

Beauty of a woman

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Great controversy has surrounded women during this generation regarding the idea of beauty. It seems to be a preconceived notion to many people in America today that women of today's standards are far more revealing and outgoing than that of yesteryear. Women in the past were more conservative and caring as to the way they looked and acted. The question remains, are these ideas accurate, and if so, is this a more desirable way for a woman to be? Young girls of today look to role models such as Britney Spears, Paris Hilton, and Lindsey Lohan for beauty.

If this is the gauge in which standards are set, it is done so poorly. These young women have come to fame at an early age and seem to try to defy any sense of discretion or modesty that they have. They wear revealing clothes, if anything at all, and behave rudely and carelessly in public places. Other role models of today's society strive to be perfect, no matter the cost. Actresses such as Mary-Kate Olsen and Nicole Richey have both reportedly been treated for eating disorders, all at the cost of a perfect body.

Women of today are repeatedly receiving messages that one must be thin and beautiful to be worthy of attention. Media is constantly telling women of these things through ads, articles, commercials, and movies. It is easy to believe that women who lived in the 1950's had it easy, in the regard to the pressures to be thin and attractive. According to *The Feminine Mystique*, a book written in 1963 by Betty Friedan, some of these cliches of women in the 1950's is not necessarily true.

First of all, women in the 50's were starving themselves to fit into the department store dresses. One shopper was quoted as saying, " Women are out to fit the clothes, not visa-versa. " It was reported that women were

three to four dress sizes smaller in the 1950's than they were in 1939. Women from the 1950's were dying in hospitals for refusing cancer treatments because the side effects were "unfeminine." The beauty of a woman is not solely related to the way she looks. Beauty comes from within, as well.

Are women of today more beautiful than that of days gone by? Women in this era, who have been freed by the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1970's, seem to have no qualms about maintaining a career and a family. Many of the women of today seem to have it all - the American Dream perhaps. Some feel that the women of today are happier than ever before. Delving deeper into this ideal raises the notion that perhaps women feel more alone today than in the past. They struggle with feelings of guilt and anxiety regarding childcare and divided family time.

Perhaps women of today wish times could be simpler, like they were in the 1950's. Women of the 50's also argued that they were living the American Dream. The suburban housewife - she was the dream image of the young American women and the envy, it was said, of women all over the world. (Friedan, 2). However, these suburban housewives stopped attending college, began getting married in their teens, and seemed to forget their place as women in society, instead replacing that role with that of a housewife. A woman in the 1950's cared deeply about the way that they looked.

They insisted their homes are kept up, that their children be presentable, and that everything had the appearance of perfection in their lives. A woman of today also cares deeply about the way she looks. They also desire that

their homes be kept up, their children presentable, and everything appears perfect within their lives. However, all of these things are just that – the appearance of something. Deep down, women in the 1950's felt very isolated and dissatisfied. Many had dreams and desires that had somehow been oppressed for years.

Somewhere along the way, they were told that their true identities no longer mattered. Instead, they must look the way television or a magazine tells them to look. They should do what the media tells them to do and nothing more. Somehow, a woman in the 1950's bought into these ideas and became mindless to it. The women of today may also feel dissatisfied and isolated. Perhaps, the women of today are also living in the shadows of what the media tells them to do. Women go to college, get six figure incomes, and strive to get ahead no matter what the cost.

The women of today are no different than those of days gone by. The only thing that has changed is the issue which is oppressing them. To conclude, the women of the 50's were incredibly beautiful, as are the women of today. The women of days gone by cared just as much of her appearance as the women of today. Women continue to have the same social and personal issues today that affected them fifty years ago. Women have come a long way in some regards, and are still so far behind in others. References Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. 1963. <http://us.history.wisc.edu>