

Sex, Stereotypes and Beauty: The ABCs and Ds of Commercial Images of Women

The following are guidelines to assist in presenting this slide show to a group. This is not a mandatory script, so please feel free to present the material in the way that best suits your style and comfort level, as well as the needs of your audience.

Please read through the script and view the slides at least once before your presentation. If you have any questions, contact Lisa Bennett at comm@now.org.

NOTE: The slides will not advance automatically. Use the down or right arrow key or click the mouse in order to advance one slide at a time. The up or left arrow key will send you back one slide at a time.

Introduction

[Slide 1 - "Warning" should be on the screen]

Hello. We're here today to talk about the role the media play in making women and girls feel

[Slide 2 – title slide]

The name of this presentation is Sex, Stereotypes and Beauty: The ABCs and Ds of Commercial Images of Women. It is brought to you by the National Organization for Women Foundation and its Love Your Body Campaign.

The presentation is organized into four sections, which we will go through one at a time, taking a brief discussion break at the end of each section.

[Slide 3 – A. Advertising]

First we're going to look at advertising, and how the beauty and fashion industries make billions of dollars by selling the dream of physical perfection.

Not all of these ads are offensive on their own, but the collective effect they have on girls and women is undeniable.

[Run slides 4 – 20. Read the slides aloud or just page through them as people read to themselves]

[Pause on slide 20]

One of the other dominant themes we see in advertising is a focus on thinness and a rejection of average-sized or larger women.

[Run slides 21 – 26. Pause on 26.]

The next group of ads illustrate how presenting women as sex objects is a common practice in advertising. Sex does sell, right? But what message does it send about women in the process?

[Run slides 27-32. Pause on 32.]

Advertisers love to think that they're being original or bold, when in fact they are repeating concepts that have been around for ages, like objectification, dehumanization, and violence.

[Run slides 33-39. Pause on 39.]

That's the end of section A. Does anyone have any comments or questions about the images we just saw?

[You can pause here for discussion, or move on if you or your audience prefer.]

[Slide 40 – B. Boys to Men]

In this section, we're going to consider the messages that are sent to boys and men through the media.

[Run slides 41- 46. Pause on 46.]

In ads and fashion lay-outs aimed at men, the sexual representation is often more explicit. The interaction between men and women, and the roles they are expected to play, are limited and often crudely drawn.

[Run slides 47 – 52. Pause on 52.]

When men are the object of the photo, are they presented any differently than women?

[Run slides 53 – 59. Pause on 59.]

That's the end of section B. Would anyone like to comment?

[You can pause here for discussion, or move on if you or your audience prefer.]

[Slide 60 – C. Celebrity Obsession]

It's clear that we are a society obsessed with fame and celebrity. And female stars are subject to far greater scrutiny and exploitation than their male counterparts.

[Run slides 61 – 65. Pause on 65.]

Women celebrities are expected to symbolize and feed our society's obsession with sex.

[Run slides 66 – 69. Pause on 69.]

What would the media do without gender stereotypes to fall back on? And the iconic nature of celebrity lends these images extra weight.

[Run slides 70 - 72. Pause on 72.]

That's it for section C. Any comments, questions?

[You can pause here for discussion, or move on if you or your audience prefer.]

[Slide 73 – D. Dangers]

The impact of the media and advertising on girls and women can range from minor to devastating. Few of us escape its influence entirely.

[Run slides 74 and 75 – Read these slides aloud.]

Believe it or not, we found a few ads that embrace a broader concept of beauty and promote a wider range of goals for women and girls.

[Run slides 76 – 80. Pause on 80.]

NOW Foundation's Love Your Body campaign was created because the media and advertisers have incredible power in our society, but WE have even more power. Together, we can really make a difference.

Why should we even try?

[Run slides 81-82. Read these slides aloud.]

Want to know where to start?

[Slide 83 – Read aloud.]

[Slide 84.]

Thank you. Does anyone have any final questions or comments?

Now it's time to commit to taking action.

[Try to get each member of your audience to agree to take some form of action. If possible, you might want to plan an action for your group to take together, either right then or on another date. Plan something as simple as a letter-writing night or as big as a protest in front of a radio that uses sexist billboards to advertise its shows.]

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