

The beauty that poets tell us is in the eyes of the beholder. But have you ever stopped thinking this phrase? Whatever is considered as beautiful has varied during history, also it varies from society to society, which shows that beauty is truly evaluated according to norms and ideals.

OK, then, it's important. That doesn't actually alter anything, right?

Not that quick. The myth of beauty performs normativity, particularly for women: it's a myth that causes the subjugation of women to men in our society. It makes women buy clothes and makeup products, experience plastic surgery, and even stay starving. Let's find out the past of the beauty myth and learn how much effect it still has on today's society.

Chapter 1 - Modern criteria of beauty are a political means of controlling women and perpetuating patriarchy.

The women's rights movement has made critical advances within the past several decades. There have been a few backfire too even though women have got lawful and regenerative rights, such as more opportunity to seek after higher education and enter already male-dominated professions

While women have made legal and economic gains over the past 50 years, we've additionally seen a rise in harmful illustrations about the beauty of females. They are using these illustrations for creating what is known as a beauty myth, with raising efficiency to work against the development women have made.

The beauty myth declares that there is a difficult quality called "beauty" – a feature that women should do everything they can do to chase, achieve, and sustain.

Myth dictates specific opinions. For example, this beauty is intrinsically a good and useful quality, and women without it are unimportant and invisible.

Think about women who are the best in their jobs. The pressure to look good doesn't stop in spite of all their accomplishments and success. Women with more power and status are more closely viewed, and the pressure to look beautiful gets worse.

The concluding mechanism of cultural ideology that has the power to constrain women who have otherwise been released to freely chase their dreams is the beauty myth.

The measurement of the social worth of women was considerably through their work in the domestic field before the Industrial Revolution. Their lives formed around properties like work capacity, physical strength, and fertility – not beauty.

Thanks to industrialization increasing freedom for women came. For weakening women's freedom and power, a new, more detailed, and more tricky method was needed so that the patriarchy continues.

The beauty myth keeps women trapped, and makes them competing with themselves and each other in a self-destructive way. Because of the change in illustrations and criteria of beauty, women continually need external approval for their identity and are defenseless.

In the following part, we will see the way this myth works in the business world.

Chapter 2 - The business world nourishes and maintains the beauty myth.

Just 32.8 percent of US women could find a job after World War II. The percentage had raised to 53.4 in 1984, such a raise threatened the male-dominated power structures. Women created an enormous and destabilizing crowd demanding the same chances against the patriarchy.

A discriminatory system that separating appearance as a woman's most wanted trait came into appearance to prevent that influx.

The writer introduces that system as the Professional Beauty Qualification (PBQ).

PBQ jobs –actresses, models, dancers – have been around for many years, of course. For example, in 1972, Margarita St. Cross who was an old Playboy Club waitress opened a case against Playboy because they fired her on the grounds that she had “lost her Bunny Image.”

Give attention to the Bunny Image ranking way and you'll see how absurd the criteria are:

Perfect (face, shape, grooming)

An extraordinarily beautiful girl

Marginal (aging or developed a fixable appearance issue)

Lost Bunny Image (due to aging or an unfixable appearance issue)

The New York State Human Rights Appeal Board decided in favor of Playboy and stated that they have the right to decide whether a woman is beautiful adequately to work with. After the Playboy conclusion, numerous other similar situations appeared and the PBQ system spread to other businesses.

Women who are working started to suffer a no-win circumstance of discrimination.

Women could be dismissed because they are very charming, for example. The ruling in *Barnes v. Costle* determined that women could legally be accused of attracting sexual harassment if their looks were assumed to incite undesirable advances.

Adversely, there is Hopkins v. Price-Waterhouse: Ms. Hopkins was rejected partnership since she needed to “walk, talk, and dress more femininely, and wear makeup.” at an accounting firm.

As you can notice, winning is not possible for women because of the complex rules of the PBQ system.

Chapter 3 - Advertisement and beauty services and goods feed the beauty myth.

Do advertisements or spreads in magazines including "beautiful" models make you feel inadequate around your self-image? If so, advertisements work.

Above all, content of most of the publications, as well as women's magazines, is managed by advertisers.

Illustrations and standards of beauty that works in favor of the organizations paying for advertisements, maintained by these magazines, as well as most mainstream media. That assures that organizations proceed to make profits and consequently continue to get advertisement space.

In the 1950s and '60s, the popular representation that brought by advertisements for housewares was the happily dedicated and busy housewife. These advertisements glorified homemaking to be felt like a job, keeping housewives satisfied in that way they wouldn't feel the necessity to attempt a career.

American housewives' lack of individuality and goal was turned into a huge industry by organizations and advertisers selling household items as Betty Friedan mentioned in her trailblazing book *The Feminist Mystique*.

Nowadays, publications have turned to "beauty" goods to gain their money.

Publications and advertisers changed direction when it was realized that women had become a permanent part of the workforce. They began using illustrations of "perfection" to sell "beauty products" such as cosmetics, dietary supplements, and anti-aging creams instead of selling household items, for comprising the beauty myth.

