

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

Caitlyn Holman

Undergraduate

Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN

Cholma01@saintmarys.edu

December 13, 2012

Advisor: Dr. Leslie Wang

E-mail Address: lwang@saintmarys.edu

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

Abstract

In recent years, there has been an increase in the positive ways that women are represented in television advertising, while previous studies have focused only on the negative images of women. The purpose of this study is to examine if college women see the 'real beauty' portrayals of women in television commercials. The sample for this study included fifty-eight women consisting of twenty-eight first years and thirty seniors, at Saint Mary's College. The purpose of this study is to examine if college women see the 'real beauty' portrayals of women in television commercials. The findings indicate that college women do not see the 'real beauty' portrayals of women in television commercials. One interpretation of these findings suggests that the media needs to improve their images of women, in order to change gender schema.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Today, advertisements are criticized for depicting women in traditional family roles, as objects for sexual desire, and for creating unrealistic ideals for women to uphold (Williams 1995). These stereotypes include the supermom, the sex kitten, or the femme fatale, which are the roles in television, film, and popular magazines for women of all ages to compare their body or lifestyle. Serdar (2005) states that the media portrays standards of beauty that are unattainable for most women. The majority of stereotypical models displayed on television and in print advertisements are not considered to represent a healthy body weight. Mass media's use of unrealistic images of women sends a message to women that to be considered beautiful, she must resemble these models.

Society's standards of feminine beauty creating an "ideal body" are presented in almost all forms of popular media. Heldman (2012) said, "United States residents are now exposed to 3,000 advertisements a day, which is as many per year as those living half a century ago would have seen in a lifetime". The statistics prove that today the importance of media in everyday life affects the way people live or the way they view themselves. In past years, research has shown that the negative images of women in the media impact body image among teens and college students. This study focuses on the construction of body image in the media as perceived by college students. Previous studies indicate that the media greatly affects how college-age women think and view themselves. In recent years, there has been a growth of positive images of the presence and influence of women in the media. Therefore, this experiment will focus on understanding how college women

view the increase of positive images of women or 'real beauty' of women in television commercials. The purpose of this research is to study the perceptions of college women as affected by positive or negative images of women on television. If college women do not see the 'real beauty' aspects in the portrayal of women on television commercials today, then the media has not done enough to portray positive images of women. Despite the recent increase in 'real beauty' images of women in television commercials, today the majority of college women do not see these positive images of women portrayed on television advertisements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing to Women

The images women see every day in all forms of popular media are typically how to make oneself look better, skinner and sexier, for men, not towards a healthy feminine body. (Barletta 2003) "Marketing to women will deliver more profit to your bottom line than putting the same budget against an all-male target" (pg. 38). If more marketers understood the importance of marketing to women, the images of women may be less targeted towards men. According to Barletta (2003), in the long term, the women's buying process is more profitable than men's for two reasons. First, effectively targeting women generates higher customer satisfaction among both women and men. Accordingly, when a marketer meets the higher expectations of women, they are usually fulfilling the demands for men at the same time. Secondly, marketing to women delivers higher customer acquisition and greater customer retention. Women are more likely to be loyal to a particular brand, which

typically leads to word-of-mouth marketing to their friends. Today, marketers need to learn that the growing business is about marketing to women.

Additionally, studies show that attractive people have advantages in today's society (Fox 1997). These advantages include a child's popularity, higher teacher evaluations, receiving higher salaries, and receiving less severe sentences. Therefore, it is not surprising that physical attractiveness is overwhelmingly important. As a result of the media, people have become accustomed to uniform standards of beauty and this standard is achievable by less than five percent of the female population. Today, the people typically portrayed on television or in advertisements are viewed as beautiful, and their images are considered the norm.

There has to be a significant change in the way the media represents women in order for women to not feel like they are expected to be perfect or to follow gender stereotypes. According to Smith (2011), "Television is one of the most present and widely viewed mediums in this country and has a large effect on the way women see themselves and how others view them" (pg. 2). In other words, television supports gender-specific roles or stereotypes. If businesses used 'real beauty' advertisements more frequently, it would increase their profits. Companies must learn that the less stereotypical images the advertisements portray, the better.

Media's Effect on Women

The women's liberation movement changed the way both women and men viewed feminine images in the media. For this reason, Mazis and Beuttenmuller (1972) looked at specific changes in the media as a result of the women's movement. The researchers found five ways advertising discriminated against

women. First, women were viewed as frivolous, docile, stupid, and incompetent. Second, it encourages the image that women should cater to men by appealing to their fears and insecurities. Third, advertisements portray unrealistic occupational and sexual stereotypes of females. Fourth, it also uses women as decorative objects. Finally, the media tries to exploit the women's movement.

