

# **Fashion Magazine Covers: Diverse or Not?**

## **-- a Content Analysis of Diversity Among Women**

### **Featured in the Covers of the Top Three Fashion Magazines**

#### **in the U.S. from January 2000 to January 2017**

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## **I. Introduction and Key Literature**

Fashion magazines shed light on a society's aesthetic standards and prevailing values. By presenting selected celebrities, their covers reflect social focus and trends. With the development of globalization and social movements, diversity has been an important factor when researchers examine the covers of fashion magazines. Analysis is also frequently performed from a gender perspective, especially by studying the physical characteristics of women.

Research on gendered messages on magazine covers Analyses showed that 78% of the covers of the women's magazines contained a message regarding bodily appearance (Malkin, Wornian, & Chrisler, 1999). Research conducted by Han and Rudd examines the fashion magazine covers from other perspectives, including sex, race, age and occupation (2015). Another research investigates temporal trends in physical appearance attributes and attire worn by female cover models, analyzing body size, body shape, breast size, and skin exposure (Webb, Vinoski, Warren, Burrell, & Putz, 2017).

Analyzing the featured women in the covers of fashion magazines is meaningful since it provides useful information indicating people's values and attitudes. The image of the cover women indirectly reveal the degree of freedom, openness and diversification, which are highly focused by some non-profit organizations such as feminist NGOs.

## **II. Hypotheses**

Although US fashion magazines may claim to represent more women of diversity on their covers than ever before, previous research has shown that the world's top fashion magazines did not present as much diversity as they claimed.

According to The Fashion Spot's annual diversity report December 14th, 2016, "Of the 679 magazine covers produced this year by 48 of the world's top fashion publications, only six featured a woman over a size 16 on the cover." Also, it mentioned "Of the total 678 cover appearances this year, 482 included white cover stars and 196 included people of color." Based on these earlier findings, we found out that most of the world's fashion magazines do not present enough diversity of their cover models. Our current research will analyze the diversity for the cover figures on the top three different US fashion magazines, and investigate the following Hypothesis:

These three magazines still suffer from a lack of diversity in the women featured on its covers, such as different races, age, or body shape, without growing in step with the increasing percentage of the minorities in population of the US.

This analysis could be described and explained in terms of analytic patterns, and they could be applied on research of feminism or diversity of beauty. Our potential client can be fashion industries or some feminist NGOs.

### **III. Method**

#### A. Content Universe

Data for this content analysis are gathered from the examination of the cover figures of the three leading fashion magazine: ELLE, Cosmopolitan, and VOGUE. Each magazine was chosen based on circulation. All of these magazines are monthly published. Therefore, 12 issues of each magazine published from October 2000 - October 2017 was collected for analysis. This specific time period was defined to reflect the current diversity in fashion world.

We chose these three women's fashion magazines because these are among the top monthly fashion magazines with the highest number of 18-34-year-old women readers in the United States.

According to its media kit, the audience demographics for Cosmopolitan are women between 18 to 34 years and its readers surpass the 18 million. Cosmopolitan focuses more on entertainment, fashion, and sex related articles.

According to its website, Glamour has 9.7 million print readers and more than 11 million "unique monthly users online". Its readers are mostly 16-34-year-old women, but it spreads closely among women between 16-44 years. This fashion magazine focuses on the empowerment of women.

Elle magazine reaches more than 16 million 18-49-year-old women. This magazine

focuses on highlighting women's individuality and encouraging personal style.

### B. Sample

This study considers the pictures of the main women featured on the cover of the top 3 monthly women's fashion magazines in the United States from 2000 to 2017.

The sample is a census of all the covers of the top three women's fashion magazines in the United states. These must be monthly women fashion magazines that target 18-24-year-old women. The sample must include the cover for each month of all three magazines from 2000 to 2017, which makes a total sample of 612.

### C. Unit of Analysis

This table shows the operational definitions of each coding category and some instructions for coders.

Category	Operational Definition
Diversity	It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, gender, body shape, age, dress style, or other women images.
Size of person	The percentage of space the figure image occupy on the cover. Small suggests that the image occupies of the cover, medium suggests that the image occupies 26%—50% of the cover, large suggests that the image occupies more than 50% of the cover.

Angle of viewer	This category refers to how the viewer percepts the featured figure.
Body Type	This category is illustrated by checking the body types of the cover images and classifying them into the most similar types in the coding sheet.
Race	This category is distinguished by appearance features, including skin colors facial features.
Perceived Age	Age is perceived by different aging level showing on appearance of female images, both facially and bodily.
Dress style	This category includes references to different dress styles of the models. Demurely dressed features “every-day” dress, including walking shorts and tennis outfits, but excluding evening gowns which exposed cleavage and miniskirts. Suggestively dressed features miniskirts, “short”-shorts, “muscle”-shorts, full-length lingerie, unless “see-through” that exposed cleavage or chests, and “hiked” skirts that expose thighs. Partially clad features bathing suits, wearing under apparel and three-quarter length or shorter lingerie, and “close-ups” where the shoulders of the models were bare. Nude features unclothed models, including silhouettes, translucent under apparel and lingerie; models clothed in nothing except a towel; and “medium shots,” where the models are depicted with no clothing, except perhaps a towel draped over their shoulders. Other dress style that can not be identified can be categorized into unable to determine.

