

**REAL BEAUTY WITH REAL BODIES: THE BODY POSITIVITY
MOVEMENT AND INCREASED CYNICISM TOWARD DOVE'S
COMMODIFICATION OF FEMINISM**

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF ARTS

by
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May 2023

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ABSTRACT

Beauty standards have perpetuated ideas of how women should look forever resulting in low self-esteem of women. Media have played a key role in these standards through advertising and modeling; however, Dove launched their Real Beauty Campaign to combat these standards and promote the inclusion of “real women” when it came to marketing and beauty standards. In 2018, Dove shifted the purpose of this campaign to include young girls, The Self-Esteem Project. I conducted an inductive and qualitative content analysis of 1000 comments left on Dove’s Real Beauty and Self-Esteem campaign videos to measure how the public’s perception of body image and this campaign as well as Dove changed over time, specifically throughout this shift in campaign messaging. Guided by a critical feminist theory lens, this study finds that as Dove’s videos became more focused on young girls there was an increased cynicism towards corporations. This cynicism was directed towards Dove with consumers questioning the motives behind the campaign. Additionally, there was an increased cynicism directed towards social media companies often blamed for perpetuation of beauty standards among girls. There was also an increased discussion around intersectionality and the effects that all aspects of a person’s identity can have on their experience with body image. This study found that the fourth wave of feminism that increased conversations around intersectionality and growing public knowledge of corporate social responsibility were responsible for the changes in public perceptions regarding the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Kogen and the rest of my committee for helping me with this thesis. Also, I want to thank Allie, Anya, and Bobby G for editing and proofreading the last version. This project would not have been possible without the support of my family, friends, and my pals: Beau, Toast, and Tobi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scrolling through online ads of trendy clothing looks a lot different than it did in the early 2000s. Brands such as Yitty, Aerie, and ASOS feature a wide range of body types within their models. People can see what clothes would look like on their body rather than only the skinny models that marketed clothing in the past. And while clothing companies have recently shifted to more inclusive sizing in advertising, another company, Dove, responsible for soap, haircare, and skincare products, was promoting this idea of body positivity long before it became so widespread. Dove's Real Beauty campaign started in 2004 and continued through to present day to promote positive and healthy beauty standards. This campaign has served as a model for beauty companies' future promotion of body positivity.

Dove first launched these campaigns in 2004 with a series of billboards, using positive and negative words to describe the women on the billboard such as "fat or fit," "wrinkled or wonderful," and "flat or flattering" (Babwin, 2005). These ads were voted on by passersby and updated regularly to reflect the audience's thoughts, where an overwhelming majority voted for the positive word. The billboards were game-changing for the time since they featured real women instead of typical models (Babwin, 2005). These billboard campaigns were just the start of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign. In 2006, Dove released a commercial titled "Evolution" that showed a woman sitting down to take a photo as a model. The commercial then shows, in 60 seconds, the makeup and hair styling that go into the photo, as well as the photoshop that elongates her neck and other adjustments that lead to an unrecognizable woman from the one that initially sat down

(Dove, 2004). This commercial was regarded as one of the most influential and positive ads (Babwin, 2005). Dove's Real Beauty campaign continued with a series of workshops and advertisements promoting the same idea of "real women" rather than models.

In 2017, Dove labeled their work since 2004 in the Real Beauty campaign in a three-prong pledge. They published the Real Beauty Pledge which has three standards: they always use real women, not models; they portray women as they are in real life (no digital alteration); and they help girls build body confidence and self-esteem (Dove, 2017). While they switched to this pledge in 2017, the idea started with the Real Beauty campaign in 2004. Dove had a series of ad campaigns addressed to promoting the idea of "real women." Their marketing changed some in 2017 to be geared more towards young girls and the criticism they face on social media, though the overall idea has remained consistent (Unilever, 2017). The Real Beauty pledge has continued to be a major part of Dove's marketing and platform.

While this campaign seems to follow the trends of changing attitudes towards body image, it is unclear how the discussion of body image changed over time. For example, it's not clear how trends have impacted what people think regarding body image or how the growth of social media has changed conversations about body image and beauty standards. This study is important because it shows the changing dynamic of discussions around body image. The cultural landscape that marketing and beauty standards are promoted in has changed dramatically in the past years and therefore body image discourse has adjusted to meet those changes. Also, the growth of social media has incorporated young girls into these conversations. This change is reflected as the Dove

Real Beauty Campaign shifted to the Self-Esteem Project. This thesis seeks to understand how this shift changed discourse around body image.

This paper seeks to shine a light on these questions and understand how one component of Dove's Real Beauty advertisements and social media campaigns – their Real Beauty videos – were perceived and discussed by the public. These videos were produced for an extended period of time from 2004 to 2023, and the landscape behind beauty in advertising has changed. It is important to understand how the public's perception changed over time to meet the changing cultural landscape. The body positivity movement has produced much debate in the U.S. context over the past five years (Fioravanti et al., 2021). How are these debates reflected, if at all, in the public's response to Dove's videos? Similarly, there is increased public awareness about the potentially detrimental effects of social media on young people (Solomon, 2023). This increased awareness is reflected in Dove's decision to pivot their Real Beauty campaign to a focus on social media and its effects on young girls' self-esteem. Is the public's awareness of social media dangers reflected in their reactions to these videos? Finally, there is increased public antagonism toward corporations as a whole (Kelly, 2021). Have Dove's efforts to address the social ills of body image concerns and social media dangers insulated the company from this public antagonism?

This thesis seeks to address how these changes in cultural discussions, particularly surrounding body image and corporations, changed in relation to Dove's Real Beauty campaign and shift to the Self-Esteem Project.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review explores the research behind beauty standards and the effects that they can have on individuals. This literature review will also cover current public debates around body image and body positivity. This literature review will also provide a background on critical feminist theory since it will be used as a lens to understand discussions around body image. Since this paper looks at the Dove Real Beauty campaign as a corporate initiative, previous research on critical feminist theory applied to consumerism can help to build a foundation for the public's perception of these campaigns already. Additionally, this literature review will explore previous research on the Dove Real Beauty campaign. Since this campaign has existed for many years, there is previous research done on the discourse around body image regarding the Dove Real Beauty campaign. Since this paper critically reviews changes in Dove's Real Beauty campaign, previous research on the campaign itself can help to explain why the campaign and conversations surrounding it may have shifted focus over time.

Beauty Standards

Beauty standards prior to Dove's Real Beauty campaign were consistent with encouraging women to fit into a certain body model. As Hua (2013) described, despite being born with certain physical characteristics, media encourages women to have "round eyes, narrow chin, slim body figures, big breasts and light skin color" (Hua, 2013, p. 130). Smith (2002) explained that beauty standards portrayed in catalogues are based on three main ideas: a woman's physical body is an instrument for selling a product, women only care about keeping the attention of men, and a woman's physical beauty described

in terms of what a man would find attractive. These ideals were what fueled the major lingerie company Victoria's Secret. While Victoria's Secret did not necessarily create the idea that women exist to please men, their marketing sustains that idea. As Redd (2000) argues: "Put it this way: Do you look like a Victoria's Secret model? No? Then you don't look sexy" (Smith, 2002, p. 43). Victoria's Secret thrived off this marketing success, promoting to women that their lingerie could make them appeal to men more by looking like the models in their ads (Smith, 2002). Companies thrived off this promotion of products to make women look like these idealized beauty standards that they marketed as attractive.

However, despite the profitability of this strategy, much of the literature on this subject looks at how damaging these beauty standards can be to women. Previous literature on the beauty standards shown in commercials and media explore how the constant reinforcement of those standards can be harmful to girls' self-esteem. "Mass media consistently reinforce assumed linkages between women's appearance and their feelings of self-worth" (Englis et al., 1994, p. 50). This, as well as the consistent reinforcing that women must reach beauty standards only attainable through Photoshop, can explain why young women have become more self-conscious of their body image. Cosmetic surgery is often promoted to women as a way to work "miracles on their face and body" to achieve these unattainable beauty standards (Hua, 2013, p. 131). Many beauty standards enforced today are only attainable through surgery, expensive products, or Photoshop.

This promotion of the same beauty standards that teach women how they are supposed to look, leads to their overall confidence without these products to diminish.

Dove found in their *Truth About Real Beauty Report* that only 2% of women felt comfortable describing themselves as beautiful, whereas about 30% of women felt comfortable describing themselves as average (Etcoff et al., 2004). Along with this research, Dove found that four of ten women explicitly do not call themselves beautiful (Etcoff et al., 2004). Dove also had women rate their overall personalities separate from their attractiveness based on their physical body. It was found that there is slight difference between the ratings, which proves that women see their worth and beauty in how attractive they are (Etcoff et al., 2004). Dove found that while beauty is not the most important factor to women, it does play an important role in women's lives and the way that they feel about themselves (Etcoff et. al, 2004). Along with this, "more than half of women strongly agree that physically attractive women are more valued to men" (Etcoff et al., 2004, p. 25). This shows that women have predominantly bought into the brand promoted stereotype that a woman's beauty is determined by a man's desires. These connections of self-worth and attractiveness as well as comparison and idealized body types in the media explain women's negative views of themselves. However, unattainable beauty standards are not the only reason that women look down on their physical appearance.

While women are expected to be slim, research identifies that they are also told specifically not to be fat. Friedman and Carr discovered that "overweight persons are 26 percent more likely than normal weight persons to report work-related discrimination;" this direct stigmatization enforces to women that skinny is pretty (Friedman & Carr, 2005, p. 252). However, this discrimination is not only available in the real world, but it is also reflected in the media that people consume. According to Himes and Thompson's

study looking into fat stigmatization in popular media, comments against fat people were all too common in media, with most of these comments being verbal rather than non-verbal (Himes & Thompsen, 2007). They also found that male characters were far more likely to make these comments to female characters than female characters making comments to other female characters (Himes & Thompsen, 2007). This fat stigmatization influences the way women view themselves and their body image, starting as early as childhood. Studies have found that children from kindergarten to older adolescence “are consistent in showing a negative attitude toward fat target figures” (Cramer & Steinwart, 1998, p. 430). The reinforcement that fat is bad in both the real-world and in media demonstrates to women that their beauty is determined by their weight.

The Body Positivity Movement

The combination of fat stigmatization as well as the reinforcement of skinniness as a beauty standard, as described in the previous section, leads to poor self-esteem for women (Bailey et al., 2016). This was common prior to the Dove Real Beauty campaign and part of the reason that their campaign was considered so revolutionary. However, in recent years there has been a push back against these beauty standards and an encouragement of body positivity. Body positivity is defined as “the movement to accept our bodies, regardless of size, shape, skin tone, gender, and physical abilities;” also including the idea of celebrating differences in bodies rather than only promoting one beauty standard (Leboeuf, 2019, p.113). According to Leboeuf (2019), this movement started around 2015 and was the product of women getting tired of the media and public’s reinforcement of one beauty standard. Roach (2022, p. 95) explores how the body positivity movement helps women step away from what is “needlessly limiting and

what can become toxic in these narrow cultural scripts.” She attributes this movement to the recent gender and sexual revolution, often described as part of third wave feminism, to be described below, explaining how the exploration of peoples’ sexuality recently has allowed women to step away from the idea that their body exists to please men (Roach, 2022). This sexual revolution has allowed beauty standards to shift to a more personal opinion rather than outside opinion. When people feel as though they can have their body as they want for themselves and not to impress the opposite sex, they have become more comfortable for other representations such as androgyny or mixing traditional feminine and masculine trends.

This movement has allowed women to consume more media that doesn’t promote the same beauty standards and the effect of that can be seen in recent studies. According to a study on the effects of #bodypositive posts on Instagram, women who were consistently shown posts using #bodypositive that featured a wide variety of body shapes and sizes, felt more positively about themselves (Fioravanti et al., 2021). This shows that the body positive movement has positively affected the way women view themselves when compared to companies’ messaging.