The purpose of Mazis and Beuttenmuller's study at the University of Florida was to see if women feel exploited by women's images in advertising or does the idea of exploitation even occur to women looking at these advertisements? To answer their questions, they chose five product categories: cleaning products, perfume, liquor, cigarettes, and stereo equipment for their first experiment. Each category had four advertisements from popular magazines at the time. The research found that women for liberation felt the neutral advertisements were more influential on them compared to the anti-women's liberation group. Mazis and Beuttenmuller's research showed that women who are pro-women are more likely to be influenced by the media. Additionally, even though this study was conducted in the past, the print advertisements chosen are still relevant for portraying the discrimination of women. Today, however, marketers have learned to promote their products to the pro-women's group more frequently than in the past.

Images of Women in the Media

Images in the media today project an unrealistic and even dangerous standard of feminine beauty that can have a powerful influence on the way women view themselves. In mass media, thinness is idealized and expected for women to be considered attractive. According to Serdar (2005), images in advertising, television,

and music usually portray the “ideal women” as tall, white, and thin. Dittmar and Howard (2004) stated the following regarding the prevalence of unrealistic media images, “Ultra-thin models are so prominent that exposure to them becomes unavoidable and ‘chronic’, constantly reinforcing a discrepancy for most women and girls between their actual size and the ideal body” (pg. 478). Dittmar and Howard also found that only a small percentage of women in Western culture fit the media’s definition of beautiful. Magazines and advertisements are marketed to help women ‘better themselves’ by providing information and products that are supposed to make them look and feel better. One study indicates that 83% of teenage girls reported reading fashion magazines for about 4.3 hours each week (Thompson and Heinberg 1999). Television, advertisements, magazines, and other forms of popular media provide a plethora of references for women of all ages to compare themselves.

Body Image

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Fisher 2008), researchers Grabe and Hyde found that exposure to media depicting ultra-thin actresses and models significantly increased women’s concerns about their bodies. Their research looked at seventy-seven previous studies with over 15,000 subjects. The basis of the study focused on the negative images and stereotypes of women. According to Grabe (Fisher 2008),

“We’ve demonstrated that it doesn’t matter what the exposure is, whether it’s general TV watching in the evening, or magazines, or ads showing on a computer. If the image is appearance-focused and sends a clear message about a woman’s body as an object, then it’s going to affect women.”

The media internalizes a thin ideal, which has changed the definition of beautiful to bodies that are unnaturally and unhealthily thin. The new definition has led to an increase in body dissatisfaction as a major risk for low self-esteem, depression, obesity, and eating disorders (Fisher 2008). Additionally, body dissatisfaction and disordered eating patterns have been found to be an especially prevalent issue in adolescent and college females because of their high exposure to mass media (Schwitzer, Bergholz, Dore, & Salimi, 1998; Stice & Whitenton, 2002). Overall, Grabe and Hyde argued that women are striving toward unobtainable beauty standards because of mass media.

Real Beauty

In today's skinny and sexualized culture, it is almost impossible to have a realistic view of beauty. However, Dove, a manufacturer of soaps, creams, shampoos and other cosmetic items, has created a new advertising campaign for 'Real Beauty' (Hoegg 2005). Their current campaign depicts normal, curvy women in order to change society's perceptions of what is 'real beauty'. Overall, Dove's goal is to get women to be comfortable and happy in their own skin. Not only is Dove leading the way by encouraging female advertisements, but Liz Claiborne and MUDD also encourages the world to see women positively (National Organization for Women 2000-2011). Likewise, Liz Claiborne has their 'Feel Comfortable' line which shows that it does not matter what a women wears, as long as they are comfortable in their own skin, nothing else matters. As well, the marketers for MUDD truly captured the spirit of women by showing that women can do it all, such as rebuilding cities in clothes that are stylish and relaxed. These companies show women that real beauty

comes from the under-the-skin feature; there is not one body shape, hair color or skin type.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Gender Schema Theory refers to the socialization of children when they learn about what it means to be male or female from the culture in which they live. According to this theory (Cherry 2012), children adjust their behavior to fit in with the socially constructed gender norms and expectations of their culture. However, one's gender identity might not align with socially prescribed gender roles. Gender identity is a lens through which one views life experiences, including gender roles. Gender schema theory examines the categorization of men and women, including behaviors and attitudes as shown in mass media. For this research, gender schema theory analyzes gender images found in the media.

