

[in]Visible



Issue 1, Volume I
Spring 2009

We are

a group of students
devoted to reducing the
perceived significance of
outward appearances in the
community, starting with Scripps.

We acknowledge unique character and
voice as essential elements of community
that should be appreciated in individuals, not
drowned out by the majority. We believe there are
qualities beyond physical appearances that define a
person. As such, we seek to emphasize appreciation of
what is frequently overlooked. It is our mission to bring
these essential qualities into focus.



[in]Visible Magazine was first envisioned in the Motley coffeehouse during the winter of 2008. After attending a Health Education Outreach (HEO)-sponsored event about healthy bodies, first-years Becca Marion and Laura Passarelli were inspired; sipping warm beverages, they continued to discuss beauty ideals and body image issues in themselves and the Scripps community.

They were disturbed by the perceived importance of physical beauty in society and their lives and wanted to make a change. They imagined creating a publication that would encourage readers to question and discuss the importance of appearances, as well as represent other aspects of identity. The word spread, and many dedicated people began to devote their time and energy to making [in]Visible Magazine a reality.

The name [in]Visible is

open to many interpretations. For us, the brackets surrounding the “in” are meant to imply that “in” is inserted and optional. On the one hand, this can symbolize how our choices determine whether we see ourselves or others as invisible or visible. We ask: “Why are some people recognized while others are drowned out? How can we give recognition to those we perceive as invisible?”

In another sense, we suggest that it is a choice to make invisible qualities visible. The Prince from Antoine de Saint-Exupery’s book *The Little Prince* learns the importance of seeing with the heart, not the eyes. As his friend the fox explains, “It is very simple: one sees well only with the heart. The essential is invisible to the eyes.”

Often, adults (like us) focus too much on the visible characteristics that define a person, ignoring the essential, invisible qualities that

make her unique. In producing this magazine, our goal is to see “with the heart.” We want to emphasize the importance of invisible qualities by bringing them to the center of our attention.

No matter your interpretation, the fundamental message is that appreciation of yourself and others—invisible and visible qualities—begins with you. You can judge yourself and others based on appearances, or you can value yourself and others for outer and inner beauty. It’s your choice, but we think that this second option paints a much more complete picture. We hope that this magazine will give much-needed representation to invisible qualities that are often ignored, and we hope that it will inspire you to see yourself and others in a whole new way.

[in]Visible Magazine Team

Becoming [in]Visible

Team Voices

Why did you join [in]Visible Magazine?

I'm involved with [in]Visible because I wanted to contribute to a magazine that promotes self-confidence that does not rely wholly on body image and encourages accepting and loving our bodies—and ourselves—as we are. —Liz Lyon '12



I am angry with today's media and the idea of body image it imposes on us. The idea of a positive, accepting magazine concerning body image is amazing. —Leah Munsey '12

I was deeply concerned with and affected by the prevalence of unhealthy body image issues here on campus. [In]Visible gives voice to the vast and varying issues experienced by young women on campus. The magazine, by illuminating this little talked about but much felt issue, will delegitimize our preoccupations with outward appearances and eradicate body image concerns, replacing them with healthy body image attitudes. —Valerie Latimore '12



Because it's fun stuff! —Abby Volkmann '12

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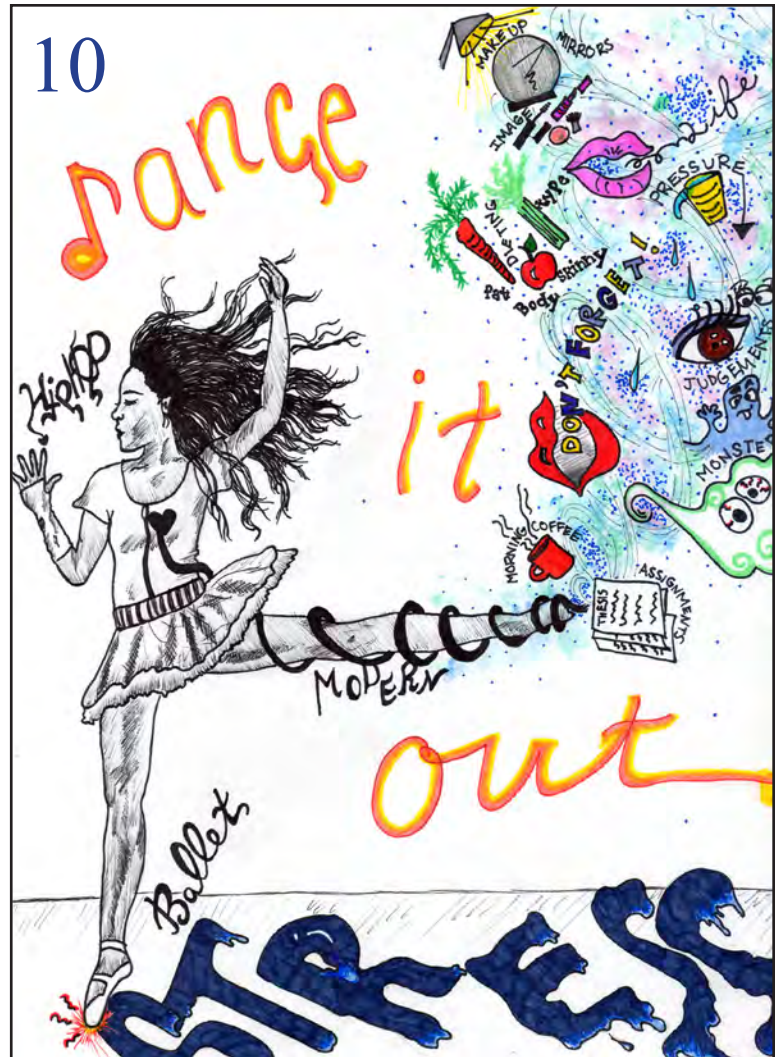
After a few years of consideration, Leah Munsey finally shaved her hair. So far, she’s gotten some interesting responses from family, friends...and strangers.

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Nephtali *Seeing the Invisible*

By Laura Passarelli

Last semester, I participated in the PhotoBooth project along with 380 people associated with Scripps. From the moment I heard about it, I was excited about the project. When Lisa Kau and I had our pictures taken in the white plastic booth, I laughed at the way the camera lens moved and rotated. I looked forward to seeing other people's portraits. I expected to see other Scripps students posing and smiling like Lisa and me, but the pictures surprised me.

When the wall was put up, I spent two separate half hours in the first day walking around the photo wall, admiring the pictures of people with poses and expressions and objects I would never have thought of and faces I had never noticed before. Even now I can clearly remember the pictures I spent time viewing: pictures of my friends Sarah and Julia right after working out, Professor Ou with his wife and daughter, Dean Wood with her many electronic accessories, and countless other people I knew, had seen before, or had never observed. I was only one of many people who stopped to view the wall that day.

However, the wall was taken down some time ago, and I have no idea when this happened. After my initial fascination with the photo wall, I no longer paused to look at the faces on it. During the first week it was put up, I had stopped once or twice and had been surprised that I kept seeing new faces. Yet after that first week, every time I passed it, I would be heading to a meal or a class or a rehearsal, and I didn't have time to stop. I didn't notice when it was gone.

When it was first introduced, the photo booth project was heralded as a force to unite and represent the Scripps community. However, the photo wall taught me more

in its absence; although I noticed it initially, I had made it invisible long before it physically disappeared. My mind was constantly focused on only what it needed to know and who it needed to see, and did not have extra energy to look at people who were not immediately important to its purposes.

Who am I missing now? Who do I walk by countless times and never once stop to say hello? Just as the photo wall faded into scenery, the people that surround me every day have become little more than scenery when I do not take the time to notice them and talk with them.

