

CONSUMERISM AND THE MEDIA

INFLUENCES

From Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the foundation of beauty beliefs (2006):

- **27%** of GBR 15-17 year olds said **media was one of earliest influences** on beauty and body image. This was the top score (above mother, friends etc) and **celebrities scored 23%**.
- The **most powerful influence** on GBR girls (15-17) was boys (27%), with **celebrities** coming second at **21%**.

From "GirlGuides" survey (2008)

- 73% of GirlGuides questioned say they use the internet every day and 80% say girls their age are more likely to get their information from the internet than from newspapers.
- 42% of the girls surveyed named celebrities as the greatest influence on girls and young women. 40% also cite the internet as the greatest influence
- 35% chose Victoria Beckham as having the greatest influence, with Leona Lewis at 32%, Kate Moss and Amy Winehouse in 3rd and 4th.

MARKETING TO CHILDREN

From Compass: The Commercialism of Childhood:

- The **average child** in the US, UK and Australia sees **between 20,000-40,000 TV ads a year** – not to mention billboards, print ads, new media ads.
- 70% of 3 year olds recognise the McDonalds sign but only 50% know their own surname.
- The average 10 year old recognizes 400 brands.

From other sources:

- 67% of children (5-16) have mobile phones and 25% of children have access to the internet in their bedrooms (*Childwise*) NB advertising on these mediums is largely unregulated.
- Majority of UK 7-16 year olds are attracted to sites aimed at adults. 25% of ads on children's best-loved sites are aimed at adults – such as laser surgery for eyes, branded clothing, on-line gambling, beauty products and on-line dating (*National Consumer Council: "Fair Game?"*)

CHILDREN AS CONSUMERS/PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

- **Children** in the UK **spend £4.2bn annually** (*Childwise estimates*)

From the Guardian/Observer article:

- Tantrum, a luxurious **child-only salon** in London's King's Road, offers manicures and pedicures, in response to demand. Children can browse Tatler and Vogue, watch personal DVDs and play Wii as they are preened by beauticians. They **ask to look like their pop heroes and favourite models**.
- The youngest customer has been 6, but LA salons regularly give manicures, pedicures and make-overs to children as young as two.
- '**Pamper parties**' for young children, involving make-up, hair styling and manicures, have become commonplace in the UK.
- **Miss Bimbo** website allows users to create a virtual doll, keep it 'waif thin' with diet pills and buy it breast implants and facelifts.
- Mattel has teamed up with Bonne Bell cosmetics to launch a **make-up line aimed at girls aged 6-9**.
- Good Morning America reported on nine-year-olds having **chemical peels**.
- Go Girl magazine is as "a lifestyle magazine containing articles on fashion, beauty, reader stories, celebrities, songwords...**everything that is important** in the life of girls aged 7 to 11"

From other sources:

- Bratz Secret Date two pack: girl doll and mystery “blind date” boy doll, date outfits, flowers, champagne glasses. Marketed to 6 year olds. Bratz Forever Diamondz Doll Funky Torso, described by one critic as “looking like a pole dancer on her way to a gentleman’s club”
- Last year, Tesco marketed the Peekaboo Pole Dancing Kit on the games and toys section of its site and Next was forced to stop selling T-shirts for girls as young as six with a slogan "so many boys, so little time"
- Thongs are now available for 7-10 year olds.

UK LADS MAGAZINES

- Arena, [Esquire](#), [Front](#), [GQ](#), Maxim, Nuts, Zoo, FHM, Loaded
- Mens weeklies have, on average, 70 pictures of women per issue, with around a third posing topless (Guardian Unlimited)
- I cannot find stats on the front covers, but we know that 100% of the time they are women in sexualised poses.

ROLE MODELS AND VALUES

ROLE MODELS

From the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (survey of primary and secondary teachers):

- **Victoria and David Beckham** are the 2 top celebrities that **pupils model themselves on**
- Sports stars were most popular with 60% (Beckham, Lampard), followed by **pop stars at 58%** (Sugarbabes, Leona Lewis). [EK: the sports stars is likely to be the boys]
- **37%** of teachers said their pupils **just wanted to be famous for the sake of being famous**
- **44%** said that their pupils **tried to emulate the role models** through their looks and behaviour, with **32% modeling themselves on Paris Hilton.**

From other sources:

- Education Minister, Ed Balls, insists the Spice Girls are good role models as they work hard, are clean living and promote “girl power”!!!!!! (*News of the World*)
- A poll of people under 25 found the Amy Winehouse was the ultimate Heroine, with Pete Doherty voted second most popular male hero (*Sky.com Poll*)

ASPIRATIONS AND VALUES

From the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (survey of primary and secondary teachers):

- **70%** said **celebrity culture was having an impact** on pupils’ aspirations for the future
- More than **70%** believed that **celebrity culture is perverting children’s aspirations** and expectations, and is producing a generation who do not believe education and hard work are necessary to achieve financial success.

PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

- Only 1 in 5 MPs in Westminster are women (*Sex and Power: Who Runs Britain? EOC, January 2007*)
- 17% of national newspaper editors are women (*Sex and Power: Who Runs Britain? EOC, January 2007*)
- 2 in 3 workers on the National Minimum Wage are women. (*National Minimum Wage, Low Pay Commission report 2008, p.8, p.70*)

CONCEPT OF BEAUTY

STARTING YOUNG

- Average age 15-17 year olds begin:

Beauty Practices (Make-up hair straightening etc)	GBR 13	Global 13
Dieting	GBR 13	Global 14
Eating Disorders	GBR 13	Global 14

(Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the foundation of beauty beliefs (2006))
- More than **60% of girls aged 7 to 10 wear lipstick** and more than **40% wear eye-shadow or eye-liner**. Almost **25% wore mascara** and **60% wore perfume**. (Mintel)

BODY IMAGE AND SATISFACTION WITH LOOKS

- Almost **50% of girls between 5-8 want to be slimmer**.(2005 British Journal of Developmental Psychology study)
- 8-15 years olds are more **worried about being the right weight (32%)** than being popular (20%). *(MTV Wellbeing Study 2005)*
- **97% of girls (15-17) feel that changing their appearance would make them happier** – body weight and shape being the most cited. *(Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the foundation of beauty beliefs (2006))*
- 70% of teenagers said they felt **the need to "look good"**, and were **on a diet** some or all of the time (BBC Newsround Survey)
- Nearly one in five 15-year-old girls and boys and one in every 20 young people of 13 said they had considered plastic surgery. (Survey by The Priory, backed by Sane and other charities, 2005)
- During the course of 2007 almost **1,600 cosmetic surgery** procedures were carried out **every single day** in the UK (Mintel Oxygen Reports)
- Teen-age girls who viewed commercials depicting women who modeled the unrealistically thin-ideal type of beauty caused adolescent girls to feel less confident, more angry and more dissatisfied with their weight and appearance (Hargreaves, 2002, Idealized Women in TV Ads Make Girls Feel Bad. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SELF ESTEEM

SELF-ESTEEM

From Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the foundation of beauty beliefs (2006)

- The younger a respondent claims they were concerned about their appearance, the **more likely they are to have low self-esteem** today.
- **76%** of British girls (15-17) say it is **hard to feel personally beautiful** when confronted with today's beauty ideals (global average 58%)
- **73%** of British girls 15-17 say that when they **feel bad** about themselves it is usually to do with **looks or weight** (globally 55%), rather than abilities etc.
- **67%** of all women 15 to 64 **withdraw from life-engaging activities due to feeling badly about their looks** (activities such as meeting friends, exercising, voicing an opinion, going to school, going to work, dating or even seeking medical help).

EATING DISORDERS

- Between 5%-10% of American girls and women (i.e. 5-10 million) suffer from eating disorders *(The National Institute of Mental Health, US)*
- The UK has about 1.1 million people affected by eating disorders disorder, mostly in the 14-25 years age group. *(Eating Disorders Association)*
- Girls aged between 13-19 account for 50% of all bulimia and anorexia cases *(Young Minds)*

- Studies show that increasing numbers of pre-teens, as young as 8, are being treated for eating disorders. No sources to back this up though. Eating disorders are more dangerous in children and adolescents, whose bodies and brains are still developing and need additional nutrition to do so.

MENTAL WELLBEING IN GENERAL

- **57% of 8-15 year olds are happy about life**, meaning that 43% aren't. This could obviously be attributed to various things, but it is reasonable to conclude that culture plays a part in it. (*MTV Wellbeing Study 2005*)
- More 8-15 year olds **turn to the TV to cope with stress (59%)** than any other activity, including talking to friends or family (37%/36%) or play sport (24%) or with toys (21%). (*MTV Wellbeing Study 2005*)
- 27% 14-16 years olds say the "often feel depressed" (*GfK NOP*)

MORE DETAIL ON SOURCES

Beyond Stereotypes: Rebuilding the foundation of beauty beliefs (2006)

10-country research commissioned by Dove, surveyed 3,300 girls and women aged 15-64 in Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

MTV Networks International/Synovate Wellbeing Study (fieldwork 2005)

This was 14 country study (USA, UK, Germany, France, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Sweden, Denmark) into youth Well Being. A total of 5,200 interviews were carried out.

The Commercialisation of Childhood

A report compiled by Compass

Observer 15th June 2008

"Beauty salons give makeovers to six year olds"

Association for Teachers and Lecturers, 2008 Study

A study of 304 primary and secondary school teachers

Childwise

A specialist child research charity

National Consumer Council: "Fair Game?"

Investigated 40 sites used the most often by children

Other

Mintel

British Journal of Developmental Psychology study (2005)

News of the World

Sky.com Poll

The National Institute of Mental Health, US

Eating Disorders Association

GfK NOP

BBC Newsround Survey

The Priory

Young Minds

Hargreaves, 2002, Idealized Women in TV Ads Make Girls Feel Bad. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*