Due to the positive effects of the body positivity movement, companies began to promote body positive campaigns. Bisht shares a list of 11 companies that as of 2021 had body positivity campaigns (Bisht, 2021). Note that most of those campaigns began since the body positivity movement gained national attention around 2016, whereas Dove’s Real Beauty campaign started in 2004, long before most other companies supported body positivity. This is why the Dove campaign is particularly useful for investigating changes

in public perception towards body image since the campaign was so long-lasting and spanned across multiple changes within conversations around beauty standards.

The body positivity movement marked a major shift in the conversation around body image. While there was little previous discussion on the effects of beauty standards and the role that corporations and media play in perpetuating those standards, the body positivity movement made the conversation more public and openly discussed. Corporations and media began to have a need to address this shift in conversation or risk losing profits. The body positivity movement marked a turning point in conversations around beauty standards to be more visible and the negative perpetuation of beauty standards by corporations and media to be no longer accepted as easily.

Feminism and Critical Feminist Theory in Consumerism

Critical feminist theory looks at how institutional systems perpetuate discrepancies and differences between men and women within multiple legal and cultural realms (Teaching Citational Practice, 2022). It is formed from theories of poststructuralism which support the idea of gender as a social construct given by various systems (Harvey, 2020). These systems include family, school, media, etc. This view of gender as a social construct demonstrates the idea that gender identity requires someone to act in a way expected by society, creating the discrepancies between men and women that exist in most systems. For example, these discrepancies are often found in the home with gender stereotypes that give men and women separate roles. These roles place women in charge of domestic work such as cooking or cleaning, and caring for children,

whereas men are expected to complete maintenance chores such as lawn work and earning the primary income for the house (Buitenbos, 2022).

Critical Feminist Theory and Media Studies

Feminism has had a long relationship with media. In the 1960s and 1970s, critics called out the media for perpetuating gender stereotypes such as women being weak and subordinate (Emerson & Watkins, 2000). Emerson and Watkins (2000) argue that breaking away from portraying traditional feminist ideals in the media is difficult. For example, the TV show “Cagney and Lacey” was initially regarded as a groundbreaking show for women since it challenged so many stereotypes, however, as ratings began to fall writers and producers turned to traditional female roles to entertain viewers (Emerson & Watkins, 2000). As explored in the above section, the media have also been critiqued for perpetuating toxic and harmful beauty standards.

Critical Feminist Theory is not only present in the on-screen media though. As Emerson and Watkins (2000, p. 155) explored, as media roles such as screenwriting became more “prestigious and lucrative” it transitioned from a female-dominated field to a male-dominated field. The lack of women representation in the rooms where decisions about media are being made contributes to the ever-present promotion of traditional gender roles (Emerson & Watkins, 2000).

The involvement of media as a system that emphasizes the discrepancies between men and women has been researched previously such as Emerson and Watkins’ (2000) study. This researched and documented relationship between media and feminism will be explored throughout this paper as conversations surrounding body image and beauty

standards are explored in the context of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign and Self-Esteem Project videos. This study will shed light on the involvement of media in constructed gender roles, and how the public perceives this involvement within the context of body image.

First- and Second Wave Feminism

The first two waves of feminism focus on collective ideas of gender equality (Harvey, 2020). For example, the first wave focused on women's suffrage and right to own property. The second wave focused on women's general celebration of their bodies, often in relation to how they appeal to men. This group view of women is brought into the third wave of feminism that encourages addressing women as a collective.

Third wave feminism and the Body Positivity Movement

The third wave of feminism began to use collective female empowerment to devalue the patriarchy. For example, bands such as the Spice Girls gained popularity using the slogan 'girl power' which focused on the encouragement of women. This wave of feminism was different from the second wave of feminism because there was more emphasis on individual action rather than collective power. This is why it links so clearly with the body positivity movement. This third wave was associated with the idea of empowering women as a way for them to achieve more than the societal standards set in place by the patriarchy.

The body positivity movement is associated with the third wave of feminism since it encourages women to believe that their physical beauty should be celebrated regardless of what societal norms are frequently associated with body image.

Third Wave Feminism and Corporate Social Responsibility

During the third wave of feminism, there was also a push amongst companies to become involved with feminism. According to Grosser and McCarthy (2019), corporations began to get involved with feminism through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. CSR is defined by University of Colorado professor David Chandler as “a responsibility among firms to meet the needs of their stakeholders and a responsibility among stakeholders to hold firms to account for their actions” (Chandler, 2016, p. 57). In the case of feminism and CSR, Grosser and McCarthy (2019) expect that feminist social movements would engage with corporations as a way to promote equality between men and women, in addition to their promotion of this with the state through legislature. This expectation can be seen in the way that companies have reacted to feminism, by following the third wave keyword of “empowerment.”

Market of Empowerment in Third Wave Feminism

As Banet-Weiser (2015) explores in her “economies of visibility,” this third wave keyword “empowerment” became integral to the companies in their marketing towards women. Companies began using the ideas of feminism to encourage consumerism from women for a variety of products designed to “empower” women. Commodification of feminism through the use of empowerment viewed a woman as “one who is seen to be in crisis and at the same time recognized for her market potential” (Banet-Weiser, 2015, p. 59). This view of women focused on the central value of the third wave of feminism that only through the empowerment of women can the disenfranchisement of the patriarchy occur.

Fourth Wave Feminism and Intersectionality

There are still numerous movements and programs contingent on the third wave of feminism ideal of collective empowerment, however, many scholars argue that society has begun to enter a fourth wave of feminism. According to Harvey (2020), this fourth wave is focused more on the individual perception and negotiation of feminism. While there is still attention and knowledge of institutionalized differences between men and women such as suffrage and contraception rights, the fourth wave of feminism focuses more on individual feelings of agency (Harvey, 2020). Empowerment popularized by the third wave of feminism is still present in the fourth wave. However, where third wave feminism would've viewed bras as a symbol of the patriarchy for all women, fourth wave feminism would view bras as a symbol of the patriarchy if a woman didn't like wearing a bra.

Along with the emphasis on individuality during the fourth wave of feminism, the fourth wave has also sought to push for the inclusion of all people identifying as women, addressing early critiques that feminism was exclusionary with emphasis on white, heterosexual, cisgender, middle-class women. Harvey (2020, p. 3) defines the approach as “one that accounts for the complexity of lived experience and address the interconnected and inseparable character of oppression” based on social stratifications as intersectionality. Intersectionality allows critical feminist theory to examine more social systems that perpetuate differences between men and women.

Market of Empowerment in Fourth Wave Feminism

With the growth of social media, there is an increased ability for companies to cater to specific needs of the individual. For example, algorithms on Instagram and TikTok have become better designed to specifically tailor posts and products shown to viewers based on collected data and more specific characteristics of people (Bentley, 2019). Banet-Weiser's (2015) market of empowerment is present within this more targeted approach to advertising. For example, products such as skincare and haircare ads can target the individual woman "in crisis" based on their specific issues, such as dry scalp or oily skin. Social media allows corporations to use this individual marketing tactic to promote specific solutions that empower women to address those certain needs based on collected data.

Market of Protection in Fourth Wave Feminism

However according to Banet-Weiser (2015), the more individualized aspects of fourth-wave feminism have created another kind of marketing campaign designed to address these individual arguments by seeking to 'protect' audiences from possible dangers exposed by feminism. As corporations are more easily able to see individual aspects of what a woman might be dealing with, they can pointedly direct campaigns to offer solutions to those issues. However, as opposed to campaigns based on empowerment, Banet-Weiser (2015) argues that the market for protection views girls as untrustworthy of their body and decisions, and as though an investment that must be protected. This can be seen in recent promotion of certain approaches towards women's health such as abstinence-only policies and recent rollbacks of women's contraceptive

care and bodily autonomy decisions. The individualized feminism that has become present within the fourth wave of feminism due to the creation of social media has created a market for audiences to be ‘protected.’ Marketing campaigns and corporations can more easily address an individual and encourage her to do differently based on this notion of protection and understanding specifically what she might be struggling with. For example, popular organizations such as “Aim for Success, True Love Waits, Pure Love Club, and Project Reality” are promoted in such a way to seem as though they seek to empower women, though the point of the organizations is to get young women to “commit to abstinence until married” (Banet-Weiser, 2015, p. 66). Additionally, products such as Undercover Colors, nail polish designed to change colors when it comes in contact with a variety of ‘date-rape’ drugs, are marketed as a way to empower women, though the real motive behind these products is to protect women who decide to partake in risky activities such as drinking (Joy, 2020).

Feminism has changed significantly since its initial creation over women's suffrage and marketers now use it as a way to target women. Banet-Weiser explains in her economies of visibilities that the market of empowerment and the market of protection are both built off of the idea of selling products to women (Banet-Weiser, 2015). The market of empowerment was first present in third wave feminism and seeks to empower women through the selling of feminism as a commodity. However, during fourth wave of feminism, the market of protection became present by selling feminism as a commodity that seeks to dissuade women from certain traits/behaviors deemed as unacceptable. These two markets can be examined when looking at the Dove Real Beauty

campaign to help explain why Dove created this campaign, and why the public may have certain reactions based on the most recent waves of feminism.

Public Reactions to Dove Real Beauty Campaign

Since this Dove campaign launched in 2004, there has been previous research surrounding its purpose, effectiveness, and impact. This study explores one aspect of this campaign: the videos. Previous research on Dove Real Beauty campaign videos can help to develop a background on why conversations in the comments of these videos may have shifted focus over time. Additionally, it can help to determine why Dove shifted the focus of this campaign away from the Real Beauty campaign itself to the Self-Esteem project and Real Beauty pledge based on the changing discourse around body image.

Multiple studies have investigated women's reactions to the Real Beauty Campaign. As Mabry-Flynn and Champlin (2018) found, the overwhelming response to this campaign was positive. Women discussed feeling as though they were represented on the screen and were no longer held to toxic and misogynistic beauty standards previously represented (Mabry-Flynn & Champlin, 2018). Murray explored how this was central to the development of the Dove Real Beauty campaign, as Dove sought to demonstrate feminism to audiences by showing "a coming together of women from various walks of life to subvert the dominant ideology of beauty" (Murray, 2012, p. 535). As Mabry-Flynn and Champlin (2018) found, this display of feminism was perceived positively by audiences and reflected within the comment sections of videos that showed viewers rallying together and creating an online community in support of these initiatives.

Taylor et. al (2014) similarly found in their study that audiences felt the videos displayed a sense of feminism. However, Taylor found that while audiences understood

Dove's use of feminism, their involvement in this movement "generally gave way to concerns about the larger meaning of the campaign, and the disingenuous or rhetorical use of feminist concerns" (Taylor et al., 2014, p. 8). One point that stood out as disingenuous to audiences was the idea that while the campaign encouraged women to accept themselves, it did not encourage women "to see beyond the confines of their own appearance and self-interest" (Taylor et al., 2014, p. 9). Additionally, viewers felt as though a majority of the women displayed in the commercials were considered conventionally attractive by preexisting beauty standards (Taylor et. al, 2014).

Another set of concerns revolved around a growing recognition by the public of the "feminism as commodity" logic discussed above. In other words, audiences began catching onto the idea that feminism was being used to sell products to them. Viewers' concerns included the idea that a corporation was promoting this idea. Audiences felt as though the message of the video was "exploited under the logic of consumerism" (Duffy, 2010, p. 30). Another concern came from the fact Dove was still selling products for women to "improve" their beauty while trying to promote the idea that everyone is beautiful (Duffy, 2010).

