ANGLE

MAGAZINE

NUDES
EVERYWHERE!

THE SHAMING OF FEMALE NUDITY

OUR "BEST NEW APPS" LIST

TRENDING IN TECH:
DRONES

The double standard behind this new phenomenon

CONTENT

ISSUE 1

respect

art

history

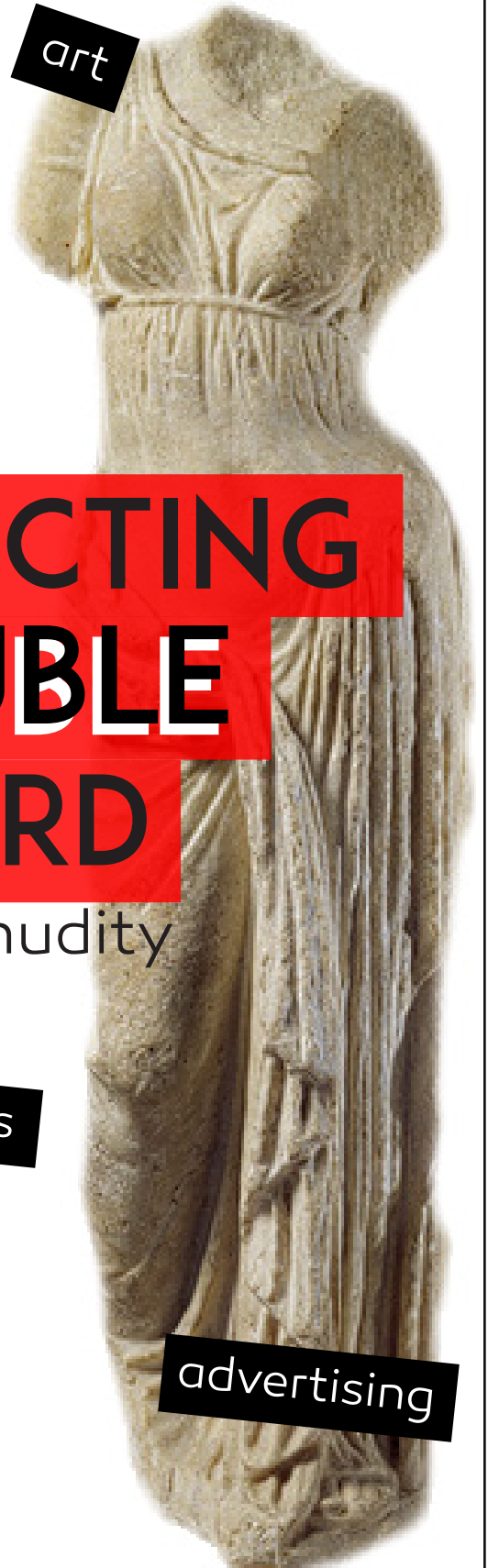# DECONSTRUCTING THE DOUBLE STANDARD

behind female nudity

nudes

media

celebrity

advertising

EDITORIAL

Media is a primary source of information for many people in North America (Bullas, 2014). Media outlets such as television, Internet, and radio are responsible for depicting stereotypes regarding gender roles and sexuality. In the feature article, I will discuss the social constructions of female nudity across different mediums and where female nudity is considered either socially acceptable or taboo. The main concern is the public shaming of women who enjoy their nudity on a private level contrasted to comparable popular culture texts, which are readily accepted. The female repression of nudity will be examined with the trend of texting "nudes". Nudes, in this situation, refer to the personal images females take of themselves partially or barely clothed.

When a female's pictures are somehow leaked to the public, she is made to feel ashamed and scrutinized by the masses. Recently, many celebrity nudes have been uncovered. The female celebrities often apologize and stress over the negative responses to the fact they were expressing their nudity in confidentiality. The same celebrities are labeled, even when equal exposure of them can be found in their professional lives for modeling or acting purposes. In all, this editorial encompasses the paradoxical views of female nudity in society.

In order to gain a complete understanding of the subject matter it is important to include perspectives of both sexes, as well as academic and popular culture sources. The key question is "Why is nudity perceived negatively in certain contexts as opposed to others? And to what effect does media influence public opinions of nudity?" To answer this, we will look at the legal setting considering women post world war two. Women had to push for the right to bear their arms and legs, and now it appears difficult to find a conservative woman in media. The history helps to explain where some of the nudity opposition stems from. Even further back, art history teaches us that a naked body can be neutral and not sexualized. Female nudity in artistic expression is a great tool for understanding how society perceives tasteful nudity.

