



Trends in Advertising Typology and Facial Cosmetic Emphasis, 1940-2010

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The beauty industry is big business (Sherrow, 2001). The U.S. cosmetics sector sales were \$36.5 billion in 2010 (Alexander, 2011). Evidence of beauty products dates to ancient periods, but today's industry grew from entrepreneurial successes in the 1920s when makeup began to be more socially acceptable (Basten, 2008; Tortora & Eubank, 2010). Women use cosmetics to enhance appearance (Sherrow, 2001). Like other facets of culturally defined beauty, use and visual appearance of cosmetics has varied over time, illustrating fashion change. Moving emphases between eyes and mouth could exemplify shifting views of sexual attractiveness (Brannon, 2010) and might fall into line with Laver's (1969) conceptualization of shifting erogenous zones as focal fashion areas. Like Laver's writing, most research into tracking or explaining fashion cycles has been dedicated to women's clothing. Multiple historic fashion cycle studies have used magazine pictures as data sources. Cosmetics advertisements in women's magazines are a well-established, common business practice that presents information about beauty fashion to consumers (Sherrow, 2001). Just as fashion has changed over time, so has advertising typology, or "types of visual advertising functions used to gain attention, create impact and stimulate interest of an audience" (Moriarty, 1989, p. 550).

Given limited scholarly research on the cosmetics business and exploration of possible cyclical patterns outside of women's clothing, as well as the cosmetics industry's common use of magazine advertising, this study investigated the existence of trends or cyclical patterns in cosmetic emphasis on the lips or eyes and advertising typology used in fashion magazines for young adult and adult female target markets. Focusing on lips and eyes was grounded in Laver's (1969) shifting zones concept and operationalized the research goal in a visibly viable way. Comparing target markets reflected the premise that differences between young and mature women were possible. Two research questions queried evidence of trends or cyclical patterns in shifting emphasis on eyes or lips (RQ1), and whether emphases were comparable for the target markets (RQ2). Two research questions sought evidence of trends in advertising typology (RQ3), and whether typologies were comparable for the target markets (RQ4).

Applying the most common fashion cycle research methodology found in the literature, first executed by Kroeber (1919), qualitative content analysis was used to categorize lip and eye products and advertising typology in 2,197 cosmetic advertisements from 316 *Mademoiselle*/*Glamour* and *Vogue* issues. These Condé Nast magazines were selected because their target markets were differentiated from the 1930s, with *Mademoiselle*'s and *Glamour*'s being younger than *Vogue*'s (Carmody, 1992; Kuczynski, 2001). *Vogue* was published throughout the study period, but *Mademoiselle* stopped in 2001, necessitating the substitution of its sister magazine, *Glamour*, from then until 2010. Purposive sampling of magazines was delineated as the March and September issues of every year. Some pre-1970 years required additional issues to compensate for those two months not providing the needed range of 10-15 advertisements per

issue. To be selected, advertisements had to be at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  page before 1970 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  page after 1970. A longer study period was enabled by allowing non-color advertisements, which could contain eye or lip products, or both. Each selected advertisement had to clearly reflect one of Moriarty's (1989) six types. In data collection three lip product categories (lipstick, gloss, liner) and four eye product categories (shadow, liner, eyebrow pencil, mascara) were counted.

Results showed limited evidence of clearly defined cycles in shifting emphasis between eyes and lips and of differences by target market. Overall, advertising for lip products trended down from substantial dominance in the 1940s, and eye products trended up to the 1980s; then the pattern reversed. There were not wide differences between *Vogue* and *Mademoiselle/Glamour* in proportion of lip and eye product advertisements. Among lip products, lipstick was the only type seen until a few examples of lip gloss in the 1960s and lip liner in the 1970s. Eye shadow and mascara were 86% of the limited number of eye advertisements in the 1940s, but the 1950s brought advertisements of all four eye products. Because color was not a measured factor, future study should consider its cyclical possibilities.

Shifts in advertising typology were found over the period, with a few types being used more early and more evenness in types used later. Identification, storytelling, and aesthetics types of advertising were observed most for adult women, and description, demonstration, and association were observed most for young adult women. Description, a literal advertising type that shows how a product looks (Moriarty, 1989), was observed the most. This may be because advertisers perceived that consumers preferred being informed about the product and how it looked, especially when new. The next three most used types were symbolic in nature, linked more to lifestyle, beauty, and narratives (Moriarty, 1989).

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