Makeup	This category includes references to different makeup styles. Heavy means makeup which is usually full of dark eye shadows, eye liners, lipsticks, and more. Natural means a light enhancement from their makeup, which are similar to the ones that already existent on the face, but adding these can still make a difference. Other refers to other makeup styles cannot be categorized.
Eye Color	This category includes a chart of different eye colors. The coder can choose the eye color that is the closest match.
Hair Style	This category includes references to straight, curled (twist or roll into coils or ringlets), wavy(set in or having waves), pulled up (evening style/up-do), pulled up (casual/ponytails), braids(a length of hair made up of three or more interlaced strands).
Visible imperfection	This category includes references to distinguish the visible imperfection, such as Blemishes, moles, freckles,or cellulite.
Visible tattoos	This category includes references to distinguish if there is any visible tattoo on the body of the cover features or not.

#### D. Coding Sheet and Examples

Coding sheet and two examples are at the end of this proposal to be presented in appropriate format.

#### IV. Time Table

	Phase	Days	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
1	Train coders	2					
2	Conduct a pilot study	3					
3	Intercoder reliability test	2					
4	Code the content	8					
5	Analyze the data	5					
6	Interpret the Results	5					

Total time: 30 work days/5 weeks

#### VI. Budget

Expense/Resource	Budget
Coders' training	\$500
Coders' salary	\$4,000
Coding software	\$500
Data analysis software	\$500
Database and academic resources	\$400
Overhead	\$300
Total	\$6,200

## VII. References

About Glamour. Glamour- Condé Nat (n.d.) Retrieved from:

<http://www.condenast.com/brands/glamour/>

Cordelia, T. (2016, December 14). Here's One Good Thing About 2016: Magazine Covers Were More Diverse Than Ever (Report). *The Fashion Spot*. Retrieved from

<http://www.thefashionspot.com/runway-news/726447-diversity-report-magazine-covers-2016/>

Elle- Hearst (n.d) Retrieved from: <https://www.hearst.com/magazines/elle>

Han, T., & Rudd, N. (2015). Images of beauty: Sex, race, age, and occupational analysis of fashion magazine covers. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 6, 47-59.

Malkin, A., Wornian, K., & Chrisler, J. (1999). Women and Weight: Gendered Messages on Magazine Covers. *Sex Roles*, 40(7), 647-655.

Webb, J., Vinoski, E., Warren-Findlow, J., Burrell, N., & Putz, D. (2017). Downward dog becomes fit body, inc.: A content analysis of 40 years of female cover images of Yoga Journal. *Body Image*, 22, 129-135.



Coder initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Case No. : \_\_\_\_\_

### **Female Figures on Fashion Magazine Covers Coding Sheet**

Each figure (on a magazine cover) should use one coding sheet

\_\_\_\_ Name of the fashion magazine

1. ELLE

2. Cosmopolitan

3. VOGUE

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Date of Publication (month / year)

\_\_\_\_ Size of person

1. Small (less than 25% of image)

2. Medium (26%—50% of image)

3. Large (over 50% of image)

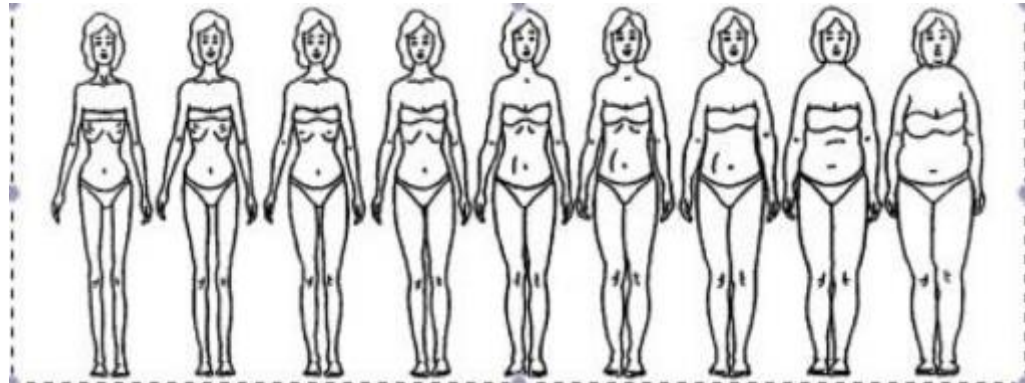
\_\_\_\_ Angle of viewer

1. Looking up

2. Looking at

3. Looking down

\_\_\_ Body Type (circle one figure)



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

\_\_\_ Races Represented

1. White
2. African American
3. Hispanic
4. Asian
5. Pacific Islander

\_\_\_ Perceived Age

1. Young (Below 30)
2. Middle aged
4. Older

\_\_\_ How is the model dressed?

