

# The Sexualization and Eurocentricity of the Western Female Aesthetic from 1920 to 1990.

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Aesthetics in Creative Practice

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## Introduction

The feminine beauty standard has always been a topic of discourse in society. With the dawn of the modern age in the Western World, the standard has evolved to accentuate different aspects of women such as her body-shape, weight, and whiteness. With modernization of industry came, new technology in the beauty industry. Women sought shapewear, makeup, chemical skin treatments, and eventually plastic surgery to reach the aesthetic they desired. Several movements throughout history have challenged the conventional female aesthetic and have brought new trends and values to it in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Modernization of feminine beauty

Before the 1920s, women dressed very reserved and strove for a silhouette that emulated European royal ballgowns. The corset undergarment was common and aimed to produce a thin waistline with rounded curves. Makeup was a commonly sold commodity, though it carried a stigma of being associated with sex workers. Making up the face was synonymous with deception. The face was a marker of unique expression, beauty, and character; so, painting it with makeup was equivalent to disguising one's character hence displaying mistrust (Alexander, 2015). Additionally, to show the shoulders or even ankles was to be an unrespectable woman.

In a way, World War I became a defining line between the Victorian and modern era (Romm, 1987). With the political sphere changing, so did the role of women in society. Many European countries began to allow women to vote in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century including Britain, Germany, and the United States (Wikipedia, n.d.). The time of the female aesthetic being rigid and modest, was beginning to be phased out.

Publications targeted towards women, re-branded the relationship between female aesthetics and spirituality. They claimed a beautiful appearance was representative of a beautiful character. Makeup and cosmetics were beginning to be seen as a moral avenue to enhance natural beauty (Alexander, 2015). The aesthetic was minimal makeup, as its role was not to cover up the natural face. The goal was to achieve a youthful, natural, healthy, and wholesome appearance. Magazines showed the optimal makeup application primarily included a face powder and blush (Alexander, 2015). Cosmetics were also widely advertised and often preferred over makeup as they could remove the risk of appearing deceptive and sinful entirely. Still, makeup was being applied in public and became a necessity of any woman's wardrobe.

A portrait of actress Bette Davis in the film Jezebel. Her makeup is minimal and simply emphasizes the eyes and lips. As this is stage makeup, it may be heavier than the everyday woman's application. (Jezebel, 1938)



The image of the woman became more modern after World War I. The corset was no longer popular and was replaced with frameless dresses that dared to show shins and shoulders. Overall clothes became simpler and were no longer heavily ornamented to convey formality

(Reddy, 2020). North American publications showed the only role of a woman didn't have to be motherhood and being a housewife. They included adverts that showed women participating in leisure, reinforcing that there was more to womanhood (Alexander, 2015). The traditional feminine roles were not removed entirely, but simply expanded to include that the life of a woman was also young and fun. Youthful, leisureful, and natural became the tagline for many cosmetic brands (Alexander, 2015). This constructed the look of the modern western woman.



Actress Yvonne Printemps in a postcard shoot (A.N. Editions, n.d.)



French tennis players Suzanne Lenglen and Julie Vlasto in Cannes in 1926. (Reddy, 2020)

Women's beauty became more unapologetic in a sense. The shapeless smock dresses were much more comfortable than their Victorian predecessors and formalwear didn't require as much ornamentation. This is when the wearing of sports clothes as daywear began (Reddy, 2020). With the simplifying of feminine fashion, being fashionable became more attainable for ordinary women. Department stores and local seamstresses could easily recreate the high fashion of Paris for the ordinary woman (Reddy, 2020).

## Eurocentric Beauty – Assimilation and Exclusion

During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many colonies of European superpowers were experiencing the remnants of slavery and the dawn of eugenics. The racially discriminated in the Americas included the indigenous people, slaves of African descent, and non-white immigrants. With white individuals being the ruling class, these groups were routinely subjected to the beauty standards of their “superiors.”

In early post-slavery South America, specifically Brazil, the small white ruling minority saw the black and indigenous populations as a threat to the prosperity of Brazil’s population’s aesthetics. The leaders secluded these groups to work in rural environments for low pay, with limited access to education. This crafted a societal correlation of poverty and unintelligence with the natural physical aesthetics of black and indigenous people. Eugenecists also sought to justify this correlation by photographing black Brazilians with visible health conditions and excluding healthy individuals from their studies and publications. This helped fuel the narrative of the inferiority of African features in South America and by characterizing non-whites as ugly, whites automatically were more superior aesthetically (Jarrín, 2017).