Social Media and Body Image

As previously explored, Dove's Real Beauty campaign was no longer the most prevalent body positive campaign as more companies began to change their messaging to address toxic beauty standards. Companies such as Aerie and Yitty launched more inclusive sizing campaigns in 2014 and 2022, respectively. Also, companies such as Rihanna x Fenty (launched in 2018) began to produce products filling a gap in the market for women of different skin colors. Part of the reason for the growth of company

campaigns has come from the boom of social media and increased exposure to beauty standards (DeBraganza & Hausenbause, 2010). The prevalence of beauty standards has grown significantly with the rise of social media due to the constant exposure to unrealistic standards and expectations. Whereas previously, beauty standards were displayed primarily in ads and on TV, social media has allowed them to infiltrate nearly every aspect of people's lives. Celebrities like Kim Kardashian, notorious for plastic surgery or Photoshop used to alter their appearances are more easily visible to audiences. Along with this visibility, Photoshop elements that once again promote unrealistic beauty standards are also utilized (Cox, 2022). Social media allows users to be exposed to these images without the needed context that influencers are Photoshopping themselves or can afford procedures that affect how they look.

A Shift in Focus to Younger Audiences

Part of the conversation surrounding social media includes the lenient age requirements, as most platforms require users to be only 13. The negative consequences of young people being exposed to this kind of material without needed context has been a discussion of concern recently. Overall, there has been a shift in attention to young people on social media with much of the research being dedicated to the negative toll social media takes on their mental health. However, in recent media news there has been an increase in the idea that social media is taking a toll on young people's body image. Solomon (2023, paragraph 2) explores how social media "has taught young people to erase all flaws" when posting pictures online. Additionally, the creation of beauty filters that adjust users' faces to conform more to conventional beauty standards has created an environment where young people may question their body image (Solomon, 2023).

The Self-Esteem Project

The shift in focus to young women within body image can help to explain why Dove's Real Beauty campaign shifted to the Self-Esteem Project which focuses more on young women. Initially promoted in 2012, the Self-Esteem Project didn't become a big part of Dove's Real Beauty campaign until 2020 when Dove released a series of new videos, as well as at-home tool kits to encourage parents and kids to discuss body image and self-esteem. These kits included the Confidence Kit (a workbook aimed at young people to explore what they like about their body) as well as *#DetoxYourFeed: The Parents' Guide*, which encouraged and provided tips for how parents should address their kids' use of social media and the effect that it could have on their self-esteem.

Self-Esteem Project Videos Production

Along with these toolkits, Dove released multiple commercials and short films focusing on young women's perception of themselves regarding beauty standards. This included the video *#DetoxYourFeed* which shows the importance of parents discussing social media with their children and helping address their self-esteem based on what they view on social media. Additionally, Dove partnered with Cartoon Network to spread the message of positive beauty campaigns to young people via shows such as *Steven Universe* (Dove x Cartoon Network, 2018). This partnership released multiple short videos where the characters of *Steven Universe* explore the idea of body image addressing young people more directly such as the video *Dove Self-Esteem Project x Steven Universe: Body Talk* that teaches young children that discussing any aspects of your physical appearance may be hurtful to peers and encourages them to refrain from those conversations (Dove x Cartoon Network, 2018). Along with the partnership with

Cartoon Network, Dove partnered with Shonda Rhimes in 2018 launching “Real Beauty Production,” as Rhimes started producing all of Dove’s Real Beauty/Self-Esteem Project videos (Campbell, 2020). Along with the partnership with Rhimes, “Real Beauty Production” employed an all-women staff to assist/work on all these projects (Campbell, 2020). This shift in the production team also resulted in an increase in diversity within videos. Continuing the partnership with Rhimes, in 2021 Rhimes and Dove launched a self-esteem podcast series that intended to address the same topics discussed in the Self-Esteem project videos (Stych, 2021).

This shift to the Self-Esteem project follows the news media’s shift in attention to young women and social media and body image.

There has been growing attention from the public on the effects social media may have on young people’s self-esteem, in the discourse around body image. It’s vital to understand the changing discourse with the focus and inclusion of young people to understand the effects social media can have their people’s self-esteem. Additionally, it’s important to understand how young people’s inclusion in this conversation changes ideas around body positivity and body image.

It is important to explore how the discussion around body image has changed over time to include focus on young people. As this study seeks to explore the way that audiences grapple with this changing conversation, the Dove’s Self-Esteem project and reactions to it can be used to better understand the changing discourse around body image to include young people due to the focus on young people and their confidence. This study will address the following broad research question:

RQ1: How has the public's reaction to Dove's Real Beauty and Dove Self-Esteem Project videos changed following the incorporation of youth into body positivity messaging?

This question will be explored by analyzing public response to the first 15 years of the Dove Real Beauty campaign videos (2004-2019) and then comparing that to the public's response to the most recent phase of the campaign videos (2019-2022): the launch of the Self-esteem project videos. I hypothesize that public perceptions towards the body positivity movement will become more positive over time as the public sees the changes in beauty standards as a positive shift to how they were. However, as Duffy (2010) and Taylor (2016) analyzed the public's response to Dove as a corporation towards the campaign had undertones of skepticism. I predict that this study will find the same as people question the motives behind Dove's reasoning for supporting the movement.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Dove's Real Beauty campaign as well as their transition to the real beauty pledge featured a variety of different outlets for their work to be shared including workshops, billboards, webpages, videos, hashtag campaigns, and various sample courses for parents to use with their children. However, for this study, only Dove's videos were analyzed to gauge public perception. This was because throughout the lifetime of this campaign the videos remained the most consistent, with a series of videos being released roughly every year to correspond with the topic that Dove chose to align the Real Beauty campaign with that year¹.

Sampling

By focusing only on the video portion of Dove's Real Beauty campaign, the data sampled will include comments left specifically on the videos advertised as a part of the campaign. Data included comments on YouTube posted under videos from the channel Dove US. These videos were collected based on the descriptions that include references to the Dove Real Beauty Campaign and/or a link to Dove's webpages for their Real Beauty Campaign. The comments on videos were inductively coded for themes. A full list of videos watched and brief descriptions of each can be found in APPENDIX A.

¹ While Dove did also run consistent hashtag campaigns on Twitter as a part of their Real Beauty Campaign, Twitter is very protective of their archives and did not allow access for this study, so public perception from those campaigns will not be included in this study.

A total of 7401 comments were scraped from the videos. These comments were scraped using the video and comments info program via Digital Methods (The Politics of Systems, 2011) into a self-organizing spreadsheet. With the focus on changes in attitudes towards Dove's Real Beauty campaign over time, data was organized by date. To balance the differences in the number of comments in certain years, comments were reviewed in two-year blocks: 2013 & 2014, 2015 & 2016, 2017 & 2018, 2019 & 2020, 2021 & 2022, with the final block corresponding to the videos from Dove's Self-Esteem Project.

Of the 7401 original comments, 1000 were randomly selected (200 for each of the five time blocks). Data was organized into separate spreadsheets based on the corresponding block. Comments that were irrelevant (such as promotion of another YouTube channel) or unusable (such as comments in other languages) were replaced with another randomly selected comment. This process continued until the appropriate number of usable comments were gathered. This ensured that the data collected is relevant to the study. These comments allowed for a clear sense of the public response to the campaign, and whether there is a change in perception over time.

Inductive Content Analysis

Data was analyzed via an inductive content analysis which is a method to examine written data (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014, p. 205). This method allowed for categories to be created following the retrieval of data rather than predetermined based on previous literature (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014, p. 210). This allowed me to sort data into thematic codes based on observable patterns among the information. However, there was some deductive content analysis for categorizing the comments between positive and

negative since these are predetermined categories (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014, p. 210). This analysis method allowed data to be organized and examined collectively.

Comments were then coded on common themes present throughout using a color-coding system to keep consistency. Once the comments were assigned to a category, they were broken up into separate spreadsheets to differentiate between the themes. This allowed for easy analysis of the number of comments in each theme and for more specific themes present. Due to the nature of expected themes of comments, comments were able to be coded into multiple categories if it fits multiple themes.

Thematic analysis is “method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis should be viewed as a foundational analysis for qualitative studies. Examining and drawing patterns from the data provides flexibility and usefulness in understanding substantial amounts of information. This method of analysis allowed for patterns to be drawn from comments collected. This method allowed me to organize the substantial number of scraped comments into a few themes to demonstrate the overall changes in body image discourse.

Comments were coded both quantitatively, on the number of comments within each code to detect differences in amount, but also qualitatively, on the themes of comments to detect different themes discussed. Along with gathering the overall view of the public, this study examined if perception and themes of the comments change over time. For example, does the public become more approving of the body positivity movement over time? This clarified if, as the body positivity movement became more

mainstream, people became more supportive of it, or if people were always generally supportive of the movement. This helps to understand if the public's perception of Dove had an overall change over time. For example, did more people view Dove as a positive brand when they were one of the only companies supporting this movement? Also, as more companies began to support the body positivity movement did people view Dove less positively? Or did the perception of Dove not change as more companies became incorporated in the body positive movement?

I had two hypotheses regarding public perceptions – one related to responses to the body positivity movement and one related to Dove as a corporation. Regarding the body positivity movement, I hypothesized that comments would skew more positively throughout every time period examined. I thought this would happen because as the body positivity movement continued, more people would learn about it and continue to support it.

However, I also hypothesized that negative comments related to Dove as a corporation will increase over time. This is because, as described in the literature review, consumers have become more aware of corporations' profit motivations for engaging in CSR. I expected that more people would become supportive of the body positivity movement, however, more people would be critical of Dove as a corporation. Negative comments left on videos would be about Dove's use of this movement and feminism to promote their brand and rather than negative perceptions of the body positivity movement.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Themes

Following data collection there were five overarching themes. These themes centered around two major conclusions regarding the public's perception of corporations, specifically Dove, and the public's increased awareness around social media and the effects it may have on children. The overall themes include:

- Overall sentiment towards the campaign (Positive or Negative)
- Beauty is not important
- Overall sentiment toward Dove as a corporation
- Inclusivity (comments addressing level of inclusivity in videos)
- Blame (comments suggesting who or what is to blame for body image problems)

Overall Sentiment Towards the Campaign

599 comments were coded related to overall sentiment. Of those 599 comments, 72% (433 comments) were positive and 28% (166 comments) were negative. While there were more General Positive comments overall, the General Positive comments compared to the General Negative comments had an inverse relationship. Where General Positive comments decreased over time, General Negative comments increased. The portion of negative comments rose steeply in the last two time periods which was when Dove's Real Beauty campaign made the more dramatic shift to the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

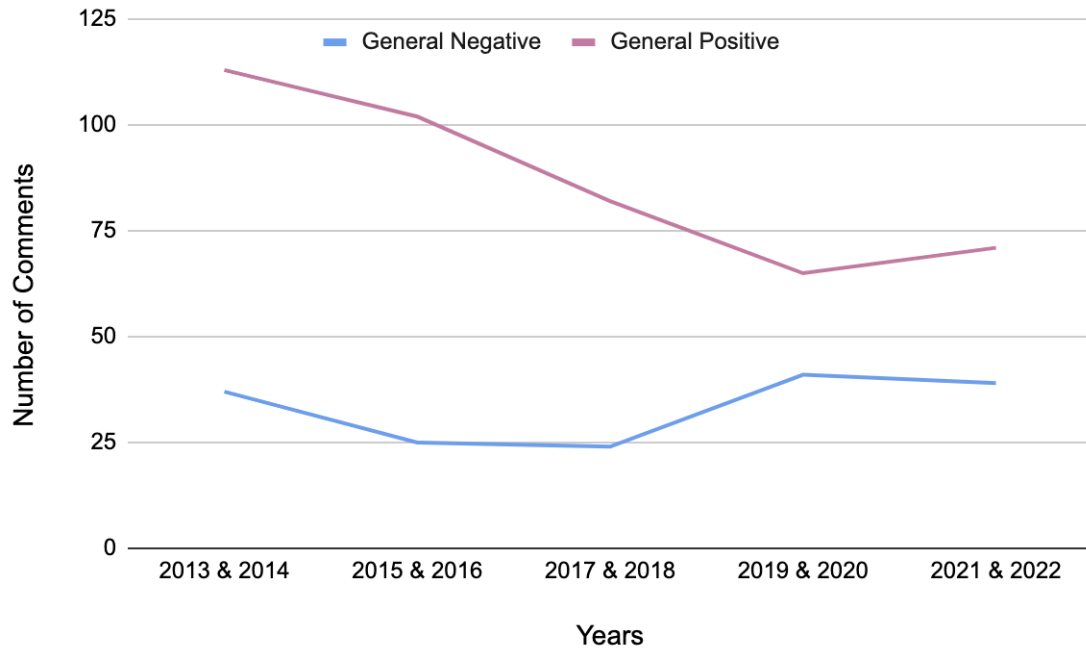
Comments such as “I love this TV ad so much!” left by Lourdes Laquian² on the ad *Dove #RealBeauty is Universal | Celebrate all types of beauty* were coded as generally positive since overall enjoyment of the video or campaign. On the opposing side, comments such as “Thumbs down” left by Stephanie Mitchell on *Dove | Hannah’s story #MyBeautyMySay* video were coded as generally negative since they mention disliking the video though give no specifics as to why.

