

ABSTRACT

Influence of fashion industry and media on individual body perceptions held by female college students as compared to perceptions held by middle-aged females

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Fixation on body shape and attaining societal beauty ideals is no new concept. History shows that body shaping can be dated back to early civilization. Modern American culture heavily emphasizes the female body, and clearly suggests an ideal form. Contrasting the reality of the body size/ shape of the modern American woman, the commonly held female beauty ideal in modern western society emphasizes thinness. This study examines the presence of body dissatisfaction among college females at a private Southern University, as compared to middle-aged females from the same region. Body dissatisfaction was found to decrease with age, and body ideal perceptions tend to become increasingly realistic, attainable, and “healthy” as age increases.

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INFLUENCE OF FASHION INDUSTRY AND MEDIA ON INDIVIDUAL BODY
PERCEPTIONS HELD BY FEMAL COLLEGE STUDENTS AS COMPARED TO
PERCEPTIONS HELD BY MIDDLE-AGED FEMALES

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	
Purpose and Scope of Report	1
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
Historical Account of Body Shaping Methods	2
Body Image	18
Body Type	19
Media Research	
Television	20
Advertising	20
Fashion Industry and Fashion Magazines	21
Body Image Ideals as implied by <i>Vogue</i> Magazine 1960-2013	
Photo Manipulation	37
Statement of Hypotheses	41
3. METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN	
Survey Design and Procedures	43
Strengths and Limitations of Study	44

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS	
Descriptive Statistics	45
5. DISCUSSION	
Summary of Study	48
Recommendations for Further Study	51
6. CONCLUSION	
Conclusions of Study	52
APPENDIX	53
REFERENCES	58

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Purpose and Scope of Report

The intent of this work is to further study the effects of media on body image perceptions held by females. Previous research suggests that there is a positive correlation between media consumption and body image satisfaction. It has also been found that mass media, namely advertisements and fashion magazines, plays a large role in dissemination of the ultra-thin female body ideal. Many counterparts of the fashion industry have taken steps to try and provide a healthier image, however, most attempts are met with little success, as this thin ideal is a widespread cultural phenomenon.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Historical Account of Body Shaping Methods

Fixation on body shape and attaining societal beauty ideals is no new concept. History shows that body shaping can be dated back to early civilization; however, I will start with details from the Minoan civilization (2000-1400 BC), because the first known fitted bodice, or better known as the corset, can be dated to this time period (History of Fashion, 2007). A corset can be defined as “a close fitting article of clothing, typically worn under other layers of clothing, used to shape the body” (Lorraine, 2009). The Minoans were one of the earliest known cultures to show complexity in the way in which clothes were worn and the body was shaped. In the Minoan culture, waists were commonly bound with wide belts, and Minoan women were known to wear strapless fitted bodices, variations of which later became known as corsets. Corseting has been used by women throughout history as a way to mold the female body into a desired form. The fitted bodice/ corset reappeared in the Renaissance period, more than 3000 years after it was introduced by the Minoans (History of Fashion, 2007).

In the 13th Century, and the introduction of the surcoat marked a notable point where fashions were worn to achieve desired body silhouettes. For women, the surcoat was an outer-coat garment typically made of rich voluminous fabrics, which altered the female silhouette. Another notable silhouette shift in the medieval period was that gowns from this period forward traditionally had tight, elongated bodices and full skirts (figure 1.1). Following the Mediaeval period was the Gothic period, during which the waistline

was shifted up to right below the bust-line, and the defined body shape lost popularity (History of Fashion, 2007). An interesting silhouette shift took place during this period when the “pregnancy” look became popular. To achieve this look many women would stuff their gowns to add fullness around the midsection (figure 1.2).



Figure 1.1: Mediaeval- 13th Century (History of Fashion, 2007)



Figure 1.2: Gothic Period- “Pregnancy” Look (History of Fashion, 2007)

What can be categorized as the Elizabethan Era lasted from 1558 to 1603. During this time women displayed their fashion styles in many different ways and used numerous methods to change their perceived body shape. The most common silhouettes of this time included puffy sleeves, tight-fitting bodices, and voluminous ruffles (History

of Fashion, 2007). The common corsets of this time were the Effigy Elizabethan Corsets (figure 1.3). The Effigy corsets were used to dramatically lift the breasts and pull in the waist (Lorraine, 2009). Although corsets were used to minimize the waist and bust, the dramatic silhouette alteration during this time period came through inflated collars, sleeves, skirts, etc. (figure 1.4). Women used clothing to make themselves appear thinner in certain areas; this was commonly achieved by having a fitted bodice and then dramatically inflating the sleeves, or skirt, which would visually draw in the waist. Elizabethan women's silhouettes during this time mimicked the masculine body shape; with broad shoulders, wide hips, and slim waists (History of Fashion, 2007).



Figure 1.3: Effigy Corset (*Lorraine, 2009*)



Figure 1.4: Elizabethan Era
(*History of Fashion, 2007*)

The year 1600-1650 marked the period of the “Rubenesque” woman; characterized by a full, voluptuous body. Talented artist Peter Paul Rubens was famous for celebrating the natural, naked, unaltered beauty of women. Many of his paintings portrayed nude, curvaceous women. One particular painting, titled *The Three Graces* (1639) (figure 1.5), is an exquisite depiction of the true female form, which was neither gaunt nor obese. During this time excess body fat was seen as a sign of good health, wealth, and beauty. The female silhouette that was popular in the Elizabethan Era lost many of the artificial elements; sleeves and necklines flattened, and waistlines softened and broadened (figure 1.6) (History of Fashion, 2007). The Baroque Era began at the same time as the Rubenesque figure was celebrated (1600), and continued through 1650. Silhouettes of the Baroque Era were dominated by full sleeves and skirts. Corseting was common throughout this time; however, there was not a heavy influence on slimming the waist or creating dramatic curves (History of Fashion, 2007).



Figure 1.5: *The Three Graces* – Rubens (1639) (Terminartors, Web)



Figure 1.6: Baroque Era (History of Fashion, 2007)

Popular fashions changed in 1650, the new desired silhouette was one characterized by long, lean lines rather than broad, high-waisted curves. Women still turned to corsetry to mold their bodies, particularly with corsets designed to mold the torso into a cylindrical shape, and to flatten and raise the bust line (Leed, n.d.). This alteration resulted in a tall, narrow, cylindrical silhouette (figures 1.7), which was achieved through the use of an Effigy corset (figure 1.3). Effigy corsets were not meant to dramatically draw in the waist or create an exaggerated hourglass figure, but to lift the breasts and slenderize the torso.



Figure 1.7: Late 1600s Cylindrical Silhouette (History of Fashion, 2007)

Silhouettes again changed during the period from 1700 to 1750. The popular silhouette characterizing this period was one featuring a small waist and wide, full skirt

(figure 1.8), which is a contrast to the tall, narrow look of the late 1600s (History of Fashion, 2007). This period marked the first time that stiffened undergarments became widely known as “corsets,” (which have been defined in the text above). During the Revolution from 1750 to 1795 the silhouette of the lower body changed dramatically. The traditionally used hoop-skirts of the 1740s were replaced with wide panniers, which dramatically held the skirts out at each side (History of Fashion, 2007). The aesthetic of a narrow, corseted torso (similar to that of the Elizabethan Era) above a dramatically full pannier skirt prevailed during most of this period (figures 1.9 and 1.10). This use of corseting exemplifies the intrinsic desire to mold the shape of the body to fit societal norms, and ideals. The corseting ideal at this time was to create an inverted cylindrical/tubular body shape, emphasizing the bust and shoulders while elongating and minimizing the waist.



