This is not a good environment for future generations. However there is hope; change is occurring. There is a strong body positivity movement taking shape thanks to the efforts of advertising campaigns like Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty. Brands such as Sports Illustrated and Barbie are also embracing this movement, promoting beauty in all shapes and sizes. Advertisers are calling out their industry for contributing to a negative environment and making strides to ensure that does not continue to happen by banning tools like Photoshop and calling out inappropriate and demeaning advertising campaigns.

It is my hope that in writing this thesis both men and women can learn to decode advertising messages and understand the harmful and unhealthy effects they can have on society. I hope that advertising will continue to change and embrace all shapes and sizes. I believe that

advertising can be a method for spreading positivity. It is up to our generation to continue in

promoting positive self-esteem and expanding the definition of beauty instead of limiting it for

future generations.

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APPENDIX

A-1, CONTENT ANALYSIS:

The researcher used a coding sheet to record the information. From this, the following was revealed from the 2015 covers of Vogue, ELLE, Marie Claire and Cosmopolitan. There were 59 covers studied with a total of 65 cover girls (some covers featured more than one person).

Who is on the front: The majority of cover girls (37 of 59) were actresses, followed by singers (14 of 59). Actresses and singers combined made up 86 percent of women chosen for the cover. Reality show personalities were featured on three of the covers. One of these covers featured 6 of the Kardashians, resulting in a total of 8 individual reality stars featured on covers. Models made up only 5 percent of people on the cover. Elle featured a daughter of a famous politician on the May 2015 cover. A professional athlete was featured on one magazine cover. A film writer/ producer/director also only appeared on one magazine.

Race: 86 percent or 56 out of 65 women on the covers were white. Only 13 percent were black (7 of 56). Two cover girls were Hispanic.

Hair color of cover girl: Many of the cover girls were blonde (29 out of 65). Brunettes came in second with 22 of the 65 cover girls featured. There were 11 black haired girls. There were two women with grey hair. There was one woman with blonde and pink streaked hair.

Eye color of cover girl: Blue and brown eyes were tied, both appearing in 30 of the 65 cover girls studied. 5 women had green eyes.

Smiling or not smiling: An overwhelming majority of magazine covers featured women who were not smiling. 52 out of 65 women were not smiling on the cover. A smiling woman appeared on the cover only 13 times.

Full body picture or not: Only 5 of the covers studied featured an image showing the cover girl's entire body. The other 54 covers featured a photo that cropped off part of the woman's body.

Age: The average age of cover girls studied was 32.6 years old. The youngest person appearing on a cover was 18 and the oldest was 85 years old.

Summary: As expected, the typical woman featured on the covers of the magazines studied was white, blonde and blue or brown-eyed. As proven by the numbers, there seems to be a lack of diversity in who the magazines choose to feature on the covers. According to Statista, the majority of the American population is white, at 62 percent. However, Hispanics comprise 17 percent, and African-Americans make up 12 percent. Asians are five percent of the population and were never featured on a cover. The proportion of minorities is expected to rise

even more over the coming years, while the percentage of whites is predicted to drop. It is advised that magazines feature women on the cover who are more reflective of the growing diversity in America.

An large majority of cover girls where either actresses or singers. Although the entertainment industry in America is extremely popular, as well as a huge money-maker, readers may want to see a wider variety of women chosen for the cover.

It is interesting to note that smiling women were rarely featured on the cover. Eighty percent of the time women were not smiling. Women may be more receptive to magazines featuring other women smiling back at them.