It is important to note that while there are more General Positive comments overall towards the campaign as shown in Figure 1, many of these comments were not coded under any additional specific themes due to the content of the comment. However, a sizable portion of the General Negative comments discussed specific themes, so many of those comments were coded as additional themes.

² Commentors are referred to by the name displayed on the comment. Therefore, they may not be users’ full legal names.

Figure 1

Overall Sentiment Towards the Campaign.



Note. Changing amounts in subthemes General Positive and General Negative throughout all five time periods.

As shown in Figure 1, General Negative comments reached their highest points in the years that correlate with the Self-Esteem Project, whereas General Positive comments reach their lowest points in those years. This inverse relationship shows a growth in negative opinions with the shift to the Self-Esteem Project, though these negative comments are explored in other themes below.

Beauty is Not Important

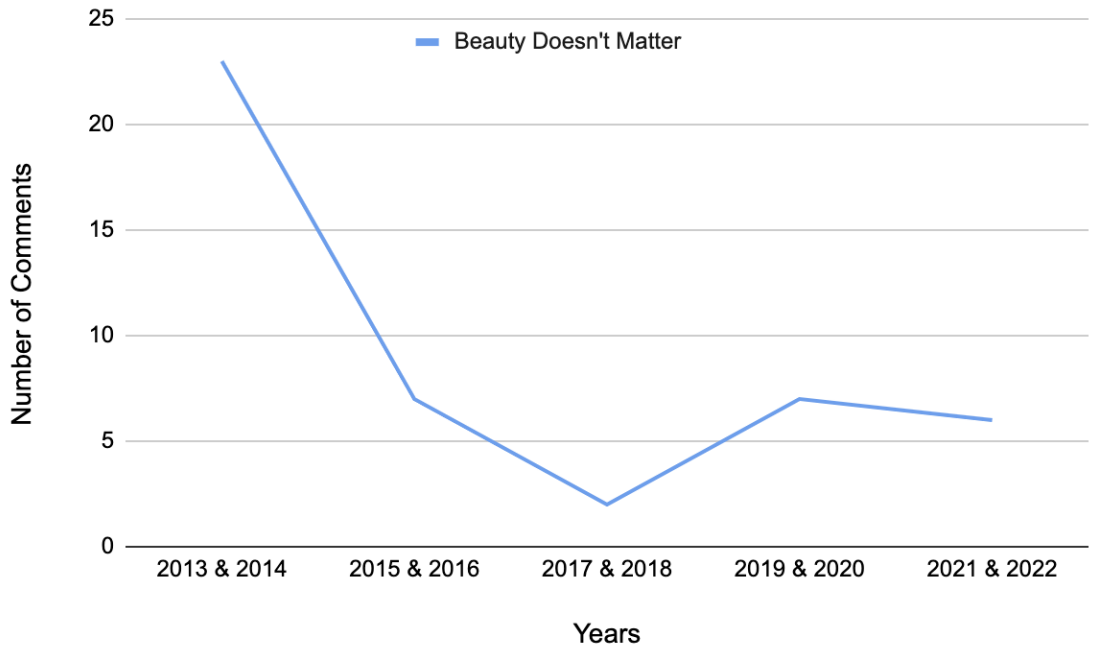
This theme had 56 comments total. Comments that were coded as ‘Beauty is not important’ on how much beauty should matter to the overall scheme of a person such as the idea of beauty being more personality focused than outer appearance, or the idea that

Dove is placing too much emphasis on beauty standards. For example, the comment on April 17th, 2013, Luna Carya commented on the video *Dove Real Beauty Sketches* | *You're more beautiful than you think* stating, "It could have been a nice attempt to a different ad, until the 'beauty is critical to your happiness.'" On the same video, Nga Thanh commented on the same Dove video as a reply to Luna's comment. Nga stated, "It's not trying to say that beauty is the most important thing in life, it's trying to say to appreciate who you are not who you want to be." This comment was also coded as 'Beauty is not important' because it references the idea that the video is not claiming that beauty is the measurement of someone's worth or happiness.

Figure 2 shows an influx of comments in the years 2013 & 2014 suggests a culture and conversation around whether beauty should matter in the overall scheme of a person. Additionally, in the years of the Self-Esteem Project, the comments coded increases demonstrating a resurgence of the conversation around how much beauty matters in society.

Figure 2

Beauty is Not Important.



Note. Changing amounts in theme Beauty is Not Important throughout all five time periods.

According to Critical Feminist Theory, beauty is considered a social structure that disempowers women. Glass (2020) explored how mainstream media’s obsession with women’s appearance demonstrates the bias that women are merely objects. Additionally, the encouragement “that women should adhere to these standards” is unreasonable and unattainable (Glass, 2020, paragraph 5). The increase in comments addressing beauty’s importance in society and in oneself demonstrates the public’s perception that the younger demographic should not be taught that their beauty is the most important part of themselves or determines worth at all.

These sentiments are reflected by Dove as well as shown in the video *Dove Self-Esteem Project x Steven Universe: Body Functionality*, which is the first video listed in their Dove Self-Esteem Project x Universe playlist. This video first discusses how the characters of Steven Universe, a popular children's TV show on Cartoon Network, seem so cool because they have multiple arms or other physical characteristics, drawing attention to their physical appearance, before transitioning to the idea that their appearance is not the main reason, they're cool. The rest of the video explains that the coolest part of the characters is what their bodies can do.

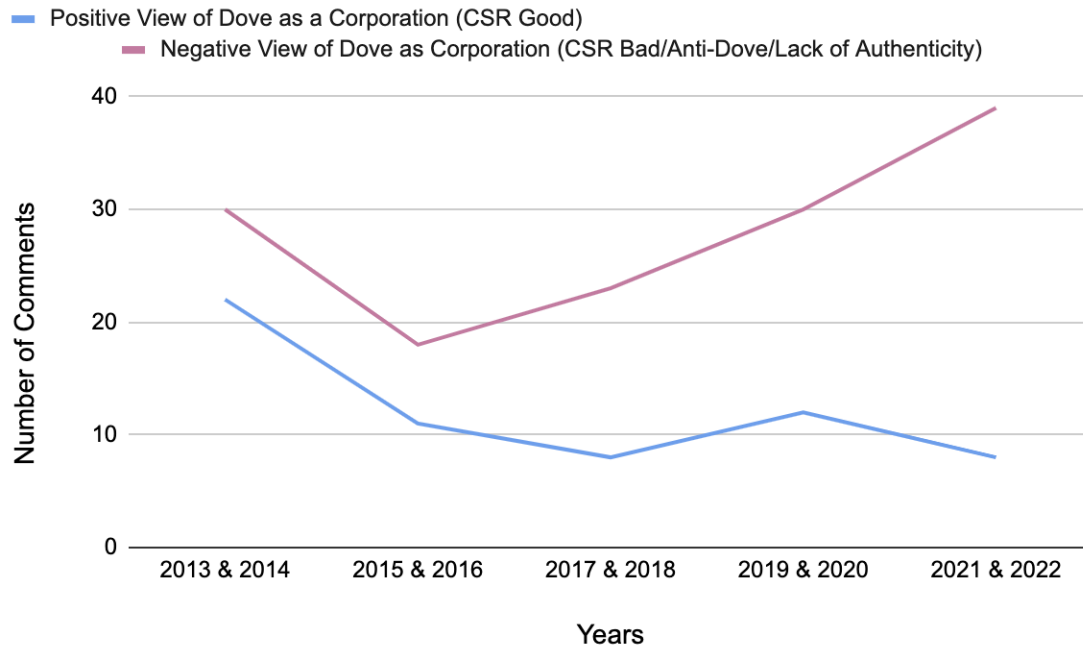
While this shift in video content demonstrates an understanding from Dove that the company wants to place less emphasis on women's appearance, the increase of comments coded as 'Beauty is not important' during the Self-Esteem project videos shows that the audience still feels that physical appearance is regarded as important by the nature of these project videos. This can explain the growth in comments about the importance of beauty and how these conversations should be discussed with the younger demographic.

Overall Sentiment Towards Dove as a Corporation

This theme contained four sub themes coded as: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Good, CSR Bad, Anti-Dove and Lack of Authenticity. There were 201 comments total in this theme. Of these 201 comments, 30% (61 comments) were coded as positive themes (CSR Good), whereas 70% (140 comments) were coded as negative themes as shown in Figure 3 (CSR Bad, Anti-Dove and/or Lack of Authenticity).

Figure 3

Overall Sentiment Towards Dove as a Corporation.



Note. Changing amounts of comments within theme Overall Sentiment Towards Dove as a Corporation. Subtheme CSR Good is coded as a positive view. Subthemes CSR Bad, Anti-Dove, and Lack of Authenticity are coded as a negative view.

Comments coded under CSR Good drew attention to the idea that the Real Beauty campaign’s benefits are still felt regardless of Dove as a corporation. Specifically, these comments discussed that Dove’s corporation status was irrelevant to the possible benefits of the campaign. Phoenix Light commented on *Dove | Beauty on your own terms* #MyBeautyMySay³ saying, “I love this. I don't care if you're selling a product, thank you for the beautiful message. You didn't just plug a product, you intended something loving,

³ This video features voiceovers of women stating things that they had previously been told about themselves and how they feel as though they define beauty rather than these outside comments.

kind, and inspirational. Thank you for that.” This comment was coded under ‘CSR Good’ since it drew attention to the fact that Dove is a business, but the benefits of this campaign are more important than their business.

The theme CSR Bad also includes comments that reference Dove being a corporation, but according to these comments Dove being a business cheapens the message that the Real Beauty campaign is promoting. For example, a comment left on the video *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You’re more beautiful than you think (6 mins⁴)* by Katie on January 19th, 2018, stated, “Dove is just trying to sell soap. I hate manipulative marketing. And all these people are falling for it.” This comment was coded under CSR Bad because it references the fact that Dove is simply a business, and this advertisement is primarily a way for them to make money.

Comments left in both categories were frequently in direct opposition to each other with one user stating how they admire that this company is doing good and another user replying in disagreement.

Comments coded under Anti-Dove were comments that discussed other frowned-upon practices that Dove engaged with but weren’t addressed in these campaign videos. For example, a couple of comments in this category focused on Dove’s testing on animals or how their products are filled with toxic chemicals. For example, Gözde Filinta commented on the video *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You’re more beautiful than you think* on Dec. 15, 2016, stating “How about seeing the beauty in animals and STOP TESTING YOUR PRODUCTS ON THEM Dove?? Why not sketch them before and

⁴ This video features a group of women participating in a social experiment where they describe themselves to an FBI sketch artist, and a stranger also describes them to the same FBI sketch artist. The strangers’ description produced more accurate and complimentary sketches rather than the person describing themselves.

after??” This comment was coded under Anti-Dove since it addressed a problem that this person had with a practice that Dove partook in even though it was not related to the current campaign that Dove was promoting within this video.

