

Beauty in hong kong



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

The definition of beauty is not something objective or immanent because people from different place, age or social class may form its own ideal of it. The ideal beauty is analogous with people's aesthetic feeling at that respecting duration. In our modern society, human body is the one of the most important components used to determine the attractiveness or beauty of a person. But for sure, there is not a definite answer for an ideal body type due to the cultural difference and historical discrepancy among countries and places. In this essay, discussion will focus on the ideal body types for men and women in Hong Kong and how these ideal body types are shaped by mass media, technology and medicine. Besides, based on Sandra Bartky's findings, impact of body modification on individuals will be analyzed.

Ideal body type in Hong Kong

As Hong Kong was ruled by Britain in the last century, it is at the cultural border between traditional Chinese and western culture. Possessing this unique perception, Hong Kong interpretation of ideal body type is a mix.

Ideal body type for men

Muscularity is undoubtedly one of the criteria for ideal body type for men in Hong Kong. It is usually represented by strong muscular arms, a large firm chest, a slim waist and board shoulders which are found to be alluring to female. Waist-to-chest ratio would be one of the indicator for men to train up their body. The smaller the ratio, the more muscle is concentrated on the upper part of the body and abdomen, generally considered as " V-shape". In

the eyes of most female, it is considered as a perfect body shape. At the same time, a sporty and athletic feeling will be delivered, giving others a message that this person is healthy and self-disciplined. With the masculine body, female believes the person has the ability to protect her and feels safer. Thus, men with a muscular body is so attracting in Hong Kong.

Height also plays an important role on the ideal body type in Hong Kong. It is often measured by the volume height index (VHI). According to the research done by Hong Kong Polytechnic University[1], VHI alone can explain ca. 73% of the variance of male body attractiveness ratings. The optimal VHI will be at 17.6 l m^{-2} and 18.0 l m^{-2} for female raters and male raters, respectively. It shows that for men who are muscular, it would be better to be taller due to their large volume. One of the reasons behind is that most female would like to have a male partner taller than her, feeling that the man should be able to protect her.

Ideal body type for women

Influenced by the western culture, people believe that women ideal body shape should be slim. So they might regard keeping fit as a mission or a life-long goal. The thinner they are, the more attractive their body shape. The perception of beauty can be measured by waist-to-height ratio, which is an important determinant. Generally, the Ideal waist circumference = height x 0.382. Moreover, they perceive thinness as a sign of independence, strength and accomplishment, which implicated that they are fashionable. The attraction for a proportionate body also affects an appeal for erect posture.

Apart from the body mass, women with large, firm and symmetrical breasts are considered as attractive as well. Some studies show that most men enjoy the sight of female breasts.[2]According to the findings from the New Zealand's University of Wellington, men constantly spent more time looking at the breasts of female posed in front of them and showed more fascination on female's breasts than their head. This culture has penetrated Hong Kong thoroughly, leading a proliferation of medical treatment center provided with chest implant surgery.

Affected by traditional Chinese culture, men in Hong Kong consider wide hips and firm buttocks as sexually attractive body type, which indicates a better ability of fertility. Also, wide buttocks of women are a strong implication to men that she is very much capable of reproduction. On the other hand, women with wide hips are particularly more tempting to man when they are walking due to their shaking buttocks, even if the women do not meant to shake it. It can be seen that large buttocks are really important to determine the attractiveness of women in the perspective of cultural and sexual sense.

Perpetuation of the concept for body type

People are not born with an innate sense of what is beautiful or not. They learn some cultural and social standards through a process of socialization. These beauty standards are cultural creations.

Mass media

From a very young age, children start to learn what is most valuable in their culture for sex through mass media. By watching cartoons, they learn that

girls should be princesses dressed in pink tiaras with a slim body, while boys should be princes who are muscular, tall and able to protect their partners with their strong arms. Being instilled these values at such an early age, it is not surprising to see that the definition for beauty has changed, focusing on the body shape of people.

On top of the early inculcation, the mass media is doing a remarkable job of making people feel badly about themselves. Through advertisement in different channels, such as free-to-air TV broadcasting, radio and so on, the ideal body types for men and women are presented to the public. These advertisement bombard people with these ideal images by repeatedly brainwashing, internalizing people's cultural values and ideals of appearance. By then, people become more dissatisfied with themselves[3]. The purpose of the mass media is to create body dissatisfaction, leading people to spend enormous amounts of money, time, and energy to fix the flaws.

Besides, the print media, such as magazines, reinforces the notion of the “ideal” male and female bodies through constant barrage of slender, scantily clad women and muscular half-naked men. As people, especially youngsters, in Hong Kong give lots of reliability and credibility to many of the popular magazines. They read them every day, using them as signifiers of what is “cool” and “hot”. According to the findings from Benjie Achtenberg Macalester College[4], students mentioned in their journals that “they read the magazines and enjoy seeing the images because their favorite celebrities were featured.” It shows that print media is influential which acts as a platform to perpetuate the aforementioned ideal body types for men and women.

Technology

With the advancement of technology, more weight loss methods are introduced. For example, non-invasive surgery, such as CoolSculpting procedure^[5] is invented to freeze away patients' fats and reduce the number of fat cells in the treated areas. Unlike weight loss surgery this procedure is lasting longer and safer because once the fat cells are eliminated, they are gone for good. Apart from that, gastric bypass is a surgery that also helps lose weight by minimizing the stomach and small intestine. Undoubtedly, the innovation and advancement in technology can bring a safer and better experience for people to reduce weight. It will therefore attract more people to pursue a slim body shape under the improvement. These social standards are gradually implanted to people, internalizing their thoughts.

Medicine

Hong Kong people, as an Asian, usually have an enlarged masseter muscle, one of the chewing muscles, causing a squaring of the facial shape. To maintain an ideal V-shaped face, it is popular for people to undergo Botox injections. It shows that the more medicine is available for maintaining a perfect body shape, the more people would do so due to the easier access to modern beauty.

[1]<http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/272/1560/219>. short

[2]<http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/2845918/Men-have-an-eye-for-womens-breasts>

[3]<http://www.jeatdisord.com/content/1/1/14>

<https://assignbuster.com/beauty-in-hong-kong/>

[4]<https://www.maclester.edu/educationreform/actionresearch/Achtenberg.pdf>

[5]<http://www.coolsculpting.com/the-coolsculpting-procedure/what-is-the-coolsculpting-procedure/>