

Real Beauty: An Examination of the Ways that Saint Mary's College Students View Women in the Media.



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Research Question



- **How do college women view 'real beauty' portrayals of women in television commercials?**

Thesis



- **Despite the recent increase in ‘real beauty’ images of women in television commercials, college women do not see enough positive images of women in television commercials.**

Literature Review



- **Marketing to Women**
 - Barletta 2003
 - Fox 1997
- **Media's Effect on Women**
 - Mazis and Beuttenmuller 1972
- **Images of Women in the Media**
 - Serdar 2005
 - Dittmar and Howard 2004
- **Body Image**
 - Fisher 2008
- **Real Beauty**
 - Hoegg 2005

Gender Schema Theory



- **Bem 1981, 1993**
 - Becoming gendered in society
 - Combination of societal influence and cognitive development
- **Dittmar and Howard 2003**
 - Observing others
 - Learning how others act
 - Accomplishing different cognitive tasks

Methodology



- **Experimental Method**
 - Experimental
 - Comparison
 - Control
- **58 participants**
 - 28 freshmen
 - 30 seniors
- **Survey**

Table 4: All Groups- Freshmen vs. Seniors

CHARACTERISTICS	POSITIVE FRESHMEN	POSITIVE SENIORS	NEGATIVE FRESHMEN	NEGATIVE SENIORS	CONTROL FRESHMEN	CONTROL SENIORS	Total
Positive Personality (Good Character)	3	0	4	3	7	4	21
Confident	3	4	2	3	1	2	15
Internal Beauty	3	1	3	2	1	3	13
Kind	2	0	1	1	5	2	11
Respectful	2	1	0	0	1	3	7
Intelligent	2	0	2	2	1	0	7
Emotionally Strong	3	0	0	0	3	0	6
Unique	1	0	1	2	1	0	5
Physically Healthy	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Accepting	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
Appearance	2	0	1	1	0	0	4
Moral	2	0	0	0	2	0	4
Loving	1	0	0	0	3	0	4
All Ethnicities	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
Average Size	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Humorous	0	0	1	0	2	0	3
Fearless	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Generous	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
All Genders	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
All Ages	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
All Sexual Orientations	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Charismatic	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Just	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	28	18	18	18	33	15	130

Findings



- **“According to your definition of ‘real beauty’, do you believe television commercials, in general, portray this successfully?”**
 - Yes- 2 Seniors
 - Somewhat- 4 freshmen and 8 seniors
 - No- 24 freshmen and 20 seniors
- **Photoshop**
 - 7 freshmen and 3 seniors
- **Dove**
 - 8 freshmen and 5 seniors

Discussion



- More positive images of women in the media are needed
- 24% of freshmen and seniors saw the increase in 'real beauty.'
- Lack of commercial varieties that portray positive images of women
- Gender focus courses
 - 2 freshmen (7%)
 - 15 seniors (50%)
- Strengths and Weaknesses

Conclusion



- **Media is a commercial venture**
- **Not changing gender schemas**
- **Future studies:**
 - Freshmen in 2016
 - Photoshop

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