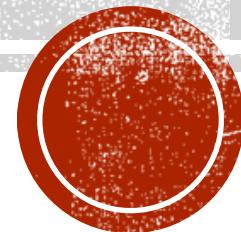


SHOWCASING THE BODY: ANALYSING INDIAN TELE-ADVERTISEMENTS

Culture and Gender Performativity



Reading an Advertisement

- Voice- What is the voice? Is it authentic/ credible
 - Audience- Who is the target audience?
- Purpose: What is the ostensible purpose/ real purpose?
- Central idea: What is the real focus or the projected focus?
 - Devices: What are the techniques or devices used?

How to Read an Ad: Learning to Read between the Lies (1983)- D.G Kehl

Gendering in Advertisements

- What is gendering?

The verb usage assigns an openness of the concept, not fixed

- What are the different ways in which ads gender us?

The Inscribed Body

Michel Thevóz, “there is no body but the painted body” (1984: 7) because the body must always be stamped with the mark of culture and society; without marking, the body cannot move within the channels of social exchange. Of course we paint the body quite literally with body paint, tattooing, makeup, and jewelry.

Embodiment

Biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling, for example, tells us that even our biological components – bone, blood, organs – are shaped by a complex relation ship between biology and the physical and social environment in which we live.

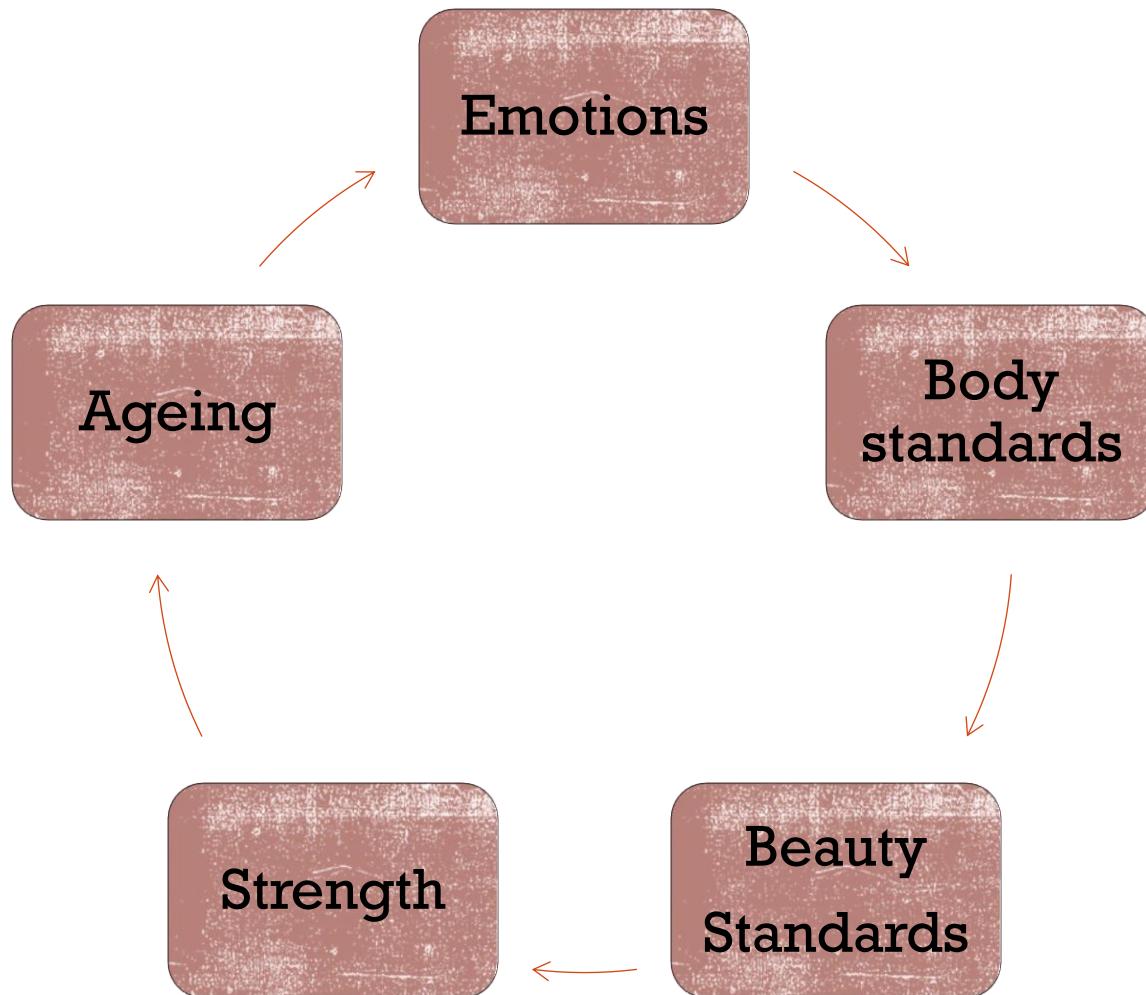
In addition, as technology changes, bodies change as well. From cosmetic surgery to organ transplantation to alternative reproductive technologies to

The Inscribed Body

Anthropologist Terence Turner coined the term “social skin” to refer to the ways in which social categories become inscribed onto the physical body. Through the social skin, the body becomes the symbolic stage on which the dramas of society are enacted (1980: 112)

Body in Advertisements

Displays of the body



Emotions in Advertisements

Attraction

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJ17BWVvIeg> (2013)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-1w2ebEqIA> (2015)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INtX-Xqm2nc> (2017)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJ80s50qx5o> (2025)

Observations

- A robotic demonstration of attraction which lacks agency.
- A certain masculine body type.

