

How elective plastic surgery has changed men and women's perception of beauty

[Business](#)



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10-11 Abstract The purpose of this research paper is to reveal how elective plastic surgery has changed men's and women's perceptions of beauty in the United States. My goal is to find why some people are getting plastic surgery, and how their actions are affecting future generations. Not only are these actions affecting future generations physically, they are financially hindering them.

Plastic surgery was once common among soldiers brutally damaged by the war and people with facial deformities. However, over time plastic surgery became increasingly popular, which gave it a new name of cosmetic surgery. This information is found through inspection of the history, the statistics of procedures, the media, and the effect it has on teenagers. During the process of researching, it became clear to me that the media contributes a large part in the advancement of cosmetic surgery. Also, it was evident that many people were following through with cosmetic surgery because they were mistaking beauty for happiness. I believe that this concept is the reason cosmetic surgery flourishes.

After finishing this research it became apparent to me that plastic surgery is popular because of the lack of confidence in natural beauty of people. The impossible standards from the modern media make it hard for people to accept their natural features. I believe the perception of beauty will continue to change as long as cosmetic surgery is an easily, attainable option. How Elective Plastic Surgery has Changed Men and Women's Perception of

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Beauty in the United States? Plastic surgery is altering one's body through surgery to achieve a desired physical appearance. This field has grown tremendously since the 1820s; and, by the 1880s, fifty percent of the population approved of plastic surgery.

The repercussion of this is many people have come to rely on plastic surgery to boost their self-esteem. This problematic result is due to the influx in commercial advertising that portrays an idealistic view of beauty. Plastic surgery was originally invented to help people with deformities or injuries after World War I. The United States' first plastic surgeon was Dr. John Peter Mettaeur. In 1827 he successfully performed the very first cleft palate surgery (American Society of Plastic Surgery).

The majority of war veterans suffered from head injuries, facial injuries, shattered jaws, and blown off noses (American Society of Plastic Surgery). The success of these procedures instilled confidence in many other people with medical problems. The new discovery of silicone was used to repair skin imperfections. Soon, Thomas Cronin, a doctor in Houston, was the first to use silicone in a breast implant procedure. From this point on, plastic surgery was known as cosmetic surgery.

Cosmetic surgery is technically the same as plastic surgery; however, cosmetic surgery has a greater appeal to common people because of the commercial attitudes prevalent in the United States. The Aesthetic Society, which has collected procedural statistics since 1997, says cosmetic procedures, as a whole, have increased by 147 percent. The top five procedures for women are breast augmentation, lipoplasty, eyelid surgery, <https://assignbuster.com/how-elective-plastic-surgery-has-changed-men-and-womens-perception-of-beau/>

abdominoplasty, and breast reduction. Similarly, the top five procedures for men are breast augmentation, liposuction, eyelid surgery, abdominoplasty, and facelift (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery). These procedures are common because of people's desire to exude a timeless image. The main culprit of the pervasive desire for cosmetic surgery is the media.

The ultimate goal of the media is to portray a person as a perfect, beautiful, and desirable human being. This image is portrayed in television shows such as: Extreme Makeover, The Swan, and I Want a Famous Face. All these shows are invading the minds of women to change their look to fit a Barbie doll image. Also, there are health industries that are constantly promoting ways to lose that extra twenty pounds; however, losing weight is not the same for every person and can be quite difficult. Therefore, plastic surgery is essentially easy access to "Barbie doll" perfection.

A recent issue of People Magazine features celebrities stating what make them feel beautiful. Kim Kardashian, reality star, said, "I feel prettier when I have makeup on" and Rihanna, singer, said, "I feel most beautiful after getting my hair done." Interestingly, these comments come from a special issue of "World's Most Beautiful People." These celebrities reveal how important it is to exude beauty from the outside rather than finding beauty in one's imperfections. Another problem with the media is the ability to make everyone and everything youthful by digitally altering images. The advancement of technology allows images to be digitally altered.

This invention changes the outlook of beauty for many watching the commercial advertisements. These alterations hide the common imperfections that set a standard of perfection. Britney Spears released pictures of her natural body and the air-brushed body, which shows how deceptive the media is (Mail Online). At first, in the regular picture, her thighs are larger, there is dry skin on her feet, and blemishes on her thighs. Afterwards, her blemishes were gone, her thighs were slimmer, and her waist was fit. Perhaps, if more celebrities released their digitally altered pictures the amount of confidence in natural beauty would increase, and the need for plastic surgery for leisure would fade away.