Magazine	Issue	Who is on front? (A=actress, M= model, S=singer, R= reality show personality P= Politician, Ath= athlete, WDP= writer, director, producer)	Race? W=white, B=black, H= hispanic	Hair color?	Eye color (if obvious)	Smiling or not?	Full body or cut off?	Age	
ELLE	Jan. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	FB	48	
	Feb. 15	A	W	BL/Pink	BR	N	CO	29	
	Mar. 15	S	W	BR	BL	N	CO	31	
	Apr. 15	A	W	BR	G	Y	CO	24	
	May. 15	P (daughter of)	W	BR	BL	Y	CO	35	
	Jun. 15	S	W	BL	BL	N	FB	26	
	Jul. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	29	
	Aug. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	25	
	Sept. 15	A	W	BR	BR	N	CO	30	
	Oct. 15	S	H	BK	BR	N	CO	23	
	Nov. 15 (8 COVERS WOMEN IN HOLLYWOOD ISSUE)	A/A/A/A/WDP/A/A/A	H/W/W/W/B/W/W/W	BK/BR/BR/BL/BK/BL/G/BR	BR/BR/BL/BL/BR/BL/G/BR	N/N/N/N/N/N/Y/N	CO/CO/CO/CO/CO/CO/CO/CO	49/27/26/34/43/40/85/30	
	Dec. 15	A	W	BR	BR	N	CO	23	
								avg= 34.5	
Marie Claire	Jan. 15	S	W	BL	BL	Y	FB	32	
	Feb. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	43	
	Mar. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	25	
	Apr. 15	A	B	BK	BR	N	CO	38	
	May. 15 (5 covers)	A/M/S/A/A	W/W/B/W/W	BR/BL/BL/BK/BR	BR/BL/BR/BR/G	N (all)	CO (all)	32/19/25/23/27	
	Jun. 15	A	W	BR	BL	N	CO	37	
	Jul.15	S	W	G	BR	N	CO	25	
	Aug. 15	A	W	BR	BL	N	CO	25	
	Sept. 15	S	W	BL	BL	N	FB	23	
	Oct. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	34	
	Nov. 15	A	W	BR	BR	N	CO	29	
	Dec. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	29	
								avg= 28.5	
Cosmopolitan	Jan. 15	A	W	BL	BL	Y	CO	43	
	Feb. 15	R	W	BR	BR	Y	CO	18	
	Mar. 15	S	W	BL	BR	N	CO	46	
	Apr. 15	A	W	BL	BR	Y	CO	28	
	May. 15	S	W	BL	BL	N	FB	57	
	Jun. 15	A	W	BR	BL	N	CO	36	
	Jul. 15	S	B	BR	BR	Y	CO	33	
	Aug. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	50	
	Sept. 15	S	W	BK	BR	N	CO	23	
	Oct. 15	R	W	BL	BL	Y	CO	29	
	Nov.15	R (Kardashians - 6)	W (Armenian)	BK (5)/ BL (1)	BR (all)	Y (1) N (5)	CO	35/31/36/60/20/18	
	Dec.15	S	W	BL	BR	Y	CO	32	
								avg= 35	
Vogue	Jan. 15	A	W	BL	BL	Y	CO	34	
	Feb. 15	A	W	BR	BL	N	CO	26	
	Mar. 15	M/S (2)	W/W	BL/BL	G/BL	N	CO	23/26	
	Apr. 15	Ath	B	BL	BR	N	CO	34	
	May. 15	A	W	BR	BR	N	CO	30	
	Jun. 15	A	W	BL	G	N	CO	30	
	Jul. 15	M	W	BR	BL	N	CO	23	
	Aug. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	48	
	Sept. 15	S	B	BR	BR	N	CO	34	
	Oct. 15	A	B	BR	BR	Y	CO	32	
	Nov. 15	A	W	BR	BL	N	CO	40	
	Dec. 15	A	W	BL	BL	N	CO	25	
								avg= 31.1	
	Total # of covers= 59	37 A	56 W	29 BL	30 BL	52 N	5 FB		
	Total # of women= 65	14 S	7 B	22 BR	30 BR	13 Y		total avg age= 32.6	
		3 M	2 H	11BK	5 G				
		1 P		2 G					
		1 WPD		1 BL/Pink					
		1 Ath							
		8 R							

A-II. Survey: The survey was distributed through social media and was emailed to various IMC and PR classes and organizations on campus.

Qualtrics Initial Report: Advertising and Self-Image Survey
Last Modified: 03/30/2016

1. Please select your gender.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Male		7	6%
2	Female		117	94%
	Total		124	100%

2. What year in college are you?
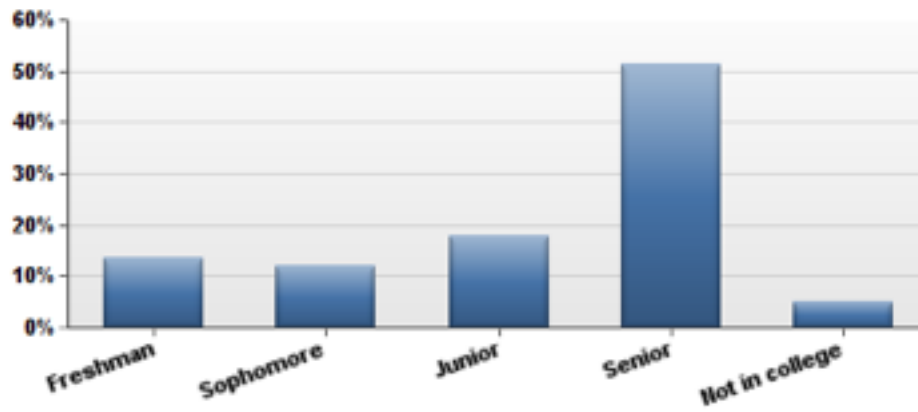
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Freshman		16	14%
2	Sophomore		14	12%
3	Junior		21	18%
4	Senior		60	51%
5	Not in college		6	5%
	Total		117	100%

3. Do you agree with this statement: "When I feel pretty, I feel better about myself in general."

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		111	100%
2	No		0	0%
3	Not sure		0	0%
	Total		111	100%

4. Please rate how much the appearance of models and celebrities in advertisements affects how you feel about your own physical appearance.
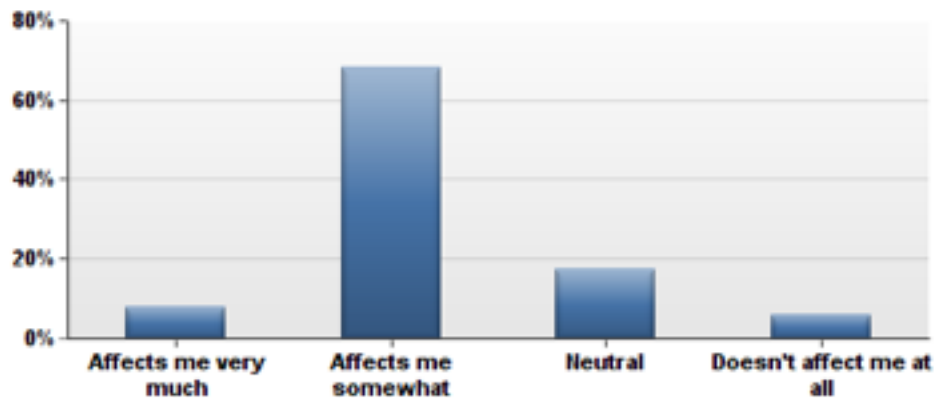
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Affects me very much		8	8%
2	Affects me somewhat		70	69%
3	Neutral		18	18%
4	Doesn't affect me at all		6	6%