Comments that were coded under Lack of Authenticity included comments that didn't believe that the videos were real. Most of these comments questioned the legitimacy of the problems present in the commercial or the accuracy of Dove in portraying these issues. For example, in the *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You're more beautiful than you think* there were several comments stating that the sketch artist was instructed to draw the second drawing as more attractive to push the point that Dove was trying to make. For example, the comment “The sketch artist knew the point of the ad. He wouldn't skew the drawings for an emotional commercial, would he.....” left by Swayze4life on April 16th, 2013, was coded as Lack of Authenticity since it questioned the legitimacy of how the sketch artist drew both images. Another example of a comment under the theme Lack of Authenticity, is the comment left by Jed_Beezel on June 30, 2022, stating “Look at this divisive crap. No school would do this in a million years, it's begging for a lawsuit. I call shenanigans.” This comment was coded as Lack of Authenticity since it questioned the problem that Dove was trying to address of young women of color being attacked for their hair.

As shown in Figure 3, the overall sentiment towards Dove as a corporation became increasingly negative starting in 2015 & 2016, additionally any positive comments about Dove as a corporation decreased 2019 & 2020. Figure 3 shows a dramatic increase in a negative view as a corporation correlating with the years of the Self-Esteem Project growth.

Since CSR Good and CSR Bad correlate with each other, the decrease in CSR Good paired with the increase in CSR Bad in the final two time periods can suggest a shift in conversations about companies' involvement with social activism campaigns. Specifically with Dove's shift to the Self-Esteem Project, the rise in discussion around people viewing the campaigns as ingenuine suggests that audiences are becoming more cynical towards Dove's motives behind the campaign. The increase in Lack of Authenticity comments during the Self-Esteem project videos emphasize a shift in audience's viewing the campaign as disingenuous since these comments question the legitimacy of issues that Dove is addressing overall. Additionally, while Anti-Dove comments do not address anything related to the Self-Esteem project, the increase in comments during the Self-Esteem Project suggest, despite Dove's creation and promotion of this project, audiences were not distracted from other 'problematic practices' that Dove has been a part of in the past. Based on the overall rise in negativity towards Dove as a corporation, it suggests that consumers are skeptical of Dove's goals with the Self-Esteem Project video.

Along with a rise in discussion around the motives behind the Real Beauty campaign, the Self-Esteem project videos also brought out many comments coded as authenticity when viewers questioned the legitimacy of the issues discussed by Dove. Most prominent comments were on the video *Dove | As Early As Five | End Race-Based Hair Discrimination*. This video begins by showing a screen that states "Based on too many true stories," (Dove, 2022, 00:00:01 – 00:00:03). After this statement, the video showed a teacher telling a Black father and daughter, that the young girl's traditional braids hair doesn't follow the school's "strict hair policy." Throughout the remainder of

the video this young woman is shown growing up wearing traditionally Black hairstyles such as braids or Bantu Knots, though continuously being discriminated against (Chidera, 2022). The video then includes an end screen that says “Race-based hair discrimination starts as early as five. And can last a lifetime” (Dove, 2022, 00:00:46 – 00:00:47).

This video is based on research that people of color are discriminated against for their hair (Belsha, 2020). This discussion gained popularity with the creation of the Crown Act passed in 2022 that sought to end race-based hair discrimination (Crown Coalition, 2019). Following the creation of the Crown Act, many stories of people facing race-based hair discrimination went viral. These included a 2020 dress code of an Atlanta elementary school that showed several young black girls with braids “to illustrate ‘inappropriate’ haircuts” (Belsha, 2020). Another viral story included a video of a 16-year-old mixed-race wrestler being forced to cut off his dreadlocks or forfeit the match (Belsha, 2020). These stories are some of the stories that Dove’s | *As Early As Five* | *End Race-Based Hair Discrimination* was inspired by.

Despite the initial statement that this video was based on true stories as well as popular stories of people facing race-based hair discrimination, many comments were coded as Lack of Authenticity since viewers questioned the integrity of the stories. For example, FreeBeard commented on this video stating⁵, “This rarely happens in today’s society (emphasis on rarely). I went to school in the deep south (graduated 20 years ago) and there were black guys & gals who had braids, you would see it all the time. So seriously, where in today’s society does this happen? We’re not talking about 30 or 40

⁵ Edited for clarity.

years ago; we're talking about now.” This sentiment was shared by many commentors who called the video “divisive” and stated, “it never happened.”

The video *Dove | As Early As Five | End Race-Based Hair Discrimination* was a part of the Self-Esteem project and sought to promote body positivity, especially for youth, by demonstrating the harsh reality that young people of color may face. However, the increase in the theme Lack of Authenticity demonstrates a shift in discourse during this time to question how likely or common this reality is.

Along with an increase in the audience questioning the legitimacy of issues within the campaign, the increase in CSR Bad comments and Anti-Dove comments demonstrate an increased cynicism towards the motives of Dove’s Self-Esteem Project. Additionally, the decrease in CSR Good comments, demonstrates an overall tone shift towards a more negative view of Dove as a corporation.

According to Kelly (2021), this increased awareness and increased negativity towards corporate social responsibility is not exclusive to Dove. In 2021, Meaningful Brands reported that 77% of consumers expect brands to support them through corporate social responsibility, however 66% of consumers want to feel more supported by brands, and want more meaningful experiences from corporations (Kelly, 2021). Banet-Weiser (2012, p. 45) explores this idea with regards to Dove’s Self-Esteem toolkits, explaining how self-esteem has become a product that girls can “acquire through consumption of the proper commodities.” These self-esteem kits can be seen as Dove trying to align with the feminist ideal of “empowerment” by encouraging young women to be more confident. As explored by Banet-Weiser (2015) the use of empowerment in consumerism perpetuates

the idea that women in crisis also have potential market value, which encourages profit from feminist struggles.

Negative feelings about Dove's use of the empowerment of women as a marketing tactic can be seen reflected in several comments within 2019 & 2020 and 2021 & 2022. One example is Nigel Smith's comment left on April 29, 2022, on the video *Dove | Reverse Selfie | Have #TheSelfieTalk* stating "Instead of Dove taking on social media properly and preventing this at source, they've taken a sticking plaster approach to a broken arm and let's not forget they're trying to sell more product too." Simona Cosimi left a similar comment on November 22, 2020, on the video *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You're more beautiful than you think*, stating "Remember, this is still a marketing campaign." These comments are like most of the other CSR Bad comments present in these two time periods, critiquing Dove for using the topics discussed to sell more product. These viewers' opinions aren't exclusive to Dove. The overall cynicism towards corporations using this idea to sell a product is reflected in other comments. For example, Lilli Manhart commented on July 3, 2022, on the video *Dove | As Early As Five | End Race-Based Hair Discrimination*, "I got this video from Ulta. I am very disappointed in Ulta because the company is sending and pushing a narrative to their customers." This comment suggests Dove's profit-driven motive behind these ads does not only exist within their corporation, but also with any corporations using feminist ideas to sell a product. The presence of these comments rising during the Self-Esteem Project could demonstrate a change in the discourse of corporate social responsibility campaigns specifically with body image to more skepticism toward corporations and greater awareness of profit-driven motivation.

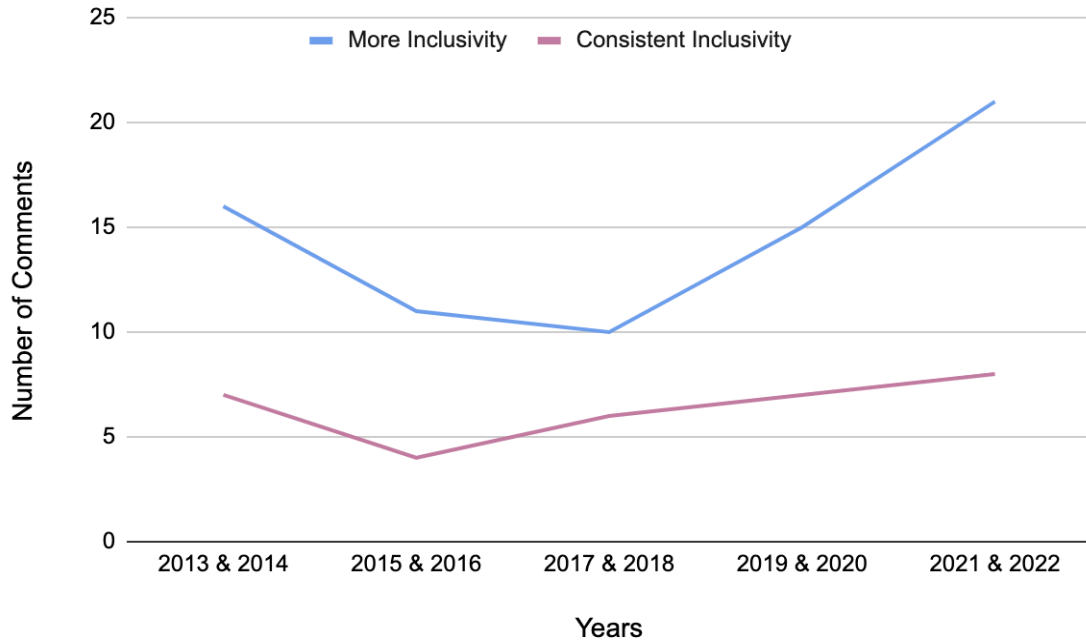
Dove's self-esteem workbooks such as #DetoxYourFeed: The Parents' Guide and Confidence Kit are free and accessible on their website. Banet-Weiser explains the act of marketing their own website while discussing self-esteem reinforces the idea that self-esteem is merely a product that can be bought (Banet-Weiser, 2012). The rise in negative comments about Dove as a corporation during the Self-Esteem Project suggests that audiences are paying more attention to Dove's motives behind this campaign. This demonstrates an agreement with Banet-Weiser's statement that marketing feminism as a product to be purchased discounts the positive effects that the product may have.

Inclusivity

There were two sub-themes coded under Inclusivity: More Inclusivity and Consistent Inclusivity. There were 105 inclusivity comments overall. As shown in Figure 4, More Inclusivity had over twice as many comments as Consistent Inclusivity with 73 comments (69%) falling into this category, whereas Consistent Inclusivity had only 32 comments (31%). Both categories increased over time, but More Inclusivity increased faster, consistently having more comments than Consistent Inclusivity.

Figure 4

Inclusivity.



Note. Changing amounts in theme Inclusivity including subthemes More Inclusivity and Consistent Inclusivity throughout all five time periods.

Comments coded under More Inclusivity included any that discussed wanting to see this video with other kinds of people (men, mothers & daughters, etc.) On July 6, 2013, Tan Smith commented, “I wish some of the people wore glasses, or had braces, or facial piercings,” on *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You’re more beautiful than you think*. This comment was coded under More Inclusivity since it emphasizes the desire for more representation. This shift is representative of the fourth wave of feminism that focused more on the individuality of people. The emphasis on individuality in fourth wave feminism helps explain this shift in discussion to include more specific inclusivity such as glasses or acne rather than large groups of people such as different races or ages.

The theme of Consistent Inclusivity included comments that discussed how Dove had already included a diverse range of people. Additionally, comments that referenced the idea that the videos were already addressing everyone affected by struggles with body image. For example, Lorena Andreea commented on the same video *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You're more beautiful than you think* on October 31, 2020, stating, "Dove, it's a brand for women so there's no point in doing it for males because they are not the target audience." This comment was coded as consistent inclusivity since it drew on the idea that Dove's Real Beauty campaign was already targeting the demographic that they wanted to.

