

Is beauty *really* in the eye of the beholder?

Chapter 8-Eating Disorders

CLASS OBJECTIVES:

- Can body image impact the development of eating disorders?
- How can eating disorders be treated?

What is Body Image?

Body image is a person's perception of his or her own physical appearance.



When you look in the mirror what do you see?

Are you proud of what you see, or do you think, "I'm too short, I'm too fat, if only I were thinner or more muscular?"

Do I Look FAT in This??

• I'd be happy if... _____

• 75% of women ages 18-35 believe they were fat
- only 25% were medically overweight

• 45% of underweight women say that they are too fat.



Social Dimensions of Eating Disorders

• For many young women (especially) looking good is often more important than being healthy.

• Anorexia and Bulimia are the most culturally specific of all psychological disorders.

• For many young women self-worth, happiness and success are determined largely by body measurements and body fat percentage.

- This directly results in dieting and dissatisfaction with their body, in the quest to achieve "beauty".

The Search for “BEAUTY”

What is the ideal image of beauty in our culture?

If you could create the “perfect” man or woman what physical characteristics would you give them?

Magazines have the ability to make an exaggerated form of the ideal seem like the norm.



How do we see ourselves?

- ◆ This modern emphasis on “extreme thinness” is a phenomenon
 - the standards of a desirable body change much like fashion styles.
- ◆ Levine & Smolak (1996) refer to “the glorification of slenderness” in magazines and on TV, where the vast majority of females are thinner than the average American woman.
 - Overweight men are 2-3 times more common as TV characters than overweight women.

How much influence can the media really have?

- ◆ Stice et al. (1994) established a strong relationship between the amount of media exposure and symptoms of eating disorders in college women.
- ◆ Research also found that 3 minutes spent looking at a fashion magazine caused 70% of women to feel depressed, guilty and shameful.
- ◆ Also, girls who watched more than 8 hours of TV per week reported significantly greater body dissatisfaction than girls who watched less TV (Gonzalez, 1996).



The risk for developing an eating disorder is directly related to the extent in which you “buy in” to media messages and the glorification of thinness (Stice, 2001)

Are we all guilty of this behavior?

Take the body image quiz...
Answer yes or no

1. Have you avoided sports or working out because you didn't want to be seen in gym clothes?
2. Does eating even a small amount of food make you feel fat?
3. Do you worry or obsess about your body not being small, thin or good enough?
4. Are you concerned your body is not muscular or strong enough?
5. Do you avoid wearing certain clothes because they make you feel fat?
6. Do you feel badly about yourself because you don't like your body?
7. Have you ever disliked your body?
8. Do you want to change something about your body?
9. Do you compare yourself to others and "come up short?"

If you answered "Yes" to 3 or more questions, you may have a negative body image.

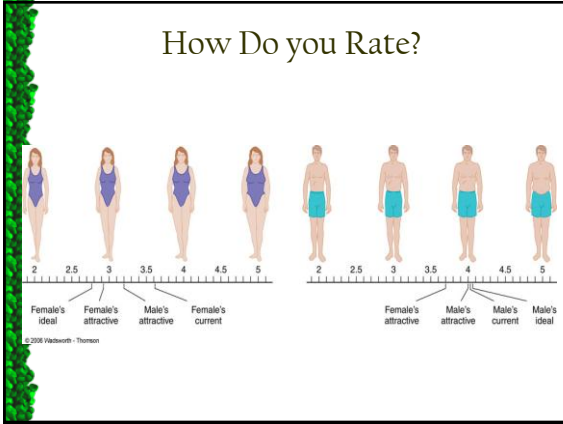
Models by Era	Average Height and Weight
1950 & 1960's	5' 8" 132 lbs
1970 & 1980's	5' 8" 117 lbs
1990's- Today	5' 10" 110 lbs.

- ✿ These weights are 13 - 19% lower than the average North American woman
- The average North American woman is 5' 4" and 140 lbs

- ✿ There has been a dramatic increase in diet and exercise among women since the 1950's
- ✿ **At what age do women start worrying about weight?**
- ✿ 42% of 1st through 4th graders expressed the desire to be thinner and 81% of ten-year-olds are "afraid of being fat."
- ✿ 80% of female high school seniors wished to lose weight-30% report actively dieting.
- Males do not display the same behaviors- fewer than 20% wished to lose weight and only 6% were dieting.

Hold on ladies, the men might be right!
(when it comes to body perception)

- ✿ Fallon and Rozin (1985) found that men rated their current size, their ideal size and the size they believed to be most attractive to women as approximately equal.
- They rated their ideal weight as heavier than the weight females thought most attractive in men.



How Do Women Self-Rate?

- ✦ Women rated their current figures as much heavier than what they judged to be the most attractive and heavier than the ideal.
- ✦ The women's judgment of the ideal female body weight was less than the weight men thought was most attractive.
- Greenberg and Portman (1996) observed that young white males preferred a thinner figure than African American males, which may contribute to a smaller number of eating disorders in African American women.

No ONE Factor can be supported

- ✦ Individuals with eating disorders may have some of the same biological vulnerabilities as people with anxiety disorders
- Causing them to be highly responsive to stressful life events.
- ✦ Research also suggests that Psychological vulnerabilities impact the development
- They have unrealistic expectations of themselves and others. Often resulting in body distortions

How can Eating Disorders be Treated?

Medications versus Psychological Treatments

Do Drugs Work?


- * Drug treatments are not very effective in the treatment of anorexia

- * Drug Treatments are effective in treating Bulimia
 - Antidepressants are most commonly prescribed
 - Prozac has been approved by the FDA for eating disorders

- * Long-term effectiveness has not been supported

Psychological Treatments

- * A combination of several psychological treatments are most effective:
 - CBT
 - Family therapy
 - Interpersonal psychotherapy



Next Class...

- * Sexual Disorders