			102	100%
	Total			

5. Please rank in order who affects your self-esteem the most (1 affects you the most, and 4 affects you the least).
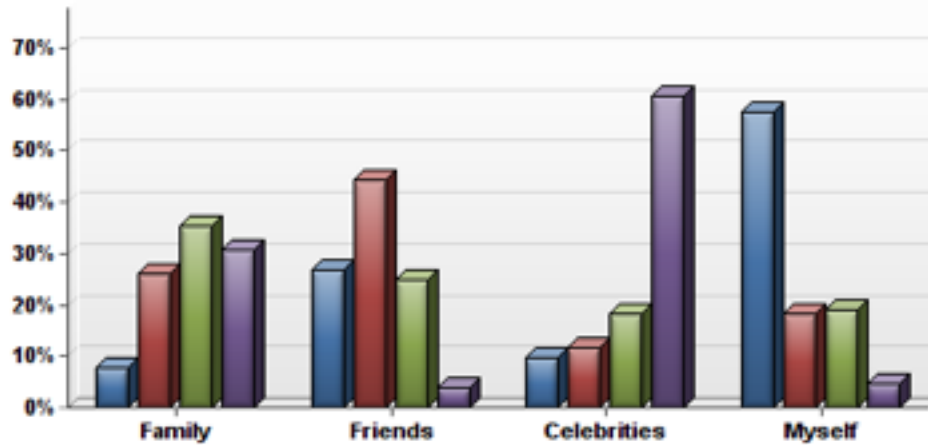
#	Answer					Total Responses
1	Family	8	27	37	32	104
2	Friends	28	46	26	4	104
3	Celebrities	10	12	19	63	104
4	Myself	60	19	20	5	104
	Total	106	104	102	104	-

6. Would you describe yourself as beautiful?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		73	63%
2	No		43	37%
	Total		116	100%

7. Do you think girls who are considered attractive have more success in life overall?
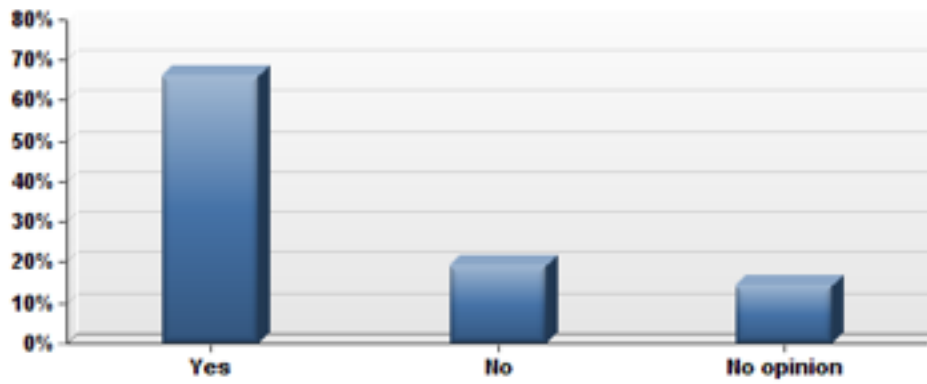
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		69	66%
2	No		20	19%
3	No opinion		15	14%
	Total		104	100%

8. Would you like to see a wider variety of women portrayed in advertisements?
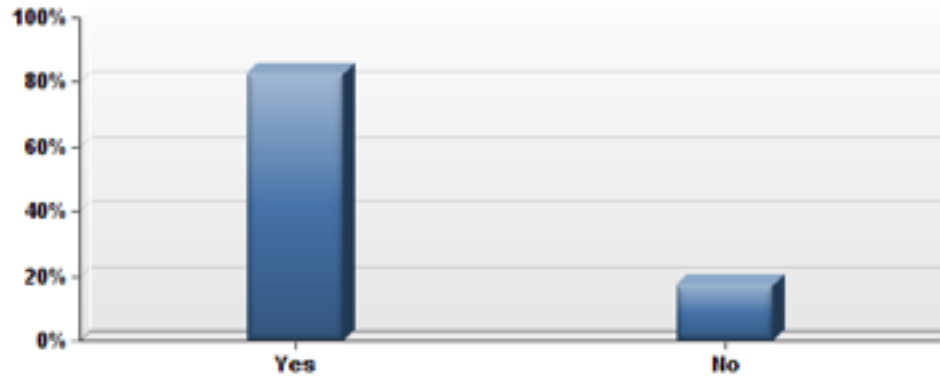
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		82	83%
2	No		17	17%
	Total		99	100%