Women who cannot meet the absurd criteria in these illustrations feel secondary, which pushes them to buy more beauty myth goods.

The consequences are obvious: Between 1968 and 1972, the number of articles about diet increased by 70 percent. And in 1989, while old favorites such as household items provided only \$ 65 million in revenue, magazines earned 10 times that amount in revenue, from cosmetics firms.

In 1991, the beauty myth was feeding some thriving industries: the diet industry earns \$ 33 billion a year; the cosmetics industry earns \$ 20 billion; the cosmetic surgery industry earns \$ 300 million; lastly, the pornography industry earns \$ 7 billion.

It's obvious that "beauty" is an effective currency. However, as you can see in the following part, it originates its real strength from keeping our community patriarchal.

Chapter 4 - For women, the beauty myth has terrible physical, psychological, and economic outcomes.

Maybe you are questioning how much the beauty legend can harm. Destructive impacts can be seen in women. But it can provide numerous benefits to the oppressors.

The beauty myth does much more than continuing discrimination against women, ground on the look, in the business world; additionally, it strengthens the double standard by assuring women to earn low wages and men to earn great money.

That discrepancy in payments happens in all jobs.

On average, male attorneys between the ages of 25 and 34 gained \$27,563, whereas ladies gained \$20,573, In 1991. Within the same year, retail sales representatives gained \$24,002 and saleswomen gained just \$7,479. In fact, female hairstylists gain \$7,603 less than their male colleagues.

And now, women still gain an average of \$ 0.79 while men gain a dollar, in the United States.

Apart from discrimination, modern women's chase of "beauty" has a large influence on their overall well-being.

The fact that the beauty myth's description of the perfect woman is notably skinny, is known. As a consequence, anorexia which touches five to ten percent of all American women, rates, has risen, a dangerous pandemic is created. It's no surprise that between 90 and 95 percent of American anorexics and bulimics being fed by the beauty myth are female.

Additionally, the harmful impacts of the beauty myth keep women alone and in conflict against each other.

Most of the time, others observe a pretty woman with jealousy and distrust, and the negativity in the conversation that ladies do to express each other can be heard, like: "Oh she's so perfect, I could just die!" Or, "Don't you hate women who can eat like that?" And don't skip the popular advertisement card line, "Don't hate me because I'm beautiful."

That lack of women's solidarity influences women in an economic way too.

In the UK, fifty percent of working women are not unionized, but that amount jumps to 86 percent in the United States. Since unionized women gain 30 percent more, on average than those who are not unionized, lots of economists think that for the "feminization of poverty", the solution is unions.

If, rather than working against each other they worked together, free from the limits of the beauty myth, think about things that can be achieved by women.

Chapter 5 - Destroying the beauty myth is a process of revival: we reshape our judgment about beauty and women.

Then in which way can we free ourselves from the repressive myth of beauty?

Realizing all the forces that keep the beauty myth alive, is the first step toward fighting.

The beauty myth is kind of like a cult - charming, persuasive, and manipulative. And to hold you in its hold, it is not afraid to blame you and make you feel guilty.

Think the way cosmetics speak: for problematical facial lines, Clinique's "scientific" table books four categories: Very Many, Several, Few, and Very Few. Therefore, in obedience to Clinique, it isn't even likely to have non-problematical facial lines. From the point of view of the cosmetic world, being a woman is also being guilty of the "original sin" of imperfection.

Clarins cosmetic goods use of feeling guilty and blame tactics too, meanwhile they share with us, "Even the most innocent expressions – including squinting, blinking and smiling – take a toll." And, "Do you laugh, cry, frown, worry, speak?"

And next, there's the food industry. Their advertisements usually blame women for making something "naughty" whenever they consume "forbidden" foods.

"You don't have to hate yourself in the morning," which implies that hating yourself for eating something is a normal part of a woman's life and that is the motto of Wheat Thins and it benefits from that tactic.

The next step is to completely reject the beauty myth.

That doesn't suggest women must stop dressing or wearing makeup. Women should have the chance to choose what to wear and what they desire, and this should be due to their own conditions, not fear of falling outside the norm.

In other words, we have to empower women's solidarity and relationships.

Women should feel free to orient their attractiveness toward other women and praise each other instead of keeping it for men.

Most significantly, the beauty myth has to be seen as disruptive, prejudicial, and double standards. Only then can we beat it.

To support that, we need to hear women's voices and develop our culture to include their true views and hopes.

The Beauty Myth by Naomi Wolf Book Review

"Beauty" is a structure that serves men in political, economic, and cultural ways. This myth of achievable beauty is held living in that way women continue to be weak, defenseless, and divided. By recognizing the beauty myth and fighting against its humiliating criteria of beauty, this can be defeated.

<https://goodbooksummary.com/the-beauty-myth-by-naomi-wolf-book-summary-review/>