Women and girls afflicted with gout in a rural region of Brazil, photographed by medical doctors Belisário Penna and Arthur Neiva during a eugenic science expedition in 1912. (Jarrín, 2017)



Aesthetic assimilation was the answer to “upgrade” human beauty in post-slavery nation. The beauty industry re-invented and introduced skin lightening creams to the populations of African-descent in the Americas. Some regions even had pageants to exhibit the range of different beauty in the women of their country; but the emphasis on whiteness remained a large factor in terms of winning (Lindo, 2023) (Jarrín, 2017). For example, in Jamaica the contestants were segregated by skin tone with light skinned and white women participating in different categories within one competition, and dark-skinned women having to compete in a completely different competition. The dark-skinned women that won were given the label of ‘an example of what a dark-skinned woman could achieve.’ And light-complexioned and visibly white women were simply celebrated as beautiful individuals rather than a representative of a phenotype of people (Lindo, 2023). Additionally, the dark-skinned women that won the title of a beauty queen were often placed in adverts for skin bleaching products. In a sense the beauty of a black woman was used to commercialize aesthetic assimilation (Lindo, 2023).



Contestants in a Jamaican beauty pageant lined up by skin tone category (Lindo, 2023)

Miss Ebony Miss Mahogany Miss Satinwood Miss Allspice Miss Sandalwood Miss Golden Apple Miss Jasmine Miss Punguraraite Miss Lotus Miss Appleblossom  
A spectrum of Jamaican beauty displayed before a cannon at Fort Charles, Port Royal. "Ten types: one people" was the heading of this contest, run in 1955 as part of the 'Jamaica 300' celebrations

A mid-twenties century  
bleaching Cream Advertisement  
with a model of African descent  
(Lindo, 2023)

*I want these roses to see how lovely you are Bob*

**Wonderful things happen when your complexion is clear, bright, Nadinola-light**

**Give yourself a chance!** Don't let a dull, dark complexion deprive you of popularity. Don't let wrinkles, big pores, blackheads cheat you of cheer. Chase away these facial foes! Please them with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream. Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your skin faster, in more different ways!

**Contains wonder-working 4-M!** This remarkable medicated ingredient of NADINOLA works deep down within the skin to brighten and lighten it, combat blackheads and externally caused pimples. Soothe your skin, feel cleansed and cooled, smoother and softer, glowing and glamorous.

**Effective but safe, so gentle!** NADINOLA acts so positively just as so kind to your skin that no guarantee you will be delighted with its results. There are two to prove—one for oily skin and the other for dry skin. Choose the type that is right for you. Buy it confidently, use it happily. NADINOLA, Paris, Tennessee.

**NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM**

Just one jar will make your complexion brighter, clearer, lighter and lovelier.

**FOR OILY SKIN**  
Nadinola brings a magical, soothing skin beauty done in the same way. In a jar.

**FOR DRY SKIN**  
The unique Nadinola is blended with fine powders to be done in the same way. In a jar.

**BACKSTAGE**

**IF THIS issue of Ebony fails to find its way to you, don't worry, you have a protective net of fingers. The November Ebony has one page, both editorial and advertising, from any previous issue, including our long 1964 Anniversary issue of November, 1965.**

**The issue you hold in your hands has a total of 100 pages and contains an all-time record of more than 100 pages of advertising. This is a far cry from the first Ebony printed just 14 years ago. That issue contained a total of just 32 pages and almost no advertising for Edward H. Beal, of any publisher.**

**Here at Ebony, November has always been considered a "busy" month. Mr. John W. Johnson, founder of the Johnson Publishing Company, has started all his magazines in November and generally all month in the company's history have come in that month.**

**This month a record of more than 100,000 copies of the magazine will go to subscribers through the regular mail—another increase considering that just two years ago less than 100,000 subscribers were on our mailing list. The bulk of our readers at that time purchased their copies from the newsstands. Today, with our circulation approaching 100,000 copies a month, more than 50 per cent of our readers are actual subscribers. And our circulation sales still amount to more than 100,000.**

**Naturally, this huge increase in subscriptions has put a heavy load on our subscription department which is working busily night and day to see that our readers get their magazines on time.**