Children develop their gender behavior by either accepting or rejecting traditional gender roles. Through language, dress, toys, songs, and other socializing agents, social learning shapes gender identity. Children then compare themselves with the social concept of gender. For example, a girl thinks, "I am a woman." Since women are feminine, sweet, and caring, the child adjusts her behavior to fit this description. A boy thinks, "I am a man." Therefore, I must act masculine, strong, and heroic.

Dittmar and Howard (2003) argue that children who are taught that certain traits or activities are appropriate or inappropriate for their gender tend to be influenced more by gender images in the media. In part, children learn through their observation to imitate and internalize the gender schema of a culture, including

those seen in mass media, and then repeat those patterns in their own lives. Gender Schema Theory suggests that once one assimilates to a given gender, they will behave accordingly to the societal norms given to that gender identity.

According to Bem (1981), Gender Schema Theory explains how individuals become gendered in society. Gender is a process also explains how gender stereotypes become ingrained in our society. Bem (1993) sought to “render those lenses of stereotypical and socially accepted masculine and feminine traits, visible rather than invisible, to enable us to look at the culture's gender lenses rather than through them” (p. 2). Bem proposes that an individual’s gender identity emerges from a combination of his or her societal influences and cognitive development. In other words, gender schemas develop through an individual’s observation of societal classifications of masculinity and femininity, which are seen as a combination of human anatomy, social roles, and other cultural characteristics.

Serdar (2005) argues that based up Gender Schema Theory women use three points of reference to construct their perceptions about their own physical appearance: the socially represented ideal body, the objective body, and the internalized ideal body. In the media, many of the portrayals of women demonstrate the socially represented ideal body, the standard definition of beauty and physical appearance according to cultural expectations. In contrast, the objective body involves a person’s own evaluation of their physical body. The internalized ideal body involves the level at which an individual strives towards the socialized ideal image. Some women can be exposed to images of thin women and not internalize this to their own internalized ideal body because they know it is unrealistic.

However, other women may internalize the socially represented ideal, which makes them vulnerable to the powerful effects of the media (Sands and Wardle 2003).

Media images of “ideal” female bodies make it difficult for the individual to have an internalized ideal body that is realistic and attainable. The constant exposure to ultra-thin women may negatively affect the internalized ideal body, because the woman wants to be that ultra-thin and engages in harmful behaviors to achieve thinness. Sands and Wardle (2003) found that women who have an internalized ideal body that resembles the socially represented ideal body are at high risk to develop body image problems and disordered eating patterns.

American standards of feminine beauty, an “ideal body,” are presented in almost all forms of popular media. The media plays an important role in the everyday life of all people, including women. The statistics show that today people see advertisements much more frequently than a person in the past would have (Heldman 2012). This illustrates the importance of media in everyday life.

Today, women and a number of companies are attempting to change the media’s representations of the “ideal body.” Although a few companies are purposely changing the types of models used, most media outlets continue to depict unrealistic images of females, which negatively affects the way women view their bodies. Dittmar and Howard (2003) believe that marketers are still using the “thinness sells” mindset because using heavier women would not be profitable. While it is difficult to change the way the media depicts women, there is movement towards positively altering women’s internalized ideal body to reflect what is realistic and attainable.

Gender roles are formed in part by observing others, including people in the media, learning how others act, and accomplishing different cognitive tasks that are done by men and women, specific to cultures. Mass media may reinforce gender roles that women and men should perform. However, there is a new trend of “real beauty” in television commercials that shows more realistic images of average sized women. There has been no previous research examining the positive images, the focus has always been on the negative images. Therefore, this study will examine whether female viewers are positively responding to ‘real beauty’ images of women constructed by the media.

METHODOLOGY

An experimental method was used to collect data. The purpose of this experiment is to understand how college women view ‘real beauty’ portrayals of women in television commercials. First years and seniors from Saint Mary’s College were chosen to be the focus of this study. The way a first year woman views the women’s images in the media may be different than a senior woman.

A total of fifty-eight students participated in this experiment. Twenty-eight first years and thirty seniors were randomly selected for the study. The first years were randomly selected into three groups, ten in the experimental, ten in the comparison, and eight in the control. The seniors were randomly selected into three groups, ten in the experimental, ten in the comparison, and ten in the control. The women selected agreed to participate in one of three sessions. Each session was completed in fifteen minutes. Appendix A shows the informed consent forms,

consisting of one for the experimental and comparison groups, and one for the control group.