Figure 1.8: 1700s (History of Fashion, 2007)



Figure 1.9: Pannier (History of Fashion, 2007)



Figure 1.10: Pannier (Buxton, 1989, p.34)

The Empire silhouette was popular from 1795 to 1820. During this period, tightly laced corsets and dramatically altered figures were briefly forsaken in favor of a high-waisted, slim-skirted, natural silhouette. Dresses of this period were closely-fitted to the torso just under the breasts, with the skirt falling loosely below (History of Fashion, 2007) (figure 1.11). This silhouette was noticeably different from those common during the 18th century and the rest of the 19th century, which were characterized by being tight against the torso and full-skirted below (History of Fashion, 2007). The empire waistline and the natural, flowy skirts drew attention away from, and covered the natural waist, virtually eliminating the need for corseting at the waist.



Figure 1.11: Empire Waist, 1795-1820 (History of Fashion, 2007)

Although the natural silhouette visited in the early 1800s was beautiful, this ideal did not last long. The Romantic period of the 1830s re-adopted many of the silhouette elements that had been characteristic of most of the 18th century, such as full skirts and clearly visible corseting of the natural waist (figure 1.12). This ever-present ideal was very popular and maintained popularity through the 19th century (History of Fashion, 2007). It is interesting to note the change in silhouette from 1800-1830 and the shift in, and amount of definition of the waistline. The desired silhouette dramatically changes from a natural, cylindrical shape, to an exaggerated hour-glass figure with a cinched waist and inflated sleeves and skirt (1.13) (Buxton, 1989, p.30).



Figure 1.12: 1830s (History of Fashion, 2007)



Figure 1.13: Silhouette Shifts (Buxton, 1989, p.30)

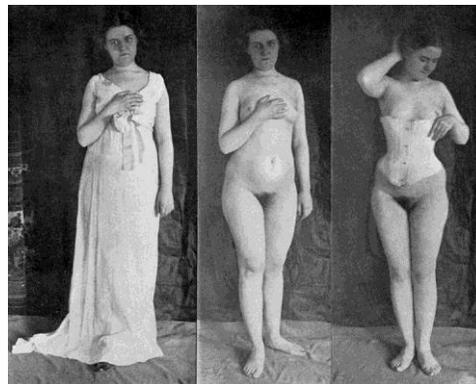


Figure 1.14: Corsetry Shaping Visual (Shufeldt, 1908)

The Victorian Era from 1837 to 1901 continued to espouse the ideal of a curvaceous, hour-glass silhouette. The desired body ideal of this time was to have a full, low bust and tiny, cinched waist. The body type for women was plump, fleshy, and full-figured; however, the women wore restrictive corsets, which made waists artificially small while accentuating the hips and buttocks, creating the ideal silhouette for females during this period. An interesting series of images by Robert Wilson Shufeldt featured in his book *Studies of the human form for artists, sculptors, and scientists*, depict a nude female with and without a corset; giving a great example of the way in which these garments changed the shape of the female silhouette (1908) (figure 1.14). The Rational

Dress Society was founded in 1881 in reaction to the extremes of fashionable corsetry (History of Fashion, 2007). In the very late 1890s the traditional corset was abandoned in favor of an elongated corset called the Swan-bill corset. The Swan-bill corset was used to create an illusion of slimmer waist by forcing the hips back and the bust forward, giving the women a slight S-curve silhouette that proved to be popular for many years to come (figures 1.15 and 1.16). The skirts of the 1890s fell more naturally over the hips than they had in the late 1700s and 1830s. These changes set the new beauty ideal as a long, lean female form, de-emphasizing the dramatic curves noted as fashionable during the early Victorian Era.



Figure 1.15: 1890s Swan-Bill Corset, S-Curve (BlogSpot, Web)



Figure 1.16: 1900s Corset (Buxton, 1989, p. 37)

The 1900s continued what began in the 1880s and confirmed the silhouette shift from curvy to long and lean (figure 1.17). It was at this time that columnar slenderness became truly fashionable. Coco Chanel, a prominent women's fashion designer, sought to liberate women from the constraints of corset, and hence began an era of simple, linear, unstructured clothing (Lasek & Gaulin 2012). During this time period there were cultural shifts in which the norms of what was considered to be acceptable activities for women changed. Women began taking an increasing interest in athletic activities such as tennis and bicycling, and the concept of maintaining 'ideal weights' became popular. The concept of using a formula to measure one's body fat was developed in 1832 by a Belgian statistician, Adolphe Quetelet (Singer-Vine, 2009). Quetelet developed the formula of measuring a persons' weight divided by the square of their height. This method is what we now call BMI, or Body Mass Index, which was adopted in 1900 as a standard measurement for obesity. During the early 1900s the perceived physically perfect woman was 5'4" tall and weighed "10 Stone" which is equivalent to 140 pounds (TheSite, 2009), this would translate to a body mass index (BMI) of 24, which, according to the modern standard of BMI measurement (figure1.19), this would be considered healthy today.



Figure 1.17: Long and Lean Female Figure (History of Fashion, 2007)

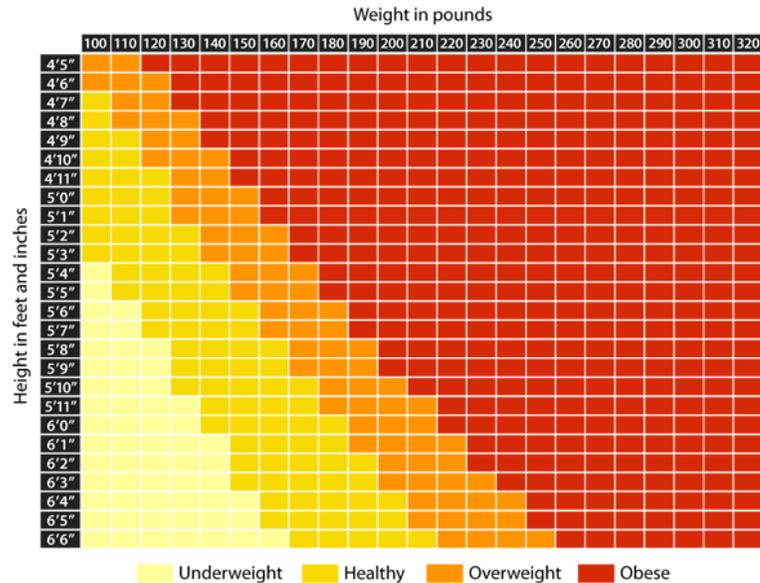


Figure 1.19: BMI Chart (Tumblr, 2012)

Throughout many of the previously described time periods, Buxton describes that corsets were used to “mold” the female body to mimic the desired shape of the “fashionable female” or what now is considered the ideal body image (1989 p.37). In the 19th century corsets laced in the back and were made from cotton fabric with strong supports made of wood, whalebone, or metal which ran down the center, to flatten the stomach, and down the sides to give the “required” (desired) shape (Buxton, 1989, p.37). The idea of lacing the corsets was to make the waist as small as possible. According to Buxton, “despite the 19th century accounts, claims to waists of as little as 14 inches are probably causes of wishful thinking. Most of the 19th century dresses in the V&A [Victoria and Albert Museum] correspond with the modern sizes 12 or 14—too large for present day store dummies” (p.38, 1989).

Continuing with the silhouette transformation of the early 1900s, the 1920s brought an era where the previously idealized Victorian hourglass figure lost popularity and gave way to the idea of a straight, petite figure (History of Fashion, 2007). From this idea emerged the widely known ‘flapper’ silhouette. To achieve this look, women would bind their breasts to create a completely flat bust profile (“Body image timeline”, 2009).