**The subscription department reports that one of their greatest problems is getting subscribers to receive magazines fast enough so that there is no interruption in their reading copies. Many overlook the expiration date of their subscriptions and then write from month to month to keep from missing an issue. Right now you should take a look at the only number under your address on the mailing label of this issue. The last two numbers tell when your subscription will expire. For instance, if the last numbers are "12 67," it means that your subscription expires the 12th month in 1967. The number "12" would mean the expiration day is the 12th month of 1967. Always read to see renewal and old months before the expiration date so that you will not take a single issue.**

**The November issue will send up 100 in good style. There will be pictures spread on a million-dollar Negro physician who became an ardent health columnist and his wonderful condition. Pictures will tell the colorful story of Mark Fisher in the Chicago talk show will enjoy a stop on a sports column.**

Invisible Makeup and the Female Illusion

Female beauty was still tied to the male gaze and servitude to a husband at this time. A woman wasn't expected to show anything that made her biologically female, such as menstruation or pregnancy, but instead forever remain an un-aging doll whose duty is to serve her husband's household (Hutchings, 2000). This was exacerbated by the marketing practices of the beauty industry as their motto was 'ugliness breeds desire for beauty.' By showing how their products "cure" imperfections, women would see how the product could help themselves become beautiful (Hutchings, 2000). The idea that beauty was something you were born with

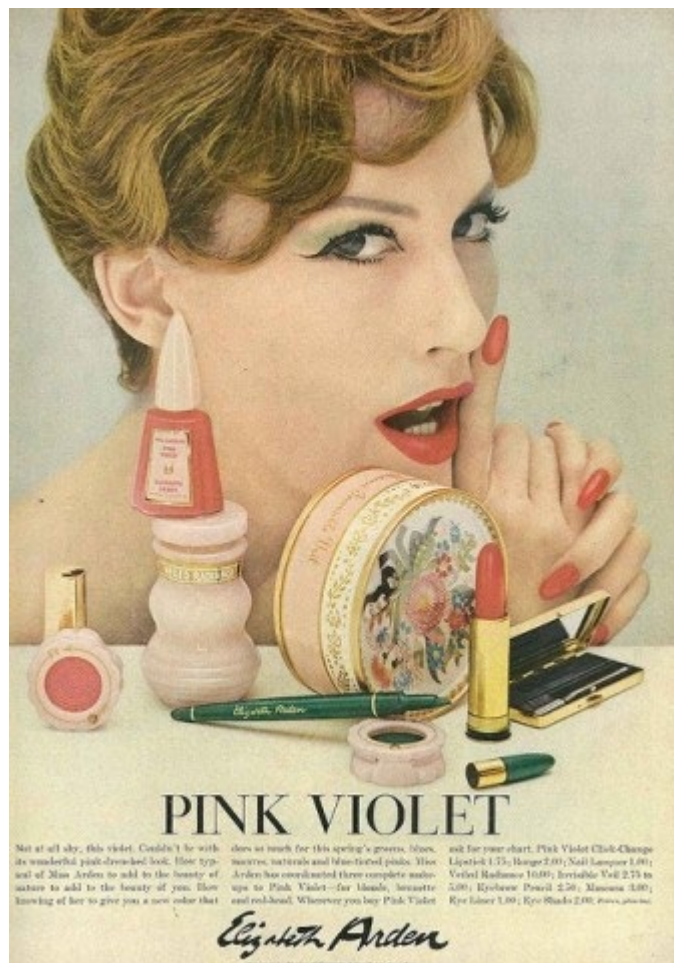


was increasingly being viewed as a fallacy and the power of cosmetics was emphasized.

However, the idea that men shouldn't concern themselves with a woman's tasks extended to the use of makeup, hence the ideal makeup look was to appear as you weren't wearing any at all.

Some historians claim it was common for a man to see his romantic partner without makeup, not until they were married (Hutchings, 2000).

An advertisement for makeup where the model is making a “shush” gesture entailing that makeup is her secret to looking beautiful (Elizabeth Arden, 1958)



An advertisement for maternity wear emphasizing the simplicity of a pregnant woman to look their best (ReCreations Maternity, 1985)

TO: **PREGNANT WOMEN**  
FROM: **ReCreations**  
RE: **WARDROBE CATALOG**



**Look your best! Learn how easy and affordable it is to keep looking your best throughout your pregnancy. For a 16-page full-color catalog *and* fit guide,**

### Sexification

The plump curves of the Victorian era were no longer in style in the 1920s. Thin was in and many women went to great lengths to achieve a youthful thin frame as the number of eating disorders soared during this decade. Though, as everything that goes up must come down, the bust to hip ratio returned to pre-1905 levels in the late 1940s (Howard, 2018). The art that popularized this aesthetic was the pinup model, on printed posters that you pin up.