"Why is nudity perceived negatively in certain contexts as opposed to others?"

04
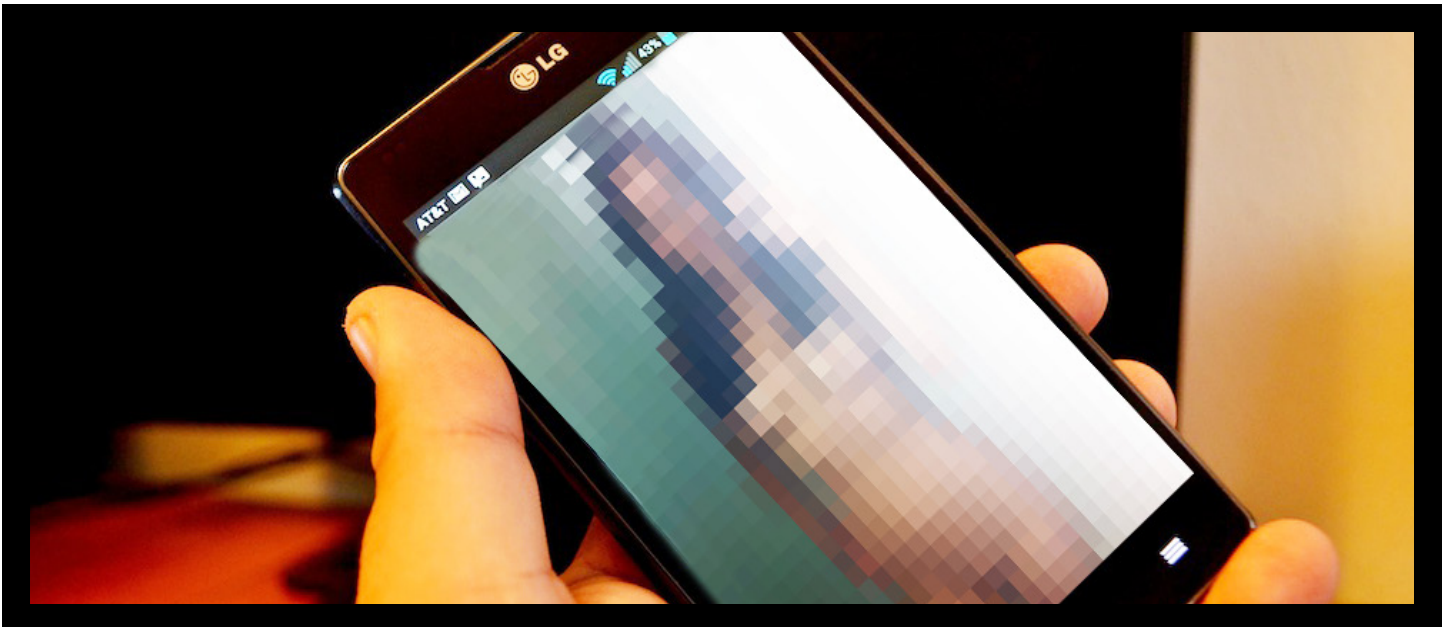
These multiple factors of nudity, art, media, history, social norms, and self-respect have not yet been examined together. The use of empirical studies will provide the solid foundation of facts to build upon. On the other hand, journal articles give a good sociological background regarding the past and present. By connecting past and current trends in a media framework, this article dissects the elements that have all contributed to the complex connotations of female nudity. It becomes clear that in an overly sexualized Western society, females are still humiliated at the individual level for sharing that same aesthetic. When the media began to use nudity for promotion and profits, it shifted female thought to view nudity as the opposite of progression (Lantham 1995). Then, it becomes essential to distinguish that there is significantly less controversy over male nudity as found in print advertising (Beetles & Harris 2005). Examples of common reactions to nudity, as found on social media, illustrate general opinions. When further examining, more factors such as "degrees of nakedness" prove to have an effect on attitudes towards nudity (Dudley 1999).

There is sufficient research on nudity in television, film and print advertisements. The majority of material concerning female nudity deals with marketing and consumer responses. The common approach in these studies is to use quantitative analysis to measure how often images of nudity are used, who is being depicted, and for what audience. Similarly, male directed magazines have been compared to female directed magazines for their use of sex appeal. Separately the information does not provide much to the topic of double standards, but in combination the connections of this relevant issue become apparent.