After World War I, lifestyles changed and many women became more active, and took on many new roles both at home and in the workplace. Contrasting to earlier perceptions of body fat, excess body fat was now “perceived to contribute to inefficiency and was seen as a sign of self-indulgence” (“Body image timeline”, 2009). The newly popular boyish, flat figure was a significant transformation from the tight-laced, emphasized curves previously desired.

Following World War II, post-war abundance in the 1950s was reflected in a new commonly desired body shape, as the desire to enhance female curves resurfaced. During this time, thin women with large bust lines were considered most attractive, and were held as the female body ideal. The epitome of this ideal could be found in cultural icon Marilyn Monroe. Marilyn set a new standard for American women, who suddenly felt the need to augment and exhibit the curves they had previously tried to bind and restrain. Marilyn was the quintessence of curviness in the 1950s, standing 5 foot 5.5 inches tall, and measuring (37”-23”-36”) (bust-waist-hips –in inches). Marilyn had an estimated weight of 115 pounds (IMDB), equating to a BMI of around 19. Marilyn was held to have the ideal body shape in the 1950s, however that curvaceous ideal changed in 1960s, when boyish slenderness became the most important indicator of physical attractiveness following the popularity of fashion model, Twiggy Lawson. During this time, Twiggy

was 5 foot 6.5 inches tall, weighing 90 pounds and measuring (31”-23”-32”) (Burburgh, n.d.). These measurements would give Twiggy a BMI of 14.3, which is well below the normal range of 18.4-24.9. It is interesting to note that Twiggy was the first underweight woman to be the widely desired standard for the ideal body type.

There is a stark contrast between the body shapes of Marilyn and Twiggy (figure 1.25). Both women were idealized (by both men and women), and became standards of body shape that most Americans’ viewed as the ideal shape. Both women were, to an extent, products of the media, and it can be argued that they can be considered the inception for media creating ideals which women strive to attain.



Figure 1.20: Marilyn v. Twiggy (Kallen94, 2012)

Media-driven thin ideals continued throughout the 1970s and 80s, with an increased emphasis on fitness, and exercise. Much of the content featured in popular magazines had a greater emphasis on fitness and health than years before, and much of the magazines transitioned into using thinner models, rather than the curvaceous models of years before (“Body image timeline”, 2009).

The 1990s ideal, continuing on to present day, highlights slenderness coupled with a large bust. Large breasts are still commonly held as an American standard of beauty, of which more details will be provided in the following chapters. The introduction and subsequent fame of Mattel's Barbie doll had an interesting impact on this standard. The Barbie doll was introduced in 1959, and the popularity of this doll is astounding. Statistics provided by Margo Maine in her book "Body Wars: Making Peace with Women's Bodies: An Activists Guide" state that there are two Barbie dolls sold each second, and that the target market are girls aged 3-12, and most girls acquire 7 Barbie dolls on average though the duration of their childhood (Maine, 2000). Research performed in 2011 by Galia Slayen, a student at Hamilton College, shows that if Barbie were an actual woman, she would be 5 foot 9 inches tall, have a 39" bust, an 18" waist, and 33" hips (figures 1.21 and 1.22). Slayen notes that the 1965 Slumber Party Barbie came with a bathroom scale marked with the weight of 110 pounds, and a book titled "How to Lose Weight" which gave directions inside that stated "don't eat" (2011). With a "life-size" height of 5'9" and a weight of 110 pounds, if Barbie were a real woman she would have a BMI of 16.24, which is extremely underweight, yet somewhat commonplace for many models.



Figure 1.21: Barbie Doll Proportions (Scarlett, 2010)



Figure 1.22: Life-Size Barbie Doll Proportions (Slayen, 2011)

It is increasingly popular for Body Mass Index (BMI) to be used as a measure for ‘healthy weight.’ This index categorizes people by their height/weight ratio into classes of underweight, healthy weight, and overweight, and obese. The Center for Disease Control (CDC, 2011) now uses separate BMI index for adults (20+) and Children. Adult BMI (table 1.1) is calculated by dividing weight in pounds by height in inches squared, and multiplying the number by a conversion factor of 703. A study by Ferguson, Munoz, Contreras & Velasquez has found that women within the normal BMI range are most satisfied with their bodies; whereas, underweight women are nearly as dissatisfied with their bodies as overweight women (2011).

Calculated BMI Value	Weight Classification
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5-24.9	Normal
25.0-29.9	Overweight
30.0 and Above	Obese

Table 1.1: Adult BMI Chart (CDC, 2011)

Body Image

Body image can be defined as “a persons’ positive or negative satisfaction with her body size” (Eggermont, 2005). Body image is an internally held perception which can be shaped by many external factors including the mass media and other sociocultural influences, the most powerful and pervasive of these forces being the mass media (Groesz, Levine, & Murnen, 2002). Internal factors including self-esteem have a large influence of body image perception, especially for females. Internal esteem can also be influenced by external factors, it is affected by the reflection of the opinions that others have about you. Essentially, body image and self esteem are majorly dependent on internalization of external influences.

Cultural ideals of body image, specifically the American ideal, are widely shaped by the mass media (Groesz, Levine, & Murnen, 2002). As apparent from previous literature, the body size portrayed in mass media has become increasing smaller. The media-fed “thin-ideal” stems from media displaying noticeably thin females as focal points of advertisements, television programs, movies, etc.(Van-Vondreen, 2012). According to Lasek and Gaulin, “A woman’s image of the ideal figure is not subject to the same evolutionary pressures as a man’s is; it is much more influenced by the culture she lives in” (2012). The currently held cultural female body ideal stresses the desirability of thinness; this can be verified through analysis of fashion and media images which display an abundance of young, tall, extremely thin women (Fotus & Burggraff, 1999, 2000).

Body Type

Jean Kilbourne the author of many articles and books, including *Can't Buy my Love*, points out that fewer than five percent of women are genetically predisposed to have the “modelesque” body type. Most models are genetically tall, thin, long-legged, and have a V-shape body type with broad shoulders, a small chest, and even smaller waist. This genetic variance excludes 95 percent of the population, making it nearly physically impossible for most women to attain this ideal (Kilbourne, 1999, p.124). The typical woman has a pear-shaped body type, which is contrastingly different than the V-shape; in fact, it is almost entirely opposite (figure 2.1). In modern American cultures, women are conditioned to attempt to transform their body shape to fit/ emulate the societal ideal.