A typical pinup painting by famous pinup artist  
Peter Driben (Driben, 1940 -1950)

The pinup did become a new art form that sexualized women, but it wasn't intended to. The sexual aspect came from the rise of nude and burlesque performers in the Americas and Europe. With the onset of World War II, men were away and women were freer to show the sexual side of womanhood and soldiers away from home wanted to see nude women (Frank, 2014).



Strip-tease dancer and actress Sherry Britton  
(Kollar, 1930s - 1940s)

The rise of the film industry also popularized the scandalous aesthetic as film executives knew sex sells and included sexy women in their adverts. Other industries caught on and soon one could get a semi-erotic issue of *Life Magazine* in any big city across the U.S. (West, 2020).

As military action across the world soared, journalists noticed the affect of strip teasers and sex on soldiers. They claimed it aided morale and the sexuality of women was crucial to the prosperity of the military man (West, 2020). Governments caught on and started using erotic visuals of women in military campaigns. Hence, the iconic military version of the pinup was born. Australia, Britain, the U.S., and even Russia rolled out print ads that incorporated a sex symbol to convince young men to fight for their country (West, 2020) (Frank, 2014). The iconic ads, or pinup art, typically included a young woman with long exposed legs, pale skin, wearing a revealing outfit like a swimsuit, looking at the viewer directly (West, 2020). The rise of military conquest also enabled women of other ethnicities to be included in beauty publications. As wars during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century involved soldiers traveling to regions much different than their own, men found the local women of the Pacific Islands and Asia aesthetically appealing and added their photographs to their idea of a beautiful woman (West, 2020).

An American Pinup Patriotic Advertisement from  
the World War II Era (Moran, 1944)

**BUY  
WAR BONDS**  
★  
**EVERYBODY  
EVERY PAYDAY**  
AT LEAST **10%**

MISS LIBERTY

**BROWN & BIGELOW**  
*Remembrance Advertising*

CALENDARS      GREETINGS      LEATHER  
PLAYING CARDS      NOVELTIES      DIRECT MAIL

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA      Nestor 6331

D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT																							

*Our strength is in our unity of purpose* ★  
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT



Pacific Islanders Posing for a Photograph  
(Volz, 1943)

The curvy body aesthetic was made widespread by these wartime drafting advertisements and propaganda. In addition to amateur models posing for pinups, such as wives looking to send images to their husbands, Hollywood stars like Marilyn Monroe and Jayne Mansfield also entered the artform. They were fuller figured than the models and movie stars that preceded them, though still carried a thin waist with an hourglass shape (Frank, 2014). The inclusion of ordinary small-town women in this artform sculpted the female aesthetic to become more realistic and included a larger range of waistlines.



(Maynard & Mansfield, 1957)

As many women were not born with naturally thin body types, exercise became a popular way to achieve the aesthetic of a small waist. Mainstream culture, led by middle-class white women, encouraged calisthenics, gymnastics, sports, physical education, and conscious eating (Purkiss, 2017). This physical culture movement intentionally excluded Black women, which prompted a parallel movement of fitness in Black communities (Purkiss, 2017).

With the rise of wide-spread marketing campaigns for beauty products, depictions of overweight Black women working domestic jobs became a frequent published image. It was a racist-offensive portrayal, but specifically educated Black women outright excluded heavier Black women from the Black-beauty ideal (Purkiss, 2017). Higher-educated Black women, such as columnists, teachers, and authors, began preaching the components of “fine womanhood” and the importance of exercise to lose weight and essentially emulated the thin aesthetic of white women (Purkiss, 2017).

A can label for coffee that includes an illustration of the ‘mammy’ stereotype, a black woman who works as a house servant that is overweight and unattractive and often plays the 2<sup>nd</sup> mother role to the children of her employers (WM. B. Reily & Company. Inc., 1875 - 1900)



As modern medicine and the media in North America advocated the importance of health to the prosperity of their nation; being fat meant being an unpatriotic citizen. For minorities, it meant further stripping away your proximity to being a fully respected member of your country (Purkiss, 2017). Many Black women internalized their feelings about their weight and it sparked many fitness businesses in Black communities. Historians argue the body became such an important component of Black culture because it was one of the few aspects of life where they could exercise control. Exercise culture allowed women of African descent to distance themselves from pejorative images constructed by racist stereotypes and create an aesthetic for themselves only and not their oppressors (Purkiss, 2017).



