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

• How do college women view ‘real beauty’ portrayals of women in television commercials?
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**
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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
References

- Cherry, Kendra. 2012. *What is Gender Schema Theory?* [http://psychology.about.com/od/gindex/g/def_genderschem.htm](http://psychology.about.com/od/gindex/g/def_genderschem.htm)
References