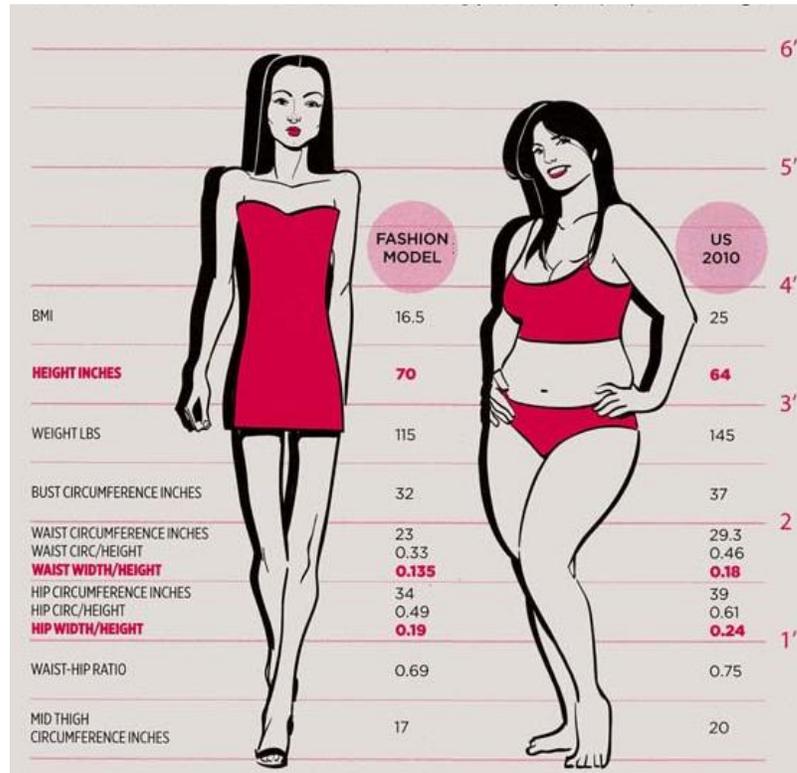


Figure 2.1: Body Type Comparison (Lassek & Gaulin, 2012)Media Research

Television

The mass media is by far the most powerful, and convincing transmitter for sociocultural ideals (Groez, Levine, & Murnen, 2002), and it has been widely researched and concluded that mass media has a negative impact on body image satisfaction, as media sources exhibit the (unrealistic) thin female ideal. It has however been found that television has much less of a negative impact as do magazines, particularly fashion magazines (Tiggemann, 2003). A study done at Texas A&M University has shown that television did not influence body dissatisfaction (Ferguson, Munoz, Contreras & Velasquez, 2011).

Advertising

The Advertising Industry is currently over a 250 billion dollar per year industry, capitalizing on the dissatisfaction of consumers (Kilbourne, 2010). The average American is exposed to nearly 3000 advertisements per day, and spends nearly two years of his or her life watching television commercials (Kilbourne, 2010). Advertising is intended to affect the consumer in a quick, subconscious way. According to Rance Crain, former Senior Editor of Advertising Advantage, “only eight percent of an ad’s message is received by the conscious mind. The rest is worked and reworked deep within the subconscious” (Kilbourne, 2010). Consequently, whatever ideals advertisements and media outlets display become subconsciously engrained into members of society, subtly forming cultural norms and expectations. As Jean Kilbourne puts it, advertising creates a “toxic cultural environment” in which it is “unhealthy” to live (2010). Anne Bolin, an

anthropologist at Elon College has said: “I think it would be nice if hating the way you look weren’t so good for the economy. [...] We know, too, that women in ads, knockouts to start with, are artificially perfected beyond human emulation. We know, but we forget” (Jim F, 2013). Advertising thrives on the concept of failure. Advertisers profit when consumers take action due to dissatisfaction. Most advertisements *create* this perceived dissatisfaction. Advertisements surround women with an image of the ideal female, and girls are conditioned from a young age to believe that those ideals can be attained through the right amount of work, products, enhancements, etc. In reality, failure is inevitable for the majority seeking to attain those ideals because this cultural beauty ‘ideal’ is built upon absolute flawlessness. The models commonly appearing flawless in advertisements and in magazine spreads, are not actually as perfect as their appearances are manipulated to be. Advertisements have been shown to not only affect the way women perceive themselves, but also how men feel about *real* women. It has been proven that after men view images of models that fit the culturally created beauty ideal, they often judge real women much more critically. It has also been found, in studies of magazine exposure, that when presented with average-size models in print advertisements, females have a more positive body satisfaction than when exposed to images of thin-models (Dittmar, Halliwell, & Stirling, 2009).

Fashion Industry and Fashion Magazines

Body Image Ideals as Implied by Vogue Magazine 1960-2013

The thin female beauty ideal has been heavily broadcast and emphasized by the mass media; and fashion and beauty magazines have been identified as the largest source of propagation of the extremely thin female body ideal (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008;

Malkin, Wornian, & Chrisler, 1999; Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, & Kelly 1986). Similarly to the eras of clothing, eras of body types seen on runways and in print advertisements for the fashion industry can be analyzed. In this section I parallel the introduction and timeline of media-sensationalized fashion models, with images and articles from the popular fashion magazine *Vogue*. These images span from 1960 (and the introduction of Twiggy), to present day. Although the portrayals of ultra-thin women in fashion magazines has not had a permanent or lasting impact on the American woman's physical body shape, it has absolutely had an impact on how women think about themselves, affecting self-esteem and body image. There is an obvious consistency among females portrayed in fashion magazines; this being tallness coupled with extreme thinness. A study by Lasek & Gaulin has found that women are much less satisfied with their own bodies after viewing images of thin models featured in fashion magazines (2012); thus inspiring this retrospection of the female beauty ideal as presented over time by *Vogue*.

As previously noted, Twiggy Lawson (figure 2.2) was the first ultra-famous fashion model to popularize the ultra-thin 'waif' look. This slender 1960's body ideal set a firm foot in the ground for the ultra thin models to continue to gain popularity. The May 1960 issue of *Vogue* magazine advertizes a swimsuit (figure 2.3) with "gratifying impulse to control and smooth lithe curves...a natural for figures that "just miss being perfect" (*Vogue*, (135), 1960).



Figure 2.2: Twiggy Lawson 1960 (buffalo.edu)

The 1970s in *Vogue* continued to use pictures of ultra-slender, long, lean models. The October 1970 cover (figure 2.3) advertised headlines such as “What the Experts Can Do for Your Looks” and “Choose Your Own Nose...Advice from the Plastic surgeons” (*Vogue*, (156-6) p.81, 1970). The inside boasted ads similar to the one for “The Sauna Belt,” hip and thigh slimmer, and waistline reducer (figure 2.4). The April 1975 cover advertised “A Whole New Way to Look at Yourself!” (figure 2.5), and the inside featured a spread that asked “Are you letting new body freedoms ruin your shape?” and gave advice on how to “Stay Lean.” These two *Vogue* issues alone are perfect examples of body image ideals that have been around for decades; ideals which media images exacerbate.



The 6-oz. bathing suit—
 a marvel for figures that just
 miss being perfect, because
 it's made of lycra, a springy
 new fibre with a gratifying
 impulse to control and smooth
 (the curves. Because it's
 practically weightless this suit
 dries in something resembling
 a flash, swims on and on and
 on. By Elisabeth Stewart.
 Brown printed on grey. About
 \$26 at Saks Fifth Avenue;
 Harfield's, Neiman-Marcus.

Figure 2.3 (*Vogue*, (135), 1960)



Figure 2.4 (*Vogue*, (156-6) p.81, 1970)



Figure 2.5 (*Vogue*, (165), 1975)

The cover of April 1980 *Vogue* was titled “Vogue Fit,” and headlined “What it Takes to Look Terrific (figure 2.6). On the inside of the magazine there is a cosmetics

advertisement (figure 2.7) which shows a “before” image of a woman, labeling all of her “issues”. Her face is “too wide”, skin “too blotchy,” she has “bags under her eyes,” her eyes are “too small”... “HELP!” on the right is and “after” image, displaying her “new beautiful face” after putting on the right makeup (*Vogue*, (170), 1980). The October 1985 *Vogue* cover displays a headline which reads: “beauty—what’s perfect, what’s changed, what counts.” The body of this said article contains text reading “The moment we are born, our parents...pronounce us perfect. And perfect we try to continue to be...falling inevitably short of the mark.” The article goes on to detail that perfection should no longer be a uniform standard but individualistic ideals. Women should define their own perfection. Great message, however the article goes on to give ‘signals of change’ including images and instructions for women to get “a stronger mouth,” “more eyes, a strong brow” etc. (*Vogue*, (175), 1985). The article denounces the commonly held ideal of beauty, yet then goes on to subtly instruct women on how their features should look (figures 2.8 through 2.11). There was some change in 1980s, (although not necessarily towards a more positive female body image).