WHAT'S THE**BIG**DEAL?
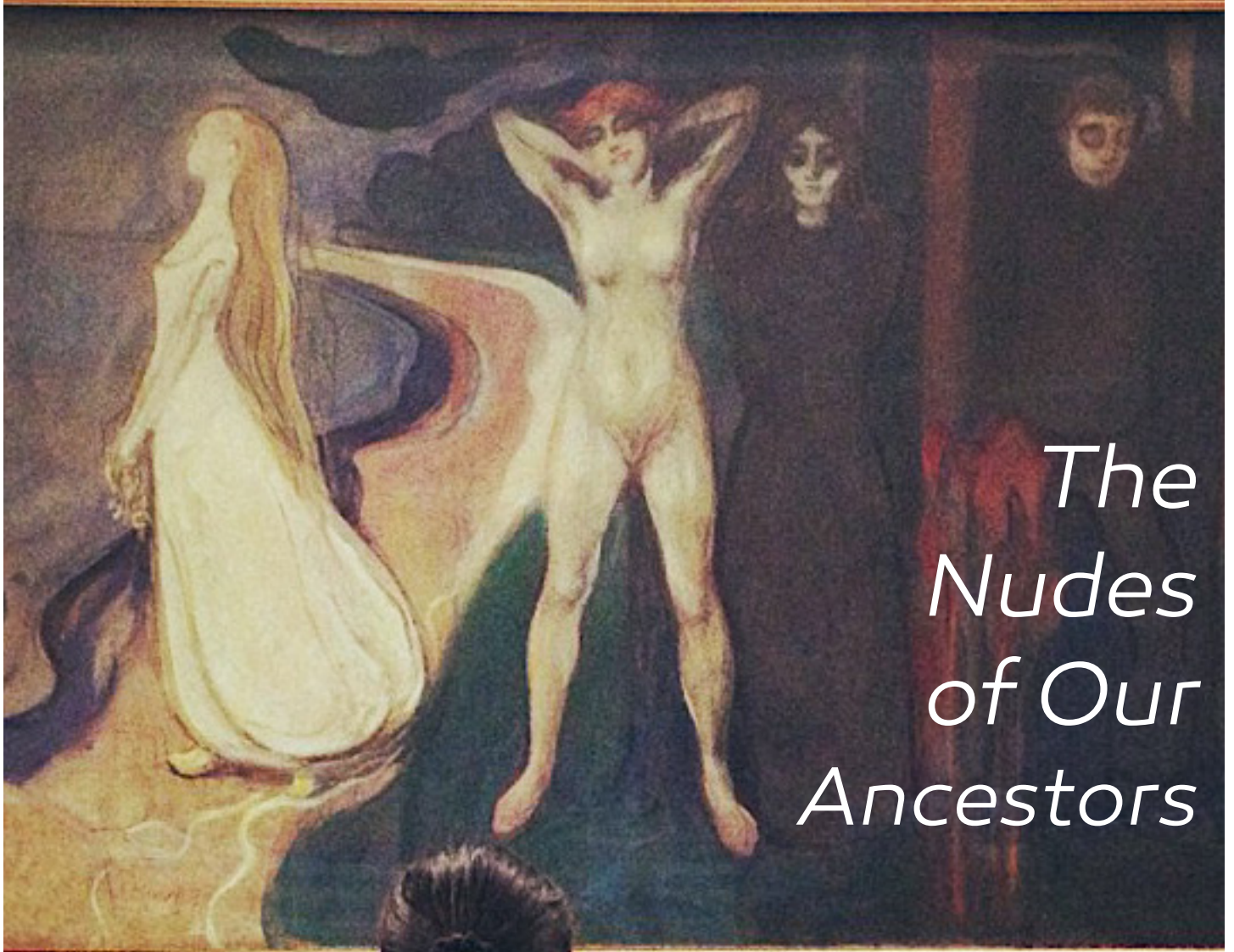
The Nudes of Our Ancestors

HISTORY OF NUDITY

"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." (Genesis 3:7)

Every human is born naked. At some point or another, an individual learns about their body and its parts. We all have bodies, so what's the big deal with nakedness? To understand the social stigmas placed on nudity we have to explore some of the first mass-produced images of nudity. It was the beginning of time, according to the Bible, when man and woman became embarrassed by their bodies as a punishment for feeding into temptation (Genesis 3:7). The Bible was the first book to be published in volumes because of Johannes Gutenberg and the revolutionary printing press (Bellis 2013).