Between 2010 and 2022, social media usage increased exponentially, correlating with the growth of the Self-Esteem Project (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). The correlation between the Self-Esteem Project and the growth of social media is emphasized by Dove with videos that address the increased use of social media. For example, the video *Toxic Influence: A Dove Film | Dove Self-Esteem Project* that discusses negative effects of social media specifically on young people.

As explored in the literature review, the fourth wave of feminism occurred with the growth of social media. Along with the growth of social media during the Self-Esteem Project, Figure 4 shows that these time periods also had more comments regarding inclusivity.

The reasoning for this can be explained by Critical Feminist Theory as feminism specifically entered its fourth wave. As discussed in the literature review, Harvey (2020) cites the shift in individuality in feminism to also include more conversations of intersectionality in feminism. Since intersectionality involves other social stratifications

discussed with inclusivity, the growth of More Inclusivity comments directly correlates with feminism's fourth wave since the fourth wave emphasized intersectionality.

A social stratification discussed during the Self-Esteem Project includes a discussion of how gender affects self-esteem. Many comments left on the different Self-Esteem Project videos point out that young girls are not the only ones affected by social media. For example, in the video *Toxic Influence: A Dove Film | Dove Self-Esteem Project*, The Crimson Misogynist commented on May 10th, 2022, stating "What about our young boys?" This comment calls for the inclusion of young boys, as they are also affected by social media, like several other comments left on Dove's Self-Esteem Project videos. Dove responded to several of these comments stating different ideas. Dove acknowledged that boys struggle with body image too stating, "We agree this issue is important to everyone and believe in inclusive education, specifically for self-esteem." However, they were also defensive in their research stating they "found that girls are disproportionately affected by low self-esteem – with 1 in 2 girls saying idealized beauty advice on social media causes it."

Dove's latter comment seems to align more closely with their website. For example, on their website some of the phrasing suggests inclusion of all young people in the Self-Esteem Project, however all the statistics shared are centered on young women and only young women are featured in the commercials. This is not the first time Dove has reacted defensively when including gender expression in the Real Beauty conversations. The only presence of someone who didn't identify as a woman was Rain Dove featured in *Dove | Rain's Story #MyBeautyMySay*. While Rain Dove identifies as nonbinary, the Dove commercial used she/her pronouns and addressed them as an

androgynous woman. Dove's defensive nature towards an argument for the inclusion of young boys within their Self-Esteem Project aligns with arguments and comments within the Consistent Inclusivity theme. For example, Peachy Skeleton commented February 9th, 2022, on the video *Dove Real Beauty Sketches | You're more beautiful than you think (6mins)* stating "There are literal studies about how it affects women more than men." In a similar vein, comments coded under Consistent Inclusivity urged viewers to "make your own advert for boys" and calling men in the comments "fragile." These comments pushed back against the comments urging for more blatant inclusion of men. This is like the arguments included in the discussion of intersectionality during the fourth wave of feminism. Harvey (2020) explained that events occurring during the fourth wave of feminism celebrated women's right to vote based on the date that white women were able to vote. Harvey argues that this undoes some discussion of intersectionality since it ignores women of other races not being able to vote for many more years.

Along with an increase in conversation around gender identity and inclusion of various gender expressions, the Self-Esteem Project videos also brought out an increase in comments addressing race and how that impacts one's experience in feminism. For example, MisterCap commented on June 30, 2022, on the video *Dove | As Early as Five | End Race-Based Hair Discrimination* stating, "My cousin was discriminated against for having a full beard. Of course, the majority (white males) could NOT grow a beard. Absolutely disgusting. #EndRaceBasedHair." Similarly, Silver Foxy Lady stated on the same video on July 2nd, 2022, "For me, it wasn't school or my jobs, it was my Hispanic mother. She hated seeing my natural curly hair flow free. She always put my hair in ponytails or braids...anything to tame it. To this day, she tells me to go comb my hair or

to ‘fix it’ whenever I visit. I love my natural curls even though it took a long time to embrace it.” Both comments, as well as numerous others, drew attention to the idea that people of color face different issues when it comes to their experience with feminism because of this added social stratification.

Along with these comments addressing the intersectionality of people and their race, Consistent Inclusivity comments grew encouraging viewers that race-based discrimination doesn’t contribute to this issue facing women that Dove is addressing. For example, Howard Roark commented on the video *Dove | Beauty standards of hair are a form of #BeautyBias* on May 4th, 2021, stating, “Well ... I don't see Dove doing any ads that promote "white people" hair. Black girls make up only 6% of the US population and yet they make up about half of the people shown in all Dove ads.” This comment is like many others coded as Consistent Inclusivity about Dove’s attempt at addressing race-based hair discrimination that either defined the problem as illegitimate or questioned the frequency of the issues. These comments deemphasized the intersectional experience that women and people of color have when it comes to beauty standards specifically involving them. For example, white women’s hairstyles are often not regarded as unprofessional, whereas women of color common hairstyles are.

The growth in More Inclusivity comments as well as the growth in Consistent Inclusivity comments that addressed race-based discrimination and additional beauty standards follows the same pattern of fourth wave feminism and the discussion around intersectionality. Race is another social stratification that Critical Feminist Theory help explains is a factor that affects many women and their experiences.

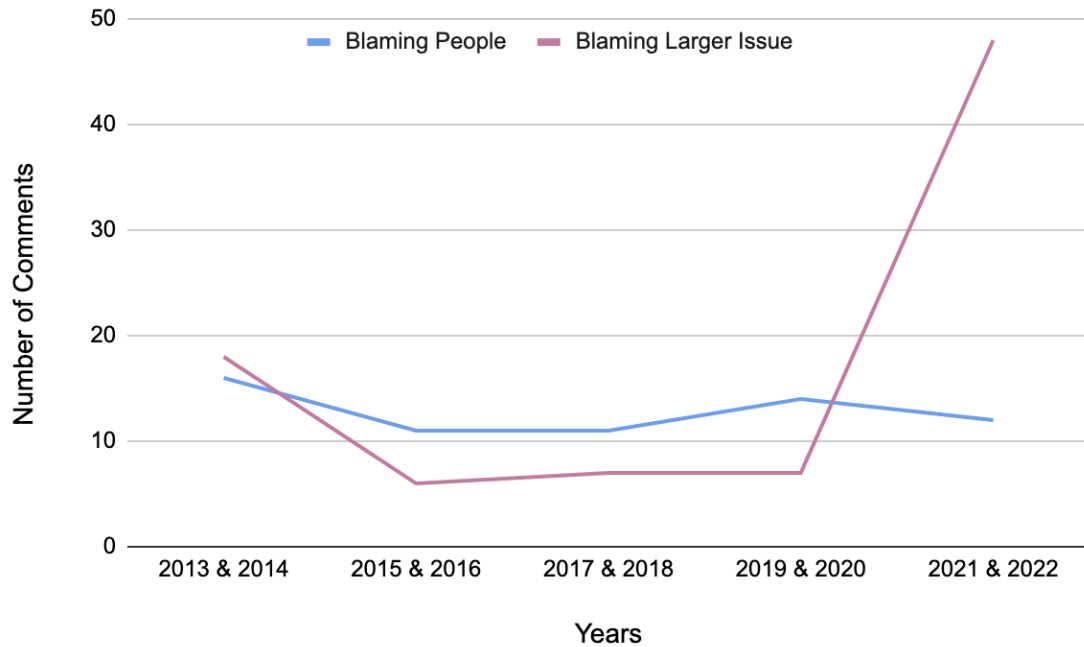
The increase in both themes shows a shift in cultural conversations to discuss representation and social stratifications, and how these various social stratifications limit or affect the experience of beauty standards. This is due to the rise in social media that encouraged the fourth wave of feminism focusing on individuality and discussion around intersectionality.

Blame

The theme blame had two subthemes: Blaming People and Blaming Larger Issue. There were 150 total comments coded under Blame. Of these 150 comments, 42% (64 comments) were coded as Blaming People, and 57% (86 comments) were coded as Blaming Larger Issue. Blaming People's comments were fairly consistent over time, whereas Blaming Larger Issue initially aligned with Blaming People before increasing dramatically in 2019 & 2020 as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Blame.



Note. Changing amounts in theme Blame including subthemes Blaming People and Blaming Larger Issue throughout all five time periods.

Comments coded as Blaming People included comments that blamed either individuals for body image issues or specific groups of people. For example, the comment from June 18, 2021 “I think schoolmates, and in general, people who are close to these girls and whom they compare to can do much more damage on their young minds than any celebrity” left by Sunburn2508 on the video *Dove | Reverse Selfie | Have the #SelfieTalk*⁶ was coded under Blaming People. This is because the commentor blames schoolmates and people close to these girls as the reason for their body image

⁶ This video shows various things that young people are told by people on social media to do to themselves to fit into “ideal beauty standards.”

issues rather than the larger societal ideas of a celebrity or influencer being responsible for this damage.

Comments blaming individuals remained fairly consistent across all time periods. However, blaming larger social structures, and in particular social media, jumped significantly in the final time period, during the launch of the Self-Esteem project, as can be seen in Figure 5 below. As an example, the comment, “One of the most powerful messages today. Social media is the devil and lowers self-esteem of both sexes physically and mentally without them realizing it,” left by FKing85 on March 17, 2022, also left on *Dove | Reverse Selfie | Have the #SelfieTalk* was coded as Blaming Larger Issue since the comment references that the reason for lowered self-esteem is due to social media. Common trends for other issues blamed included social media, society, beauty standards, and influencers.

The dramatic increase in Blaming Larger Issue in 2019 & 2020 during the Self-Esteem Project demonstrates a very substantial shift in conversation about who or what should be blamed for the issues presented in the video. As discussed, most of the comments coded as Blaming Larger Issue in the time periods of the Self-Esteem Project specifically blamed social media. This shows a similar shift as theme Overall sentiment of Dove as a corporation with a more specific emphasis on social media corporations. Like that theme, part of the reasoning for this shift is due to Critical Feminist Theory.

As explored in the literature review, Critical Feminist Theory addresses the use of various social structures and systems designed to continue the discrepancies between men and women. Blaming Larger Issue comments in the time periods of the Self-Esteem project reference social media as a system designed to create societal differences between

men and women. For example, Rebecca Tslibaris commented on the video *Dove | Reverse Selfie | Have the #SelfieTalk* on May 11th, 2022, stating, “I’m so glad that this issue is being addressed as young girls struggle to fit in due to the pressures created on social and mass media.” Similarly, John Bishop commented on the same video on June 21st, 2022, stating “The pressure of social media is harming girls.” Both comments as well as many others draw attention to the fact that social media as a corporate structure pressures young girls to look a certain way, emphasizing the discrepancies between men and women based on the standards that women are held to due to social media.

With the sharp increase in Blaming Larger Issue comments during the Self-Esteem project, the shift in conversation skews negatively towards corporations such as social media companies that continue to promote the same beauty standards. Some of these companies include Meta, Facebook, Instagram, and ByteDance, which owns TikTok. This emphasizes the shift in conversation to include social media as a social structure that disempowers women by holding them to unreasonable expectations. Critical Feminist Theory helps explain that social media, as a social structure, continues to uphold these values emphasizing the differences between men and women.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

There were two major findings in the data as the Dove Real Beauty campaign shifted to the Self-Esteem Project. The first is the increased cynicism towards corporations Dove specifically as their Self-Esteem campaign project videos grew to include young people in body image discourse. Additionally, there was an increased cynicism and blame towards social media companies as a new structure to uphold traditional gender roles and beauty standards. The second is increased conversation around inclusivity and other aspects of a person affecting their identity. Critical Feminist Theory can help us understand these phenomena as they handle the systems and structures that are built societally to discriminate between men and women.