This would give the common people a reassurance that even the celebrities have imperfections and everyone should appreciate their own. The unrealistic pressure of advertisement agencies are, interestingly enough, trying to deliver beauty but fail to understand that digital beauty does not exist. This causes many people to believe that beauty is best seen in the younger years. The problem with this advertisement is teenagers are the unfortunate bystanders in this situation. Also, there is a new invention that allows a patient to view what he or she would look like after the surgery (Reporter).

Even though this invention seems to be of help to the patient, it is actually reducing the amount of confidence that person has. This is because if that person can predict what they are going to look like, and are pleased, then they have the ability to disregard their own feature easily. Another problem

with this new invention is that is not a guarantee, therefore, patients have the possibility of distorting their face. Dr. W.

Russell Ries, associate professor of Otolaryngology, claims that viewing their image digitally will not show a drastic change in their face because it is only a representation. If so, there is no need for this equipment. The overall ability to alter an appearance is to appear younger, and with this technology it does just that. If the adults are trying to look younger then that leaves teenagers striving to look like them. Teenagers eighteen years old and younger, in 2003, were approximately four percent of the cosmetic procedures, which are 330, 000 procedures performed on girls attending school (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery). The way to achieve beauty, according to the media, is gradually decreasing.

The 1983 statistics show that the average girl will watch 5, 000 hours of television before she is in kindergarten (“ Media and Girls”). Kate Monahan, author of the article “ Teen Plastic Surgery,” says that many teens are likely to want cosmetic surgery because they are going through puberty and are having trouble accepting themselves. Most teens grow up trying to fit in and keep up with the latest trends; once again, this is where the media plays a huge role. With all these expectations come the risks of damaging their bodies- both mentally and physically. The teens that do go through with procedures risk long-term complications, including self-esteem issues.

This is because their body development is not finished completely and the cosmetic surgery could alter the healthy and more importantly, natural shape of an individual body (“ Teen Plastic Surgery”). The perception of

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beauty is becoming more difficult to understand. Essentially, adults are a vital chess piece—setting good examples to better the future generations. However, adult women are facing self-esteem problems of their own. Another reason beauty is heavily focused on in today's world dates back to The Renaissance days.

During this time is when the golden ratio was formed ("Plastic Surgery and the Golden Ratio"). Originally, the golden ratio was used to mathematically formula that was used to determine which art and architecture was beautiful ("Plastic Surgery and the Golden Ratio"). However, it took a different route by deciding what human beauty looks like. Even though there is not much discussion about the golden ratio today, it still has a chance of resurfacing due to the advancement in technology. The whole idea of the golden ratio is symmetry and proportions, and with digital altering, these could greatly enhance the desire for plastic surgery.

Dr. Stephen Marquardt, former plastic surgeon, claims he uses the golden ratio when reconstructing a patient's face. He says that the most beautiful faces are easily recognized by humans. According to this statement, there are few, truly beautiful people in this world, and if that is true then the rest are average. With the real world constantly judging people, the desire to not want to obtain the golden ratio face is becoming harder.

As stated before, the whole idea of cosmetic surgery is to be young and beautiful. Many women receive plastic surgery to compete with other women to see who can look the best. This competitiveness adds to the confusion of what beauty is. Without the surgery, it makes some women feel less

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important because women are analyzed first by their looks, which makes the pressure of cosmetic surgery hard to overcome. In 2008, over ten million nonsurgical and surgical cosmetic surgeries were performed in the United States; out of these surgeries 9.2 million were on women (Cosmetic Surgery Research.

Info). As women get older, these numbers have a significant chance of exponentially reoccurring due to the commercial advertisement of beauty. As always, the pressure is a result of the media that has women selling everything from food to cars. Because women are in the media constantly, the appearance of a wrinkle could spark their desire for plastic surgery. Plastic surgery for leisure is creating misconceptions of beauty for oneself and others.

As wrinkles start to form, most adults begin to feel self-consciousness and want to look like they're twenty-five instead of forty-five. Robin Wright, an actress, says that she had collagen injections ten years ago to cover her aging face, but unfortunately, the collagen did not work causing six welts on her face ("People Magazine"). She is forty-four years old, and she thought she needed some extra help when actually she needed confidence. Her lack of confidence comes from her livelihood of being in the media. This woman risked her natural beauty for beauty that is not always guaranteed.