Figure 2.6 (*Vogue*, (170), 1980)



Figure 2.7 (*Vogue*, (170) pp.168-169, 1980)



Figure 2.8 (*Vogue*, (175), pp.482-483), 1985)



Figures 2.9-2.11 (*Vogue*, (175), pp.492-497), 1985)

The 1980s engendered the beginning of the media created 'supermodel'.

Supermodels marked the moment when models were no longer merely known on the

runways and in print, but many of them rose to achieve great fame both on and off the runway. Models such as Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington, Claudia Schiffer Naomi Campbell, Janice Dickinson (to name a few) became household names and symbols of pop culture in the 1990s.

January 1990 began with a British *Vogue* cover (figure 2.12) presenting five models: Naomi Campbell, Christy Turlington, Cindy Crawford, Linda Evangelista, and Tatiana Patitz ((British *Vogue*, (1), 1990). These women had gradually attained fame since the mid-1980s, and were now the industry's most famous faces. A photo of most of the same women in American *Vogue* in 1994 was captioned as a “six-pack of supermodels” (figure 2.13) (Bowles, H., (202-9) p.527, 2012). This idea of a long-legged, slender, “bombshell” woman became the body image ideal of the “supermodel era.” The October 1990 cover of *Vogue* (figure 2.14) featured supermodel Cindy Crawford, as well as headlines which read “From Natural to Knockout” and “Thin Promises: the Lowdown on Diets” (*Vogue*, (180), 1990). Another beauty ideal introduced in the 1990s was the introduction of ‘Heroin chic’ by famous supermodel Kate Moss. ‘Heroin chic’ was denoted by dark eyes, pale skin, and an angular bone structure. The look was enhanced by emaciated features, glamorizing extreme thinness. The year 1995 brought an increased emphasis on beauty and thinness. The May 1995 issue of *Vogue* displayed a headline which read “From Stairmaster to Scalpel: In Pursuit of Perfection” (*Vogue*, (185),1995). An inside article titled “Stairmaster to Heaven” depicted a very thin model, in a gym-type setting, surrounded by men (figure 2.15) (Freidman, V. (185) p.208, 1995). Another article inside the issue titled “The Body in Fashion” talks about the latest trends for clothing and swimwear, but warns: “There is one caveat that comes with these sexy

fashions: They demand a body at its personal peak” (Vogue point of view, *Vogue* (185-5) p.254, 1995). The following article titled “Surgical Sculpture” depicts a photo of an ultra thin, tanned female in small black bikini (figure 2.16) (Jaret, P., *Vogue* (185-5) p.286-290, 1995); this alludes to the idea that surgery can give a woman this amazing body that is “required” in order to wear the latest fashions, and on the directly adjacent page there is an article about the “Mental Makeover” stating that there is “finally, new research showing how we can *learn* to like our looks” (Pike, *Vogue* (185-5) p.291,1995). A final photo from *Vogue* in 1995, depicting another super-lean woman in a tiny black bikini (figure 2.17) reiterates the blatant contradictions posed to females reading these magazines. They only show tall, thin, lean, beautiful models and they give tips for attempting to attain this ‘perfect’ female body ideal that they advertise, all while reinforcing the idea that women are individuals, and unique, and should learn to like their own look.



Figure 2.12 (British *Vogue*, (1), 1990).



Figure 2.13 (Bowles, H., (202-9) p.527, 2012)



Figure 2.14 (*Vogue*, (180), 1990).



Figure 2.15 (Freidman, V. (185) p.208, 1995)



Figure 2.16 (Jaret, P., *Vogue*, p.286-290, 1995)



Figure 2.17 (Pike, *Vogue* (185-5) p.291, 1995)

The 2000s marked a decade where ultra-thin was still not thin enough. The May 2000 issue of *Vogue* has supermodel Gisele Bundchen (who had a BMI of 16) on the cover, and inside there are swimsuit editorials featuring shockingly thin models. In one of these images, the model's legs are exceptionally long and unrealistically thin (even for a long-legged, thin model), and in the other photo, the model's chest bones are alarmingly protruding (figure 2.18 and 2.19) (Fashion, *Vogue*, (190), 2000).



Figure 2.18 (Fashion, *Vogue* (190), 2000)



Figure 2.19 (Fashion, *Vogue* (190), 2000)

The thinness of models in the September 2005 issue of *Vogue* is increasingly alarming. An advertisement by Neiman Marcus displays a startlingly tall, thin model wearing an exquisitely desirable evening gown (figure 2.20) (Advertisement, *Vogue* (194) p.211, 2005). In the same issue another candid photo taken behind the scenes at a photo shoot gives the image of four very happy, yet extremely thin, models (figure 2.21) (Andre, L. T., (194), *Vogue*, 2005). These images glamorize the tall, skeletal beauty ideal; an ideal, which most models themselves feel pressure to attain. Model Kate Moss was quoted saying that one of her life mottos is: “nothing tastes as good as skinny feels” (Kilbourne, 2010). Sadly, Kate Moss’s motto seems to be one that was held by too many

models throughout the 2000s. Ana Carolina Reston was a model who died in 2006; At the time of her death she was 5 foot 8 inches tall and weighed 88 pounds, resulting in a BMI of 13.4. Astoundingly, Ana Reston was walking runways and modeling at this severely emaciated weight (figures 2.22, and 2.23), until she died (Siverman,S., 2006). Another model who died in 2006 due to complications of her extreme thinness was Luisel Ramos (figure 2.24). Luisel collapsed and died at the age of 22, right after she completed a runway show. Luisel was 5 foot 9 inches tall and weighed 97 pounds, giving her a BMI of 14.3 at the time she walked down the runway. A few years later, in 2009, model Isabelle Caro (figure 2.25) died after a very public and severe battle with anorexia.



Figure 2.20 (Advertisement, *Vogue* (194) p.211, 2005)



Figure 2.21(Andre, L. T., (194),*Vogue*, 2005)



Figure 2.22: Ana Carolina Reston (Silverman,S., 2006)

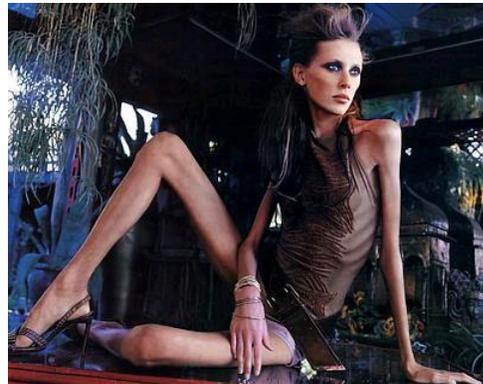


Figure 2.23: Ana Carolina Reston (Wendy, 2011)



Figure 2.24: Luisel Ramos (Hadid, D., 2012)



Figure 2.25: Isabelle Caro (Wendy, 2011)

Following the deaths of many fashion models in 2006, Italy and Spain issued a ‘model ban’ for the runways. This ban cited that models must be over 16 years of age and have a BMI of 18 or over in order to walk in a runway show. The ban aimed to encourage the use of models with “healthy” bodies on the runways, in efforts to portray more positive images of the female body to the public. It should be noted that the ban had no legal ramifications or punishment for violations; however, officials still hoped fashion leaders would comply (BBC News, 2006). This ban was largely not enforced on the runway; however, it did create widespread conversations and awareness involving the extreme thinness of fashion models. The United States has yet to establish any regulations regarding the size (height/ weight/ BMI) of models on US runways.

