

TRIBHUWAN UNIVERSITY

Exploitation of Female Beauty in Visual Advertisement:

A Marxist - Feminist Study

A Thesis

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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**Recommendation Letter**

This is to certify that Mr. Khyam Narayan Kafley, a student of MA in English with TU Registration No. 2-6-297-368-2007, has worked on his thesis entitled “Exploitation of Female Beauty in Visual Advertisement: A Marxist - Feminist Study” under my supervision. In my opinion, this work is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in English. I, therefore recommend Mr. Kafley’s thesis be accepted for defense.

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TRIBHUWAN UNIVERSITY  
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**Approval Letter**

This is to certify that Mr. Khyam Narayan Kafley, a student of MA in English with TU Registration No. 2-6-297-368-2007, has defended his thesis entitled “Exploitation of Female Beauty in Visual Advertisement: A Marxist - Feminist Study” and has been approved by the undersigned members of the evaluation committee.

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It is a matter of great achievement for me to complete this master dissertation with a proposal in this institution. It was not so easy for me to complete this dissertation since reading theories in class and applying them in practice are quite different and confusing. However, this assignment has not only developed my creativity, skill, knowledge, thinking and writing power for composition but also has broadened my mind with confidence.

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### Abstract

Advertisements on Media affect viewers and can easily shape their perception to look at things including gender relation and women's sexuality. When women are projected in advertisement with sexual appeal that can draw the attention of audience ultimately forces to think about advertising product. This is the ideological tool of capitalism. Women have amazingly accepted capitalist hegemony by presenting themselves as a beautiful object to win the favor of onlookers. Thus, when females are stereotypically presented by Media, it does not only satisfy women's desire but also creates gender distinction which is the key assumption of feminism. Though many researchers have already proved that the image of ideal women as presented by the media today is harmful, women show their devotion towards the ideal image thinking that beauty is one of the major tools of higher self-esteem. This psychological chain creates a circle between media advertiser, female models and the actual consumers. Beauty and sexuality become the central theme behind the entire circle of capitalist feminism. Explicitly all the parts of capitalist feminism are satisfied: media advertisers are satisfied by consumers' intention to purchase; consumers are satisfied by ideal media image and female models are satisfied with their beauty as well as high self-esteem which is directly related to media advertiser. Presenting female body in advertising does not only promote commercial products but cultural fashion as well. Women from consumer class express excessive desire to become as beautiful as the media images and try to copy dressing patterns posed in ideal image. However beauty and sexuality are not free from politics because this trend leads consumers to invest larger amount of money to get the commercialized product. In this situation this paper implies quantitative and qualitative methodology to explore the impact on a micro and macro level of absorbing sexist media that presents the audience with unrealistic and objectified image of feminism. It also shows the facts that how manufacturing companies exploit common consumers and media models themselves by their hegemonic mechanism.

## Chapter-1

### The Effects of Advertisements on Women

#### Background

Female body has become the most effective means of advertisement in the field of modern corporate world, no matter what age they belong to. Socio cultural standard of female beauty is presented in almost all forms of popular media. Body image is a complicated aspect of the self concept that concerns an individual's perception and feeling about one's body and physical appearance. Image in the media today projects an unrealistic and even dangerous standard of feminine beauty that can have powerful influence on the way women view themselves. Unrealistic media image of women is so prevalent that it seems the females who fulfill such a standard are more the norms than exception, but they are badly exploited by the media owners who employ them.

When one thinks and discusses about advertisements female body simply comes in mind. Why it is so? This question still lacks satisfactory answer. Most of the advertisements we watch contain female body with direct or indirect projection of perverted sexuality of women. Media is controlled element of modern life whilst beauty and sexuality remains at the core of how we think about our identities. Media contains so many images and messages relating to men and women and their sexuality that it is highly unlikely that these ideas would have no impact on our own sense of identity and our attitudes about beauty and sexuality. "As advertisement is a controlled mass media it certainly makes impact on people's life and perception" (Adikari 2056).

Now a day's people spend several hours in front of television, read magazines, newspapers and other publication, surf internet, go to cinema and are generally unable



to avoid popular culture and advertisements.

An average woman sees 400 to 600 advertisements per day and by the time she is 17 years old, she receives over 250000 commercial messages through the media. A large number of audiences and large scale of investment is a genuine assumption that advertisements do make impact on people. Moreover numerous studies have also proven this fact. (Aryal 224)

Media has been so important in people's life that one's choice and likes and dislikes are controlled by the advertisement images. Women specially watch more of this kind of advertisements and shape their mind about something.

Traditionally there were many texts with short comments to promote the field of marketing in a pamphlet form. But nowadays visual texts such as female body work to promote commercial advertisements by exposing female beauty to be the quality of industrial production. Traditionally the female ideal image was a matter of purity, loyalty, beauty, innocence and used to be a matter of honor as a motherly figure. However, now it has become an object to convey particular message to deceive human conscience for commercial purposes.