The two experimental groups were shown positive television commercials. The positive commercials (Dove, Degree, Nike, and Bare Minerals) included women of all ages, ethnicities, and body types. They do not show women in stereotypical gender roles, but in empowering ways. The Dove commercials showed women of all ages portraying their “true colors” or true self, not following the media’s definition of beautiful. The Nike commercial told women that they can become anything they wish. Both Degree and Bare Minerals empowered women to break female stereotypes, such as becoming a firefighter, typically a male occupation.

The two comparison groups were shown negative television commercials. The negative commercials (Maybelline, Dolce & Gabbana, Aaron’s, and Axe) showed stereotypical images of women as inferior to men or women as sexualized objects. Maybelline, Dolce & Gabbana, and Axe portrayed women as sexual objects, desperate for men’s attention and they were at the disposal of men. Aaron’s showed a female cooking and cleaning for her husband, but according to her husband’s standards, she does not do anything correctly. The man became angry but then realized he has a great television from Aaron’s, therefore it was fine.

The two control groups colored nature themed coloring books that have nothing to do with gender identity. This group did not watch any commercials so their answers to the survey questions were not influenced by the commercials.

After each group activity, participants responded to a set of survey questions. A copy of the survey questions is found in Appendix B. The questions asked the

participants their attitudes and opinions about their involvement in the experiment. The survey began with a set of demographic questions. In this study, there were a variety of majors and minors. Sixteen first years were intended biology majors, the remaining were undecided or interested in an assortment of majors. Thirteen seniors were education majors, while the rest were majors in a variety of departments. Participants were asked whether they had taken a class specifically on gender topics such as Masculinities, or any Gender and Women's Studies course, as it may explain differences in responses. They were also asked the number of hours they watched television per day; the amount of time spent on television watching may impact their responses to how they view the ways that women are portrayed. Finally, the participants had the opportunity to define 'real beauty' in women and whether they see their definition portrayed in television commercials.

FINDINGS

The following results are organized based on the findings of the first years and seniors in this experiment. Tables 1 through 3 found in Appendix C are categorized based on the survey question "How do you define 'real beauty'?" Tables 1 through 3 list only the characteristics responded by the participants, either first years or seniors. These findings show the different views of 'real beauty' in television commercials between first years and seniors at Saint Mary's College.

Table 1, found in Appendix C, shows the total frequency of characteristics for the experimental groups, consisting of twenty participants, ten first years and ten seniors, who watched positive television commercials. The characteristics of 'real beauty' shared by first years and seniors, included confidence, respect, physically

healthy, and internal beauty. For three first years and four seniors, confidence was the most important characteristic that defined a women's beauty. Two first years and two seniors reported physically healthy as their definition of 'real beauty', while three first years and one senior stated internal beauty as the central explanation. One first year defined internal beauty as "beauty of the soul." Finally, respect was important to two first years and one senior. For seniors, only one student mentioned that 'real beauty' includes all genders, ages, sexual orientations, and ethnicities. Three first years women said positive personality or good character and emotionally strong were significant in identifying 'real beauty;' while one senior stated, "Physical appearance must include all skin types." There was no significant difference in the characteristics defined by first years, compared to the seniors.

Table 2, found in Appendix C, provides the data for the comparison group, consisting of twenty participants, ten first years and ten seniors, who watched negative television commercials. Four first years and three seniors stated that a positive personality or a good character was essential in defining 'real beauty.' Two first years and three seniors defined 'real beauty' as a woman's confidence. Lastly, three first years and two seniors answered internal beauty as the fundamental characterization. There was no significant difference in the characteristics defined by first years, compared to the seniors.

Table 3, found in Appendix C, provides the data for the control group, consisting of eighteen participants, eight first years and ten seniors, who participated in a coloring activity. Overall, the most significant quality for seven first years and four seniors was a positive personality or good character. After that,

kindness was the vital attribute of 'real beauty' for five first years and two seniors. One first year and three seniors said internal beauty was a valuable trait. There was no significant difference in the characteristics defined by first years, compared to the seniors.

The significant difference among first years and seniors was the frequency of characteristics that defined 'real beauty.' In the experimental group, the first years had a total number of characteristics defining 'real beauty' of twenty-eight, while, the seniors had a frequency total of eighteen. In the comparison groups, first years and seniors both had a total of eighteen. Lastly, the first years in the control group had thirty-three more responses, while the seniors in the control group only had a total of fifteen. Thus, the first years had several more characteristics that were essential to the definition of 'real beauty.'