Contrasting the extreme thinness of popular runways models, the year 2009 saw a slight movement toward accepting models who displayed healthier body images. A good example of this is model Lara Stone, featured in the January 2010 issue of *Vogue* (figures 2.26 and 2.27). Lara is described in the magazine as a model “facing body issues”. To the fashion world, Lara Stone is 5 foot 10 *inches tall* and considered fat; yet she wears a size 4. The article details how she “tried to lose weight with diet and exercise, but nothing

worked: ‘I even tried pills.’ ...Eventually she started drinking alcohol just to make it through the day” (Johnson, R., *Vogue* (200) p. 32, 2010). Lara has seen increased success from 2006 to present; however, even with the body measurements of (32”-22”-34”) she is considered to be a large model (Versus, 2010).



Figure 2.26: Lara Stone (Johnson, R., *Vogue* (200) p. 32, 2010)

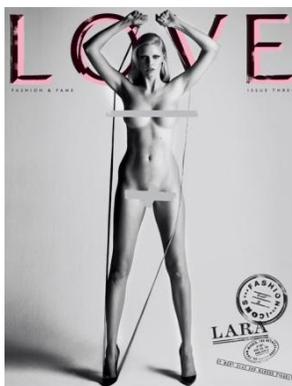


Figure 2.27: Lara Stone (Versus, 2010)



Figure 2.28: Fillipa Hamilton

Filippa Hamilton (figure 2.28) is a size-4 model who lost her job with Ralph Lauren in 2009. Filippa spoke out about this termination citing the reason for her termination as because the company stated that she “couldn’t fit into the clothes anymore” (Schweiger, 2009). Filippa is 5 foot 10 inches tall, and weighs 120 pounds; with a BMI of 17.2 which is considered underweight by the CDC. As Johnson writes in in the January 2010 issue of *Vogue*, “It is hard to tell which came first, the size zero clothes, or the super skinny model.” Designers used to fit the clothes to the model for the photo shoot, or runway. Now, models are expected to fit into the clothes. The Editor of British *Vogue*, Alexandra Schulman, has said that they often face the problem of designers sending clothes that are so small that the average models cannot fit into the garments, and they resort to using exceptionally thin models to wear the clothing. Often times when retouching the images, she says that they will artificially make the models look larger as to not attract public scrutiny (Kilbourne, 2010). Susan Ringwood, the chief of the Eating Disorders Charity Beat states, "Altering models' bodies to appear fuller-figured proves that the industry acknowledges there is a serious issue with projecting images of very thin models, but [that is] missing the point," she said. "They should be

using naturally healthy models in the first instance, instead of having to make them look that way” (Tyronne, 2008). In 2012, *Vogue* directors urged designers to stop making “unrealistically small” sample sizes for the runway and photo shoots, as they are a serious catalyst to the problem of models being so dramatically thin (Italie, 2012).

One would have hoped that after the deaths of so many models and the surge of support for larger models in 2009, the fashion industry and media would more realistically present body image ideals. In May of 2012, 19 *Vogue* editors from around the globe agreed to project images of healthy females ideals in their magazines (Critchell, 2012). However, the image of Lady Gaga on the cover of the September 2012 *Vogue* (figure 3.0) only continues to reinforce unrealistic ideals of the female shape, leading to the discussion about photo manipulation.

Photo Manipulation

Females portrayed in fashion and beauty magazines are already astoundingly tall and thin; however, photo manipulation further elongates limbs, and narrows waists and thighs, and flattens curves to further promote and ideal of unrealistic thinness (Bennett, 2008). Photo manipulation takes place among almost all advertisements and images portrayed through the fashion industry or the mass media, and advertising industry (Bennett, 2008; National Advisory Group on Body Image, 2009). The result of this manipulation is that consumers, particularly females, are exposed to images which display a female beauty ideal which is increasingly unrealistic and unattainable; making it increasingly impossible to achieve. There is recent evidence which suggests that placing warning labels on images (displayed through media outlets) which have been digitally

enhanced or altered, may decrease the negative psychological effects of the images (Slater, Tiggemann, Firth & Hawkins, 2012). This particular study reported that participants who viewed images with a warning label reported lower levels of body dissatisfaction. Another study by Tiggemann, Polivy, & Hargreaves, has found that viewing instructions or warning prior viewing certain altered or unrealistic images, may decrease negative mood dissatisfaction among viewers (2009).

The cover of the September 2012 issue of *Vogue* featuring Lady Gaga, a musician and pop-culture sensation, is a prime example of fashion magazines and media outlets promoting drastically unrealistic ideals of the female body. As apparent from the comparison of untouched images from the photoshoot and the cover image (figures 3.0 and 3.1), the cover image has been digitally manipulated to narrow Gaga's waist and augment her curves to excessively unrealistic proportions. Other shocking examples of excessively manipulated portrayals of the female body come from two Ralph Lauren advertisements, both picturing model Filippa Hamilton. As previously mentioned Filippa is 5 foot 10 inches tall and has a BMI of 17.2. Naturally Filippa is considered to be underweight, or too thin; however, these advertisements have digitally altered the images to make her waist excessively small (figure 3.2). The image is blatantly unrealistic and unnatural for any body type. After many complaints that this particular image had impossibly inhuman proportions, a Ralph Lauren representative admitted to "poor imaging and retouching", and added, "We have learned that we are responsible for the poor imaging and retouching that resulted in a very distorted image of a woman's body" (Photo tampering, n.d.). The fashion house then promised that they would take precaution in the future when retouching images as to not make this mistake again; yet,

astonishingly enough, another Ralph Lauren advertisement (figure 3.3) featuring Fillipa, and the same shockingly thin proportions was displayed in an Australian storefront in 2009 (Photo tampering, n.d.). According to research by Jean Kilbourne, most advertised images go through at least 20 or 30 rounds of retouching before they are published (2010); consequently real women measure themselves against artificial ideals. The Dove “Evolution” video (Ogilvy & Mather, 2009) depicts the process through which ideal images are constructed, rather than captured. Supporting the idea that beauty ideals seem to be constructed and created, rather than being reflected from what is real; famous supermodel Cindy Crawford has been quoted saying, “I wish I looked like Cindy Crawford” (Kilbourne, 2010).



Figures 3.0 and 3.1: Lady Gaga Cover Images (*Vogue*, (202), 2012)



Figure 3.2: Filippa Hamilton Ralph Lauren Advertisement (Jklein0414, 2009)



Figure 3.3: Filippa Hamilton Ralph Lauren Advertisement (Photo tampering, n.d.)

Statement of Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were developed to understand the effects of mass media on body image perception in females, and how this perception changes from college-age to later-stage females.

H1: College-age females are more susceptible to body image ideals presented by the mass media than are later-stage females.

H2: College-age females will be less satisfied with their body image compared to later-stage females.

H3: Body ideals of college-age females will be closer to the media driven thin-ideal than body ideals held by later-stage females.