Alice Coachman, an African-American Gold Medalist at the 1948 Olympics (Unknown, 1948)



## *Eugenics in Plastic Surgery*

As different ethnic populations mixed in post-slavery nations, the desirable features in women changed. White men often saw women of African-descent as promiscuous, and their body features became the sexual aesthetic for women in the Americas. African female features such as wide hips and big breasts and butts were often sought after by white women (Jarrín, 2017).

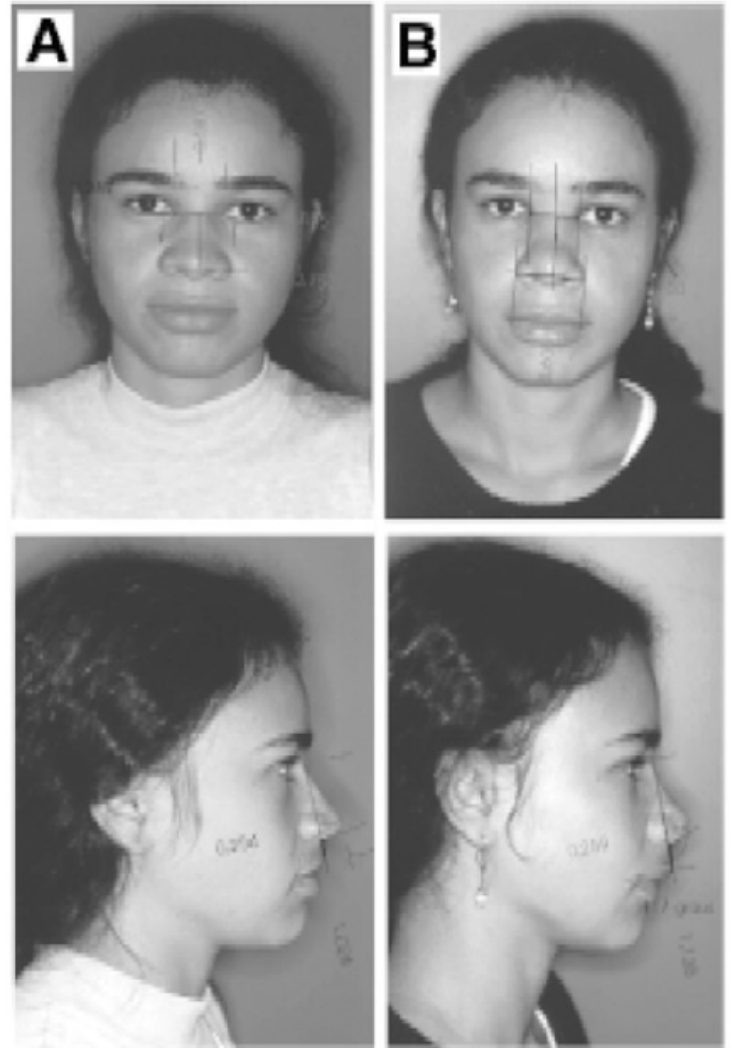
On the contrary, European noses and complexions were preferred over African and indigenous ones because a European face was one of respect, especially for women. Young mixed-race women in South America sought plastic surgery to “Caucasian-ize” their faces.

The advance in medicine over the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries has enabled people to achieve new feats of cosmetic “perfection,” with less health risks from simply going under the knife. With the beauty standards of the west being grounded in eugenics, women often sought to achieve this hybrid ethnic look that exhibited a perfect amount of sexiness and respectability through plastic surgery. Doctors of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century encouraged facial plastic surgery for indigenous and Black women in South America as a way to increase their aesthetic value according to eugenic ideals. Procedures such as rhinoplasties and lip thinning were common as they removed the Afro-Latin features that associated one’s face with racist ideals of Black ugliness and criminality (Jarrín, 2017). To be Black was to be ugly, and it was characterized by facial features and skin tone. But to have the physique to that of a Black woman coupled with a lighter complexion and a Caucasian face was to be beautiful. Mixed-race women in Brazil and other countries became coveted in the world of aesthetics as they have a mix of features that portray them both as sexy and respectable in the eyes of ruling class of white men (Jarrín, 2017). Additionally, smaller framed women were recommended fat grafting and implants to achieve a

mixed-race body aesthetic. This is where the trend of the Gluteal Fat Grafting Procedure, better known as the Brazilian Butt Lift, was started (Silva, 2022).