Cynicism towards corporations can be seen in multiple ways towards Dove as well as towards other corporations. The cynicism towards Dove as a corporation is seen most with an increase in comments discussing the campaign being a corporate social responsibility campaign, comments questioning the legitimacy as well as comments calling out Dove's behaviors not related to the campaign. Separate from the cynicism regarding Dove as a corporation, the shift in blame to focus more on social media demonstrated this continued increase in cynicism towards companies. Critical feminist theory supports the growing distrust of corporations especially with regards to corporations addressing feminism. As Banet-Weiser (2015) defined in her *Economies of Visibility*, the use of Critical Feminist Theory in consumerism has had conflicting reviews throughout history. She defines two markets, the market for empowerment and

the market for protection, as the two major ways that corporations use feminist theory to promote products.

The shift in Dove's marketing from a campaign of empowerment to protection explains this shift in cynicism. Initially, Dove's Real Beauty campaign was more centered around the market for empowerment. Campaign language tapped into a market for Dove to empower women: the ability to address "women who desired a new philosophy of beauty" (Murray, 2013, p. 534). As Murray (2013) explored, many consumers felt the feminist undertones within the Real Beauty campaign and appreciated Dove's support of the movement. Beginning with the Self-Esteem project, Dove's use of feminism in marketing switched from the market of empowerment to the market of protection. Banet-Weiser (2015) explains that the market for protection still views women as worthy investments, but that instead of uplifting women they must be contained. This shift in market discussion can be seen in the changes in messaging that occurred with the Self-Esteem Project. Whereas initially, in Dove's Real Beauty marketing the messaging revolved around women feeling beautiful in themselves, the Self-Esteem project messaging featured concern over girls and what they're exposed to on social media and in school that affect their Self-Esteem. A couple of the videos in the Self-Esteem Project are marketed towards parents such as the video *#DetoxYourFeed: The Parents' Guide* as a way for parents to protect their young children from the dangers of online beauty standards. Market protection as a campaign technique for consumerism has more negative undertones (Banet-Weiser, 2015). For example, the market for protection is based on "containing girls." Additionally, the market for protection has clear religious views that "reinforces a religious-patriarchal organization of gender" (Banet-

Weiser, 2015, p. 64-65). The shift in Dove's marketing of feminism to include more in the market of protection rather than empowerment is a reason for the growth of cynicism towards corporations. Since the market of protection more specifically upholds gender roles with Critical Feminist Theory focuses on dismantling, Dove's use of market of protection within their Self-Esteem project videos explains the increased cynicism towards Dove's selling of feminism since it is instead selling outdated gender roles.

Along with an increase in cynicism towards Dove as a corporation, there was an increased cynicism towards social media companies. There was an increase in comments blaming social media companies for toxic beauty standards and low self-esteem. Critical Feminist Theory in consumerism helps explain the increased blame and negativity towards these social media companies. As many of the comments suggest, social media has become a new social structure that upholds previous gender roles. For example, many comments draw attention to the idea that social media is a new place for beauty standards to be enforced, as well as dangerous/toxic advice on how to fit these beauty standards. Social media has become a new social structure that upholds the discrepancies and differences between men and women that Critical Feminist Theory examines while understanding the societal differences in men and women.

The third major finding is the increased discussion of inclusivity during the Self-Esteem Project, specifically with social stratifications such as gender identity and race. The increased discourse around how these other aspects of a person affect their experience with body image can be attributed to the fourth wave of feminism. As discussed, the fourth wave of feminism began during the growth of social media as the ability for algorithms to focus more specifically on individuality. This increased

discussion around individuality included an increased discussion around intersectionality, which looks at other aspects of a person to understand their experience in feminism. The Self-Esteem Project coincided a lot with the growth of social media and this fourth wave of feminism. This can help to explain the increase in comments asking for more inclusivity in their videos. Most notably was the push for young boys to be included in these conversations about the toxicity of social media. Additionally, there was a push for more inclusivity of various race-related beauty issues such as hair discrimination or colorism. The growth in conversation around these specific topics demonstrates the increased discourse of intersectionality since these conversations include specifics of other social dividers that affect one's experience with body image. Fourth wave feminism can help us understand this increased discussion around intersectionality as with an increased along with a focus to individuality, the push for more specific inclusivity coincided with the growth of social media and the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

There is a societal perception that people do not know or care about the effects of large corporations. For example, CNN reports that while there is inflation it's not corporation's greed at fault (Cecchetti & Schoenholtz, 2022). Stossel (2022) agrees that while it may feel like corporations should be at fault, people should instead be blaming the government. This demonstrates a shift in conversation away from blaming corporations, even if they are at fault. Additionally, there are conflicting reports on who is to blame for climate change. While social media and trends encourage consumers to use less single-use plastic, McGrath (2020) argues that consumers are being blamed for a problem that is majorly caused by corporations. The reasoning for this is that the general public is mostly unaware of the damage that corporations cause. However, as this study

and these findings demonstrate, the general public is aware of the effects that corporations have on society, particularly with issues such as reinforcing beauty standards. The growth in this cynicism results in a push for corporations to be held to certain ethical standards. This is also seen in part by the rise in corporations' involvement with corporate social responsibility. The Governance and Accountability Institute (2020) found that there was a significant increase in corporations' CSR initiatives in 2018 as opposed to 2011. The acknowledgement from corporations that consumers are holding them responsible for their actions and potentially damaging effects on society is present as they seek to create positive perceptions within the public through corporate social responsibility. The growth of CSR as well as the findings from this study demonstrate a shift in culture and public perception to consumers noticing and holding corporations accountable for the damaging effects they may have on society and situations.

Overall, major findings showed an increased cynicism towards corporations. With the cynicism towards Dove specifically, their shift in campaign style from empowerment to protection demonstrates the societal idea that women must be protected and upholds various standards that Critical Feminist Theory seeks to dismantle. However, as comments explained social media companies began to be viewed as a new social structure/system that upholds beauty standards and differences between men and women. Critical Feminist Theory helps explain that this new structure receiving the critique from feminism, feels more prominent than a preexisting social structure since feminism has already critiqued that structure. With the fourth wave of feminism, the shift to individuality exacerbated by social media emphasized an increased discussion around intersectionality and other aspects of a person's identity that affects their body image.

This growth of intersectionality conversations can help to explain conversations that occurred during the Self-Esteem Project, urging greater discussion of other aspects of an identity that affect beauty standards. Critical Feminist Theory is used to explore social structures that uphold societal differences between men and women, so the shift in these structures as well as conversations around feminism would increase these conversations.

Dove's Self-Esteem Project occurred during the fourth wave of feminism and their marketing changing to focus more on various social structures and the market for protection. Critical Feminist Theory helps to explain why the comments grew in negativity and became more cynical towards Dove.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis sought to understand the changes in discourse surrounding body image, as well as Dove's transition from their Real Beauty campaign to the Self-Esteem Project was perceived by the public. This study asked, "How has the public's reaction to the Dove's Real Beauty and Dove Self-Esteem Project videos changed following the incorporation of youth into body positivity messaging?"

Based on the analysis, it is shown how the shift to incorporate a younger demographic into the discussions around body image resulted in an increase in cynicism towards corporations. This finding of increased cynicism supports Taylor's (2016) and Duffy's (2010) finding. For example, while some commentators supported the campaign, Dove's messaging, and Dove's inclusion of young people into discourse around body image. There were numerous other commentators that were at least somewhat cynical and critical of Dove's messaging, specifically questioning Dove's motivations behind the campaign. This is similar to what Taylor (2016) and Duffy (2010) found as there were some positive reactions to the initial Real Beauty campaign though ultimately audiences were mildly skeptical of Dove's motives behind the campaign.

Increased cynicism with the development of the Self-Esteem Project was directed towards Dove, as conversations discussed the motives behind the campaign and doubted the reality of issues. However, this cynicism was also directed to social media companies that perpetuate systems of discrimination between men and women. I argue that Critical Feminist Theory helps explain these critiques and increased cynicism since fourth wave

feminism drew attention to corporations and the role that they play in upholding discrepancies between genders.

The data also shows a shift in conversation to include more demand for inclusivity specifically with increased discourse around the effects of social media on young boys' self-esteem. There was also increased discussion around how other social stratifications of a person such as race affects their experience within their gender identity. For example, a woman of color experiences of gender roles differently from a white woman since the woman of color has other social standards held against her. I attest to the idea that this is due to increased discussion around intersectionality and how all aspects of a person's identity affect their life experiences. This increased discussion around intersectionality is also a result of Critical Feminist Theory, as fourth wave feminism's focus on the increased conversations around specific aspects of an individual explored in intersectionality.

Dove was perceptive to some of these changes in conversations, as the brand responded to comments that urged for male representation stating that they hope their Self-Esteem Project reaches both boys and girls, but also that their research demonstrated a stronger emphasis on social media effects on girls' self-esteem. Additionally, Dove's partnership with Shonda Rhimes during the Self-Esteem Project and shift to an all-woman production staff brought out increased diversity in project videos as well as increased conversations around topics discussed such as the importance of beauty. While this partnership did seem to create changes in the Self-Esteem Project, the comments still urged the corporation for more discussion of intersectionality more within body image discourse the Self-Esteem Project.

As I hypothesized, the public's reaction to Dove as a corporation skewed more negatively with the shift to the Self-Esteem Project. However, I did not expect there to be discussions surrounding other corporations and possible implications of their brand with beauty standards and self-esteem. Additionally, I hypothesized that comments around body image in general would skew more positively over time. I expected this since the public reaction towards the body positivity movement was fairly positive and supported the shift in conversation away from toxic beauty standards. There were not a lot of comments around body image in general. I expected comments to discuss changing beauty standards and instead comments mostly discussed beauty standards in the context of corporations. For example, comments discussed social media and how it perpetuates those beauty standards. Overall general positive comments greatly outweighed negative comments. This was due in part to a significant number of positive comments simply stating enjoying the campaign or the video without providing any context on what was particularly enjoyed, such as body positivity.

I found it most interesting that the shift to addressing a younger demographic brought an increased cynical reaction towards corporations. I would expect that these negative reactions would be towards the standards in general and the harm that can come from enforcing toxic beauty standards. However, a majority of these comments were negative towards corporations since they placed the blame of self-esteem issues and beauty standards on corporations who continue to highlight these "ideal" body standards. I found it most interesting that discussions centered more around blaming someone or something for these problems rather than possibly addressing the issue itself or how to limit the impact.

Limitations

I originally sought to examine all aspects of the Dove Real Beauty campaign including their billboard initiatives, workshops, and toolkits, in addition to the videos. However, a lack of social media presence in the early stages of the campaign made it difficult to gather public reactions unless they were discussed in the comment section. Additionally, difficulties with Twitter to access Dove's social media campaigns added limitations on being able to gauge public opinion and reaction as well as its shift to the Self-Esteem Project.

