

Ideal and
advertisements,
billboards on the
highway,



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Ideal Woman In magazines stuffed with models and advertisements, billboards on the highway, and actresses on television, the message of what women should look like is everywhere. Advertising is a powerful force in our culture due to the exposure. The decided presence of these images in effect shapes the image of women today. It is very unfortunate that the media influences American society to the point that it defines the "ideal woman". The "ideal woman" is defined as someone that is thin, young, and beautiful. Today it seems as if being thin is the only way to go.

There is a wealth of businesses that depend upon the American desire to be thin to survive. Exercise and diet companies are a perfect example. In order to create a market for their product they attempt to make women feel imperfect about their own bodies through advertisement. Advertisers manipulate women into thinking their value is dependent on their physical appearance. An overweight person is seen as lazy. Women, especially, are told that their efforts to exercise and to stay fit will be rewarded by success in their personal and professional lives. If they fail at the idea they are encouraged to try harder. The cruel thing is that the social requirement that we achieve the "ideal weight" is based on the presumption that we can completely control our body size, which is not true.

The only things that seem to sell these days are young faces. It seems as if the younger the better. When you take a look at all the new television shows and movies all you see is young faces. It is harder for the older and more experienced actress to get roles nowadays. They are pairing up older male actors with very young actresses.

For most women, staying youthful is an ongoing competition. One of the most common ways is the use of makeup. A lot of women use makeup to cover any flaws or imperfections that they may have to enhance their appearance and make them appear younger. Another idea of the “ ideal woman” is, of course, to be beautiful. The media teaches women what is attractive, what is feminine, what is cool, what is sexy, and what is romantic.

However this may come at an expense. After the exercising and the makeup a lot of women turn to the more costly cosmetic surgery. Cosmetic surgery may consist of a minor eye or chin tuck and progress to the more advanced and expensive facelift or stomach tuck. Still women will go through all this money and pain to be what is “ in” today but may not be tomorrow.

The public knows that body types go in and out of fashion and the exclusion of so many women is a denial of the wide ranges of bodies and appearances. Advertisers manipulate women into thinking their value is dependent on their physical appearance. They appeal to the basic human desire to be wanted, accepted, and sexually attractive. This country prizes things like individuality, self-help, hard work, success, and self-control.

Women are given the message that if they just work hard enough at dieting and exercise, they can be younger looking, thin, beautiful, and more importantly happy. Instead of curiosity at the assortment of body shapes and faces, women are continually comparing themselves to each other. Finally, the question remains...is this healthy? Is the current image for the “ ideal woman” healthy for the women of America? Is it “ ideal”?