Media and body image assignment

In the twenty first century, media is all around us. Billboards, television shows, magazine covers, makeup advertisements and commercials surround us, and the list is limitless. Media literacy, the ability to filter out the scams from reality presented to us in media, however, is very limited. Young girls and even women are bombarded every day with media that can potentially damage their body images.

Fashion in the media is one of several negative messages conveyed to the public in recent years. The gaunt-like figures used to advertise current fashion trends has possibly damaged the body image of any girls, leading them to have damaging expectations for their bodies. In USA Today, Audrey Brachia, a former teen model and author, pointed about that in recent society, " We know more about women who look good than we do about women who do good. Due to leaders in the fashion industry's value Of money over a positive role model for its observers, the lack Of regulations on model weight and health, and the widespread advertisement of the ' thin is pretty' ideal; fashion in media has damaged the body images of those who view it, and in some cases, caused unhealthy eating habits in women and girls n the attempt to replicate fashion models and celebrities. In recent years, fashion models have been reduced to objects designed to display clothing much like a coat hanger.

Designers have been quoted saying that clothing " hangs better" on thin people. The reason that designers and agents demand this of models is to highlight the clothing, make a profit, rather than the natural beauty of the models. This not only affects the models, but the unhealthy body type that is popularized by the fashion industry is being projected in the minds of young

girls and women, and in any cases causing them to have morphed body images. The common idea of a runway model is a woman who is six feet tall and 110 pounds.

Images of these willowy figures have taken over the fashion industry not just on the runway but the pages of fashion magazines and television shows. Since the issue of unhealthy body weight in fashion models has been called to the public eye, questions about laws enforcing regulations upon the fashion industry have been taken into consideration. In the past, fashion models in Italy were required to weigh at least 125 pounds. The common fashion model weighs 23% less than the average female. Regulations like these would benefit the United States.

Women and girls are easily influenced by what they see in the media. If a healthy standard were set into place in fashion media, it is only common sense to say that a fair amount of viewers would benefit from it. By the age of 17, the average girl will have seen over 250, 000 commercial messages delivered by the media. If these messages were regulated to convey a positive and healthy outlook on body image, what is there to lose? The obsession with being thin caused by the media not only damages those who view it, but it directly affects fashion models and actresses.

According to Hilary Fashion Magazine, " Most supermodels and actresses are so unnaturally thin that they risk infertility, osteoporosis and ultimately, kidney damage. " Models and actresses are pushed to lose weight in order to please the media to make a living. But very little attention is paid to the permanent damage that is caused by crash diets and unhealthy eating

habits. Those who are spotlighted by the media are victims of it. They are forced into unhealthy addictions to pleasing the unrealistic expectations posed on them. The ultimate issue today is the idea that in order to be beautiful, one must be thin.

It is the most common wish for women is to lose weight. According to body image researcher Sarah Mermen, " The promotion of thin, sexy ideal in our culture has created a situation where the majority of girls and women don't like their bodies… And body dissatisfaction can lead girls to participate in very unhealthy behaviors to try to control weight' According to USA Today, t used to be very rare that " rail-thin" models were seen in fashion magazines and ads. But in recent years, it is normal to open a magazine and see willowy models and celebrities cascading every page.

These people, models and celebrities, are those who set the standard for " ideal beauty. " Also in USA Today, Sarah Mermen was quoted saying that in a study in which she and her colleagues reviewed medias effect on more than 6, 000 girls, that " girls ages 1 0 and older, who were exposed to the most fashion magazines were more likely to suffer from poor body images. In Teen People Magazine, a recent survey was conducted revealing that 27% of girls surveyed felt as though the media pressures them to have a perfect body. " You are what you eat. This quote has remained ingrained in my mind for years. Although it is not a very realistic saying, visiting my modeling agent starting at a young age and being told I needed to lose " the belly fat" and " tone up around the thighs", did more damage than I expected when I decided to enter into an industry that seemed so fun and exciting. Watched girls in my agency walk in who looked like they could break, and found yeses

falling into the trap of longing to look like these emaciated girls who, I was told, were beautiful.

Having had modeling experience since the age of twelve, saw the ruthless nature of the industry on a smaller scale than a famous model. My agents voice would ring in my mind saying, " They just don't like your face" or ' look at this girl, her stomach has no fat on it. " until going to college did not realize how damaging modeling could be. I was 20 pounds underweight and I still was overweight to the fashion industry standards. Having had first hand experience, it is hard to negate that the message that assign media is sending out to the public is an unhealthy one to say the least.

The fashion industry has set a standard for females to obtain a body weight that is almost unachievable. Thin has become the new beautiful. Models and other celebrities have suffered from the media's expectations. Consumers are being taught that in order to be beautiful and happy with themselves, they must damage themselves. Because of the fashion industry's value of money over the health of the consumers, unhealthy eating habits and body images are becoming more and more common every day.