I remember one walk to my class at Pomona that was different from all of the others. I was taking a different route than I normally did and, also unlike my usual schedule, I had fifteen minutes to spare. As I passed by the





small plot of greenery outside the southwest corner of Frary, I saw a man working there. We smiled at each other, and I almost kept walking, but then I stopped. He came over and we talked. It turned out that his father had passed away the previous weekend, and he was going to the funeral this weekend. He takes his mother out to coffee every weekend. He loves his two kids and hopes they'll do the same for him when he is older. He hopes to retire in five years and is a second-degree black belt. His name is Nephtali. Talking with him was the most inspiring experience—he was so peaceful, so joyous, and so loving. I almost didn't meet him. I've walked past that plot many times since then but have not seen him again.

We'll never know who we have walked by and how many once-in-a-lifetime conversations we have missed if we are not looking. As a community, we must notice each other every day, and expand our world view beyond only those objects, obligations, and people who are closest to us. We must see those whom we have made invisible.



I Shaved My Head

By Leah Munsey

For the past couple of years I've been toying with the idea of shaving my head. I'm not really sure how the idea first made its way into my brain, but for a long time it was in the same category as skydiving—something I “had to do in life,” with the pending “someday” attached to the end.

In 2008 my aunt was diagnosed with breast cancer. She began chemotherapy and immediately bought several wigs to wear when she lost her hair. One day she took her wig off, pointed to her bald head and said to her five-year-old daughter, “Anna, should I wear my hair like this from now on?” Anna proceeded to cover her eyes and yell, “Ew, Mommy, that's so gross! Put your hair back on!”

Watching my aunt establish such a skewed idea of self-image with her children has undoubtedly affected my decision to shave my head. It is something I'm still coming to terms with, and it sped up my process immensely. By the summer of 2008, I'd had long, blonde hair for five consecutive years, and I finally decided it was time for a change. I cut it to about mid-neck and, a few months later, into a shaggy bob. I really liked it shorter

and started thinking seriously about going all the way and shaving it. I wanted to know the feeling of running my hand over a bald head instead of through stringy hair. I wanted to see all the various dents in my skull. I wanted to watch my hair in all its various stages of growth, beginning with no hair at all.

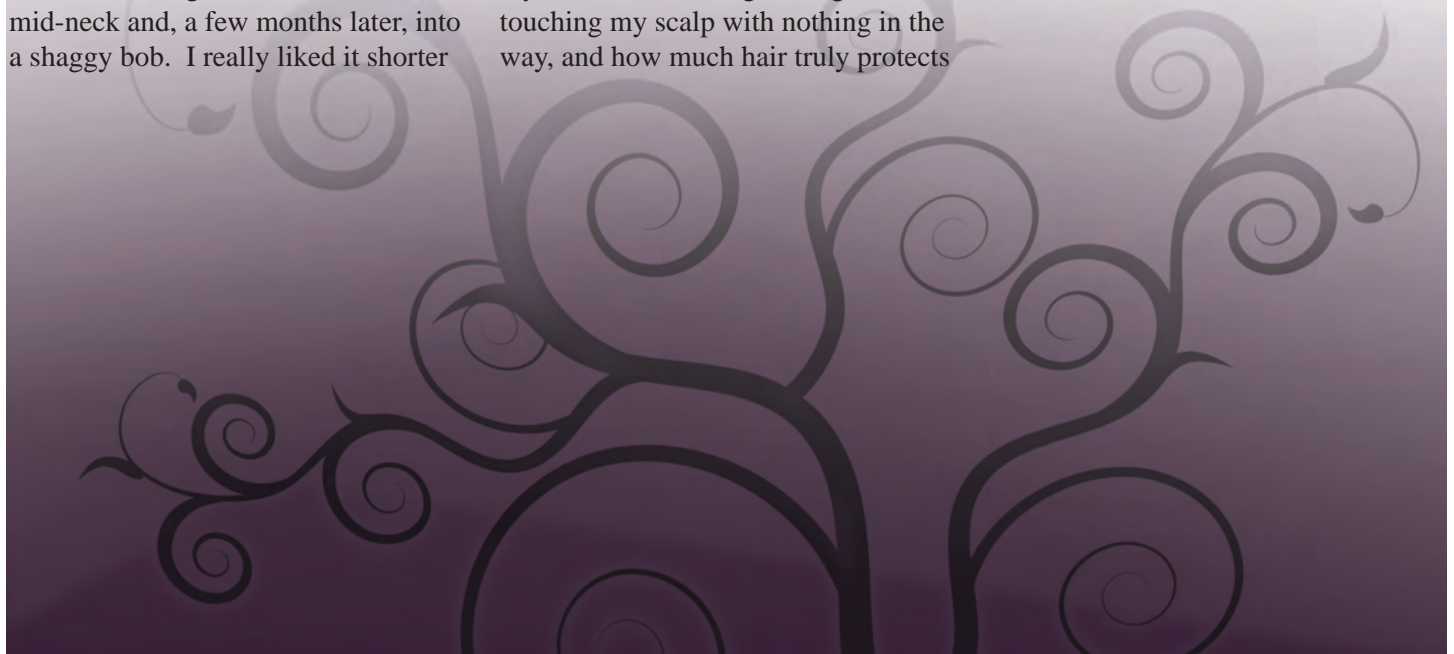
I entered Scripps in January of this semester, and my level of self-confidence seems to have sky-rocketed. It took only a few weeks of being here to realize that I was in a safe and accepting environment, and that now would be the perfect time to shave my head.

I decided to do it during spring break. My boyfriend came to visit, and I asked him to bring his electric razor. I didn't cut it shorter with scissors first or anything—I just put the razor directly to my head and went for it. I expected to cry while doing it or after, but I have yet to shed a tear.

The cliché response does stand true—it feels really liberating. But most of all, it has been interesting. I now know the true shape of my head, the amazing feeling of wind touching my scalp with nothing in the way, and how much hair truly protects

the head from cold. I'd say that has been my biggest obstacle—staying warm.