9. Please select all adjectives you would actually use to describe your appearance.
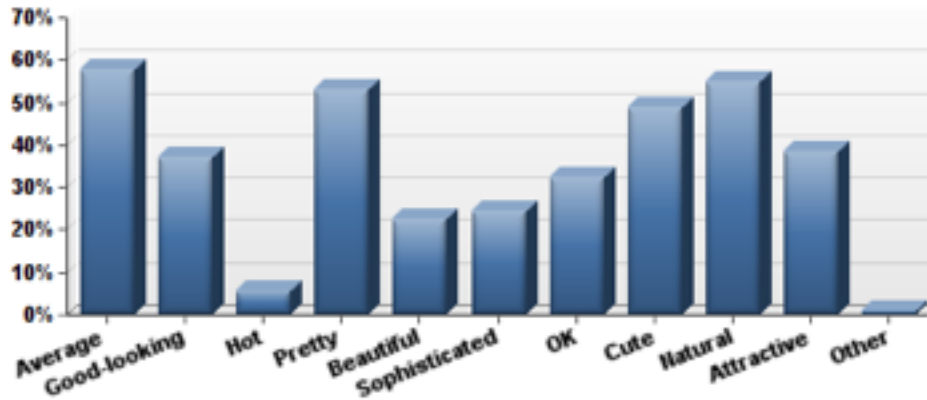
10. How do you view your weight?
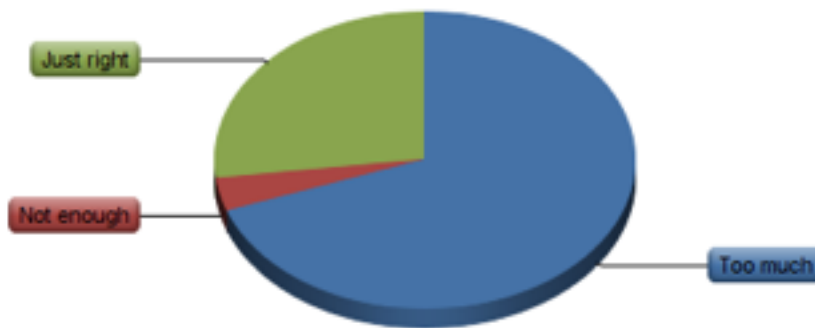
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Too much		77	69%
2	Not enough		4	4%
3	Just right		30	27%
	Total		111	100%

11. Have you ever dieted to lose weight?
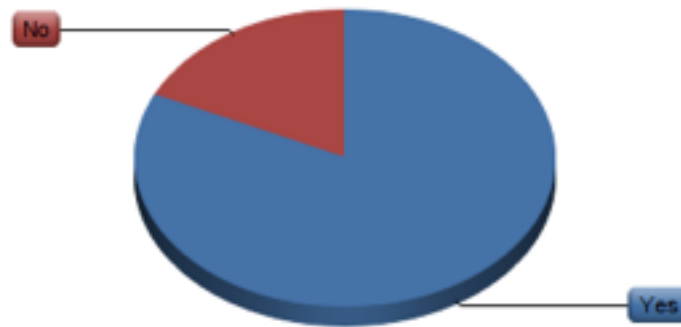
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		91	82%
2	No		20	18%
	Total		111	100%

12. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your overall physical appearance.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Very satisfied		3	3%
2	Satisfied		43	39%
3	Neutral		34	31%
4	Dissatisfied		26	24%

5	Very disatisfied		4	4%
	Total		110	100%

13. Please explain the ways how the appearance of models and celebrities in advertising affects you.

Text Response
They are so freaking beautiful and skinny but it is mostly fake
How thin they are
Makes me feel bad
I don't look like them, therefore I don't think I'm as beautiful
I feel like they really push that makeup makes you beautiful which sometimes I feel that way about myself
i am affected by their weight, polished skin, and pretty faces. They make you believe that they are the "whole package" type of women when you don't even know a single thing about them. In doing this, we are forgetting that personalities are truly what define people.
comparison
No
What they wear
makes me wanna be skinnier
TYNA FIT IN
It makes me want to be skinnier
when people call people who aren't that big big
They make me feel self conscious about my body. I already don't like my body, so when I see models in skimpy swimsuits it really kills my self esteem.
Their size and clothes
They're skinny so makes me want to be skinny.
Cus you see how good the clothing looks on them and you know you could never look like that
They look very proportionate even with extremely long limbs. It is hard to look like that. But I try to keep in mind the fact that it is edited.
I see beautiful people and I think "I'll never look like that" I guess that makes me a little sad
Constant comparison of what are the unrealistic expectations of beauty
They make being beautiful easy when in reality it takes a lot effort
They look almost too good to be true and that makes you want to have something that is hard to attain
They seem like they always look their best and have the best style and I want that
They are all flawless and skinny
Makes me feel bad about myself
I see their perfect shape, skin and hair and wonder why I can't look like that
I always think oh i want their legs, or arms, ect
Makes me feel like I should look like that
They make you want to look like them

Makes me jealous
When I see a model that I sort of look like. It makes me think I'm not doing enough, bc if I was.. I'd look like them
it's very unrealistic but not everyone in society is aware of the editing that is done. so I still feel insecure about the photos of celebrities in comparison to myself
I feel like they always look good because of their bodies and their skin is always so clear
It lowers self esteem
Makes me feel like I should look like them.
It definitely makes me want to look more like them which is kind of impossible since that's like their job
Unrealistic bodies
It makes me wish I was tall, skinny and blonde
Their weight is probably the biggest factor when considering how they affect me. I guess also the way their makeup is done and how they contour because I can't do that, I've tried lol
If I don't look somewhat like a model or celebrity I feel as if I'm not exercising and eating the way I should.
It motivates me to want to look better
they are beautiful
Perfect bodies
I feel like I'm not pretty enough
They look unreal, and it is unattainable for normal people to have that same appearance
make you feel like you have to be skinny
Too pretty
It motivates me.
Unrealistic beauty expectations
Want to look like them
when they have good bodies it is motivating and discouraging
There skin is perfect and it stresses me out that my skin isn't perfect. They have the perfect shaped bodies and that pushes me to get that body
Makes me want to look like them
Definitely wish I had the bodies of models
When I see advertisements I feel like I need to look more like them
Impacts the way i dress workout eat...
It gives us unrealistic expectations to live up to. It gives off the impression that everyone should look like that and if you aren't then you are inferior
Their clothes
I see their bodies and the way men look at them. I want my boyfriend to look at me the same way.