Before Europe and the rest of the general public from around the world got their hands on the Bible, people already felt clothing was more than just warmth or protection. Religion and religious institutions can be credited as one of the major reasons nudity is seen as offensive, and this was reconfirmed when people read Genesis for themselves (Graves 2003). The Bible travelled across borders and oceans, bearing this message about clothing, "You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs (Exodus 28:42)." The several painted interpretations of the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve show them censoring their genitalia. The power of books as a medium seemed infinite, and it's influence still lasts today, as we will explore later with a research case (Dudley 1999).
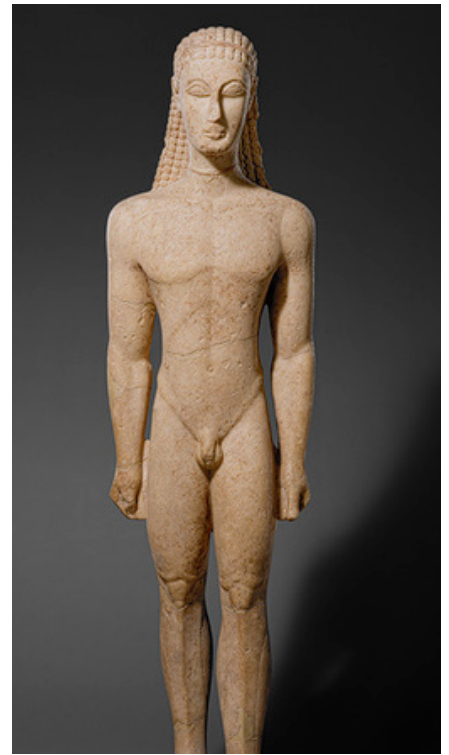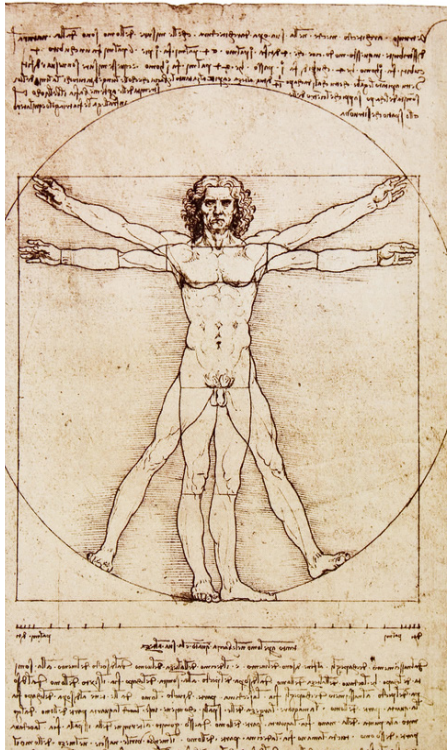
More than a few centuries

before the Bible underwent mass production, around 25000 BC the Greeks were carving out hundreds of Willendorf Venus statues (Graves 2003). The statue was created as a mini figurine of a plump woman to symbolize fertility, and it was adorned for blessings in having a child (Graves 2003). From India to Italy, majority of ancient art containing nudity was created in appreciation of the body and it's abilities, especially that of women and their ability to reproduce. It wasn't until Leonardo Da Vinci sketched out the human anatomy, that there was an entirely new lens to perceive the body, followed by the French who created implicitly erotic art and sexualized depictions of the body (Graves 2003). The views of a society towards nudity are strongly connected to the images of nudity that perpetuate the time.
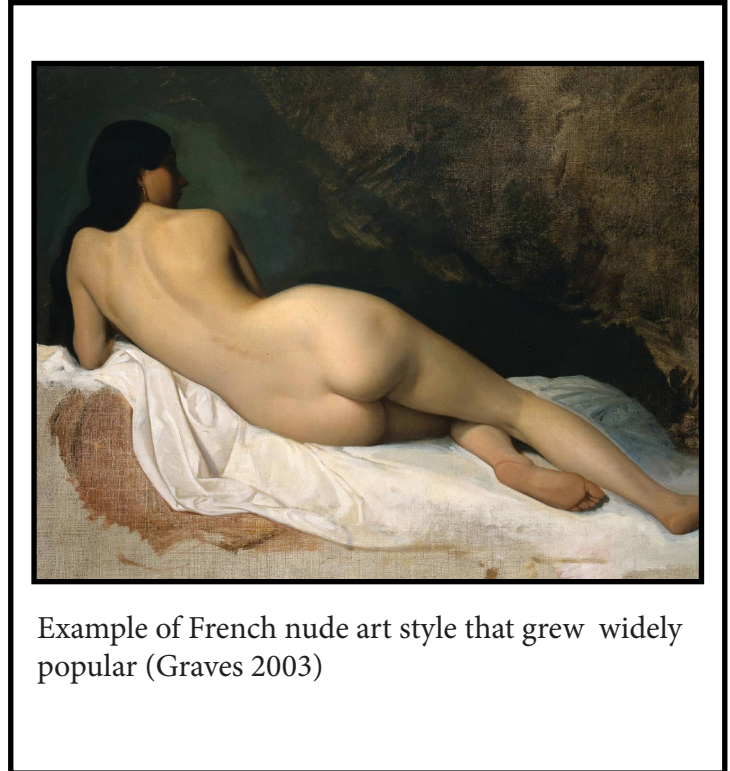
Example of French nude art style that grew widely popular (Graves 2003)