An advertisement is a public promotion of some products or services. Generally speaking advertising is a paid promotion of goods, services, companies and ideas by an identified sponsor. Marketeer sees advertising as part of an overall promotional strategy. Other components of the promotional mix include publicity, public relations, personal selling and sales promotion. As the purpose of advertisement is to promote sale or consumption of products, commonly the question rises whether increased use of female body in the advertisement actually promotes marketing and increase consumption of such products or not? In this regard, as the

theme of male dominance and female victimization is an important issue in feminist discussion through which they aim to establish equality among the social unrest.

However the presentation of women in the media has always been exploitative. It has, throughout the years, reduced women to being nothing more than an object won. It has also created a definition of beauty that women compared themselves too. Also men compare the women in their life to what they see on television screen, on magazine, on newspaper, and on billboards. Both the self and sexuality has suffered because of the objectification, sexism, exploitation and assessment. Because of the harmful ideal put forth by Western media and accepted in large by Eastern society, there are drastic increases in artificial beauty. Numbers of beauty parlors, fitness clubs, saloons, massage centers and skin treatment centers have been opened on a large scale in every nooks and corners, more importantly most of the city of Nepal. There is a steady number of sexual assaults and an overwhelming occurrence of eating disorder among women. Yet when a woman goes at an airbrushed beauty wishing for model thighs or slender hips she fails to resist that the image she sees before her is not real. "Our understanding of the images we see seldom takes into consideration the 'beauty' we see are fabrication. They forget that these images are designed by graphic artist commissioned to change appearance and stimulate desire. (Berberick, 2) The deception in these images goes largely unnoticed which cause women down a road of destructive self comparison.

Murray and Beumont at the University of Western Sydney and Touyz at the Department of Medical Psychology, Westmead Hospital (1996) note that socio-cultural factors Such as the media continually promote particular body standard for women.

## **Marxist Feminist Approach**

Marxist feminism is a branch of feminism focused on investigating and explaining the ways in which women are oppressed through systems of capitalism and private property. According to Marxist feminists, women's liberation can only be achieved through a radical restructuring of the current capitalist economy, in which much of women's labor is uncompensated (Ferguson & Hennessy 6-9).

Since we are discussing the terms 'oppression and exploitation', these are the products of power. There is direct relationship in between power, knowledge and truth. Knowledge establishes power and power ultimately guarantees truth. However there is slight difference in between Foucaultian power and Marxist power. Since Foucaultian power is the superstructure of knowledge (not of matter), Marxist power comes from the base structure of winning means and source of production.

In his later work Foucault become even more concerned with how knowledge was put to work through discursive practices in specific institutional settings to regulate the conduct of others. He focused on the relationship between knowledge and power, and how power operated with in what he called an institutional apparatus and its technologies. This approach took as one of its key subjects of investigation the relation between knowledge power and the body in modern society. (Hall 1977)

To some people the industrial revolution only seemed to cause greater separation between the classes; while factory owners made good profits, workers sunk into poverty. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, two radical thinkers from Germany, attacked the capitalist system who believed that capitalism caused this inequality. In 1848, they wrote *The Communist Manifesto*, a 23 pages pamphlet that eventually

would trigger revolution around the world for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions. “It has substituted naked, shameless, direct brutal exploitation. The bourgeois has stripped of its hallow every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe” (Marx and Engels 1848, 2).

Either by knowledge or means of production there is no doubt that modern mass Media are in direct relation with power. More importantly they are working in favor of propagating bourgeois ideology. In this sense the models presented in Media have become the agents of capitalist system to convey a particular message. Moreover they are artistically presented with an unrealistic beauty led by sexual appeals. However, this standard of beauty is more the norms than an average standard. Which, in other words, is key to equality for social feminists? Unlike Marxism, feminist have assumed that male dominated society is their major enemy causing such social inequality, oppression and subordination. They think men are in power either, due to their physical strength or by traditional culture, ignoring the belief that power comes either from knowledge or by winning means and force of production. Whatever it is, there is no doubt that women cannot avoid oppression and exploitation exercised on them either by masculinity or by capitalism unless and until drastic change is caused in the society. They have to choose one domination over another. They cannot forget patriarchy because it is deep rooted in our culture/society; similarly they cannot harm the capitalist system because it is in hegemonic form.