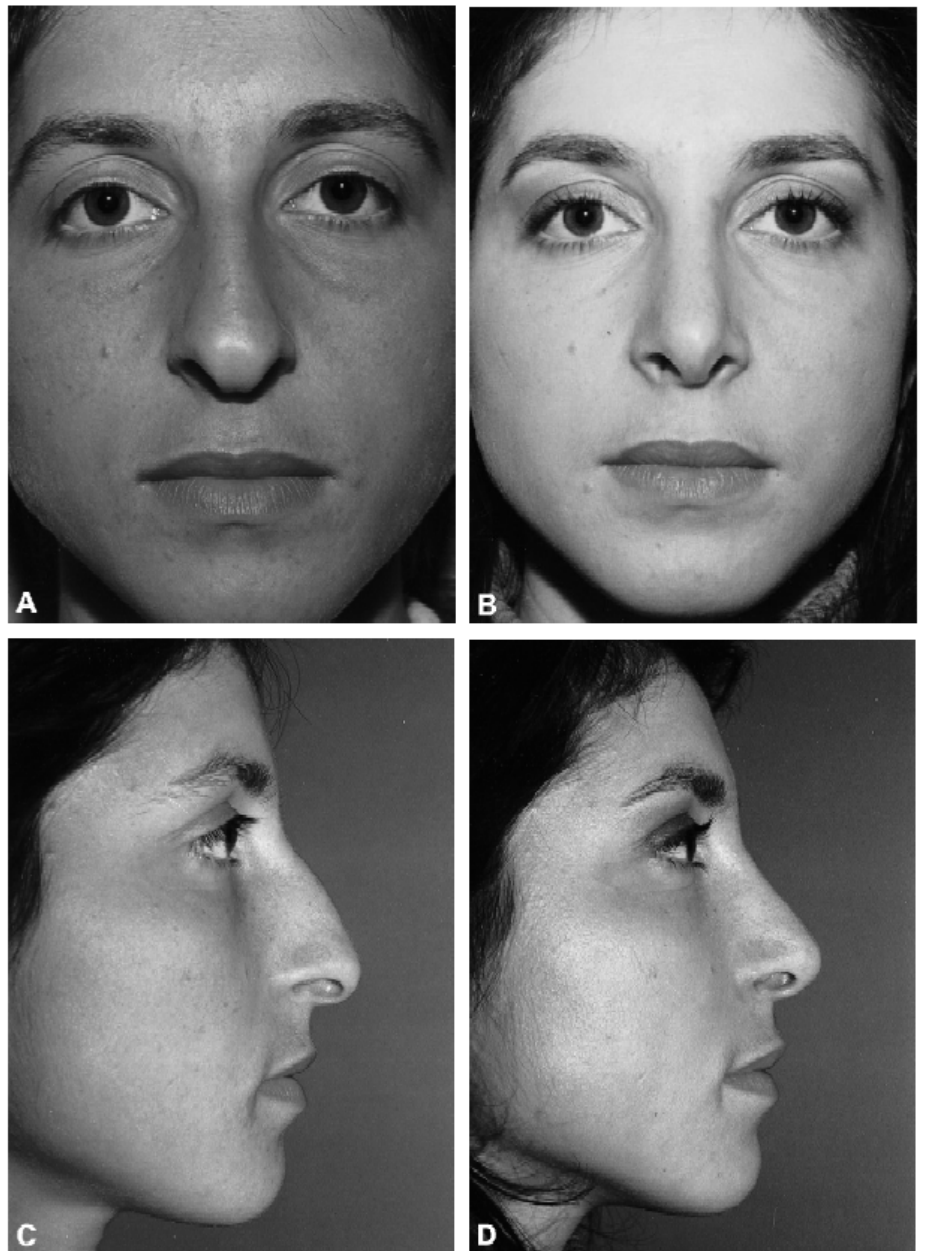
Actress, adult entertainer, and model of the 1970s and 80s: Joyce Mandell; this was the aesthetic of the glamour or erotic model (Anon., 1980)



A woman of Afro-Latin descent before (A) and after (B) undergoing a rhinoplasty to assimilate her face (Jarrín, 2017)

By the 1980s, cultures across the west praised smaller waists and larger curves in the female body; and big lips and eyes with small noses and defined cheekbones in the female face. Procedures such as the rhinoplasty, forehead lift, and bovine sourced collagen injections became very popular (Mehren, 1985). The shame around plastic surgery began to subside and people began to seek medical treatments to make them look better, or visually assimilate. People from minority ethnic groups often sought to Europeanize their faces to achieve what would be considered beautiful or merely not look so “ethnic” (Niechajev & Haraldsson, 1997).