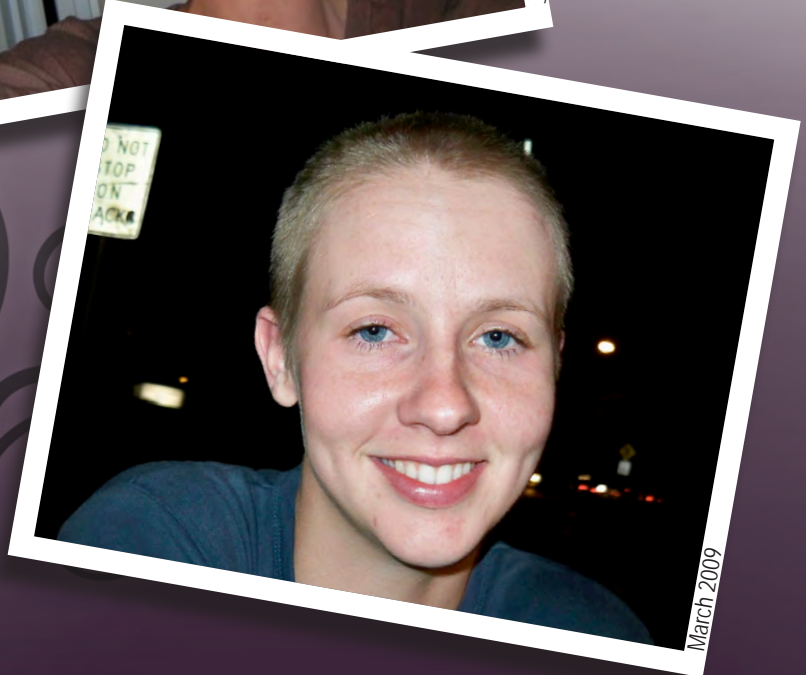
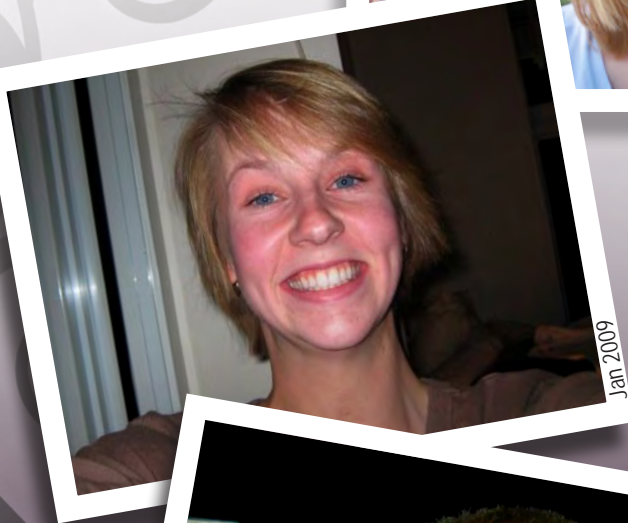
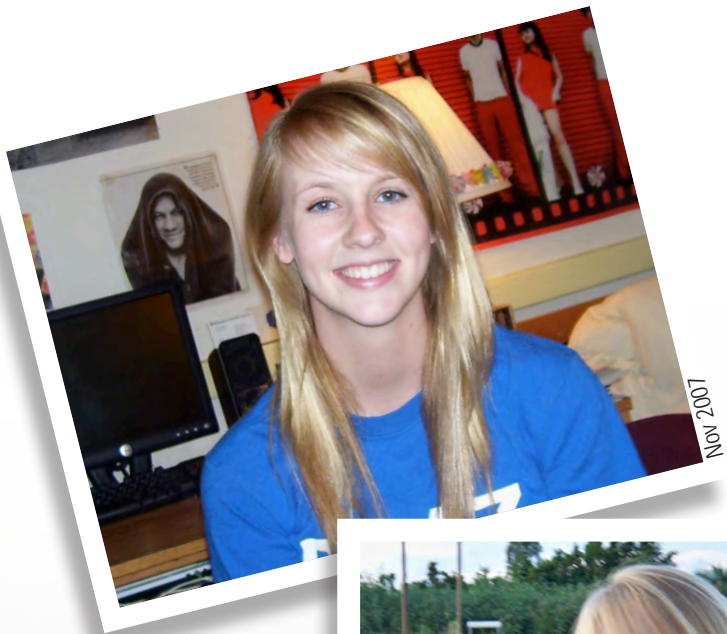
I have seen an array of reactions since I shaved it. The first response I received from someone in the Scripps community was from a girl in one of my classes to whom I'd never spoken. She asked why I did it and then said, “Well, you're rockin' it!” The majority of responses have had the same positive feeling. People comment on my bone structure and almost always say, “I could never pull that off.” Lots of people assume I am going through chemotherapy. One girl asked my roommate if I had cancer; one of my professors asked outright if I did it because of cancer; the owner of a hat stand at a flea market greeted me and then said, “Young lady, are you going through chemotherapy?” I expected reactions like these, but nevertheless it is interesting that sometimes we automatically assume someone is sick if they shave his or her head (and, I think it is safe to add that it applies more with women, because to me it seems like people don't consider it strange when a man shaves his head).



My gender has been confused only once (that I know of). I was at a French restaurant with some girlfriends and the waiter tried to impress us with his French. He addressed me as “Monsieur” instead of “Mademoiselle,” even though I was wearing a flower-patterned cardigan.

Not all responses have been positive and/or funny. My dad very literally thinks I’m manically depressed. When we were arguing about my reasons for doing it, I told him that I’m different from “the norm” and he responded, “And you choose to be that way.” My best friend’s mom also became worried and asked my friend if I am doing okay. I guess I’m not too surprised by these reactions—particularly my dad’s, since he has always been concerned with image—but it hurts a little to think that people who know me so well still assume I’ve gone off the deep end for a mere hair-cut.

Nevertheless, I do not regret cutting a single strand of hair. How I feel when the wind blows, the reactions I’ve gotten, and how I handle such reactions have provided me with an absolutely unforgettable experience.



Portrait of a Dancer

By Becca Marion

Professor Gail Abrams has taught in the Scripps College Dance Department for 23 years. She is currently team-teaching a CORE II class called “The Embodied Self: Feminist Theories of Body, Yoga, and Dance” with Professor Leigh Gilmore. The class explores expression through body movement in yoga and dance, as well as the role of gender in embodiment. She also teaches Modern Dance, CORE III, Laban Movement Analysis, and a course called Dynamics of Human Movement, which explores efficiency (or lack thereof) in the ways we use our bodies and movement. Abrams is a Certified Laban Movement Analyst who studies the qualitative and quantitative characteristics that contribute to expressive communication and efficacy of all forms of human movement (including sports, dance, management, teamwork, and other motion-related tasks).

“Everybody has body image issues,” says Abrams when asked about her self-image. While this might be a generalization, she explains that it would be hard to find a woman who has never had an issue with her appearance.

Like most people, Abrams has had insecurities. While growing up, people teased her for her small stature and “big Jewish nose,” and she was self-conscious about being flat-chested as a teenager.

Such insecurities affected her throughout high school, but her experience in college was different. In her sophomore year, a friend dragged her

to a modern dance class and she was instantly hooked. She was attracted to the “less codified movement” of modern dance, and the fact that it celebrates individuality by not prescribing a specific body type for all dancers. Modern dance, she says, is “concerned with expressive content and movement as communication.”

For Abrams, connecting with modern dance was the first step towards sensing her own self-worth. Exploring the connection between mind and body relieved her of many insecurities, including body image struggles.

A sense of self-worth, in Abrams’ opinion, is vital for accepting love from others. Each woman needs to feel good about herself before she can really believe it when someone tells her she is beautiful, or intelligent, or worthy.

As a mother of two, Abrams appreciates the relationship between good parenting and a child’s positive self-image. Her parents loved their children unconditionally and emphasized the importance of loving oneself. By the same token, Abrams was careful not to be self-critical in front of her own children. In today’s culture, dieting and plastic surgery have become increasingly common. While she does not believe that caring about appearances is bad, Abrams does question the negative messages mothers send their children when following such cultural trends.

Abrams believes that men have body image issues too, but feels

that “women struggle with them more than men do.” This is partly a result of mixed messages coming from the media. When magazines and television criticize female celebrities for both gaining a few pounds and being too thin, women are caught in a double bind where they “can’t win either way.” By contrast, weight gain and loss in male celebrities is usually attributed to movie or television roles, and is not “a reflection of an inadequacy in the person himself.”

Through her experience, Abrams has learned the value of individuality in contemporary society. “Where we make a mistake is in allowing ourselves to be dictated to by some external arbiter of how we are supposed to look.”



Dance



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MODERN

out

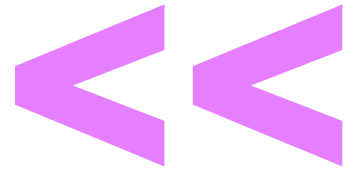


The Critical Body

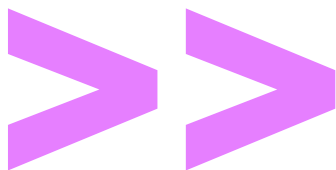
ART 100 B COMBINED MEDIA STUDIES STUDENTS INTERPRET AND QUESTION THE IDEA OF THE CRITICAL BODY; ISSUES OF GENDER, BODY IMAGE, AND THE INVISIBLE BODY ARE ALL UNDER EXAMINATION. IN THESE MULTIMEDIA PIECES, BOTH WEARABLE ART AND ART USING STOLEN FORMS IS SHOWN.