Research has found that college-age females are highly susceptible to pressures set by the mass media. College-age females are now, more than ever, connected to mass media outlets through internet, television, and social media; heightening their exposure to the media set ideals. Hypothesis one looks at media consumption of females in both age groups, correlated with body satisfaction scores for those participants. Hypothesis two looks at body satisfaction and predicts that due to high media exposure, college-age females will be less satisfied with their bodies than later-stage females who may feel more secure. Women most often compare themselves to, and feel pressure to change their appearance from their female peers. College females are surrounded by a highly concentrated number of females in a relatively small area, this being amplified in Greek-

life situations. Because of this, coupled with high media consumption, college females may be less satisfied with their own appearances. Hypothesis three looks at the current BMI for each participant, and compares it to a BMI determined by their stated desired “ideal” height/ weight. These desired BMI’s are then compared to mass media ideals and determined to be “healthy” or “unhealthy” body image expectations. The results for the two age groups will be compared.

CHAPTER THREE

Method and Research Design

To perform this study on body image perceptions held by college-age females, as compared to later-stage females, a snowball survey was conducted. Volunteer subjects who answered a questionnaire aimed to judge body image perceptions. The study focused on segments of “college-age” (18-25 year old) and “later-stage” (26-65+ year old) females. The study was designed to judge the general ideas held by women of all ages about their perceptions of body image, and to see if and how those ideals change with age. This method of study was used to gather information on body image perceptions and ideals held by women. The survey tested three hypotheses relating to body image satisfaction and desired body image.

Survey Design

The survey featured 44 questions, including 11 free-response questions, 31 multiple-choice questions, and two raking questions. Many of the multiple-choice questions had participants choose their level of agreement with a statement where they could select from the options of: agree, disagree, or neutral. The survey was designed and distributed through Qualtrics.com. The data was analyzed using the Qualtrics software, and by doing cross-tabulations, horizontal analyses, averages, and free response interpretations.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The survey had advantages by using models of questions and scales that have been successful in previous body satisfaction studies. The study is the first undergraduate research, to our knowledge, that compares these body perception results of college females against later-stage females.

The study has several limitations. The sample size of the survey is 213 persons, which is relatively small. By increasing the sample size the range of errors in the results would be reduced and the study would be a reflection of a wider range of the female population. Ninety-two percent of the study participants were Caucasian; a larger sample-size over a broad geographic region may allow for a more diverse range of demographics, including: ethnicities, backgrounds, and education levels. When working with human subjects, there is a great deal of opportunity for error. Results can be skewed do to many factors including: the Hawthorne effect, misinterpretation of survey questions, personal bias, and false/misleading answers (particularly for the question asking for height/weight). Because of these factors, survey answers could potentially not accurately reflect the exact results of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

In total, 231 females participated in this study. Of the 231 female respondents 113 (49 percent of the sample) were between 18 and 25 years of age, and 118 (50 percent of the sample) were 26- 65+ years of age. The main focus of this study was to discover the levels of body image satisfaction, and desired ideal body image; and then to determine if those factors change with age.

Overall, 89 percent (90 percent of which were college-age participants and 87 percent were later-stage participants) of respondents answered that they believe that the media has an influence on ideal body image perceptions, and 85 percent (83 percent were college-age participants and 87 percent were later-stage participants) agreed that the media does not portray realistic body images in ads, magazines, movies, and television.

Eighteen percent answered that they never weigh themselves, and 25 percent said that they weigh themselves less than once a month. Thirty-four percent of respondents weigh themselves once a week to daily. Sixty-two percent (61 percent of college-age participants and 66 percent of later-stage participants) answered that they were not satisfied with their current weight and 30 percent (33 percent of college-age participants and 28 percent of later-stage participants) answered that they were satisfied with the way their body looks.

Forty-seven percent of respondents were satisfied with their body shape. Ninety-five percent wished their thighs were smaller, 99 percent wished their waist was smaller. A total of 77 percent (90 percent of college-age participants and 65 percent of later-stage participants) said that they do feel pressure to be thinner. Sixty-two percent (71 percent of college-age participants and 54 percent of later-stage participants) answered they feel pressure to look a certain way from the same sex, and 15 percent (19 percent of college-age participants and 11 percent of later-stage participants) felt that pressure from members of the opposite sex.

A total of 77 percent answered that the female beauty ideal most affects women of the college-age group (18-25). Eighty-seven percent of this 18-25 age group agreed that the beauty ideal most affects their particular age range.

A total of 50 percent (61 percent of college-age participants and 40 percent of later-stage participants) of women were motivated to lose weight or change their physical appearance after seeing models or actresses on television. This compared to only 42 percent (59 percent of college-age participants and 28 percent of later-stage participants) who were motivated to lose weight after browsing the Internet, and 48 percent said they felt motivated to lose weight after reading magazines. Sixty percent of college-age participants felt this way after reading a magazine whereas magazines affected only 38 percent of later-stage participants. Given this data it is clear that college-age females are more affected by images of women portrayed through mass media outlets, than are later-stage females. Eighty-five percent (88 percent of college-age participants and 82 percent of later-stage participants) said that at some point in their life they have felt pressure to be thinner. A chart summarizing these finding can be found on the following page.

	TOTAL%	% COLLEGE	% LATER
Believe media has an influence on female body ideals	89	90	87
Think media does NOT portray realistic images of females	85	83	87
Not currently satisfied with weight	62	58	66
Currently satisfied with the way their body LOOKS	30	33	28
Wished their thighs were smaller	95		
Wished their waist was smaller	99		
Motivated to change appearance after watching television	50	61	40
Motivated to change appearance after viewing magazines	48	60	38
CURRENTLY feel pressure to be thinner	77	90	65
Have felt pressure to be thinner at some point	85	88	82

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Summary of the Study

Many recent studies have highlighted the effect of the media on body image. It is known that the current culturally accepted female body ideal is unrealistically thin. This ideal is only further distorted through images, advertisements and portrayals of this ideal through mass media outlets.

Hypothesis one tests the idea that college-age females are more susceptible to body image ideals presented by the mass media than are later-stage females. Sixty-one percent of college-age females were motivated to lose weight or change their physical appearance after seeing models or actresses on television, 59 percent of college-age participants felt this way after viewing the internet, and 60 percent of college-age participants felt this way after reading a magazine. College-age women averaged 7 hours per week watching television, and read on average two magazines per week. When compared to later stage women, it was found that they watched 11 hours of television on average and read 1.7 magazines per week. Later-stage women were much less inclined to desire to lose weight or change their physical appearance after viewing thin models or actresses. Only 40 percent of later-stage participants were motivated to lose weight or change their physical appearance after seeing models or actresses on television. A total of 28 percent of later-stage participants felt this way after viewing images or videos on the Internet, and only 38 percent of later-stage participants felt motivation to lose weight or alter their appearance after exposure to magazines. This data suggests that college-age women are more affected by the ideals represented through these media outlets. The data

also suggests that the more media to which one is exposed, the more likely she believes in or supports the ideals presented and the more value she will put on thinness. The data shows that although college-age females may not be exposed to greater amounts of media outlets; they do tend to be more affected, and have a greater internalization of media ideals. Ninety percent of college-age females answered that they do currently feel pressure to be thinner; whereas, only 65 percent of later-stage females felt this pressure.

Hypothesis two tests the idea that college-age females will be less satisfied with their body image compared to later-stage females. Sixty-one percent of college-age participants answered that they were not satisfied with their current weight and 66 percent of later-stage participants felt this same dissatisfaction. Thirty-three percent of college-age participants answered that they were satisfied with the way their body looks, and only twenty-eight percent of later-stage participants felt this satisfaction. Although the numbers are very low, a higher percentage of college-aged females were satisfied with the way their body looked. The tested hypothesis was nullified; suggesting that college females actually tend to be more satisfied with their body image than later-stage women. The female body progresses and transforms as females age and go through life changes such as childbirth and menopause. The majority of college-age females have not yet experienced these changes. As a female ages and her body changes, while the ideal remains the same, she may experience higher levels of cognitive dissonance and dissatisfaction. It can be concluded that even though later-stage females are less influenced by the media, and feel less pressured to be thin, they still experience high levels of body dissatisfaction; hence, they are still affected by the thin ideal. Sixty-two percent of later-stage women agree that their perceived body ideal has changed since they

were in college, and most stated that they are less focused on “thinness” and looking a certain way and more concerned with overall “health.”