"According to your definition of 'real beauty', do you believe television commercials in general, portray this successfully?" The responses were organized into the following themes; marketing to women, media's effect on women, images of women in the media, body image, and lastly real beauty. These are the themes used in the literature review.

Marketing to Women & Media's Effect on Women

One first year stated that today it is hard to know what is real or not, because of Photoshop; it makes a person question every image they see on television. One senior responded that "marketing to women should not be just be commercials for hair, nails, skin, clothes, makeup, and weight loss programs." For eleven seniors, media tells women that in order to be beautiful, one must have the perfect body.

This is discussed further in the images of women and body image themes. Another senior answered, “Men feel inclined to meet or match a woman’s “ideal beauty.””

Images of Women

Seven first years and three seniors, a total of ten (17%), mentioned the use of Photoshop, plastic surgery, or air brushing as being prevalent in the images of women in television commercials. This theme was not as important for the first years as it was for the seniors. Five first years talked about the fakeness of women on television due to Photoshop. As well, ten first years answered that the images of women were stereotypical and shallow. Eight seniors stated that a number of commercials have an emphasis on female sexuality or sex appeal, which does not represent ‘real beauty.’ Additionally, “the beauty portrayed on television is a fake view of beauty and only follows Western standards of beauty,” according to one senior. Finally, three seniors responded that women on television must have a great “female” job or be married to be significant in the world today.

Body Image

The responses relating to body image of the first years did not vary as much as the responses among the seniors. Nineteen first years stated similar thoughts, in which one’s external beauty is the most important factor in television. Two seniors responded that one’s body type and being “good looking” as the most important factor in being on television. “One must [also] be unhealthily thin to be considered beautiful in commercials,” according to one senior. Overall, a woman must have perfect skin, hair, and body to fit the “ideal woman,” which is the only way to be considered beautiful in today’s media.

Real Beauty Portrayals

Lastly, the first years and seniors that stated that the media is improving in their commercials portraying 'real beauty' followed this theme in the findings. Only four first years stated that there is some 'real beauty' in today's commercials. Seven first years also mentioned Dove and Nike as the main advertisements showing 'real beauty.' While, the other first years said that some commercials do prove women are strong and that women do have significant roles in society. Lastly, 'real beauty' commercials illustrate powerful women fighting for equal rights in the world, compared to males. There were only two seniors who stated that commercials today do show 'real beauty' because of the various body types and a mixture of ethnicities. Eight of the senior women stated that there is an improvement in 'real beauty' representations. Five seniors mentioned Dove, Nike, and Bare Minerals as the main companies that show the strongest images of female beauty.

DISCUSSION

Women of all ages are exposed to media, which teaches everyone lessons about how the world should be viewed. The ways women are portrayed in television advertising, can lead to oppression or the continued belief that women are objects of male satisfaction. The 1970's saw a more feminist oriented programming (Smith 2011), however, there was an immense decrease in these shows in the 1980's. As people watch media portrayals of women, they develop an idea of how women are constructed. Women interpret the messages of television as guidance on how to behave (Smith 2011). Today, there has been progress in the

images of women on television, but women are still in need of better representation in the media.

The findings support that the media is displaying more positive images of women, but more needs to be done according to college women at Saint Mary's College. Only fourteen of the fifty-eight (24%) first years and seniors saw the increase of 'real beauty.' Television commercials are still not displaying enough positive images of women for college women viewers.

The only companies portraying strong women were companies that help "better" women. Dove, Bare Minerals, Degree, and Nike were the companies that portrayed 'real beauty.' Three of these companies sell skin-care products, for women to improve their skin, cover up blemishes, or to smell better. These are all perceived to be hygienic products that women should use to feel better. Trowler (1996) found in a study of women in advertising that women are seven times more likely to appear in personal hygiene product advertisements than not to appear. Nike markets that all women can be athletic, which overall promotes a healthy body, that women should aim for. The purpose of these companies is to overall improve women's bodies. Therefore, although companies are improving their portrayal of women, there needs to be a larger variety of companies that promote women's images beyond their bodies.

Courses on gender and women may contribute to differences in responses between first years and seniors. Only two of the twenty-eight first years (7%) have taken a course in gender or women; they have both taken the course Introduction to Women's Studies. On the other hand, fifteen of the thirty seniors (50%) have taken

at least one course on gender or women. Of these fifteen seniors, one hundred percent did not see 'real beauty' images in the media. These women had very critical definitions of 'real beauty,' thus why they could not see the positive images of women in the media. The other seniors who had never taken a gender focus course usually had narrow definitions of 'real beauty.' Of the fifteen seniors who had not taken a course on gender and women, ten of these women (67%) said that majority or some of television commercials do portray positive images of women. Courses on gender and women are likely to educate women on what truly are positive portrayals of women, which are not found in the media today.