By Lili Salzberg

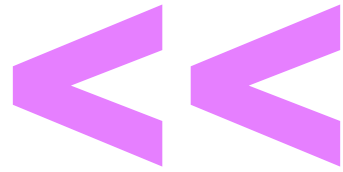
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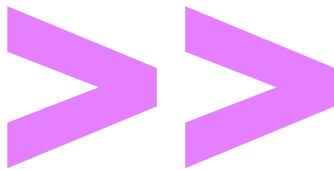
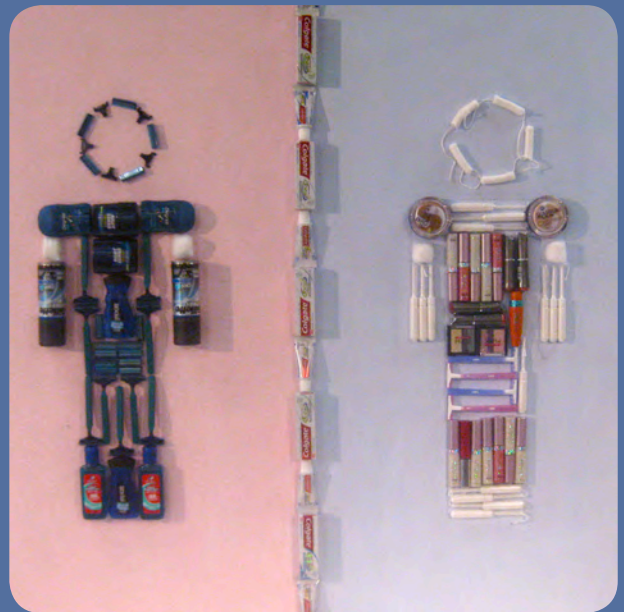
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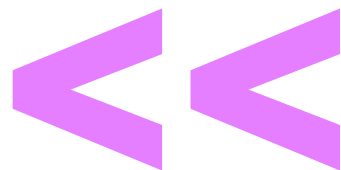
JOHANNA GLASER



LILI SALZBERG



SARAH DICK



Bodies in Balance

An expert opinion...

By Becca Marion

Professor Abrams studies the mind-body connection by analyzing body movement. “The body,” she explains, “has an innate intelligence which is often interfered with by outside influences” that create misalignment, patterns of tension, and inefficiency in body movement.

For example, wearing high heels has very real consequences on the body. The muscles in the front of your feet, legs, and lower back tense to keep you from falling over, creating an imbalance that causes other parts of the body to overcompensate. Unfortunately, this imbalance remains as residual tension, affecting your body long



photo credit: <http://www.prevention.com>



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after you kick off your heels. People who frequently wear heels, such as models, are far more likely to have chronic back and knee problems.

Don't wear heels? Imbalances can also happen in other areas of life, like studying: poor sitting posture and an improperly positioned computer screen can result in body tension. Abrams warns students against positioning a computer screen above the line of vision because craning your



Photo credit: <http://fileserv.glam.com>

neck creates imbalance. She suggests lowering the screen or raising the chair to allow your neck to elongate, in addition to sitting with the spine supported vertically over the pelvis, with the “sit bones” back in the support of the chair.

Even with these preventive measures in mind, imbalance in the body is sometimes unavoidable. Therefore, Abrams devotes much of her attention to studying and teaching somatic practices that “retrain” the body. Visual imagery is particularly useful in rebalancing muscle work in the body, though several other methods can be used. Ideokinesis (or Neuromuscular Reeducation), Laban Movement Analysis, Tai Chi, Alexander Technique, Pilates, Yoga, and various types of massage work help address body imbalances.

Abrams encourages somatic practices because feeling good physically affects self-confidence. “The better your body feels, the better you feel about your body,” she says. According to Abrams, leading a healthy lifestyle is integral to feeling good about yourself.

The message is clear: treating your body well has positive and reciprocal consequences—physically and mentally!



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Many have heard the term “male gaze,” which is a conscious and subconscious process by which women are viewed by an assumed male audience. This results in the sexualization and objectification of women and the curtailment of female agency. Although the male gaze cannot be tangibly felt, touched, or even easily defined, its practice is increasingly detrimental to women. Many readers may dismiss the male gaze as no longer relevant to the 21st century, but it is responsible for many women’s preoccupations with appearance and often spurs eating disorders, dieting, and plastic surgery, which have become prevalent in our society today. Even the most successful women fall prey to the standards of the male gaze. Critical attention must be called to the male gaze because it is the root of many unhealthy, self-objectifying body image views that affect women today.

It is easier, now more than ever, for women to receive and internalize the ideals of the male gaze because of the pervasive ways in which the popular media of both today and the past reinforce the male gaze. For instance, many magazine ads and music videos depict women in a way that assumes a male spectator and appeals to male sexuality. The female sexuality included in these videos often is an expression of the fulfillment of male sexual desires. The media and art (music videos, advertisements, paintings, television) have the power to mold our subconscious modes of thinking. The world is narrated by the male gaze, and women can internalize this detrimental, objectifying male gaze.

The male gaze also wields the power to disable female autonomy. As John Berger, an English

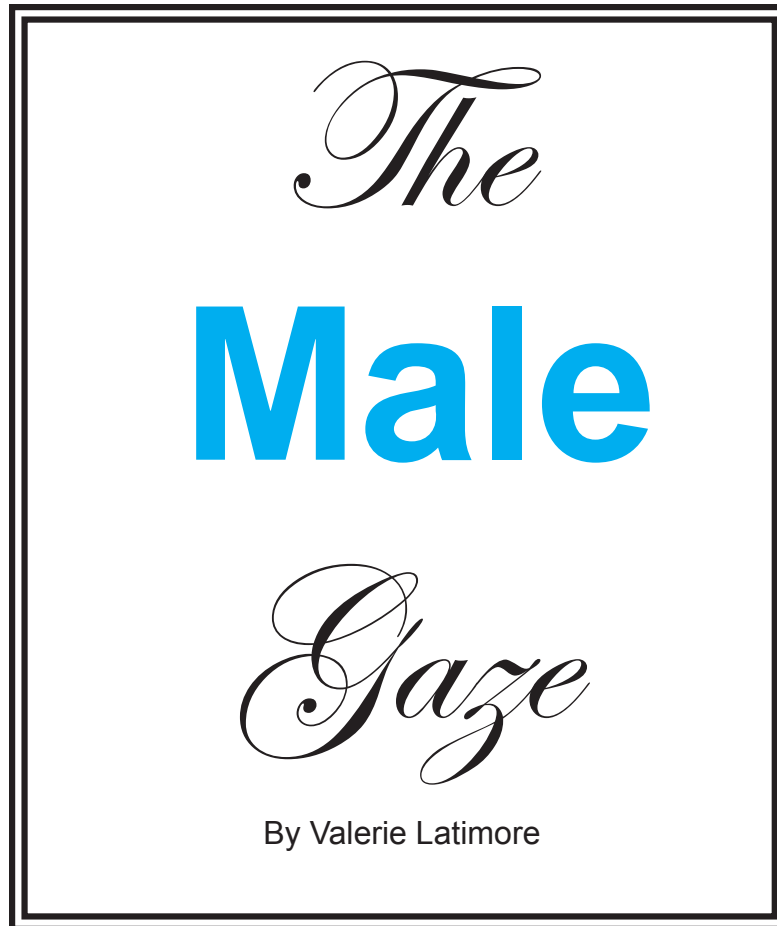
art critic, states, “Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at.” John Berger’s analysis of European nude paintings encapsulates the concept of the male gaze. Many women are depicted viewing their reflections in a mirror, “responding with calculated charm,” or simply assuming positions of display while regarding

themselves as a sight to be viewed. These paintings assume that the target audience is male, further reinforcing male gaze. This practice goes on in our daily lives: most of us dedicate many, often unnecessary, hours of our week primping and perfecting our appearances in the mirror. Sometimes we forget that what we have to offer transcends our outward appearances.

Unlike other forms of control, the male gaze operates within the subconscious of both men and women who internalize these expecta-

tions. And while we may be aware of the concept of the male gaze, it is very important to remind ourselves how our practices reinforce it.

This is not a plea for the boycotting of mirrors, make-up, dieting or even plastic surgery; rather, it is a gentle reminder to not let these things serve as validations. It’s important to examine and critique the motivations behind why we do the things we do because if self-satisfaction is based on fulfilling the male gaze ideal, a true sense of self-satisfaction is difficult to achieve. So, continue putting on make-up, looking in the mirror, and admiring yourself. The point to remember is that, when it comes to body image, only one person’s opinion matters—and that is yours.