As this actress, many patients fail to realize the risks of plastic surgery which vary based on procedures; such as blood clots, brain damage, death, and heart attack (Smart Plastic Surgery). With these complications it shows that people are losing the idea of beauty; the natural features that show who a

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person is have gone unnoticeable. Out of the millions of people that get plastic surgery, two-thirds repeat their procedure because it was not a success or they trying to find the perfect look (“ Plastic Surgery Addiction”). What many women fail to understand is that they all have different bone structures that give a certain look, so there is no exact way of matching their facial features to the images depicted. Similarly to women, men get plastic surgery to look young.

The difference between them is men are not easily interested in having procedures done. This is because many men have a difficult time admitting that they are concerned about their appearance. In 2004, thirteen percent were involved with some kind of plastic surgery procedure (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery). This small amount suggests that men are not commonly targeted in the media, which allows them to resist the pressure of their standards. Normally, men do not start considering plastic surgery until around forty to fifty-eight years of age, while women start considering plastic surgery between the ages of thirty and forty (“ More Men Having Plastic Surgery”).

However, the main reason many men get plastic surgery is to stay a threat in the workforce or to attract younger women (“ More Men Having Plastic Surgery”). Today’s world is constantly looking for younger adults to work because of their advanced education. The baby boomers of our time are the ones who are threatened by America’s desire to stay youthful. Of the men that receive plastic surgery, risk a chance of being seen as weak because they can feel their career slipping. While some men want to find a way to

stay a threat in their field of work, they are actually reducing their chances of being a threat by having plastic surgery.

Plastic surgery for men is rarely seen because the ideal man is supposed to be strong and smart. With the sculptures of macho men with chiseled chest establishes the ideal man. Many men engage in plastic surgery for economical reasons to fit this stereotype of a man (American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery). Achieving artificial beauty for men and women is easily obtained. However, the simplicity of receiving plastic surgery can lead to mental problems for a person. Mellisa Dittman, author of *Plastic Surgery: Beauty or Beast*, says that plastic surgery can mentally harm a person because of the aftermath of not recognizing themselves or it can be mentally harmful if a person does not have the surgery.

This is simply because of the pressures that lie with being beautiful are growing constantly in today's world. People that see others with plastic surgery begin to question whether their natural beauty is still considered beauty. In this moment is when peoples' perception of beauty begins to change, and start to consider plastic surgery. As the aged looked becomes outdated, elderly people, between the ages sixty and seventy, are starting to consider and receive plastic surgery. This is because they now have the money from their pensions to have procedures done (British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons).

The startling aspect of plastic surgery patients is their willingness to pay large amounts of money for artificial beauty. One of the top five procedures, breast augmentation, is around 4, 000 to 10, 000 dollars. The anesthesia fee <https://assignbuster.com/how-elective-plastic-surgery-has-changed-men-and-womens-perception-of-beau/>

ranges from 600 to 800 dollars. To pay for the facility fee it ranges from 800 to 1, 200 dollars (“ What Does Breast Augmentation Cost?”). This amount of money that people are willing to pay shows that the world is strongly fascinated with plastic surgery and this fascination will shorten their pocketbooks.

Many Americans are greedy and want to be noticed however they can. Plastic surgery is that outlet, and is causing a huge separation between reality and fantasy. The process of getting plastic surgery seems fairly simple, but it cost a large some of money. Not everyone can afford plastic surgery, which is why some people suffer with accepting themselves. The thought of getting rid of a feature that they feel is keeping them from being beautiful forces them to become unaware of anything else other than appearances. The big idea here is that plastic surgery can change into cosmetic surgery when people want to look “ beautiful.

” Plastic surgery is helpful, but its existence has made the world crazed with their appearance. Many people that go through cosmetic surgery mistake beauty for happiness and forget that they have something to show that does not revolve around plastic. Plastic surgery is a domino effect that is causing many people to follow others to lead them to their beauty. Mainly, people have chosen plastic surgery to transform their bodies into the impossible beauty. If the beauty is impossible why are people focusing so much time and money on this? This question may never be answered simply because many people refuse to see the importance of natural beauty. The rate of

plastic surgery procedures is still increasing, and will continue this way because of the way the media portrays men and women.

Although, the media is not completely to blame for the change of the perception of beauty, the blame goes mainly to the people that take to heart what impossible standards the media displays. Plastic surgery has made people feel less than beautiful and confused about the self-acceptance of beauty. Plastic surgery changes the perception of beauty because it reacts to the people that react to the commercial advertisements in the media. Works Cited “ Beauty and Body Image in the Media.” Media Awareness Network | Reseau education Medias.

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