

# Media advertisements

[Media](#)



Media images regarding the ideal female body are not simply unrealistic but, more importantly, are harmful. Advertisement models, supposedly representing the 'perfect' female, are unrealistically and unhealthily thin. In fact, they represent 5% of the population, an extreme minority. This minority, however, defines the standards of beauty and perfection that countless women, especially impressionable teenagers and adolescents, try to achieve. The consequences are not simply excessive dieting, but life-threatening anorexia, bulimia, and numerous other eating disorders. Media images, in other words, have set up unrealistic beauty and body figure standards which, although only possessed by 5% of Americans, have been identified as the norm. In their desire and determination to reach this norm and become beautiful, women are sacrificing their health and, in a few cases, their lives.

Not only is the media establishing unrealistic standards of body and body images and portraying them as the norm but it is presenting women as little other than sexual objects. Were one to look through magazine advertisements or TV commercials, one would realize that there is hardly an ad in which women are not sexualized and portrayed as objects. As a matter of fact, a careful analysis of media ads will show that women are not simply used to advertise products that stereotypes have traditionally associated with women, such as household goods but pain medication as well. In advertisements for a headache medication called Moltrin, a female model is used to sexualize the drug. Before taking the medication she looks tired and weary but after taking it she looks extremely sexy and seductive. The point here is that the female body is portrayed as a thing, an object which is only present in an ad in order to attract attention. This sends a very negative

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message: not only are women objects but they are sexual objects which exist for the pleasure of the males.

From a personal point of view, the media is one of the most important sources of gender stereotypes. Surrounded by advertisements which, regardless of the product or service being promoted, sexualizes the female and portrays her in unrealistic body images, many accept these images as the norm, as reality. Not only does this encourage sexual violence against women but, it encourages women to harm themselves through excessive and unhealthy dieting. Media ads are harmful to women and promote gender stereotypes.