IN THE BIG SCHEME OF THINGS

By Leah Munsey

I grew up in two very different households. My parents divorced when I was seven. My mother had primary custody of me, but I still saw my father at least once a week. My parents are two very different people—my mother is extremely liberal and self-aware, while my father is extraordinarily conservative.

I think I started becoming cognizant of my body when I began middle school. I had the stereotypical desire to be in the “in” group, and I scrambled at the first chance to start wearing makeup and buying “cute” clothes. My mom didn’t fight this sudden urge to be “in”; rather, she wisely let it run its course. She stood back and watched as my popular pink eye shadow from sixth grade turned into the black, heavy, emotionally strained eyeliner of eighth grade. She did have a few rules—I couldn’t shave my legs or pierce my ears until I was twelve, but that was all. Of course I made her drive me to Claire’s on the morning of my twelfth birthday, and that night she taught me how to use a razor. She was also sure to respond whenever I said

something about being “fat”; she always frowned and said, “Leah, you are NOT fat.” She advocated healthy food merely for the sake of health, not for a skinnier body.

In my father’s world, on the other hand, girls wear cute clothes and use just the right amount of make-up. Although he never verbally advocated this lifestyle, I always knew it was there, because he never objected when my stepmother made herself heard. Once she told me,

“If I were your mother, I wouldn’t let you wear that to school.”

She always put makeup in my stocking at Christmas and never ceased to remind me of the calorie content of Nestlé hot cocoa mix.

During these years I was exposed to two entirely different perceptions of image—in one household, my looks didn’t matter and there was always encouragement for positive self-image. In the other, there was no “self” attached to “image” and there were implicit and explicit expectations to live up to.

Both of these were left behind, however, when I went to boarding school my sophomore year of high school.

“My self-image plummeted when I left home.”

I was on my own, with neither a safety net of indifference nor expectations to live by. I continued to wear makeup and believed I was fat. I felt guilty at every meal, even if all I ate was an apple. There weren’t any specific characteristics of my school that necessarily perpetuated this downward spiral; looking back, I think it was the fact that I was too young to be away from home and I still had so much to learn from my family. Boarding school is a weird place, and my entrapment merely made my self-conscious tendencies multiply.

Over the course of my senior year, I became

more and more exhausted by the demands of college applications, my senior paper, and my concern for my appearance slowly faded. I went from wearing eyeliner on the top and bottom of my eyelids to only the top and then to no eyeliner at all. I graduated and went home for the summer, where my mother acted as she normally did—I was beautiful no matter what. In my dad's household, nothing was specifically said, but my stepmother asked me with disdain why I stopped shaving my legs (and she still insists on stuffing my stocking

with makeup that I'll never use.)

Once in elementary school I asked my mother if she would wear lipstick like all the other mommies. She chuckled and told me that lipstick didn't really matter in the big scheme of things. She has shown me that it truly does not matter how I look—with makeup or without makeup, lovehandles or none, she loves me. This, rather than my father's passive aggressive desire for me to be "normal," is what I will carry with me for the rest of my life.



Journal Beautiful

I have a compulsive drive to write down everything about and around me in a journal. I tend to forget a lot of things, so the way that I remember things - be they names, French vocabulary words, class notes, or things going on my life - is to write them down. Over time, by looking back on what I've written, I have come to realize that what I do, think, and write has intrinsic value.

My experience with journals has been varied. I've received journals as birthday presents or bought my own, written in the first few pages, and then stopped. Months later, I've picked up the same journal and started again, only to stop. I began keeping a serious journal when I was fifteen, making a commitment to write at least two sentences every night for a month.

When I first started out, I wrote in my journal so that I could feel good about myself. I was like a first-grader dutifully finishing a sheet of homework, proud that I had done the simple task I was assigned.

However, as time progressed, writing in my journal became more than that. I had days where I couldn't wait to write in my journal, and throughout the day I'd think of little phrases or thoughts I'd specifically want to include. My enthusiasm for writing in my journal got to the point where I stopped thinking about what I was doing and instead thought about how I was going to record it. Although the purpose of a journal is to record for oneself the passing of time, events, and thoughts, the nature of the journal shouldn't be to write and forget to live.

I have come to realize that what I do, think, and write has intrinsic value

After the month was up, I kept going because I enjoyed writing, and I'd reread what I had written and couldn't get enough of it. However, as time went on I wasn't quite as consistent about recording my thoughts and life events. I sporadically wrote in my journal for

the next year and a half.

I didn't realize the value of keeping a journal until the summer between my junior and senior years of high school. I went to France for three weeks with a program sponsored by

...the nature of the journal shouldn't be to write and forget to live

my high school, and before the trip began, I made a commitment to write in my journal every night, (which I kept.) I stayed up all hours of the night in order to record everything I could remember about the day: what we had seen, how I had felt, what I had thought, how I was getting along with the other members on the trip. I slept less than my travelling companions, but I now have more than pictures to augment my memories of the trip.

As I look back, that was my favorite time to write in a journal, as well as one of my favorite trips so far. We spent three weeks traveling the country, swimming in lakes and rivers, visiting French

monuments and theme parks, spending a week-end with a host family, and overall having a good time. However, there were occurrences that I'd rather forget, but nevertheless made it into the journal such as the journey back home when we missed our connecting flight and returned home a day and a half later than expected.

Six months after my trip to France, I finished my journal. It was an auspicious event; it was the first journal I finished that had more than eighty pages. When I finished the last page and turned over the cover, I felt part of something larger. Like the journal, I was complete. And not only had I accomplished something, I had done it completely for myself. A part of me rested in those pages. And afterwards, I realized that I had found a source of self-worth, of wholeness, of confidence. The events of my life, hand-written in that journal, were striking, my perspective on them was important, and I realized for myself that I was beautiful.

By Liz Lyon

April 9, 2009

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Journal-writing is something I do for myself so that I can look back, see the progression my life has taken, and then look forward expectantly to new experiences to fill the blank pages. A journal can be as poorly written as the writer wants it to be and contain personal thoughts to be hidden away and infrequently divulged. Blogs, on the other hand, are a different matter entirely.

Blogs are meant to be public, to be shared, and to provoke discussion, insight, and commentary, something I did not understand when I started my own blog. I had been thinking about starting one, and when the [in]Visible team wanted an article about the blogging experience, I thought it would be a perfect opportunity to start one. Since I started my blog, www.spoonydriftwood.blogspot.com, I have discovered for myself how public a form of writing it is. It has an audience, so I found myself putting more and more thought into my posts, examining how they were written, and wondering if they were polished to a sufficient degree. I wanted to make my blog understandable and exciting in order to make friends of mine want to read it for pleasure, instead of feeling obliged to do so because I posted a link on their Facebook walls.

For me, writing is a tool to make sense of confusing issues, ranging from academic to personal and everywhere in between, as well as a cathartic exercise. After writing down an event that causes me frustration, such as a heated phone call with my sister, I am cleansed because I have physically expelled those feelings from the call. Thinking that a blog was a type of electronic journal that few people would see, I wrote that I missed home late one night. My plan backfired spectacularly, as I received several responses consoling me when I thought no one would notice my post. In all honesty, I was not that homesick, and I felt naked that others had seen my confession of weakness.

Although blogs are handy for writing down a quick update on one's life, blogs can be open to as many people as stumble upon them. My problem was that I did not realize just how open to the world a blog can be. At first I felt as if I had been invaded, but now I publish what I am doing or thinking about with a little more caution than I did at the the start of my blogging experience. I did not want to be critiqued for what I was saying, to have my friends think that what or how I thought was weird or odd. Journaling was like being in a crystal tower – I could think and express myself, but I was not willing to share what I thought or let myself accept the fact that others may think I was wrong or miss the point of what I was saying. My self-confidence does not have its foundation on what others think about me. My thoughts are valid in their own right because I am a thinking human in the midst of achieving her higher education.