All the models that are used are all tall and skinny so I think that makes women think that's how they should look
They make me feel like I should do more for my appearancd
If I didn't have those advertisements to look at, I would only be comparing myself to real people, not photoshopped people
Makes me want to diet, excessive, make healthier choices, get a better wardrobe, a new hairstyle
Tall, skinny, well-dressed and all made it, its hard to not compare yourself for want the life they have
It makes me feel as if everyone else is judging me based on their appearance. Not so much myself. Like when girls look at each other's eyebrows and compare them to those of celebrities who don't even do their own make up.
makes me feel like i am not pretty
Makes me feel like I should look like them
It makes me feel like a cow
I see how I should look
they portray false images of what beauty is
Jealous
Expectation
People think they should look like them
I want what they have and to be skinnier
I feel like society wants you to look like the models do or else you aren't pretty.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	75

14. Ole Miss has a well-known reputation for having an attractive student body. Does this affect you in any way? If so, please explain.

Text Response
Yes - all other girls are so much prettier than me
Yes feel ugly compared to other
Yes, it seems that every where you turn there is a beautiful person and you can't help to compare yourself to them
Not really
No
No
Sometimes I wonder if others think I'm attractive/beautiful
It's very intimidating yes. I wear makeup to class everyday because I don't want to feel like the ugly one in my class. I don't want to be over looked or forgotten. Even though I refer to myself as strong and confident, I still wear makeup to make myself feel as though I am good enough to be noticed in my class.
Makes me care more. Which is a good thing no one wants to see you look bad
No
Game days in the Grove always make me want to look my best
I feel average
Yes
Yes. Extra pressure to look good when out in publis
Yes
duh- gotta be hot
yes, tryna look good
Yes it makes me feel as if I don't belong in the student body at some points
No
yes, it makes me feel worse about myself
Yes. My freshman year here at Ole Miss I wanted to leave Oxford because I was so intimidated by the pretty girls. They seemed to be generally meaner as well. Luckily I found some very down to earth girls and realized those "pretty" girls actually lived sad/pathetic lives. One day we will all be old, wrinkly and most of us will be wearing depends. It 60 years it won't matter what we look or used to look like. Beauty truly is on the inside.
Yes it is extremely difficult to be an average looking girl and constantly comparing yourself to the insanely attractive girls who attend school here.
Somewhat
Creates an environment of competition
no
No
It just means we keep up with our physical appearances (hair, makeup, clothes, etc.). Not everyone defines beauty the same way, but most define upkeep similarly.
Yes, I feel that when I am compared to the other girls at this school I am not considered attractive

Very much. My self esteem has very much lowered since coming here and when a fratnerity has a function and you don't get asked it hits harder because all the girls here are in a competition of whose the prettiest and gets asked to the most functions
No
I think so you see a lot of attractive people around you and it's hard not to want to keep up
No
No
No
no
No
I feel like I'm not appreciated as much as I was in highschool. Like I don't get near the same amount of attention because there are so many absolutely stunning girls here. I go unnoticed I feel like
yes but not much
just by being compared to others
Makes me feel prettier
No
Yes it makes it difficult to stand out
Doesn't seem to affect me.
Yes
Not really. Besides the fact that they're are gorgeous people everwhere. The pressure to look good in class is annoying
yes but in a positive way. I don't see it as too isolating
Yes-because if you don't consider yourself one of the attractive ones then you don't feel like you fit in fully
No
No
Yes. More pressure to look good for class
No.
nope
No
It does, especially at formals and football games
I guess in a way I feel more compelled to put on makeup every day for class and try to look better than most on game day
No
Yes-almost makes you feel as if you have a high standard to live up to
yes but I'm gay and in a relationship so I'm neither harmed nor helped

Yes, i don't feel particularly noticed in a crowd here but somehow constantly compared on a scale with everybody els and not looked at as a beautiful individual.
no
Yes
Yes I feel like I have to be pretty to fit in
does not affect me
no
Many want to fit into that stereotype of attraction with the idea of finding a future husband.
No
Makes me proud and motivates me. And hope it motivates others as well.
Not really
N/a
No,it does not affect me
No
Not exactly, there is a lot more to a person than appearance.
somewhat. comparing myself to other girls
Yes I feel like I have to look my best
Yes. I definitely don't feel nearly as attractive as other girls around me.
Yes I feel like so many girls are way prettier than me
Yes. It puts a lot of pressure on me and other girls on an every day basis. Whether is going out, working out, or even going to class. It seems like everyone is always judging others based on their attractiveness and appearance.
Yes. I try harder
No
No
No, it doesn't.
Not me personally, but I know a lot of people who it does affect.
Yes--it can be easy to compare myself with other girls
It makes me feel like I need to do more to keep up my appearance
No
yes, especially as a sorority member surrounded by beautiful, well put together girls all the time
Yes
No
Yes, it makes me want to be included in that statistic.