1. Demurely dressed (“every-day” dress, including walking shorts and tennis

outfits, but excluding evening gowns which exposed cleavage and mini- skirts).

2. Suggestively dressed (mini-skirts, “short”-shorts, “muscle”-shorts, full- length lingerie, unless “see-through” that exposed cleavage or chests, and “hiked” skirts that expose thighs).

3. Partially clad (bathing suits, wearing under apparel and three-quarter length or shorter lingerie, and “close-ups” where the shoulders of the models were bare).

4. Nude (unclothed models, including silhouettes, translucent under apparel and lingerie; models clothed in nothing except a towel; and “medium shots,” where the models are depicted with no clothing, except perhaps a towel draped over their shoulders).

5. Unable to determine (headshot)

\_\_\_ Eye Color: choose the eye color that is the closest match.



\_\_\_ Makeup

1. Heavy (dark makeup around the eyes and/or lips)
2. Natural (light makeup - light pinks and tans)
3. Other

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the model have any visible imperfection? Blemishes, moles, freckles, cellulite

1. Yes
2. No

\_\_\_\_\_ Hair Style

- |             |                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Straight | 4. Pulled Up (evening style/up-do) |
| 2. Curled   | 5. Pulled Up (casual/ponytails)    |
| 3. Wavy     | 6. Braids                          |

\_\_\_\_\_ Does the model have any visible tattoos?

1. Yes
2. No

THE 10th ANNUAL  
SHAPE ISSUE

# VOGUE

APR

## RIHANNA

On Fame, Family  
& How She Really  
Feels About  
Her Curves

### LIVE BETTER

PUSH YOUR  
FITNESS LIMITS  
GIVE UP SUGAR  
CUT BACK  
ALCOHOL

### DUNKIN' DANDY

A *Vogue*  
Style Scribe  
Shoots Hoops  
with AMAR'E

### EAT YOURSELF HAPPY

Foods to Treat  
Depression

SECRETS BEHIND THE

## WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL BODIES

PLUS

Fashion to  
Flatter Every  
Figure

### PICK YOUR SWIMSUIT STYLE

MARY-KATE AND  
ASHLEY OLSEN

Tiny Powerhouses  
Behind The Row



Coder initials:   C  

Case No. :   201104  

### **Female Figures on Fashion Magazine Covers Coding Sheet**

Each figure (on a magazine cover) should use one coding sheet

  3   Name of the fashion magazine

1. ELLE
2. Cosmopolitan
3. VOGUE

  04   /   2011   Date of Publication (month / year)

  3   Size of person

1. Small (less than 25% of image)
2. Medium (26%—50% of image)
3. Large (over 50% of image)

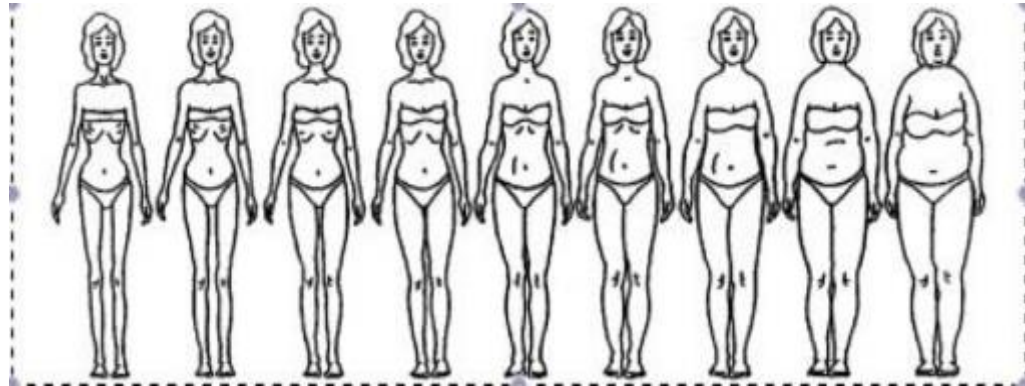
  2   Angle of viewer

1. Looking up
2. Looking at



3. Looking down

4 Body Type (circle one figure)



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

2 Races Represented

1. White

2. African American

3. Hispanic

4. Asian

5. Pacific Islander

1 Perceived Age

1. Young (Below 30)

2. Middle aged

4. Older

4 How is the model dressed?

1. Demurely dressed (“every-day” dress, including walking shorts and tennis

outfits, but excluding evening gowns which exposed cleavage and mini- skirts).