Why do we think the way we think?

In current North American culture, many of the first mediatized encounters of nakedness for individuals are through pornography or explicitly televised content (Bey 2011). These encounters happen at a young age, either intentionally or unintentionally. There is a critical study conducted by Sharif Bey (2011) on decoding 'sex scripts' during adolescence and the normalization of nudity in art education. Bey focuses on other social influences such as family and school for creating a taboo perception of female nudity. This helps to compare the influences of media and see how its messages are combated or supported by stronger ties in one's social world. The study can be used to understand context as important when perceiving nudity, through investigation of previous literature (Bey 2011).

09

Sex scripts are described as the prominent adult views of gender and sexuality. Bey (2011) recounts that his personal sex scripts also included adult views as shown on television (p.2). Naturally, sex scripts vary depending on the individual and their role models. Adolescents try to negotiate meanings at a premature age and usually are not comfortable exchanging their thoughts with their parents or teachers. Schools place restrictions on sexual education and prohibit teachers from teaching younger children about sexual differences (Bey 2011, p.4). It becomes understandable as to why children and even adults get their ideas of nudity from media because it has been taught as uncomfortable since youth. This contributes to the attitude of viewing nudity as something that is unacceptable and immoral.

Furthermore, A.J. Lantham (1995) writes about the political progress made in the 1920's with female nudity, and the opposing views of different communities. After the World War, women in America felt the need to be further liberated in society through sexual emancipation (Lantham, 1995, p.11). These ethics were embraced by media and "immortalized by popular culture" (Lantham, 1995, p.15). The goal for women was to have equal rights and equal treatment, but progress digressed when men began to capitalize on nudity.
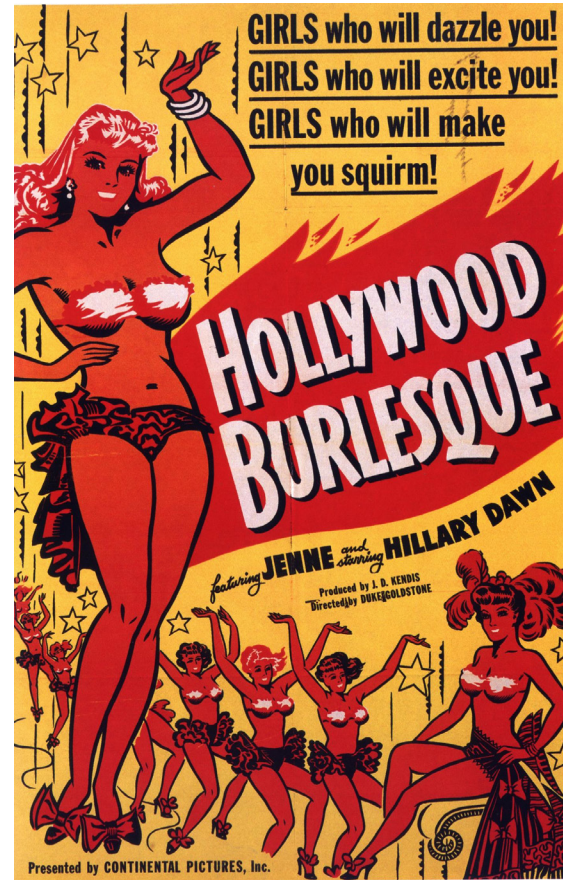
Swimwear was once heavily regulated to try and restrict female nudity. Police and seamstresses at the beach met women who opted for one-piece bathing suits. They were commissioned to make sure women's attire was decent by legal standards (Lantham, 1995, p.19). In Chicago the year of 1921, women were required to have their thighs and knees covered at all times (Lantham, 1995, p.19). Public nudity has not been a big part of Western history, which helps justify why societal values are not completely at ease with images of nudity and feel inclined to judge individuals relatedly to how the legal system once did. The legal system has patriarchic origins, and since female nudity was illegal it was also deemed wrong from a moral standpoint. Therefore, while the laws may have changed, the subtle meanings attributed to this display have not.