Life and thinking are not solitary things. They cannot be pent-up and written only in a journal; what we think must rub against what other people think. A blog, and the Internet, as many people have already discovered, is a pretty good way to do that.

Needless to say, I have learned to not be afraid that other people may challenge my thoughts or feel put out when people do not respond to issues that I may think are important. My self-worth lies in the fact that I am thinking, not what other people think – although in the future, I may be more discriminating about whom I invite to see my blog, and particularly discriminating about what I choose to publish.

That said, please feel free to visit at www.spoonydriftwood.blogspot.com

By Liz Lyon

Changing Attitudes

Harvey Mudd senior Elaine Shaver reveals how a perfectionist academic atmosphere and family influences indirectly led her to become bulimic – and how she learned to respect her body.

By Lisa Kau and Laura Passarelli

Has the Mudd or Claremont community affected how you view your and others' bodies?

Indirectly, I guess. Mudd in particular has a perfectionist attitude. Almost every Mudder is really, really driven. This is something you probably didn't know about Mudd, but among the ladies, there is a high secret incidence of eating disorders. We're very stressed and perfectionistic, so it's easy to get into the negative cycle. When I went to college, I had the framework all set up to get bulimia. I was really a perfectionist. Everything had to be just so. When I got to Mudd, my stress levels went a lot higher than they had been.

What was it like having bulimia?

By the time it got to dinner, I'd want to relax, so I'd turn to food as a comfort item, but because of the eating disorder, I wouldn't allow that, so I'd start feeling guilty and hurt. I purged every day in tough times, but when stress would die down, it would go away again. I was worried about hiding it from my suitemates. I usually purged at night, and they were late-nighters.

How did purging make you feel?

After purging, I felt guilty that I'd done it again, that I was still in the cycle, but a lot better. And I didn't like the feeling of how heavy my stomach was. I had mixed feelings.

How did you get over bulimia?

Christmas my junior year I told my best friend about it. Seeing how she reacted to it made me realize that it was actually really serious, because I'd been denying to myself that it'd been a problem.


How did she react?

She started crying. She made me promise to go speak to someone. I went to a Mudd counselor who's an eating-disorder specialist. I started going to her weekly. She made me identify why food was the focus of my relaxation. We found the root causes and once we understood the causes, it was

a lot easier to change my mental attitudes. It sounds silly, but the moment of change was when she made me realize there is no good food and bad food. Before, I used to think that eating foods like apples would give me good-person points, and that eating foods like pizza would give me bad-person points.

Did your boyfriend at that time make you feel beautiful?

This will sound weird, but he was so subservient. There was a power imbalance. He was the more dependent one. When he'd tell me I was beautiful, I'd hear the words, but think "Well, you think so." He said the right things, but



'I really think that if I'd been more accepting of myself, I wouldn't have had that voice in the background saying, "You think I'm beautiful, but you're just dumb."'

Photos by Becca Marion



I didn't really feel beautiful. Working out made me feel beautiful. During the summer I would work out everyday. I exercised to burn calories. If I was too busy to work out, it would contribute to thoughts like "I'm being so bad, I just sit all day doing homework."

How do you know you're 100% over bulimia?

I guess it's gonna sound simple, but my attitude changed. I'm okay with myself, just as I am. It's okay to eat the pizza if I want to. Maybe tomorrow I'll eat an apple and my body can handle it and I'll look good. I get to enjoy having a body that can have fun, walk, and lie under the sunshine. I've started to talk about it some. I've reached the point where that was a different me. I'm a proctor and I told my girls, "Please, if you start feeling this way, come talk to me. You're normal, not crazy. It's something we can work through."

Has the media played a role in your experience of bulimia?

Mom keeps *Shape* magazine always around the house. In my obsessive state of mind, I'd read "Good foods to eat," or other similar articles. It would feed that part of me. My mom is a jazzercise

instructor. I'm pretty sure she's addicted to exercise, literally.

Have you told her about having bulimia?

It's not something we ever talked about. We're not particularly close anymore. It's something I would like to share with her. It seems like it'd be pertinent to her own life. She diets and watches calories a lot. She's been complaining about fat thighs since I could talk. I was too perfectionistic to complain about that. I wouldn't say to my friends, "I think my thighs are too big," but in front of the mirror, I would say to myself, "Your thighs are looking a little big."

What is your favorite part of your body?

I love my arms. I'm a rock climber, so I've got some burly arms.

Does your current boyfriend make you feel beautiful?

Absolutely. He's been my best friend for 1 ½ years. When he said it, it just mattered more somehow. We basically lived together over the summer. He's seen all parts of me. When he said I was beautiful, I'd have to believe it.

Do you think it was more your attitude change than your boyfriend change that helped you get over bulimia?

Absolutely my attitude change. I really think that if I'd been more accepting of myself, I wouldn't have had that voice in the background saying, "You think I'm beautiful, but you're just dumb."

**Author's response
Laura Passarelli '12**

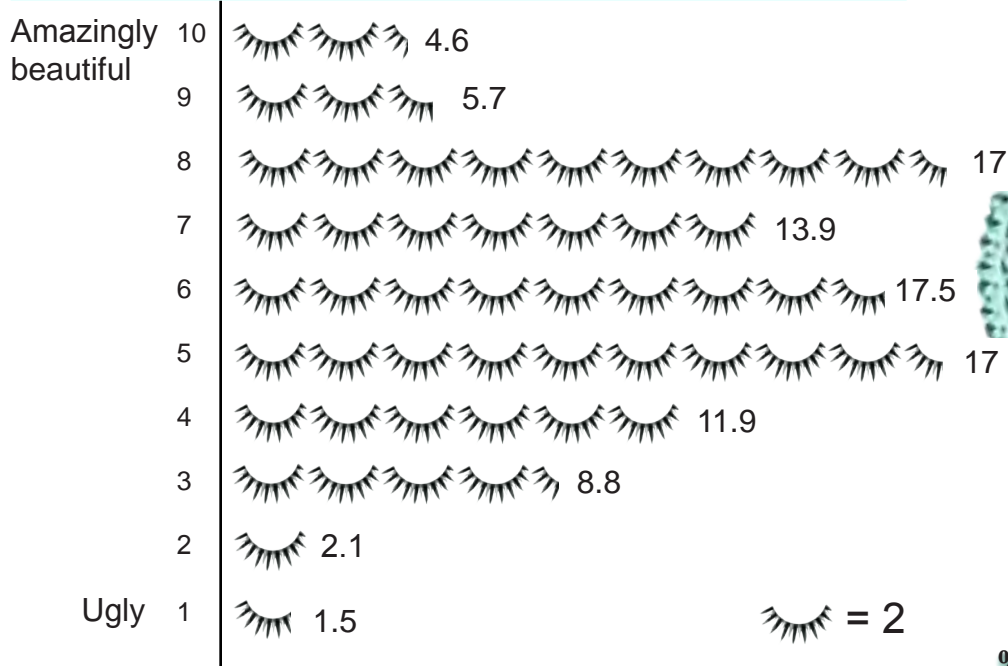
I've always considered myself to have a very healthy body image. Working out makes me feel beautiful, and I am usually comfortable with my body. However, after the interview I realized that I sometimes feel insecure about my body, too.

Remembering what Elaine said—that she used to see food as "good" and "bad"—I discovered that I have sometimes evaluated my self-worth based on the food I eat and the amount of exercise I get. By speaking with Elaine, I have understood the fundamental changes in attitude that I need to make in myself to be honest with myself.