Hypothesis three tests the idea that body ideals of college-age females will be closer to the media driven thin-ideal than body ideals held by later-stage females. This study has found that college-age female participants collectively had an average BMI of 21.73, and an average desired BMI of 19.76. This is an average decrease in BMI of eight percent (this was found through doing a horizontal analysis of the data). The later-stage female participants had a collective average BMI of 23.92 and an average desired BMI of 21.32. This gives an average desired decrease of 10.9 percent. It is important to note that all of these BMI ranges fall within the ‘normal’ range; however, the average desired BMI for the college-age females is only one point over the threshold for an acceptable BMI. The desired BMI for college-age participants was 19.6, and it is argued that fashion models with a BMI of 18.5 or under should not be allowed to walk on runways. Twelve percent of college-age participants had BMI’s, which fell in the underweight/ unhealthy range, and when asked about desired height and weight, 19 percent of college-age participants desired a height and weight that would constitute a BMI that falls within the underweight/ unhealthy range. Only three percent of later-stage participants had BMI’s which fell in the underweight/ unhealthy range, and when asked about desired height and weight, this percent increased to six percent later-stage participants who desired a height and weight which would constitute a BMI which falls within the underweight/ unhealthy range.

This data concludes that the body ideal held by college-age females is closer to the thin ideal than that of later-stage females. Later-stage females seem to have a more realistic/ healthy view of attainable female body ideals.

Recommendations for Further Study

Many opportunities for further study are available. One opportunity would be to further examine the deeper root causes for change in body image perceptions among females of different age groups. It would be interesting to study how advertisements target these groups differently, and how television programs, magazines, etc. change the way the target females.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Many attempts have been made to alter the images of the female body ideal displayed to the public; however, most have been met with futile results. The model ban of 2006 was a met with little compliance, the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty has been in effect since 2004, yet we have seen little change in advertisements and female body images portrayed through mass media outlets. Plus-size models gained popularity during the “plus-size model movement” of 2009, yet four years later we have not seen much of a shift in the models used on catwalks and in fashion spreads and advertisements. Due to advanced technology, media images are being manipulated now more than ever and although many have been scrutinized for obvious photo manipulation practices, the practice is still ever-present.

The effect that this culturally imposed beauty ideal has on females, including those within the fashion industry, is harrowing. Those in the mass media responsible for photo manipulation, advertisements featuring unrealistic or emaciated women, television programs starring underweight actors, etc. need to become aware of the effects that these imposed ideals have on females of all ages. Dove continues to actively send messages of “real beauty” and point out the unrealistic ideals provided through most media outlets.

The thin ideal may never be lost; however, a good solution is to inform and enlighten the public about the validity or reality of media images. The unattainable beauty ideal needs to stop being something which women are conditioned to think can be attained, and reality should be accepted and celebrated.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

What is your gender?

Male Female

How old are you?

Under 13 13-17 18-25 26-34 35-54 55-64 65 or over

What is your height?

below 5'1" 5'1"-5'2" 5'3"-5'4" 5'5"-5'6" 5'7"-5'8" 5'9"-5'10" 5'11"-6'0" above 6'0"

what is your weight?

What is your ethnicity?

White/Caucasian African American Hispanic Asian Native American Pacific Islander Other

Please indicate your current family structure.

Single without children Single with children Married without children Married with children Life partner without children Life partner with children

How often do you weigh yourself?

Never Less than Once a Month Once a Month 2-3 Times a Month Once a Week 2-3 Times a Week Daily

Are you satisfied with your current weight?

Yes No

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

I am satisfied with the way my body looks I am not satisfied with the way my body looks

The media has an influence on 'ideal' body image perceptions

Agree Disagree Neutral

The media portrays realistic body images of women in ad campaigns, magazines, movies and television.

Agree Disagree Neutral

The majority of advertisements on television, in magazines, and on the Internet portray a thin ideal female body image

Agree Disagree Neutral

The average actress or model is much thinner than the average woman

Agree Disagree

I think that I am "average" body size

Agree



Disagree



I think that I am either below or above the average size

below



above



I am happy with my weight

Agree



Disagree



I am happy with my body shape

Agree



Disagree



I am happy with the size of my thighs

Agree



Disagree



I wish my thighs were:

smaller



larger



I am happy with my waist measurement

Agree



Disagree



I wish my waist were:

Smaller



Larger



I wish I were:
(please drag each item to the corresponding answer box)

- ITEMS**
- taller
 - thinner
 - shorter
 - lighter
 - heavier

I WOULD LIKE TO BE:

I WOULD NOT LIKE TO BE:

After seeing thin models or actresses on the Internet I feel motivated to lose weight or change my physical appearance.

Agree

Disagree

Neutral

I most compare the way I look to:

- Friends
- Women in magazines
- Women I see on television
- Women I see in passing
- Other

If you answered other to the previous question, please elaborate:

I currently, or at some point in my life, have felt pressure to be thinner.

Agree

Disagree

Neutral

What do you feel your 'ideal' height and weight would be?

please select one of the following:

I feel pressure to be thinner

I do not feel pressure to be thin

I feel accepted and encouraged to be any size

I am happy with the appearance of my stomach:

Agree

Disagree

After seeing thin models or actresses in magazines I feel motivated to lose weight or change my physical appearance.

Agree

Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

I feel pressure to be thin from:
(please drag each group into the corresponding answer box)

- ITEMS**
- Peers
 - Family
 - Significant other
 - Television
 - Magazines
 - The Internet
 - Models
 - Myself

I FEEL PRESSURE FROM THESE GROUPS

I DO NOT FEEL PRESSURE FROM THESE GROUPS

I feel more pressure to look a certain way from:

Members of the same sex

Members of the opposite sex

I do not feel any pressure

After seeing thin models or actresses on television I feel motivated to lose weight or change my physical appearance.

Agree

Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Please describe the extent to which you read magazines (one magazine per week, two per week... one hour per week, three hours per week, one magazine per month, etc.), and list the Names of the magazines.

Please list the amount of hours per week you watch television and the most common shows/ channels that you watch:

I have never been completely satisfied with the way I look/ feel about myself

Agree

Disagree

The following four questions are for women 26 and older:

Do you feel that your 'ideal' body image perception has changed since you were in college?

- Yes
 No

If yes, Can you please elaborate how you perceived beauty 'ideals' in college, as compared to how see beauty now? What has changed (lifestyle factors, cultural shifts, etc)?

Compared to when you were in college, would you go to greater, or lesser lengths to attain 'beauty' now, or then?

Knowing what you know now, what would you tell your college self about body image perception, if anything?

I feel that the female beauty ideal most affects women of what age group (please select all that apply):

17 and under

18-25

26-34

35-54

55+

What are some methods you , or women you know, use to enhance/ alter their body image (please list anything that applies):
example: dieting, exercise, plastic surgery, diet pills, etc.

The most common weight loss method for women of my age group is:

Please feel free to leave comments, notes, or anything you would like to let me know (again, this is completely anonymous).

This survey is anonymous and confidential, however if you would be willing to participate in further thesis research, please leave your name and email address.

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