Lantham (1995) notes that women's nudity became a commodity; something that could earn profits. The gradual integration of nudity into theatrical plays and performances helped to legitimize nudity but also gained criticism of feminists who saw this as another form of patriarchic manipulation and exploitation (Lantham, 1995, p.24). The public denouncing of such performances by religious figures such as Rabbi Stephen A. Wise, further created contested feelings of female nudity in the public eye. This turned a positive public reform into entertainment for ticket sales.

SEX SELLS...
SORT OF.

The acceptance nudity in advertising versus real life

History reveals how we have gotten to this point, where nudity is a common marketing tool. Yet despite the multitude of nakedness we receive through magazines, television and the Internet, there is still great controversy over personal nudes. This is because advertising has instilled the idea that nudity is low culture, something of low value, which is often interchangeable with popular culture, which is something accessible to the masses. Seeing as popular culture is motivated by consumption patterns, there are fiscal benefits to using nudity for promotion.

As nudity became popular culture, the surplus of imagery caused it to lose some of its artistic value. However, it still carries the political and religious meaning that nudity is wrong and that is why it is resisted. People try to challenge those who embrace nudity, such as celebrities, because they believe there are oppressing meanings behind these displays. People who share their discomfort online or in the setting of focus groups provide evidence that there are divided feelings on the topic.

12

In a Telegram article by Mass Worchester (2014), he discusses the reactions of celebrities whose nudes have been leaked due to a computer security breach. The article gives a real insight to the upset responses of celebrities who were embarrassed and scrutinized by their fans. The star's apologies imply there is an appropriate reaction for participating in nude culture, and for the purpose of the larger subject it authenticates that personal sexuality is generally looked down upon for females. Starlet Scarlett Johansson said, "I have been truly humiliated and embarrassed" (Worchester 2014). Comparably, actor Naya Rivera was documented criticizing Kim Kardashian for her latest nude cover on Paper Magazine, saying, "I normally don't. But… you're someone's mother"(Hood 2014).

The number of appearances of female nudity in media has increased since the 1980's (Dudley, 1999, p. 6). S.C. Dudley (1999) facilitated a study on consumer attitudes towards nudity in advertising. He wanted to understand the relationship between levels of nudity and social approval. The research tried to see if advertisers could target females and males alike. He noticed in print advertising that there were only two roles in which women were represented: a housewife and a young attractive adult (Dudley, 1999, p. 27). For the purpose of this editorial, Dudley's work is a great reference for how the gender of the audience influences the perception of a model's nakedness.

Dudley showed four staged images of suntan lotion (a unisex product) to both male and female students through a slide-show presentation, mixed among other advertisements. One image was of just the suntan lotion, the other with the lotion and a woman in a one piece, another of a topless woman, and finally of a naked woman. The woman's face was covered by a sunhat to mask any sexual implications from her expression so that the participants could focus on their feelings of non-suggestive nudity. Participants ranked the naked woman most memorable, but also lowest in quality (Dudley, 1999, p. 4). The results show that using sex to sell has become associated with poor quality and casts the impression that the product cannot be sold without unnecessary imagery. People are generally unsupportive of explicit and overt nudity.