“Excuse me while I put my face on”

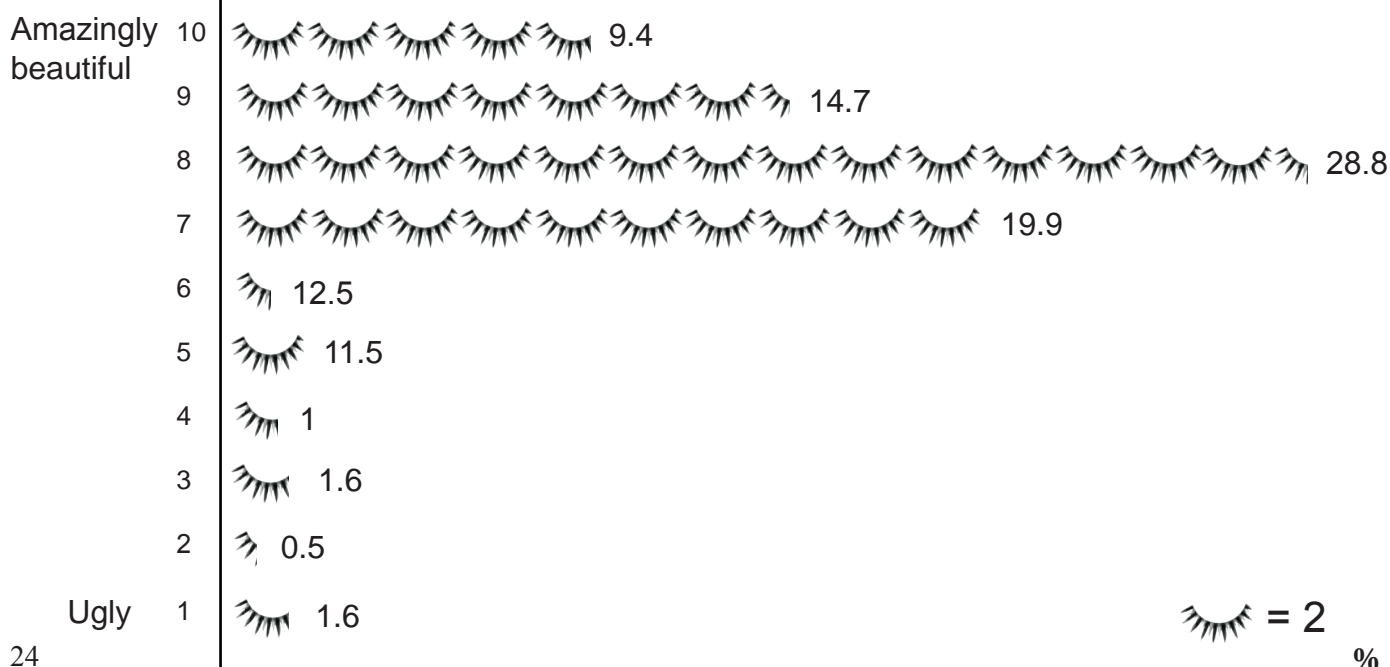
About a month ago, [in]Visible sent out a links to a survey by way of emails sent to the entire first-year class, mail digest emails, and facebook. 200 Scripps students participated, at least half of whom were first-years. These results are meant to be neither a holistic nor accurate representation of the Scripps population.

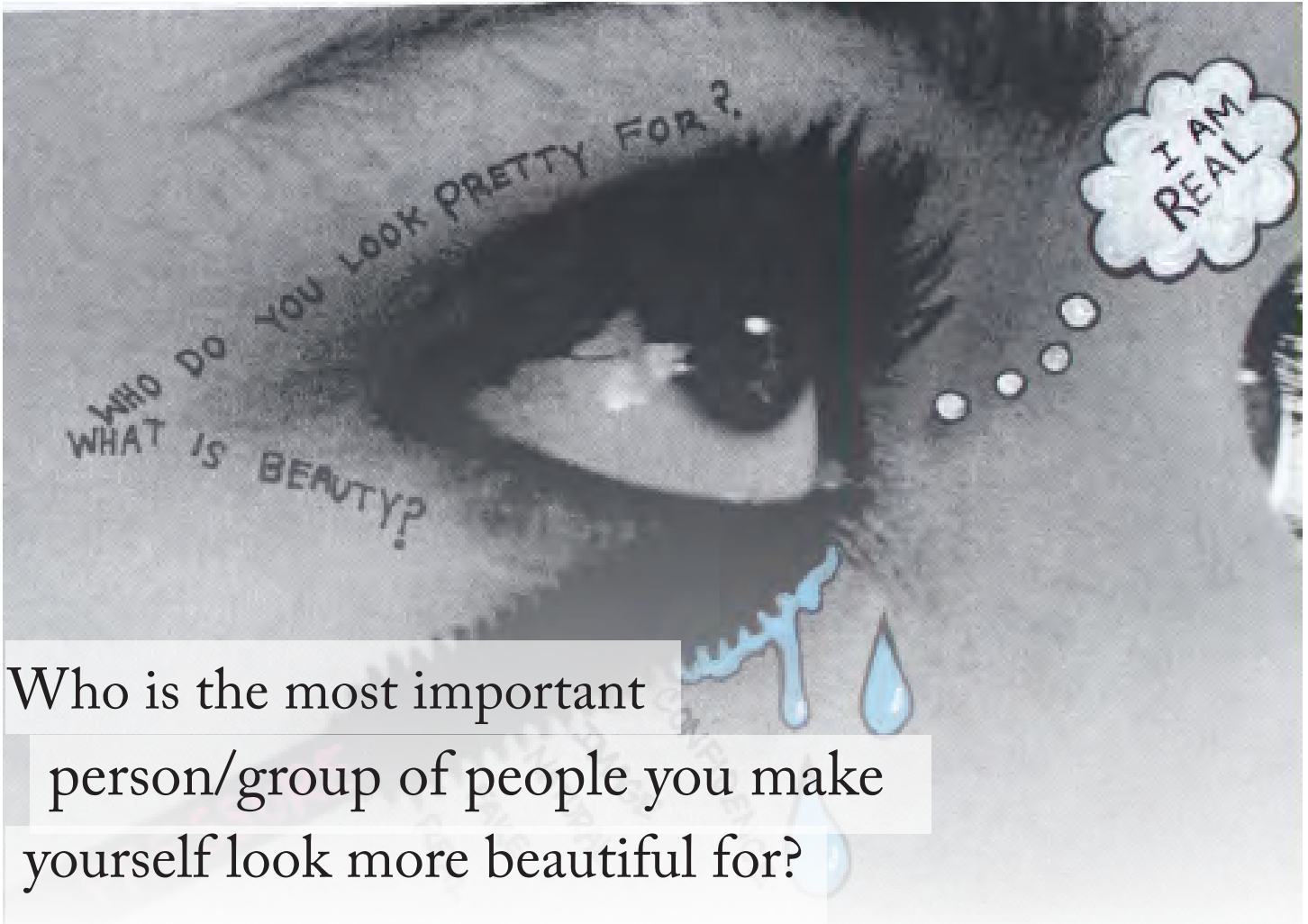
How beautiful do you feel *without* make-up?