not really...
Yes. It's hard when you think everyone else around you is prettier than you.
Yes, it makes me feel like one of the "ugly ones"
Yes. I feel like I have to keep up with the people around me
no
Not really
It maybe makes me compare myself more often, but I wouldn't say that being around attractive people makes me feel uglier.
No
Yes
No

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	99

15. If you could change something regarding your physical appearance what would it be?

Text Response
Less stomach fat/upper thigh fat
My weight
My skin
I would be skinnier
Face shape
Everything
Nose and weight
Weight
Smaller hips and tummy
Weight
I want to be taller with leaner hips!
weight
My weight
Better butt
Weight
belly button an tummy
My weight
Weight
Weight
weight
My thighs
Weight
Legs
Weight
I wish my legs were longer and my lips were bigger, and my smile went up on the side
B
Lighter eyes
height
Weight, height (want to be taller)
My nose
Flatter stomach
Skinnier

Weight
Face
My legs
Brest size
I wish my legs were more toned
legs and stomach
muscle tone
Smaller tummy
nose, breasts, waist
My weight
Would love to be taller
My stomach
I want to be skinnier. Have higher cheek bones. A smaller forehead. Bigger eyes
my skin
the shape of my body
Weight
Not sure
Skin
Chest and nose
get more toned and in shape
Weight
Nose, thighs
My nose and my tiny little chicken legs
my hands
Body shape
nose
no hair from my armpits down please and thank you
weight
my legs
Weight
Be in better physical shape
Nose, bone structure, under eyes
Thighs

i'd like to be taller
Lose weight
thighs
Weight
Nose
Pigment
weight
More toned
my stomach
Weight
My nose
stomach
My weight
Weight
Weight
Lose weight
teeth
Size
Thighs
Weight
Arms
My round face
Extra weight carried on hips and thighs
Weight
My stomach
Weight
Weight
The shape of my body
i don't think i would change anything..
Weight
Lose 80 pounds
Skinnier legs
my hips

My legs	
My nose or my weight	
Face shape	

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	104

16. Please select all of the options that make you feel beautiful.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Doing something I enjoy		53	51%
2	Being in good physical shape		100	96%
3	Feeling like I look better than someone else		38	37%
4	Being satisfied with what I see in the mirror		88	85%
5	Being loved		87	84%
6	Receiving compliments from others		93	89%
7	Being asked to a function or on a date		70	67%
8	Having good friendships		58	56%
9	My spiritual beliefs		44	42%
10	Other		2	2%

Other
Wearing something that I feel good in

17. Would you ever consider plastic surgery?
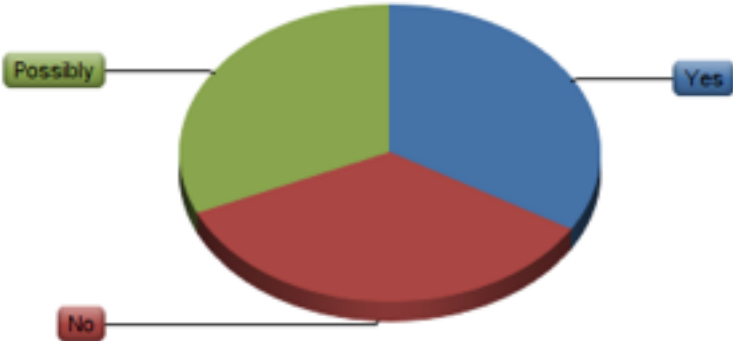
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		35	34%
2	No		36	35%
3	Possibly		33	32%
	Total		104	100%

18. At what age do you first remember starting to care about what you looked like?
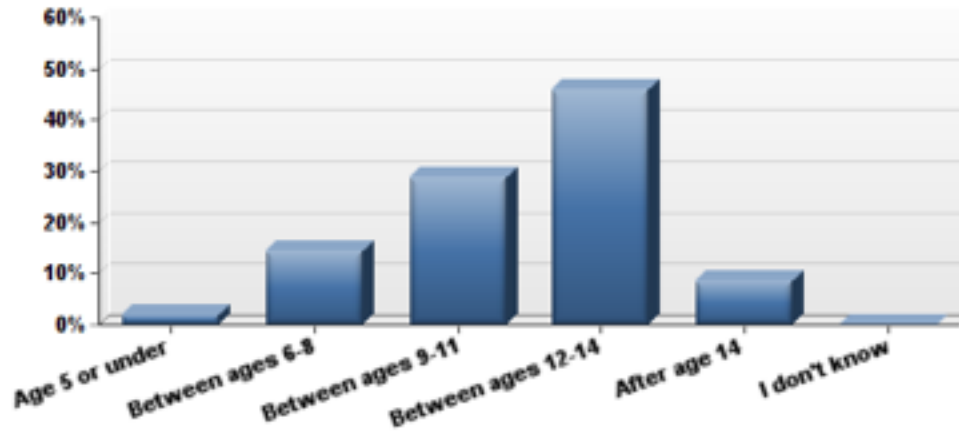
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Age 5 or under		2	2%
2	Between ages 6-8		15	14%
3	Between ages 9-11		30	29%
4	Between ages 12-14		48	46%
5	After age 14		9	9%
6	I don't know		0	0%
	Total		104	100%