The initial feminists were against Marx, which finally resulted in a renunciation of Marxist thought, was not directed. But, rather at Marx’s concept of work and his theories of the production of the surplus- value, what are we to make up feminist concern that Marx’s concept of work excludes women and prevents them from perceiving the reality of their oppression. In his analysis of the dual character of

work, Marx focuses on wage labor as the dominant mode of life-deforming activity, with the first step towards change being the abolition of private ownership of the means of production. His analysis had the effect of focusing too narrowly on the male workers' historical role as family breadwinners and on the working class at the political subject. Women's protest against this theoretical configuration seems justified, for even if we agree that such a situation is the product of capitalist society rather than the creation of Marx's analysis of it, his terms are remarkable for a certain vacuity and silence on women.

Now-a-days the public places such as the sidewall of highway roads, surrounding areas of Bus Park, apex of buildings, outer boundaries of hospitals are posted with beautiful faces, attractively exposed and superficially designed, unrealistic female images with particular slogans related to the particular advertisements along with the pages of popular newspapers and magazines. The motionless unrealistic body image forces us to listen without hearing, talks without speaking, looks us without watching, motivates without feeling and communicates without interacting. We cannot give a precise date about how and where female body was initiated for commercial purpose but there is no doubt it had stepped forward with growing massive production in industrial goods of the 19<sup>th</sup> century along with growing media culture of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Researchers

### **Impact of Sexual Appeal on Women's Health**

Harrison and Cantor (1997) note that eating disorder is threatening to the physical and mental health of many college-age women. These researchers suggest that, for women media consumption can influence and predict attitude towards body image and eating disorder. Harrison relates that the media plays a significant role in transmitting thinness-oriented norms and values to children, 24 adolescents and young

adults (41). Harrison also notes that “Historical trend and effects studies substantiate the claim that media image of thinness foster and reinforce a social climate in which thinness is considered essential to beauty, especially for woman”(42). Furthermore he states “when an advertisement stresses beauty as the criterion for attending cultural success, important aspect of an individual’s talents and how they can contribute to society are devalued” (Harrison, K and Cantor, J 40-68).

At present sexual appeal is one of the key advertising tools. However, they are often two-edged sword, since young people are so much used to such advertisements that they do not respond to them at all. And if they do so, their response is highly likely to be negative. Therefore the company is recommended to reconsider using sexual appeal as the choice of main theme in their advertising campaigns, since some products might be better represented by another. Naturally due to the increasing number of ads with sexual appeals, this issue is expected to be legally regulated through various researches. The most significant differences in attitude were found in respondents of different sexes. Female respondents believe that portrayal of women in advertising is offensive and prefer humorous ads to those with sexual connotation while males do not care. Beside female respondents, rural population and non religious respondents particularly prefer humorous commercials to those with sexual connotations. Attitudes towards whether a company’s portrayal of women in advertising reflects the general attitude of that company towards women differ between male and female respondents. While male respondents neither agree nor disagree, female respondents partly agree. There is a difference in attitude between respondents of different geographic origins and different degree of religiosity towards purchasing products introduced by advertising campaign they consider offensive, but if it offers benefits the respondents find attractive (Cicic 2005 abstract).

Since female ideal body image with its effective role over-emphasizes the quality of advertised materials and sometimes misleads us to be the subject of persuasion, the persuasive nature of the body invites us to believe whatever message they may signify. And then we are easily moved by the advertisement and spend larger amount of money to achieve the industrial goods. Even if we can go through consumer's culture to be selective according to our interest we are hegemonised by the advertisements. However, we are given freedom from limited options. Females have begun to use many artificial methods to keep themselves beautiful, slim and thin. However these methods are not free from other negative effects. Media representation has so badly affected that women are not only dissatisfied with their present body structure but also badly exploited by the promoters.

### **Research Design**

We can develop a research question that why do many manufacturing companies and service industries such as automobiles, food and beverage, fabric, household decorating companies, tourism industries, private banks, finances etc use popular image of female figures to arouse people's interest on their commercial goods instead of other means of advertisements? How exposed female body does affect both male and female audiences to be the subject of persuasion? And, how are the females used for these eye-catching advertisements exploited? How can they fight the exploitation back? Are they fighting back or being used even if they know they are exploited?

Since female body amazingly over-emphasizes the quality of advertised goods, this study, in this condition through micro study of the ideal body image in relation with commercial product, shows how it affects media lovers. It would also provide particular vision to onlookers, not to accept persuasive advertisement. It tries

to make people aware about dangerous effect of the body image not only for the onlookers but also exposures.

This research gives a proper concern about female body image that makes it worth (quality of production) by its commercial advertisement. Therefore it has appealed to those females, who expose their body for the commercial profit of the producers of goods not to be exploited through who promote by exposing the female body. It also appeals female audience to save themselves from body dissatisfaction, negative thought, level of depression and lower self-esteem. In short my research appeals the people who expose, to be rationally active and conscientious in the process of advertising the consumer products.