The average woman spends 2 years of her life looking at the mirror

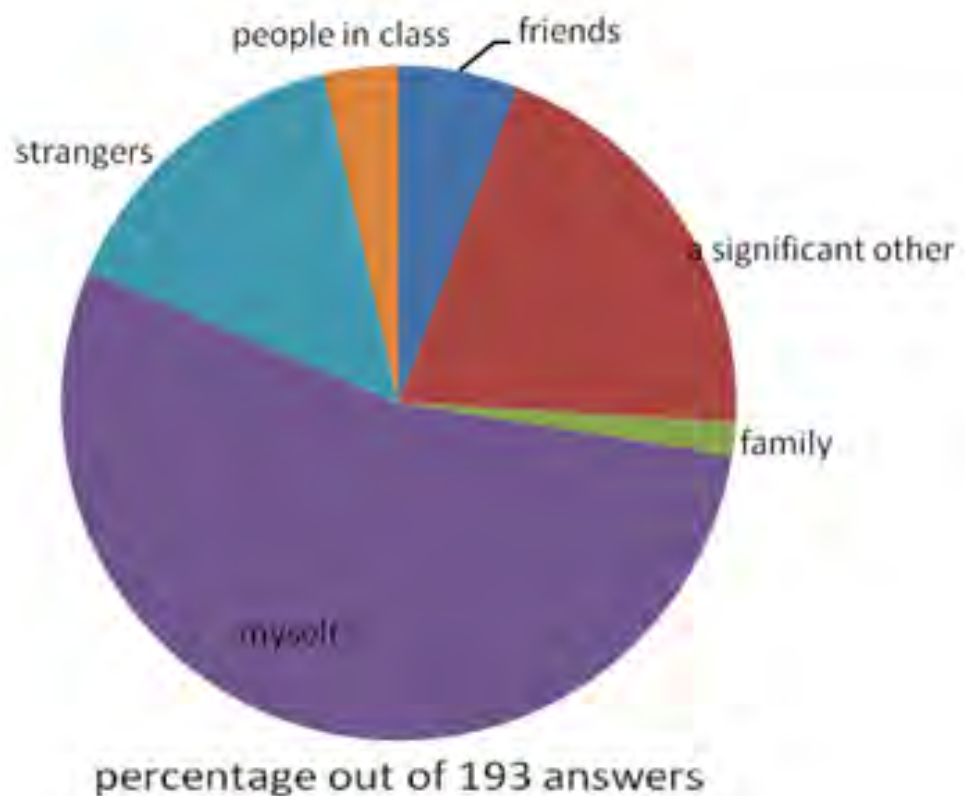
How beautiful do you feel *with* make-up?





Who is the most important person/group of people you make yourself look more beautiful for?

The survey found that most Scripps students consider themselves their most important audience



“Killing Us Softly”

By Michelle Gloster



Photo credit: The Body Shop



Photo credit: Tom Ford

Women may have always been self-conscious about their bodies, but advertisements have only exacerbated the problem. Professor of Psychology Amy Marcus-Newhall notes that “advertising has a persistent message that subjugates women, whether they are aware of it or not, and all women are affected.”

In the 21st century, our exposure to ads has become even more pervasive—in magazines, newspapers, on TV, the radio, buses, street signs and billboards. The average American views more than 3,000 ads a day, many of which present sexist images

and messages. Jean Kilbourne explores the influence of modern ads in the film *Killing Us Softly* 3. She demonstrates that advertisements, which are designed primarily to sell products, also define beauty; the beauty they depict is the only acceptable form, and women must buy their products in order to achieve this ideal.

As Kilbourne says, “Advertising tells us who we are and who we should be.” However, the “perfect” women depicted in advertisements are unrealistic; advertisers retouch images of women as well as create computer-generated models. Because this unreal

image is unattainable for most women, it negatively affects their self-esteem. As a Body Shop ad shown in the film states, “There are 3 billion women who don’t look like supermodels and only 8 who do.”

Moreover, women’s bodies are often objectified, which can be sexist and result in violence against women. Sometimes, only one aspect of a woman’s body is shown in an advertisement, illustrating that women are mere “things,” or a part of a thing. The depiction of women as objects is common in advertisements, where they are sometimes nude or shown with their

legs spread open (as exemplified in the Tom Ford ad showing the lower half of a woman's body with a fragrance bottle strategically placed.)

Killing Us Softly 3 also notes that the repetitive appearances of ads that naturalize violence against women only worsen the situation for women. The message of these advertisements is that abuse is acceptable, which Marcus-Newhall views as a very serious problem. "I would argue that it's problematic for two reasons: One is that women perceive themselves as one option.

"By being represented as sexual objects, women then perceive themselves as a single dimension, and this becomes a prominent part of the schema of their identity. The second is that others, such as men, then have a very narrow stereotype of women (who they are, who they represent, and the power they should or should not hold).

"Others perceive them that

way, and the expectations of others, such as men, almost become self-fulfilling prophecies or a narrower window of how to view themselves."

Jean Kilbourne in *Killing Us Softly 3* also points out that "women of color are often literally shown as animals, dressed in leopard skins and animal prints. Over and over again the message is, 'Not fully human.'" Sex and near-pornographic images sell, but the objectification of women in advertisements, especially women of color, reflects a serious problem in society's view of women.

Another message portrayed in ads is that women should be subservient to men because men are the more powerful sex. Kilbourne says: "The obsession with thinness, I think, is really about cutting girls down to size, silencing them. So not only do we have images of very thin girls and women, but we also have many, many images of girls in ads with their hands over their mouths. Or worse, with

her lips sewn together. Or silenced in many other ways."

Meanwhile, ads often present men as being dominant in a way that seems erotic and appealing, as seen in the Dolce & Gabbana ad. The repetition of such a message in advertisements might result in the belief that men truly are more dominant than women. Kilbourne concludes that "advertising is one powerful force that keeps us trapped in very rigid roles and in very crippling definitions of femininity and masculinity."

She urges our society to not only reform media messages, but also change our culture's attitude toward women and men. Perhaps this is too idealistic. Even so, we should be aware of the skewed depiction of women in advertisements and not allow repetitive sexist ads to affect our individual perceptions of women and ourselves.



Photo credit: Dolce & Gabbana

At a Glance

By Asia Morris



Lucy Bosche

Photos by Asia Morris

What was your opinion of Becky before you became friends with her?

When I first met Becky I thought she had a funky-cool East Coast style and was relaxed, aloof even. She still has the same clothes, but the Becky I know now is pretty crazy. Initially I did not attribute

many human qualities to her, merely labels. But now that I am her friend, I see how similar we are. I suppose that's how it goes with mostly everyone I meet: I first see them, I categorize them, then I discover their humanity, and it either jives with me or it doesn't.

How do you think people see you upon first glance?

I would guess that people maybe think I am more artistic than I am. That's assuming that people might see me as the hippy-dippy type, and artistic ability is a quality that comes with that label more often than not.

Lucy Bosche



Becky Armstrong

Photos by Asia Morris

What was your first impression of Lucy?

My first impression was that she seemed very fierce and to know herself very well. She seemed comfortable in her own skin, and seemed a lot older than everyone else.

What do you think of her now that you know her better?

I think that she is a very caring, very accepting person. She knows what she wants, she's honest, and she's not afraid to be herself and to cultivate her own health and strength. If I hadn't

gotten to know her I wouldn't know what a nurturing, total goof she is.

Becky Armstrong



Liz Spelman

Photos by Asia Morris

What do you think people's opinions about you are?

"They like the way I ball, they call me hot sauce." - Lil Wayne

What are your opinions regarding first impressions?

"Okay you're a goon, but what's a goon to a goblin?" - Lil Wayne

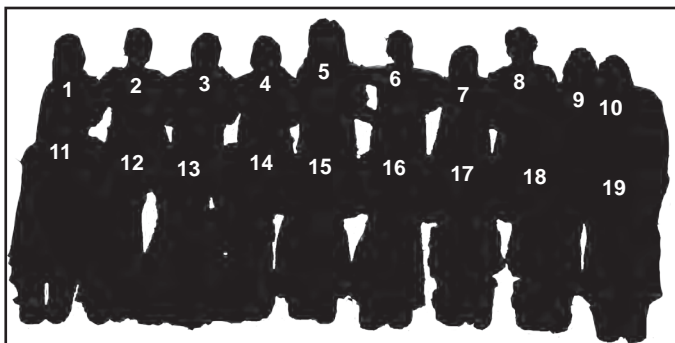
"Tell them haters cut it out like a coupon" - Lil Wayne

Liz Spelman

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PLEASE FORWARD ANY QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, CRITICISMS, AND RESPONSES TO INVISIBLEMAG@GMAIL.COM. ANONYMOUS E-MAILS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLISHING.



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12 MAYA PISCIOOTTO Artist | *Is not a fan of eggplant*

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14 LISA KAU Staff Writer | *Discovered that she loves interviewing*

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“The essential is invisible to the eyes”