Instead, I focused on the video aspect of the campaigns by using videos that Dove US, YouTube channel had posted referencing the Dove Real Beauty project or the Self-Esteem project either in the video, the video's title or in the description of the video. Several of the Dove Self-Esteem videos have comments turned off which was a limitation. For example, all the videos of the Cartoon Network and Dove partnership had comments turned off, making me unable to garner public reaction to those videos. Additionally, there were multiple channels that posted or reposted Dove Real Beauty videos, however, to keep consistency in the data I chose to only analyze those uploaded by Dove US. As a result, some videos removed from Dove's YouTube channel and reuploaded elsewhere were not included in this study despite their initial inclusion in the Dove Real Beauty project or the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

Future Considerations

While Dove does not address boys in their Self-Esteem Project videos, future research could look at campaigns that do address men's self-esteem to compare how it varies from videos directed towards women. Additionally, since the social media hashtag

campaigns were unable to be included in this study, future research could explore public reactions on different platforms such as Twitter and how they might differ from reactions left on YouTube videos. Finally, I explored the Dove Real Beauty campaign in part due to its longevity, however, multiple other brands and corporations have recently started supporting conversations about body image and toxic beauty standards. Future research could examine how other various campaigns have affected perceptions of those brands or on the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

This study is important since it shows changing conversations around how corporate social responsibility efforts and the commodification of femininity as a product are perceived by audiences. It is important to look into these changes since corporate social responsibility is a growing field and understanding how consumers view this field can help companies to develop strong CSR initiatives in the future. Additionally, looking at consumers reactions to feminism as a commodity is important since many brands and products are marketed for or to women and understanding how audiences view this targeting can help companies to better sell their products. Finally, looking at feminism as a commodity can help audiences understand the social structures that uphold traditional gender roles and how that can be damaging to women and people moving forward.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF VIDEOS

Table 1. URL	Title	Date of Publication	Number of Comments	Duration (minutes)	Brief Description
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4i3cHOnV84	Dove Redefining Beauty & Inspiring Confidence	10/28/2011	1	00:32	Explains how Dove changed the definition of beauty, and the mission of the Dove Brand
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZiQJnPGBoU&t=5s	Dove Today's Girl How Mentors can Build a Young Girl's Self-Esteem	10/28/2011	41	01:37	Dove encourages real women to mentor young girls to grow their self-esteem
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90v2mMbbB_M	Dove Self-Esteem Project Inspiring Girls to Embrace Their Beauty	03/13/2013	13	00:32	Shows Dove's workshops for young girls to develop Self-Esteem, encourages download of toolkit
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-pyb7Z0NZU	Dove Real Beauty Sketches Florence embraces her authentic self	04/14/2013	87	01:18	Florence explains how her life choices determined her self-esteem, and how she has

					worked to improve that self-esteem
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcStstAc1ig&t=27s	Dove Real Beauty Sketches FBI sketch artist Gil Zamora	04/14/2013	107	01:36	FBI Sketch artist Gil Zamora explains his background in forensic science, and how it helped his work in the Dove Real Beauty Sketches
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiTltdxfNjg&t=3s	Dove Real Beauty Sketches Zela Finds Confidence for her Daughter	04/14/2013	67	01:30	Zela explains her experience in the Dove Real Beauty Sketches, and her worries about her daughter losing her self-confidence
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZnXTJZFnpM&t=4s	Dove Real Beauty Sketches Melinda Discusses Supporting Other Women	04/14/2013	113	01:08	Melinda explains how support from other women transforms how women feel about themselves
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APgEJoAYh0Y&t=6s	Dove Friends Seeing The Beauty In Our Friends And Ourselves	01/02/2014	81	01:43	Women are asked to say something about their body that they love, then something

					about their friend's body. It is shown it's easier to compliment someone else
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PPjeelgG9Cg&t=2s	Dove Inner Critic Are you your own worst critic?	01/02/2014	95	01:33	Dove asked women their least favorite aspect of their body, and their reaction time was 2 seconds. However, when asked what their favorite part of their body was much longer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZcqOz8BsXQ	Dove Selfie Trailer Redefining Beauty One Photo At A Time	01/13/2014	7	00:34	Dove teases their new project about how they seek to redefine beauty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3agBWqGfRo&t=59s	Dove Selfie Redefining Beauty One Photo At A Time	01/20/2014	127	03:00	A group of high school students and mothers explain their experience with the Dove Selfie Project, and how the gallery helped these women

					develop confidence.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFkm1Hg4dTI&t=15s	Dove Selfie Redefining Beauty One Photo At A Time	01/20/2014	192	08:03	This extended video explains how high school students feel about their beauty and the effect their mothers have on their self-confidence. As well as how Dove Selfie project helped to develop confidence
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4Uq9F1DykU	Dove #BeautyIs We asked real women when they feel the most beautiful	03/18/2014	4	00:21	Women explain when they feel the most beautiful and why
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGUQPUXv1cM	Dove #BeautyIs We asked real women what beauty means to them	03/18/2014	20	00:29	Dove shares what women said beauty is to them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aD6pv6IbtP4&t=16s	Dove #BeautyIs Real Women Redefine Beauty	03/18/2014	61	01:40	Women explain how their physical features affect their

					self-confidence and how they feel about beauty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGD5Y6ysjEs&t=20s	Dove Four Generations One family shares their beauty secret	04/13/2015	61	02:40	A family explains how they've passed down a secret of using Dove products to support their skin, and how it encourages their beauty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XOa7zVqxA4&t=19s	Dove Beauty on your own terms #MyBeauty MySay	06/28/2016	896	01:30	Voiceovers of women state things that they have been told about themselves, and that they define their own beauty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EYn_NX1nYs	Dove Grace's story #MyBeauty MySay	06/28/2016	56	00:53	Grace explains how she was told her nose was too big, but that job helps to inspire her feeling beautiful, especially about her nose

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3GksS6WGgY	Dove Hannah's story #MyBeauty MySay	06/28/2016	81	00:50	Hannah explains how she was cat-called, and it made her uncomfortable. However, she started photographing men who catcalled her, showing that she wasn't afraid of them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XRXBrcdtWg	Dove Heather's story #MyBeauty MySay	06/28/2016	100	00:48	Heather used to be told she was too pretty to fight and underestimate her. However, now as a professional fighter she proves that her beauty is still within her
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqToVzu0iTc&t=0s	Dove Jessica's story #MyBeauty MySay	06/28/2016	222	00:57	Jessica was told that she was too big to be a model, however, she started her fashion blog to be a role model to others

					who are plus-sized
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5l-H3fj8Rw	Dove Rain's story #MyBeauty MySay	06/28/2016	328	00:58	Rain was told that they were too masculine, however, they became a model and encouraged the idea of people being responsible for their own definition of beauty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqOvcgzowA8	Dove Dear media: An athlete's beauty is her say #MyBeauty MySay	07/28/2016	26	00:26	Clips of athletes with descriptions based on their appearance over top of them, states that viewing only athletes' appearance doesn't see them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIJTBrnVHNk	Dove Dear media: An athlete's beauty is her say #MyBeauty MySay	08/16/2016	18	00:48	Extended version of video with clips of athletes with descriptions based on their appearance over top of them, states that viewing only

					athletes' appearance doesn't see them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDIA7PdSrgE&t=29s	Dove Beauty standards of looks are a form of bias #BeautyBias	12/2/2016	15	1:30	Dove discussed with women on the street how important physical appearance is to how they are treated/opportunities they are given
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5q-siau_zVM&t=4s	Dove Beauty standards of age are a form of bias #BeautyBias	12/2/2016	24	02:00	Dove discussed with women how their age has affected how they are treated/opportunities they are given
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ln4V4y-kI4	Dove Beauty standards of height are a form of bias #BeautyBias teaser video	12/2/2016	3	00:30	Dove discussed with women how they are perceived differently based on their height
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVloM6xKUlg	Anissa believes that beauty comes within	02/28/2017	3	00:48	Anissa explains that being oneself and using their mind and heart is

					most beautiful they can be
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qceGkq-pssA	Karen believes every woman is beautiful	02/28/2017	4	00:50	Karen explains that every person she has ever seen is beautiful, and grounding your confidence in more than your appearance can help you feel more beautiful
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMPtQvzJgml	Megan shares her journey to finding her beautiful self	02/28/2017	9	01:12	Megan shares her experience with beauty standards, and she shares that when she embraced her curves and body, she felt much happier
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laLajnk42PQ&	Vaishali says beauty is strength	02/28/2017	1	01:20	Vaishali grew up learning that external beauty is the most important, however, now as an adult she feels

					strength and mentality determines beauty
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qbD3MXdGKF0	Dove Real Beauty Productions #RealBeauty	03/30/2017	9	01:00	Shonda Rhimes explains the purpose of Real Beauty production, such as inspiring women to be themselves
https://youtu.be/m5TJ00fptTM	Dove #BeautyLooksLike @EssenceFest	7/6/2018	14	02:00	A compilation of black women explaining how they had seen beauty in connect with their race
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyBQi74qU-0	Dove + Cartoon Network "I'm Fine"	7/19/2018	65	01:00	Explains the partnership between Dove and Cartoon Network by showing how children aren't always likely to tell their parents when they have low self-esteem
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjA4Oqe1T6U	Dove Kelly Rowland	2/4/2019	8	00:15	Kelly Rowland announces her

					partnership with Dove to support the CROWN Act
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jx-jM4uTF18	Mic in Partnership with Dove Dove Presents the C.R.O.W.N Coalition	6/4/2019	5	02:00	Dove supports the CROWN Act by explaining that the act seeks to stop race-based hairstyles discrimination
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2T-Rh838GA	Dove Reverse Selfie Have #TheSelfie Talk	4/20/2021	558	01:01	Shows all of the different things that young women do to themselves based on what social media shows them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGrfhOTxy4Q	Dove As Early As Five End Race-Based Hair Discrimination	1/26/2022	598	01:00	A voiceover of a young girl discussing how she likes her hair, with continuous clips of her being discriminated against due to traditionally black hairstyles

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFUbj1RSeqI	Toxic Beauty Advice Harms Girls' Esteem Dove Self-Esteem Project	4/27/2022	73	00:15	Voiceovers of unhealthy beauty advice while a young girl looks at her phone
https://youtu.be/GAFvaz0pJSE	Detox Your Feed: The Parents' Guide Dove Self-Esteem Project	4/27/2022	27	03:50	Explains that social media promotes unrealistic beauty standards, encourages parents to discuss this toxic beauty advice with their children
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sF3iRZtkyAQ	Toxic Influence: A Dove Film Dove Self-Esteem Project	4/27/2022	501	03:48	Girls and their mom discuss their experience on social media, then an AI (Artificial Intelligence) of the mother plays stating this toxic advice before explaining that while you'd never tell your daughter that they hear it online

https://youtu.be/upnHVCS0AU	Dove Ashton's Story Together we can end appearance hate	10/4/2022	33	01:46	Ashton discusses that she feels unrepresented and wants to see more of a variety of people with things such as acne, skin tone and hair
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLP9gS_dn0	Dove Pennie's Story Together we can end appearance hate	10/4/2022	13	02:00	Pennie explains her experience with bullying in school and on social media
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fss4Z5bnYp8	Dove Morgann's Story Together we can end appearance hate	10/4/2022	20	01:48	Morgann explains her experience bullied for being black, and explains issues with colorism and representation
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAWgM4PxsyQ	Dove Jameson's Story Together we can end appearance hate	10/5/2022	5	02:16	Jameson explains their experience with gender identity and how they were perceived growing up for wanting to partake in

					'feminine' things
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfLP8jVlgro	Dove Ana's Story Together we can end appearance hate	10/7/2022	7	01:51	Ana explains how she was bullied for her weight when she moved to the US and how it hurt her self-esteem, she urges for more diversity
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5S-IIA7yAc	Dove Together we can end appearance hate	10/14/2022	63	02:33	A group of people explain various things about their physical appearance that they had been bullied for, and how/why representation is important to them
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ05C1o9utg	Dove Beauty standards of weight are a form of bias #BeautyBias	12/2/2016	94	02:00	Women explain how weight affects women's pay and how/why that is damaging to women

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEEAZKbul4w	Dove Real Beauty Sketches Mothers & Daughters	5/15/2013	126	02:58	Mothers and daughters participate in a social experiment by the mother describing themselves, and then their daughters describing themselves. The daughters' descriptions are more accurate and positive
https://youtu.be/litXW91UauE	Dove Real Beauty Sketches You're more beautiful than you think (6mins)	4/14/2013	4830	06:36	Women participate in a social experiment where both they and a stranger describe them to a sketch artist. The strangers' descriptions are more accurate and positive
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agptl1_1C40	Dove Beauty standards of hair are a form of bias #BeautyBias	12/2/2016	155	02:00	Women describe how hair can lead to discrimination in careers as well as how they perceive

					women with different hair
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ua6wADFu_xM	Dove Real Beauty The Mannequin Challenge.. with a twist!	12/12/2016	70	00:52	Women participate in the mannequin challenge of staying still near actual mannequins while the camera moves around them, however, there are multiple mannequins that have different body shapes than the traditional mannequin