For the first years, the majority, two out of twenty-eight (93%) did not see any 'real beauty' portrayals of women. The first years that had watched positive or negative commercials of women, had a greater total frequency of 'real beauty,' than the first years in the control group because they did not watch any form of media. Therefore, once the first years watched any form of media, their responses to what 'real beauty' is, became more critical, which is the reason for not seeing any positive images of women in the commercials. Overall, the first years in all three groups had more definitions of 'real beauty' compared to the seniors. For that reason, the first years did not see the positive images of women. This argument is difficult to apply to the seniors because they were influenced more by their gender focus course, rather than the actual content of the commercial.

Strengths and Weaknesses

This research is the first to study positive images of women in television commercials. The majority of the previous research has focused on the negative

portrayals of women in all types of advertisements. The only studies of positive images of women were conducted using print advertisements. This study is a small sample of students at Saint Mary's College that was generalized to other colleges and universities. As well, this study was not able to measure attitude changes in watching television, but rather examined differences in responses.

CONCLUSION

Television advertisements represent and reinforce mainstream ideology of what it means to be beautiful. These television representations of women have changed greatly in the last twenty years, in order to accommodate the changing role of women in society. Overall, this research found that companies are failing to change gender schema. Women are still typically portrayed in stereotypical roles, sexual objects, or being inferior to men. Therefore, commercials are teaching women to follow these roles and behaviors. However, despite the increase in commercials portraying women in a more favorable light, women's attitudes about commercials portraying positive images of women have changed very little.

Unfortunately, media is a commercial venture; it makes it hard to change the images portrayed. If marketers had a better understanding of gender or women's studies, their advertisements would reflect this. The way a first year views the portrayals of women is greatly affected by the positive or negative images they have seen. Whereas, the way a senior views the media's portrayal of women is influenced by a gender focus course. As women progress in their education on women and gender, they are less likely to be influenced by the media. Additionally, they are capable of being critical to the positive or negative images of women portrayed in

advertisements. For future studies, this research could be conducted again when the first years are seniors in 2016. It would be interesting to see if their responses have changed, due to their gender focus course. Hopefully, in three years, their responses are also impacted by 'real beauty' portrayals of women in majority of advertisements.

References

- Barletta, Martha. 2003. *Marketing to Women*. Dearborn Trade Publishing.
- Bem, Sandra Lipsitz. 1981. *Gender Schema Theory: A Cognitive Account of Sex Typing*. Cornell University: Psychological Review.
- Bem, Sandra Lipsitz. 1993. *The Lenses of Gender*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Cherry, Kendra. 2012. *What is Gender Schema Theory?*
http://psychology.about.com/od/gindex/g/def_genderschem.htm
- Dittmar, H. and Howard, S. 2004. *Professional Hazards? The Impact of Models' Body Size on Advertising Effectiveness and Women's Body-Focused anxiety in Professions that do and do not Emphasize the Cultural Ideal of Thinness*.
British Journal of Social Psychology.
- Fisher, Madeline. 2008. *Sweeping Analysis of Research Reinforces Media Influence on Women's Body Image*. <http://www.news.wisc.edu/15215>
- Fox, Kate. 1997. *Mirror Mirror: A Summary of Research Findings on Body Image*.
<http://www.sirc.org/publik/mirror.html>
- Heldman, Caroline. 2008. *Out-of-Body Image: Women See Themselves Through Eyes of Others*. http://www.alternet.org/movies/89999/out-of-body_image%3A_women_see_themselves_through_eyes_of_others/?page=2
- Hoegg, Nicole. 2005. *Dove's 'Real Beauty' Ads Send Positive Message to Women*.
<http://www.thebatt.com/2.8482/dove-s-real-beauty-ads-send-positive-message-to-women-1.1197854>