A separate study done by Beetles and Harris applied literary, feminist and art theory to their advertising research (2005). The study was centralized around six key premises: sex and sex appeal, the gaze, sexual and nonsexual use of nudity, femininity and androgyny, congruence, and authorial intent mixed with reader response. These points create a holistic approach for understanding what affects a consumer's opinion when viewing an image with nudity. Beetles and Harris (2005) made sure to use a diverse sample for their participants, seeing as most samples consists of students and heterosexual females. Heterosexual females were less inclined to appreciate female nudity because of their lack of sexual attraction to other women, which is why the sample also included homosexual women, homosexual men, and heterosexual men.
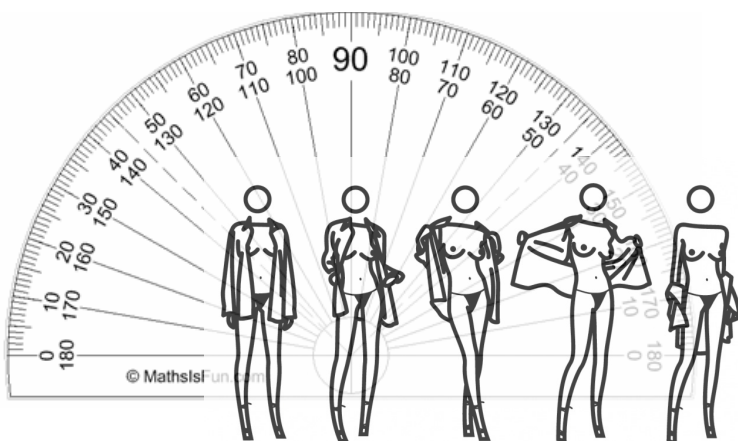
> ## " Using sex to sell has become associated with poor quality "

14

Each group had common views, which proves sexual preferences and gender roles affect views of nudity (Beetles & Harris, 2005, p. 3). The focus group consists of fifty-four respondents split into twenty-two micro groups. They spent at least a half an hour within those groups responding to advertisements with some female nudity and openly discussing how they felt about ad effectiveness and evoked emotions. While advertising effectiveness does not directly contribute to the overarching topic, it does show that 'sex sells' is not a generalization that can be applied to everyone. In terms of sex appeal and arousal, females prefer partial nudity where it is relevant to the product being sold, whereas men favor nudity if they find the woman physically attractive (Beetles & Harris, 2005, p.12).

The study shows that men judge nudity based on personal preference of the model, and are unopposed if they feel aesthetically pleased. Women do not like unnecessary nudity, often questioning the purpose and intensity of the nudity to deem it tolerable. This mindset persists when judging celebrity nudes and non-famous individuals presenting nude. Women tend to be disapproving of nudes because it easily gains male attention, often noted by the participants as stereotypical and oppressive (Beetles & Harris, 2005, p.33). Females assume that because this is how media uses nudity, that this is also the motivation behind a female individual's nudity: to gain male attention. In conclusion, the contested meanings of nudity account for the double standard in society today.

FINAL WORD

15

+

suggestions
for
further
reading

The sources used for this article were selectively chosen on the basis that they contributed to answering the problem question and used reputable works to support their evaluation or methodology. The studies of consumer attitudes towards nudity in advertising carried out different approaches but each were effective in yielding reliable results with their chosen approach.

In Dudley's 1999 examination of students he presented the advertisements as a presentation where students answered questions individually at their desks. However, he was unable to monitor their ability to discuss and share answers that could have implications for the consistency of the data. Dudley noted his apprehension regarding the fat students tend to copy and agree with each other, which could explain generalities in the results. Whereas Beetles and Harris (2005) took the extended effort of having an multiple small focus groups as opposed to a big one because they knew people were less likely to share honest opinions in front of a large crowd of strangers. This also allowed them to go in-depth with individuals following the questions and allow for a free flow of conversation, which is advantageous to authenticity of the results. He results from Bettles and Harris' work gave a strong insight to individual opinions of nudity that can not be gained through survey methodology. Together, these studies provide a strong mixture of qualitative and quantitative data.

Bey's (2011) recollection of adolescent accounts of experiencing nudity is strong but not heavily cited. It is mixed with personal understanding but framed within sociological theory making it useful for this purpose. His views in this sense may be bias to his opinions, where supporting evidence is plentiful but conflicting ideas are not. On the other hand, Latham gave a thorough story of women's rights and nudity (1995). Latham's work leaves it to the reader to draw connections between modern societies since the study was conducted twenty years ago. Also, Latham's concern with beauty pageants being the hallmark of acceptance for what the ideal lady should be like is a good topic but irrelevant because the swimwear section of beauty pageants such as Miss America is now accepted so it is of less concern in this discussion.

The article on celebrity nudes is written for Telegram Magazine. To dig past issues on privacy, and arrive at the feelings of women who were criticized for their nudity was less rewarding than hoped. The insight to the feelings of these exposed women were expressed as open displays of distress i.e. crying in public and directs quotes. There were also statements from their public relations teams. For future reading, interviews with celebrities on the topic of nudes would be ideal. The affected celebrities that give their opinion on the public's feedback to their nudity and share their notions of self-respect could contribute to a genuine understanding of how people treat nudity in relation to an individual.