Hunger-

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLDZ-gAkbg> (2013)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yf39vt0MKug> (2014)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZMYdEYzYgU> (2024)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndK3mXAdRRI> (2024)

- Difference in display of emotions
- Assignment of masculine and feminine attributes

Emotions in Advertisements

Adventure

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2B-jgstzM> (Sprite) (2025)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPEWgORY1kk> (Thumsup) (2023)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LI-VTJsn348> (Limca) (2025)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPLFMSsJ1xw> (Pepsi) (2021)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KDZGCEhurU> (Pepsi) (2021)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=23aWGQH133U> (Pepsi)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTwZrY6KFdU> (Pepsi) (2023)

Pain

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vpe6Sc7-gqA> (2017)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koSZNnNbnDA> (2017)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOkwGO0siU8> (2021)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aWmkuvt5rQ> (2021)

Observations

- Assignment of realms, qualities
- Need for speed, thrill

Observations

- Depiction of women as multitaskers, heroes
- Identification

The Body- Cultural/ Biological

- The body is the most natural symbol for and medium of classification, and thus rules associated with controlling the body and its processes emerge as a powerful means of social control.
- Bodies are shaped in myriad ways by culture, by society, and by the experiences that are shared within a social and cultural context. In addition, bodies are shaped by history, and as such, they are always changing, as are our ideas about them.

Beauty Standards in Advertisements

Difference in beauty standards

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbCR0hiN2z8> (2022) Garnier

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wcxQiyRO4g> (2025)-Garnier Men

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/3319zj1gkbM> (Anubhav Bassi)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RgpI2Q1u26g> (2025) –Wild stone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCXQPYJCKus> (2024) –Cinthol

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DyMln2UZaaQ> (2021)- Cinthol

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bi6kxSFuGe8> (2022) Cinthol

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTYJfAis-4> (2022)- Havell's

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqIT1U5Qc2g> (2025)- Havell's

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjbJtFf3VKA> (2022) Havell's

- Difference in ingredients and targets
- Grooming standards
- Assignment of professions through external appearance
- Fragrances
- Attribution of characteristics

Ageing in Advertisements

Anti-ageing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gl0HZn2p1Bs> (2017) Pond's Age Miracle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpyFpUKhyLo> (2025)- Olay

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFR39f4Uu4M> Loreal casting crème

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrzOThQJpPQ> Godrej Expert

Agelessness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhDUBDi34Bg> (2025)- Santoor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n19aGam0ZL0> (2022)- Santoor

Ageing and
agelessness- concerns
of woman
The concept of an
ageless mother

The Beauty Project

First, the beauty project is signified as an extension of women's right to freedom and liberation. Second, beauty practices are represented as offering women self-determined choices. The consumerist discourse of emancipation – centring on rights, freedoms and choices – purportedly 'speaks to' the concerns of feminists generally, regardless of their identification with second- or third-wave feminisms. {The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change (2008) -Angela McRobbie

In addition, these meanings occur within a set of culturally constructed power relations that suggest that, for example, women must be attractive in order to be valuable. Phenomena like beauty or obesity or race are expressed in the body, it seems like they must be natural.

The Beauty Project

'Feminism', is instrumentalised, it is brought forward and claimed by Western governments, as a signal to the rest of the world that this is a key part of what freedom now means. Freedom is revitalised and brought up to-date with this faux-feminism. {The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change (2008) - Angela McRobbie

Bodies are also changing thanks to changing perceptions, fuelled by mass media, of beauty, thinness, and muscularity, with new illnesses, practices, and obsessions emerging.

Strength in Advertisements

Markers of Strength

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdkGNedh7yI> (2025) – Jindal Steel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhUH-S4k50> (2024)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jU8NgbhnVaw> (2024)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdkGNedh7yI> (2023) – Ambuja Cement

- Metaphoric display of strength
- A singular body type as the symbol of strength
- Durability, endurance as traits assigned to a body type

Body Image in Advertisements

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bp1SmVUAY60> Green tea (2025)
 - Difference in targets and standards
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcZjzzim7MY> (2024)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcNDHYUj3F0> (2025) (Lipton)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgVOAEL2q4> (2017)- Special K
 - Health and body standards
 - Relatability
 - Assignment of health and unhealthy bodies
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnVCBwsFbmq> (2014)- Special K
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Swg1O5Nvwd8> (2024)

What about the Body in Advertisements?

- Furthermore, the body is not simply the target of power; it is the source of power as well, because as Foucault demonstrated, with the multitude of regulatory agencies available throughout society, bodies begin to discipline themselves and each other.
- Mike Featherstone- draws on a Marxist critique of consumer culture and positions the body within a post-industrial world in which bodies, and the maintenance of those bodies, serve as a new vehicle for the expansion of consumer culture and capitalism, and focuses in particular on body modification in his critiques.
- Mary Douglas- The body is the most natural symbol for and medium of classification, and thus rules associated with controlling the body and its processes emerge as a powerful means of social control.

What about the Body in Advertisements?

- One paradox is that binaries inscribe (not describe, note) not balanced oppositions, but a single standard whereby the devalued term -most often that associated with the feminine or indeed with the body as such -is measured against the primary norm and found wanting. *{Feminist Theory and the Body (1999)- Janet Price and Margret Shildrick}*
- Crucially, then, construction is neither a single act nor a causal process initiated by a subject and culminating in a set of fixed effects. Construction not only takes place *in time*, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms; sex is both produced and destabilized in the course of this reiteration. *{Bodies that Matter (1993)- Judith Butler}*

thank you

