
Critical Analysis Of Victoria's Secret The "Love My Body" Campaign

Victoria's Secret has been one of the most successful lingerie and retail brands for numerous years. The company is not only recognized in America, but worldwide. Each year, they host their annual fashion show that is broadcasted in many countries. Although the company has great power and influence on such a diverse group of people, they still continue to depict women with the ideal body type. The company's "Love my Body" campaign claims to target women of all shapes, sizes, and races, but fails at displaying these characteristics in their advertisements. Instead, they portray several thin and tall women with the stereotypical body. Additionally, the advertisement only includes two African American females, the rest being white. Not only does this advertisement communicate a remarkably different message than intended, but it sets an impossible standard for women. Instead of embracing real beauty, this Victoria's Secret ad campaign is a primary example of female and racial power structures.

Social media has become a huge platform in today's society, projecting strong views on how women should look, feel, and act. When we compare ourselves to the idealized characteristics of a woman, we often scrutinize ourselves for not looking the same way. In recent years body positivity has finally become embraced by society. Nevertheless, Victoria's Secret still continues to advertise using skinny, white, and 'sexy' women. With these ideals set, the company has still remained successful and highly regarded when all they do is implement an unhealthy body image. The "Love my Body" campaign is supposedly celebrating women for the bodies they have, but it is only portraying what a woman should look like. There are many aspects of this advertisement that uphold power structures rather than challenge them.

Since the ad has a neutral colored background and no props, the main focus is on the women. All of the models are standing side by side and out of the seven women, five of them are white women wearing nude lingerie, while the other two are African American women that are wearing black lingerie. One thing I found interesting about this was that the models skin color correlated with the color of their lingerie. Since the women in this campaign are predominantly white, it is assumed that the targeted audience is white woman. Furthermore, if you look at the image as a whole, there are mostly light colors depicted, not dark. Despite having two African American models featured in the advertisement, the bright and nude colors say otherwise. They're flaunting themselves while showing lots of cleavage and skin, trying to draw your focus onto their bodies rather than their faces.

Additionally, all of the models have their collar and hip bones protruding, a thigh gap, and accentuated abs. The models look very underweight and are displaying an unhealthy body image to the public. Men will expect women to look like that, and women will feel the need to achieve that look. This can be dangerous for a woman because she can resort to extreme dieting. If you look at the models faces, their mouths are slightly opened, their eyes are wide and gazing directly into the camera, no wrinkles are present, and they are smirking. This gives the girls a very sexual appeal, which is a typical stereotype for women to have. When you look even closer to the models detail, their hair is perfectly curled, straightened, and blown back. However, the black women have their hair styled to look more like the white women in the picture. This especially does not show natural characteristics of an African American woman's

hair. On their skin, there is no sweat, oil, blemishes, scars, or stretch marks. This is a very atypical characteristic for any woman to have or achieve. This is significant because women in society are made to feel like they cannot have cellulite, stretch marks, acne, or scars on their body. The women's skin is also free of any body hair, rather it is radiantly glowing and has an airbrushed effect. It is perceived to be disgusting to a man, even though these things are natural. If this ad embraced body positivity, it would show women with scars and curves, or new mothers which would show a nature look.

The lighting plays a huge role in the image because it shines on the woman's face, breasts, intimate area, and legs. While the women are very beautiful, this does not empower them, but makes them look as if they are sexual objects. Each girl is holding a different pose, with their legs and chest accentuated, and their hands touching their inner thigh, collar bone, hips, or hair. These body parts are associated with sexual appeal as well. The advertisement also features another image of two white females stomachs that says, "Now with seven styles, there really is a body for everybody". Consequently, women who read this will still feel uncomfortable and not good enough because the two women are extremely thin. It makes it worse that the image in this ad just focuses on the stomach, a body part that makes many women feel insecure. The consumer will see the ad and think the "seven styles" only apply to women with a body like the models in the picture, not a women with various body shapes. In the last few years, different fashion brands are breaking the norm and embracing different cultures and challenging the stereotypical beauty ideals for women.

Nonetheless, Victoria's Secret is the biggest lingerie brand in the world and still continues to uphold female power structures. As the company claims to celebrate beauty in various ways, they use lengthy, slender, white women in their ads. In the "Love my Body" campaign, it was especially disturbing to see no diversity, plus size models, or no photoshop. This advertisement is hypocritical because it makes women feel like in order to have the perfect body, they must have specific body measurements in order to be ideal. When a young girl looks at images like this, they will feel like their bodies aren't normal or met by today's standards. This can lead to things like eating disorders, depression, and an unhealthy mentality. If Victoria's Secret had challenged female and racial power structures and had a successful "body positive" advertisement, they would had women of different ethnicities, sizes, and shapes shown. This would show women that you don't have to look a certain way to be beautiful or sexy, and that you can't be as successful as a white woman.