Graves (2003) account of nudes in art history is an accurate summary based upon facts. Her background and credentials make her a great source for this subject. She chronologically discusses the use of nudity in art and reasoning behind its influx at certain times and decrease at other times. To better understand religious influences in art history, it would be beneficial to read Genesis in the Holy Bible. In addition, art history journals are even more detailed by including political contexts. A final approach to further the understanding of nudity and double standards would be to look at the depictions of nudity in different mediums and create a study that acquires data on people's attitudes. For reader's interested in contributing to the conversation, try to analyze mediums such as comics, cartoon shows, novels and more.

16

BY: RHEA PURI

REFERENCES
& IMAGES

Beetles, A., & Harris, L. (2005). Consumer attitudes towards female nudity in advertising: An empirical study. In Marketing theory, 4(5), 297-432. New York.

Bey, S. (2011). Naked bodies and nasty pictures: Decoding sex scripts in preadolescence, re-examining normative nudity through art education. Studies in Art Education, 52(3), 196-212.

Dudley, S. C. (1999). Consumer attitudes toward nudity in advertising. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 7(4), 89-96.

FBI investigating nude celebrity leaks. (2014, Sep 02). Telegram & Gazette

Graves, E. (2003, January 1). The nude in art - a brief history. Retrieved November 25, 2014, from http://www.dundee.ac.uk/museum/exhibitions/djc/lifestudy/graves/

Hood, N. (2014, November 24). Does nudity negate motherhood? Retrieved November 26, 2014, from http://teendiaries.net/article/does-nudity-negate-motherhood

Latham, A. J. (1995). Packaging woman: The concurrent rise of beauty pageants, public bathing, and other performances of female "nudity". Journal of Popular Culture, 29(3), 149-167.

phone image
http://phandroid.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/att-lg-optimus-g-screen.jpg

girl looking at naked painting
http://www.theweekendtraveller.com/true-beauty-bergen-norway/

eve
http://bahaisofutah.angelfire.com/doc/images/rloadblock.jpg

Marilyn
https://farm8.staticflickr.com/7412/11201314853_4400de9ff6_z.jpg

stone body
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/images/h2/h2_2006.509.jpg

robot
http://www.redicecreations.com/ul_img/23980killerrobot.jpg

farming
http://farmon.com/media/67927/alterrus.jpg

global
http://www.ihbristol.com/img/info/iStock_International_Business.jpg

uber
http://i2.cdn.turner.com/money/dam/assets/131212071236-uber-app-620xa.jpg

police body camera
http://natocouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/police-body-camera.jpg

media stats
http://www.jeffbullas.com/2013/09/20/12-awesome-social-media-facts-and-statistics-for-2013/

adam eve
http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/assets/images/images/durer-adam-eve-560.jpg

venus
http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-8YK07g1sjWs/T1AmmUeXqrI/AAAAAAAABR0/xc53L7jc9G4/s1600/venus_willen-dorf.jpg

stone man
http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/images/h2/h2_32.11.1.jpg

davinci
http://www.medicalsciencenavigator.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Vitruvian-man1.jpg

violence nude
http://uploads2.wikiart.org/images/eugene-delacroix/the-death-of-sardanapalus-1827(1).jpg

burlesque
http://www.moviepostergeek.com/hollywood-burlesque-movie-poster/

swim wear
http://www.vintagedancer.com/wp-content/uploads/June-30-1922.-Washington-policeman-Bill-Norton-swim-suits.jpg

pornhub
http://images.rapgenius.com/du3efo4t81u169zb6516x29ev.1000x375x1.jpg

girls on beach
http://l0lz.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/atthebeach5.jpg

paris hilton
http://ries.typepad.com/.shared/image.html?%2Fphotos%2Funcategorized%2F2007%2F10%2F02%2Fparishilton.jpg

jealous girl
http://cdn.gurl.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/guy-staring-main.jpg

stripper vector
http://static.freepik.com/free-photo/silhouette-of-stripper-on-a-pole_17-1120222452.jpg

miley
http://cdn2.thegloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/miley-cyrus-fashion-disaster-iheartradio.jpg

superhero
https://d1466nnw0ex81e.cloudfront.net/n_iv/600/923135.jpg

bible
https://www.biblegateway.com

printing press

http://inventors.about.com/od/gstartinventors/a/Gutenberg.htm