19. Do you think advertising affects how you define beauty? If so, how?

Text Response
Yes - all products are geared toward becoming more beautiful; models are everywhere, everything is photoshopped to be prettier and skinnier
Yes how distorted it is
Yes, advertising has the power to make people look unrealistically beautiful
Yes, ads usually have tall & very thin girls
No
Of course. You will always judge yourself based on people define as beautiful
Not me personally
Yes, day in and day out the only things we are exposed to are airbrushed skin and exceptionally skinny women. What we see in movies is that the beautiful girl with a good body, regardless of if she hides it or not, is the one that will be wanted in the end. In magazines beautiful women are used to sell makeup which is implying that if we buy the product we will look like them... This makes us want to look like someone else vs. the best version of ourselves. It's unfortunate.
It used to. But I know those people aren't happy and most of them are photoshopped. I would rather live a full happy life than live off kale for every meal
No
The media advertises a "model's" body, not an average image
no
No
Yes, it displays what the standard of beauty "should be" for the world. Kinda dumb though, because beauty is relative. But thanks so ads we now think stick skinny is beautiful.
Yes
yeah
DUHHHHH-- what they show
Yes. It damages the idea of what beauty is. Every girl who grows up watching television and reading magazines believes they should be a size zero
Negatively
yes
Yes, they always pick the prettiest women and men to advertise with, when in reality the people who are most likely going to buy their product probably look like the average Joe, not a super model.
No
Yes
Yes, skews perception for both men & women
Yes, because they alter every model and make them look perfect and girls think buying that makeup will make there skin pour less but its impossible
No

No
I see women who look thin and tall and perfectly toned so I feel that is how everyone should ideally look if you want guys to like you
No
It sets a standard for women
Yes. You see perfect photo shopped models everywhere and it creates an image that is practically unattainable
Yes, celebrities always look perfect
No
Yes
Yes, by what ideas of beauty that it puts into people's heads.
Yes, it gives people the view that you should have a certain type of body.
Somewhat. They make some girls look so great and then we think what they have is what's "beautiful"
yes, the "perfect" bikini bod
yes because models are always in the best shape
Yes
Not me personally, but people view ads and celebrities in ads as how they should base their appearance
Yes, it makes you compare yourself to others
Yes. Advertising is what shapes people's perception of beauty.
Yes
Ya. I'm constantly comparing
yes. Photoshop has made it impossible to achieve the look that celebrities and models are portraying as a norm
yes-everyone in ads look perfect and it's not realistic
No
Yes, the people on advertisements are 'perfect'
Yes. It sets a standard for beauty.
I like to think it doesn't
yes, i think it give girls a false sense of what perfection is and what it should look like.
Yes. Unrealistic bodies
Yes
I think they definitely try to, but I'm comfortable with myself so I don't pay much attention to much of it
Yes, all the models are super skinny and make the world believe that is beautiful, so I feel the need to look somewhat like them.
Yes-what you see is often what you feel as if you should look like yourself

nah
not always, advertising introduces ideas I may or may not find beautiful
yes, advertising for makeup and clothing with models
yes
Yes
Yes
yes, you feel like you need to look like celebrities and models in order to be considered attractive
Not sure
maybe
Yes, it sets our standards to unattainable heights
yes
No
Yes. So many models and beautiful people
Yes. What society considers beautiful.
Yes, advertising creates unrealistic beauty expectations for women
Yes bc we want to look like those people
not for me personally
No
Yes, b/c beauty in ads in commercials or in magazines is mainly skinny girls with little to no flaws on their face. Having the perfect hair, clothes and makeup.
somewhat. body image
Yes because everyone looks perfect
Yes
No
Yes. Companies advertise based on their definition and societies definition of beautiful.
Yes. It provides us with unrealistic body goals
Yes because most of the time all of the people I them are models that are a size 2, and they have perfect skin. They set unrealistic expectations for everyone
Yes and no. I sometimes see models that I don't find beautiful.
Definitely. Everyone wants to look like the people we see. Thin and beautiful. Even you Alli. Girls around Oxford are the epitome of what I want to be.
Probably so, the media basically tells you how you should look.
Yes--models are all super skinny and toned
Yes, I sometimes compare myself to others

Yes- gives us something to compare oueselves to
yes, its not always easy to look past the photoshopping
Yes
I don't think it affects how I define beauty but I think that it affects the idea of what a standard person should look like. Most celebrities are thin or very toned and that's how we think everyone should look. Beauty is a personal opinion.
Not really. Advertising is used to sell a product. I look at the product, not who is in the ad.
yes. for sure. I think advertising gives us the wrong image and causes un realistic expectations
Yes. By showcasing girls who look physically perfect
Yes it conditions girls to have a warped sense of what is considered beautiful
Yes. We see how we are suppose to look based off of products that are advertised because they are defined as perfect so that we will buy the products
yes, we all want to look like the models with flat bellies
Yes, they define beauty
Yes, the images we see on a regular basis become our expectation of what everyone wants us to look like
Yes

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	103

20. Do you think advertising affects the way men view women?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		99	94%
2	No		6	6%
	Total		105	100%