- Mazis, Michael B. and Beuttenmuller, Marilyn. 1972. *Attitudes Toward Women's Liberation and Perception of Advertisements*. University of Florida.
<http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/display.asp?id=11887>
- National Organization for Women. 2000-2011. *Love Your Body: Positive Ads*.
<http://loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org/positiveads.html>
- Sands, E. R. and Wardle, J. 2003. *Internalization of Ideal Body Shapes in 9-12 Year Old Girls*. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*.
- Schwitzer, A. M., Bergholz, K., Dore, T., and Salimi, L. 1998. *Eating Disorders Among College Women: Prevention, Education, and Treatment Responses*. *Journal of American College Health*.
- Serdar, Kasey L. 2005. *Female Body Image and the Mass Media: Perspectives on How Women Internalize the Ideal Body Standard*. Westminster College.
<http://www.westminstercollege.edu/myriad/index.cfm?parent=2514&detail=4475&content=4795>
- Smith, Nicole. 2011. *Analysis of Harmful Representations of Women in the Media*.
<http://www.articlemyriad.com/analysis-harmful-representations-women-media/>
- Stice, E. and Whitenton, K. 2002. *Risk Factors for Body Dissatisfaction in Adolescent Girls: A Longitudinal Investigation*. *Developmental Psychology*.
- Thompson, J. K. and Heinberg, L. J. 1999. *The Media's Influence on Body Image Disturbance and Eating Disorders: We've reviled them, now can we rehabilitate them?* *Journal of Social Issues*.

Trowler, Paul. 1996. *Investigating Mass Media: Sociology in Action*. Harper Collins Publishers.

Williams, Patti. 1995. *Female Role Portrayals in Print Advertising: Talking with Women about their Perceptions and their Preferences*. University of California at Los Angeles. <http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/display.asp?id=7851>

Appendix A. Sample of Consent Forms

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Experimental and Comparison Groups)

Department of Sociology
Saint Mary's College

You are invited to participate in a study of images of women in television commercials. I hope to learn the affects of positive and negative television commercials on a woman's gender identity. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a female college student enrolled at Saint Mary's. Your participation may lead to insights into the ways marketers portray women in positive or negative manners.

If you decided to participate, Caitlyn Holman, Sociology major from Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, will be conducting an experiment to understand the immediate reactions of women after watching television commercials. This process will take no more than fifteen minutes and will only occur once. There should be no discomforts or risks in this experiment. The television commercials being shown will be current commercials shown constantly on popular channels, thus there should be no physiological harm in watching the negative images of women. The questions asked after the experiment will be attitude questions on your opinion of women, in general. If you decide to participate, you will be helping me understand marketing to women successfully.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. A report of the findings will be given in academic settings and your comments will remain anonymous. Only the advisor, Dr. Leslie Wang and Caitlyn Holman will have access to the survey records. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with Saint Mary's College. You are free to discontinue your participation in the research at any time.

This research will last approximately fifteen minutes. If you have any questions about the survey, this form, the television commercials, or the overall research, please contact me (Caitlyn Holman) and I will be happy to answer your questions. You may contact me at (630) 484-6333. You may contact my faculty supervisor, Dr. Leslie Wang, at any time. If you would like a copy of my findings, please feel free to contact me.

Your signature below signals your agreement to participate in the interview. Your signature indicates you have read this information and have chosen to participate in this study. You may withdraw from this study at any time. Should you choose to withdraw from the study, your comments will not be included. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty. A copy of this form will be given to you to keep.

I hereby give my consent to participate in this study as a volunteer over the age of 18. I have been informed of the general nature and purpose of the study and I am aware of the expected duration of my participation in this study. Possible benefits of this study have been explained to me. I have been informed of the extent to which confidentiality of the records identifying me will be maintained and I have been instructed to whom to contact for answers to my questions concerning this exercise. I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I may discontinue my participation at any time, and that discontinuing participation will involve no penalty.

Signature of Participant: _____
Investigator: _____

Date: _____

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Control Groups)

Department of Sociology
Saint Mary's College

You are invited to participate in a study to understand how college aged women view women in the media. The overall goal is to learn the effects of positive and negative television commercials on a woman's gender identity. However, you will not be watching any of these television commercials, you will be coloring so that the researcher will have a control group in the experiment. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a female college student enrolled at Saint Mary's. Your participation may lead to insights into the ways marketers portray women in positive or negative manners.

If you decided to participate, Caitlyn Holman, Sociology major from Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, will be conducting an experiment to understand the initial thoughts of women who have not watched any content dealing with women's gender identity in the media. This process will take no more than fifteen minutes and will only occur once. There should be no discomforts or risks in this experiment. You will be participating in a coloring activity that has nothing to do with positive or negative images of women in the media. The questions asked after the experiment will be demographic and attitude questions on your opinion of women, in general. You are doing this because it allows the researcher to compare your answers to those of the women who will be watching the television commercials. If you decide to participate, you will be helping me understand marketing to women successfully.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. A report of the findings will be given in academic settings and your comments will remain anonymous. Only the advisor, Dr. Leslie Wang and Caitlyn Holman will have access to the survey records. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with Saint Mary's College. You are free to discontinue your participation in the research at any time.

