

Body image in media assignment



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Media affects body image because in every TV show or movie the characters are healthy, lean, handsome, or beautiful. In ads they change the picture by editing the person's body to make them look unrealistically skinny or muscular. This unrealistic image pushes people to the extreme to gain that image because the media makes it seem that you have to look like that to be attractive and to have a boyfriend or girlfriend. And when people can't gain that image they then become depressed and/or kill themselves, because they can't obtain the image that the media is evoking.

For girls and women, beauty has long been held up as a desirable trait. From infancy onward, when baby girls are described as "delicate", "soft", and "pretty". Females are encouraged since birth to define themselves in terms of their bodies. Many girls and young women aspire to the weight and shape of the super-thin, super-pretty fashion models. Eating disorders occur during the adolescent period of girls. Hormonal changes cause an increase in body fat in girls. Given that ads and movies emphasize thinness and beauty many girls become subconscious about their weight and appearance.

The media has less affected male body image. Men have historically been judged by strength and achievement; however, they are not immune to the media's influence on appearance. Marketing and television shows have created an environment where a man's physique has become as important as his possessions and his achievements. This causes men to want the ideal body a man should have that the media displays, so they would take medication's or over work their body to try and attempt at gaining the "ideal" physique. As with women the ideal male body image has become unrealistic and impossible to achieve.

A person's ethnicity or cultural group can also affect one's body dissatisfaction. Generally white women have been reported to have greater body dissatisfaction. Ethnic minorities were believed to have less cultural pressure to be thin. It appears that differences between ethnic groups in fear of fatness, body dissatisfaction, and dieting to be thin have been diminished to the point of only Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. Among men, blacks appear to have a larger preference for body size and more positive body images than whites. Native Americans also report slightly greater body image concerns than whites.

Whites and Hispanics have about the same body image concerns. For Asian men the reports have been inconsistent. Sports may provide some protection from eating disorders because they focus more on performance in the sport than on their physical appearance. However participation in sports also carries pressure because of having to perform in front of lots of people where they are all looking at the person. In some sports such as wrestling, dance, swimming, and cycling an importance is placed on leanness. The risk for eating disorders increases for those athletes that that are competing at an elite level of sport.

Eating disorders are a group of serious conditions in which you're so preoccupied with how much food you eat and how you look that you refuse to focus on anything else. Bulimia nervosa is a disorder marked by distortion of body image and a repeated series of episodes where you "binge eat", it is usually followed by purging in the form of self-induced vomiting. Binge-eating disorder is marked by binge eating behaviors without the vomiting or

purging of bulimia. Anorexia nervosa is a disease marked by distortion of body image and refusal to maintain a minimally normal body weight.