21. Please explain how you think advertising affects the way men view women.

Text Response
Men expect women to have perfect bodies, no flaws. Beautiful hair, skin, etc
They think that is the standard
It raises men's expectations of beauty.
They look for women that look like the ads
They see all these beautiful fit women and expect everyone to look that way
Men see what the norm of beauty is and compares them to us
It portrays a picture of how women should look
They have started to expect what they see on paper. In reality, if we expected them all to look like brad pit, no one would want eachother. From the guys I have met, they all want the same thing. A pretty face, a fit body, a good personality, good style, to be social, and have a stellar personality. This is a lot to ask for right off the bat. We need to strive to grow with one another and not expect the "whole package" image that we have been intoxicated with from the media.
Big boobs.Tiny waist. Big butt. Thigh gap.
Gives them high & sometimes unrealistic expectations
expectations
Them being in perfect
They think we all are suppose to look like Barbie. Women come in all shapes and sizes, we have a natural size/shape but men think we should all have the same sexy body
Prettier in advertisements
they think we gotta be a size 2
Bc they see all these skinny b*tches
Men see the women that are famous for their looks being super thin so they expect regular women to strive to be super thin too
Viewed as an object
they expect them to look like them
Men are already pigs, or should I say most of them, it isn't fair for me to group them all together! The way women are advertised today set a very high standard for men. They expect us all to look like Victoria's Secret models, which lets face it there are only a few of us that actually do look like them. Women are portrayed as sex symbols and men can't see past that sometimes.
I think it creates an idea of what women could look like
They want models.
Unrealistic expectations
They have impossible expectations sometimes.. without it being their own fault its just they see such beautiful women who've been altered to look better.. same way girls don't think they are as pretty
Men expect women's bodies and skin to look like they do in ads, which are extremely edited.
Men see women looking perfect in advertising and assume that is the way women are supposed to look

Unrealistic expectations
It sets a standard how how they think we should look
Men hold woman to a higher standard because they see beautiful woman on advertisements and want to be with someone at that level of perfectness
We don't always wear makeup.
It makes them believe every girl will look like the girls used for advertising
Make them have high expectations
It puts a false image of what women should be in their heads.
Men see big boobs, small waist, large butts, etc, and looks for people who fit the ideal girl they imagine.
Men have unrealistic expectations and fantasies because of these edited women on the cover of magazines.
seeing what a perfect bod "should" look like
Men would compare a skinny model to an average size girl and still consider her larger.
Makes them think all women should look that perfect even though they are photoshopped
Men are easily impressed by attractive women
They hold women to unattainable standards of beauty
Gives them false expectations of what women look like when often what they see is photoshopped and unrealistic.
Men are dumb and think photoshop isn't a thing. Pictures on covers of magazines aren't even real. The celebrities have even admitted this
they now view unrealistic attributes and characteristics as norms and hold women to those expectations
Men see women in ads and then think that's how all women should look or can look, and some think that women don't try hard enough to look the way the girls do in the advertisements
It sets their standards
The women on advertisements are perfect. Normal women have flaws.
same as previous andwer
The women in advertisements are basically perfect which is a standard that women can't meet
they think that women should look the way celebrities and models look in commercials. That women are always looking perfect no matter what
Women are sexualized in advertisements. Women have unrealistic bodies in advertisements, which skews the way men see women
They set the standards of "beauty".
Men have unrealistic expectations
They see women in advertisements as attractive, skinny, blonde dolls and expect that in real life too. They don't know about the makeup artists and self-tanners and how we can't do that ourselves.
Men are expected to find a woman like the women they see in advertising. There are very few of those woman, so when they start dating a woman who is average and normal I feel as if they are disappointed because their girl doesn't look like Cameron Diaz.

Men see women on ads. Even though they may know that's not 100% realistic, I still think it puts an idea in their head of what looks good, even if only ever so slightly.
as visually appealing objects
I think it gives men an unrealistic expectation of women's beauty
objectify
Men expect all women to look like supermodels/actresses
k
Men are so use to seeing the outside and not what's on the inside. One of my best guy friends has told me "he won't date an ugly girl" and that definition has come from seeing what's beautiful in the eyes of advertising.
False idea of women
False expectations.
It creates unrealistic beauty expectations for men. Men think all women should look the way models/celebrities do.
Men want girls to look like thay
They see girls tv and set a mental standard
It can put the wrong idea of "everyday women" in their mind when in reality not everyone looks or acts like the women in advertisement
unrealistic expectations. always put together
They believe we are supposed to have this perfect image when we are all created differently
They begin to think the advertisements are realistic expectations of women.
Portrays the picture of what women should look like.
They definitely want a girl with a body like sports illustrated models
Most women believe men think of women is advertisements as some of the most beautiful people in the world, and that makes them less confident about themselves
Unrealistic body expectations
If that is what men see all the time then that is what they expect, and it gives the impression that all women should look like that
Makes men value beauty over other aspects of women.
They see models and how "beautiful and skinny" those women are and tend to be more attracted to women who look like the girls they see in advertising
Advertising today shows woman as tools as things to use and to look at.
It shows them what all bodies have the potential to look like, and that's what they decide they want.
i think that some men may think that all women can look like the women they see advertised. I think it sets their standards to high.
Men have unrealistic expectations for women
Men may think that women should all look like those in advertisements

Men compare beauty to what the media thinks is beautiful and in style
It sexualizes women in a completely unrealistic way
If all they see Is one body type, that's the standard they could hold
We are supposed to be a stick figure with abs
Too much exposure to one type and not enough to all the others.
advertising shows men a false image of what real beauty truly is.
It makes men think that all women should look like those in advertisements.
Men only growing up seeing and hearing that super skinny women are the only pretty ones
They think of how woman should look
men think every woman should look that way
Like objects
Depending on ad, how men should look or act
They get certain images in their head of what they like or think is beautiful and it makes us feel as though we aren't enough
Men think all women can look like that
They have a stronger opinion on what women should look like
They look at the models then compare them to everyday girls

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	98