(A,C) A 16-year-old girl of Middle Eastern descent, who has undergone a rhinoplasty and obtained a southern European look (B,D). (Niechajev & Haraldsson, 1997)



## *Au Naturel Body Sculpting*

In addition to surgery being a popular route to body customization, fitness was also becoming a popular avenue. Exercise was being recommended by medical professionals and with new workout equipment and philosophies taking over the health market, people began subscribing to the idea that the way your body looked is dependent on your time at the gym. Aerobics were many women's go to for losing weight, but it didn't always yield the shape many wanted. Body sculpting through weight lifting was a way to build muscle tone and achieve tight abs, thicker thighs, and perky buttocks (Pike, 1994). Professional trainers emphasized that the goal was to look healthy through having a balance of toned muscle and body fat, along with having the confidence that comes with realizing your fitness goals. To show skin was to show muscle and if you were fat, society expected you to cover up (Pike, 1994). Overweight women were often used in fitness adverts to show one's "before look", before they started working out (Lee, 2020).

Model Kelly LeBrock in the movie *Weird Science*  
(1985) (Weird Science, 1985)



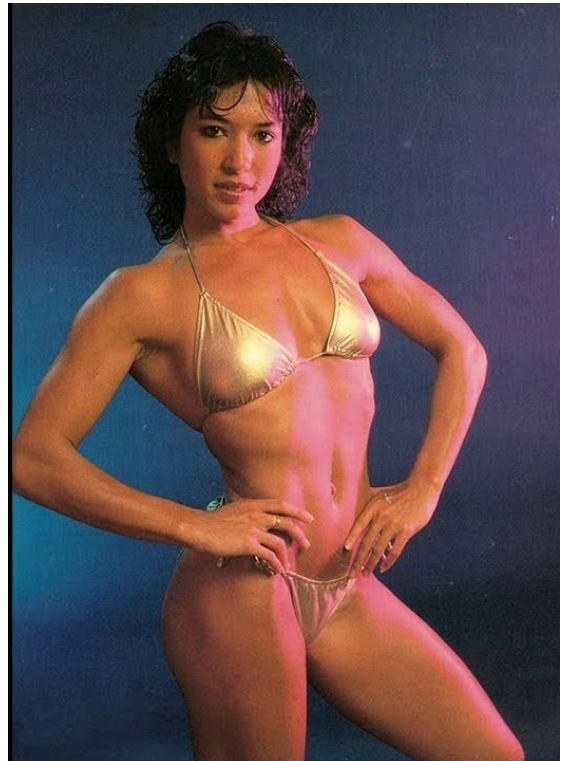


A catalogue ad for exercise-wear; the models are thin with toned muscles (Danskin, 1976)

Several women's liberation movements took place across Europe and North America in the 1970s. They gave way to new laws, gender roles, and new ideas of what a woman should look like. This inspired many women to take up the traditionally masculine sports of weightlifting and body-building. There was a lot of push-back with the popularity of female bodybuilding as many male critics deemed it a form of envy of masculinity (Strand, 1985). But female bodybuilders didn't want to be men; they liked the way their muscles looked and viewed it as another way to express their femininity. Muscularity wasn't synonymous with masculinity anymore. Many body builders started working out as a way to look "normally healthy" and

initially expressed concern over how much muscle would be gained from their pursuits as a muscular physique was deemed unattractive. But many women soon fell in love with the sport and the way it made them look. The sport added a new female aesthetic to the definition of feminine beauty (Strand, 1985).

Bodybuilder Lydia Cheng who won the 1985 title  
of Ms.Olympia (Rosen, 1985)



Professional Bodybuilder Corinna Kneuer-  
Everson (Rosen, 1982)

## *Big, Blonde, and Beautiful*

With women's liberation movements redefining the western beauty ideals of the 1970s and 80s, other body types were allowed to shine. The commercialization of retail food, combined with the popularity of fast food, and stress from corporate work environments all contributed to the rise of obesity in the Americas in the late twentieth century. Being overweight was shameful. But movements in several communities brought the feeling of beauty to many overweight women (Suárez, 2018).