2. Suggestively dressed (mini-skirts, “short”-shorts, “muscle”-shorts, full- length lingerie, unless “see-through” that exposed cleavage or chests, and “hiked” skirts that expose thighs).

3. Partially clad (bathing suits, wearing under apparel and three-quarter length or shorter lingerie, and “close-ups” where the shoulders of the models were bare).

4. Nude (unclothed models, including silhouettes, translucent under apparel and lingerie; models clothed in nothing except a towel; and “medium shots,” where the models are depicted with no clothing, except perhaps a towel draped over their shoulders).

5. Unable to determine (headshot)

T17 Eye Color: choose the eye color that is the closest match.





1 Makeup

1. Heavy (dark makeup around the eyes and/or lips)
2. Natural (light makeup - light pinks and tans)
3. Other

2 Does the model have any visible imperfection? Blemishes, moles, freckles, cellulite

1. Yes
2. No

2 Hair Style

- |             |                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Straight | 4. Pulled Up (evening style/up-do) |
| 2. Curled   | 5. Pulled Up (casual/ponytails)    |
| 3. Wavy     | 6. Braids                          |

2 Does the model have any visible tattoos?

1. Yes
2. No

# VOGUE

AUSTRIA

*Carla  
DeLeringne*  
Crowned  
Miss Cool

The  
style  
secrets  
of Vogue  
insiders

TOM FORD  
from dapper  
to daddy

Plus  
Meet  
the  
healthy  
wealthies

Fashion  
royalty

Miranda Kerr  
Julia Nobis &  
the new models to know



Coder initials:   C  

Case No. :   201310  

### **Female Figures on Fashion Magazine Covers Coding Sheet**

Each figure (on a magazine cover) should use one coding sheet

  3   Name of the fashion magazine

1. ELLE
2. Cosmopolitan
3. VOGUE

 10  /  2013  Date of Publication (month / year)

  3   Size of person

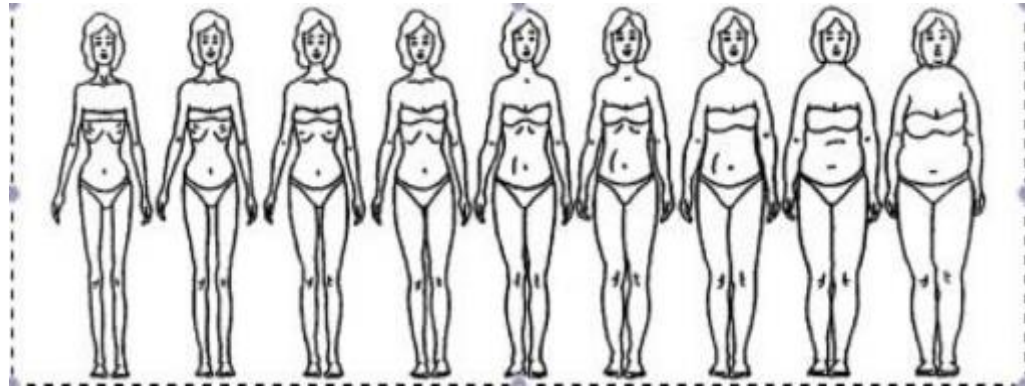
1. Small (less than 25% of image)
2. Medium (26%—50% of image)
3. Large (over 50% of image)

  2   Angle of viewer

1. Looking up
2. Looking at

3. Looking down

2 Body Type (circle one figure)



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

1 Races Represented

1. White

2. African American

3. Hispanic

4. Asian

5. Pacific Islander

1 Perceived Age

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4. Older

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3. Partially clad (bathing suits, wearing under apparel and three-quarter length or shorter lingerie, and “close-ups” where the shoulders of the models were bare).

4. Nude (unclothed models, including silhouettes, translucent under apparel and lingerie; models clothed in nothing except a towel; and “medium shots,” where the models are depicted with no clothing, except perhaps a towel draped over their shoulders).

5. Unable to determine (headshot)

A30 Eye Color: choose the eye color that is the closest match.



2 Makeup

1. Heavy (dark makeup around the eyes and/or lips)
2. Natural (light makeup - light pinks and tans)
3. Other

2 Does the model have any visible imperfection? Blemishes, moles, freckles, cellulite

1. Yes
2. No

3 Hair Style

- |             |                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Straight | 4. Pulled Up (evening style/up-do) |
| 2. Curled   | 5. Pulled Up (casual/ponytails)    |
| 3. Wavy     | 6. Braids                          |

2 Does the model have any visible tattoos?

1. Yes
2. No