This research will last approximately fifteen minutes. If you have any questions about the survey, this form, or the overall research, please contact me (Caitlyn Holman) and I will be happy to answer your questions. You may contact me at (630) 484-6333. You may contact my faculty supervisor, Dr. Leslie Wang, at any time. If you would like a copy of my findings, please feel free to contact me.

Your signature below signals your agreement to participate in the interview. Your signature indicates you have read this information and have chosen to participate in this study. You may withdraw from this study at any time. Should you choose to withdraw from the study, your comments will not be included. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty. A copy of this form will be given to you to keep.

I hereby give my consent to participate in this study as a volunteer over the age of 18. I have been informed of the general nature and purpose of the study and I am aware of the expected duration of my participation in this study. Possible benefits of this study have been explained to me. I have been informed of the extent to which confidentiality of the records identifying me will be maintained and I have been instructed to whom to contact for answers to my questions concerning this exercise. I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I may discontinue my participation at any time, and that discontinuing participation will involve no penalty.

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Investigator: _____

Appendix B. Sample of Survey Questions

1. How old are you? Please list
2. What year are you in at Saint Mary's?
 - First Year
 - Senior
3. What is your major(s)? Please list
4. What is your minor(s)? Please list
5. Have you ever taken a class dealing with gender, as the main topic in a college or high school? (I.e. Women's Studies, Masculinities, etc.)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
6. If you answered yes to the question above, number 5, please list the class or classes?
7. On average, how much television do you watch per day? (In hours)
 - 0
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5-6
 - 7-8
 - 8+
 - Other
8. How would you define 'real beauty'?
9. According to your definition of real beauty, do you believe television commercials, in general, portray this successfully? Please explain

Appendix C. Tables 1-3: Findings of ‘Real Beauty’ Definitions

Table 1. Experimental Group (Positive Commercials) First Years vs. Seniors
(Percentages based on 10 first years and 10 seniors)

CHARACTERISTICS	POSITIVE FIRST YEARS	POSITIVE SENIORS
Confident	3 (30%)	4 (40%)
Internal Beauty	3 (30%)	1 (10%)
Physically Healthy	2 (20%)	2 (20%)
Emotionally Strong	3 (30%)	0
Positive Personality (Good Character)	3 (30%)	0
Respectful	2 (20%)	1 (10%)
Accepting (Open-minded)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)
Appearance	2 (20%)	0
Intelligent	2 (20%)	0
Kind	2 (20%)	0
Moral	2 (20%)	0
Happy	0	1 (10%)
All Ages	0	1 (10%)
All Ethnicities	0	1 (10%)
All Genders	0	1 (10%)
All Sexual Orientations	0	1 (10%)
Fearless	0	1 (10%)
Just	1 (10%)	0
Loving	1 (10%)	0
TOTAL	28	18

Table 2. Comparison Group (Negative Commercials) First Years vs. Seniors
(Percentages based on 10 first years and 10 seniors)

CHARACTERISTICS	NEGATIVE FIRST YEARS	NEGATIVE SENIORS
Positive Personality (Good Character)	4 (40%)	3 (30%)
Confident	2 (20%)	3 (30%)
Internal Beauty	3 (30%)	2 (20%)
Unique	1 (10%)	2 (20%)
Accepting (Open-minded)	2 (20%)	0
Appearance	1 (10%)	1 (10%)
Intelligent	2 (20%)	0
All Ages	0	1 (10%)
All Ethnicities	0	1 (10%)
All Sexual Orientations	0	1 (10%)
Charismatic	0	1 (10%)
Fearless	0	1 (10%)
Humorous	1 (10%)	0
TOTAL	18	18

Table 3. Control Group (Coloring Activity) First Years vs. Seniors
(Percentages based on 8 first years and 10 seniors)

CHARACTERISTICS	CONTROL FIRST YEARS	CONTROL SENIORS
Positive Personality (Good Character)	7 (88%)	4 (40%)
Kind	5 (63%)	2 (20%)
Internal Beauty	1 (13%)	3 (30%)
Respectful	1 (13%)	3 (30%)
Average Size	3 (38%)	0
Confident	1 (13%)	2 (20%)
Emotionally Strong	3 (38%)	0
Loving	3 (38%)	0
Generous	1 (13%)	1 (10%)
Humorous	2 (25%)	0
Moral	2 (25%)	0
Intelligent	1 (13%)	0
Unique	1 (13%)	0
TOTAL	33	15