American Engineer Bill Fabrey started a small organization to combat the stigma of being overweight. It was called the National Association to Aid Fat Americans. Other fat activist organizations formed and over the course of a few decades, the movement towards fat acceptance, especially in feminine spaces, became international (Miss Gordita: South American Plus Sized Beauty Pageant, 2018) (National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance, n.d.).

The marketing industry wasn't blind to the existence of big women and fashionable clothes were sold in bigger sizes, but the high fashion houses of New York and Paris wouldn't be caught dead promoting sizes larger than an eight (Black, 2014). It wasn't until the women's liberation movement that being fashionable and big was a thing you could be loud and proud about. Fashion retailers started recruiting plus size models to advertise their clothing and a movement for women's beauty took off (Plus-Sized Modelling, 1989).

Now the fashion industry wasn't looking to just promote every large person, just like not every thin person was fit to be hired by a designer modeling agency. The ideal plus size model was, and still is, a curvaceous woman with an hourglass figure. Her breasts are large, uniform, and pronounced, her butt tight and round, and her arms and legs have youthful skin with not too

**A**  
Now available in Ivory  
Up to 46F

**B. JUST MY SIZE® NYLON BRIEF.** Made of Captiva nylon and composed of the best silky yarns for a smooth, soft feel. With a cotton crotch. Machine wash and dry.  
Beige (14), White (02), Peach (21).  
Style 7000D Sizes: 8 to 13.  
Buy 1 to 3.....\$3.50 ea.  
Buy 4 to 8.....\$3.25 ea.  
Buy 9 or more.....\$3.00 ea.  
(same style number)

**24 HOURS A DAY**  
like quantities last.

**C**  
Up to 46F

**D. NEW! THE GLAMORISE® LONG LEG COTTON COMFORT SHAPER.** Soft, stretch, chafe-free, cotton thighs prevent irritation. Smooth, no-show seams, tummy control panel shapes like a grille. Each size fits perfectly. Nylon/polyester/spandex/19% cotton.  
White (02) or Black (90).  
Style 8283E  
Sizes 38B to 46B, 38C to 46C.  
Buy 1-2.....\$29.00 ea.  
Buy 3 or more.....\$27.50 ea.

**Style 8284E.**  
Sizes 38D to 46D, 38DD to 46DD,  
38F to 46F.  
Buy 1-2.....\$30.00 ea.  
Buy 3 or more.....\$28.50 ea.

**White (02) or Black (90).**  
Style 7357C Sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48.  
Buy 1-2.....\$26.00 ea.  
Buy 3 or more.....\$24.50 ea.  
(same style number)

**Non-chafe cotton legs**

**13**

much cellulite and of course she has a youthful healthy-looking face. Today's plus size modeling industry is defined differently and doesn't include all sizes larger than a UK 8, but rather the industry has evolved to represent models of various shapes and sizes in categories of high fashion, commercial retail, plus size, glamour, and fitness.

Undergarment catalogue ad for plus-sized women (Just My Size, 1994)

**BIG • BEAUTIFUL • WOMAN**

**BBW**

December 1991 • U.S. \$2.95 • Canada \$3.50

**CABERRE • STEPHEN YEARICK • GIANNI VERSACE • GIVENCHY • MARINA RINALDI • VICTOR COSTA • PIERRE LABICHE • PARIS**

THE WORLD'S FIRST **All-Designer Issue for the BBW**

35 PAGES OF LARGE-SIZE FASHION YOU'LL LOVE WITH A PASSION!

1 2  
0 74666 53257

Cover of an issue of the fashion magazine Big Beautiful Women, a magazine for plus-sized patrons (Big Beautiful Women, 1991)



## Conclusion

The beauty of women is a subjective and convoluted topic that is constantly changing. Events in politics, technology, human migration, and pop culture have greatly influenced the beauty standard and who is able to subscribe to it. With the dawn of the modern era, women gained a new-more respected class status in many western countries and with it came a freedom to bend the definition of what was aesthetically pleasing. The twentieth-century allowed women to move away from their looks being defined by nature, technology, and the male gaze. Much of the ideal female aesthetic is still grounded in sex-shaming and racism that stems from patriarchy and colonization, but as it has bent before, it will bend again and hopefully allow more women to feel beautiful in their own skin.

***Fini***

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