### **Exploitation in Body Exposure**

The exposure of female body has not only been representing the female body unrealistically to attract the consumers but also those females who expose are cheated badly and pushed back rationally and are humiliated. Even though these Media workers think that they have got good position and power in societies, who get chances to introduce themselves to the public, are paid back by the feedbacks with low attitude by public to some extent. They are often criticized and judged by social critics. However, this issue is minor to those other forms of exploitation.

Many critics have conducted their research in female body and advertisement to show the relation between body image and particular advertisement. Sandage and Fryberger conducted their research on *Advertising Theory and Practice* in 1971 and found that companies started using female body in advertising as early as in the 19<sup>th</sup> century". Although complete naked women were first shown in an advertisement in 1904 companies started using female body in their advertizing as early as in the 19<sup>th</sup> century" (Sandage and Fryberger 1971, 4). Murray and Beumont focused their study



on *Media Representation of Female Image in Women's Magazine* (2006) and noted that socio cultural factors like media continually promotes body standard for females themselves (5-10). Bessenoff in his research *Can the Media Affect Us? 'Psychology of Women'* (2006) shows that females are oriented towards thin and slim body and applied many artificial methods to keep their body slim. "Exposure to thin ideal advertisements increased body dissatisfaction, negative mood, level of dissatisfaction and lower self- esteem" (Bessenoff 1-4)". ASA Berger in his publication *Sexuality in Advertisement, In Media Research Technique* (1998, 65) discovered that advertisements also cause anxiety about our sexuality and desirability, "Sometimes advertiser also attempts to create anxiety in our mind about our sexuality and desirability, which they then solve by suggesting products or services (25). Tulsiram Paudel, a Nepali scholar of gender studies in his work *Outline of Gender Studies* (B.S.2058) points out that women are being internally passive with media representation (227-228).

In mainstream Nepalese culture behaviors like active, aggressive, rational, strong, independent, high sexuality, mechanical, competitive, dominant, factual, messy and judgmental are attached to male; whereas behaviors like passive, tolerant, emotional, weak, dependant, soft, low sexuality, artsy, cooperative, subordinate, intuitive, neat and clean and supportive attached to females. (Poudel, 228)

They have almost lost their subjectivity and media represents them as an ideal object. Dittrich in his article '*Above Face Fact on the Media*' (2004) notes that young women are under cultural Pressure to conform to thin ideal body that diminishes the self- esteem of the women who work and who watch media advertisement (cover page. online).

### **Marxist and Feminist Views on Exploitation of Body Image**

Karl Marx, in his work *Communist Manifesto* (1848) argues that our ideologies are determined by material base structure. There is direct relation between ideological super-structure and economic facts. According to Marx those groups who own the means of production thereby control the means of production and circulate a society's ideas (14-21). Through their ownership of publishing houses, newspaper and latterly the electronic media, for feminists as for Marxist, the media have figured as a major instrument of ideological domination.

In the same way, radical feminists argue that traditionally the academic and cultural fields have been dominated by males. The studies, researches, arguments and analyses in the field of gender studies have also become male oriented. Women did not get good opportunity for intellectual activities and were misrepresented in general. Even in that case in which women are represented by males the result has always been aimed at dominating and keeping the women in illusion. The traditional cultures, style, norms, value systems, have been stained with the male arrogance. Therefore women have to develop their own culture and social standard to challenge the traditional male society. In order to achieve and enjoy equality, independence, freedom and justice they have began to establish their own culture, i.e. feminism (Cixous 675). That is why women represent themselves as a beautiful sexual object in the traditional male oriented society. Realizing that beauty and sexuality are weaknesses of patriarchal society women have begun to represent themselves as ideal image in various media, which in turn, has been a medium of exploitation of them, for monetary value now.

Thus, as proletariats are exploited by capitalists, females are exploited by patriarchal society. As working classes make their unions to overthrow upper classes

domination in order to access means and source of production, in the same way women are presenting themselves as a beautiful object in Medias to circulate feminist ideologies in order to get freedom, justice, independence and equality which they assume have not been achieved under patriarchy.

Most of the modern music videos are presented with nudity. They present sexuality as main theme in such videos which are even printed in magazines for advertisements. Similarly women are most frequently presented on the ads of cosmetic, fashion and alcoholic products. These ads however force the onlookers to rethink about their products' worth. The meaning in such ads is connotative in the sense that it has compared woman's beauty with the quality of that product. More importantly the implied meaning is controlled by the media themselves.

If we go for micro study of such advertisements we find different views and attitudes among the participants. Common people, especially males, simply watch on the ads and get voyeuristic influence which ultimately forces them to accept the product worthy. The model looks on the audiences and expects the feedback with positive responses in order to win public promotions regarding her name and fame. Most importantly the Media advertiser looks on the people with business motives. The company wants to sell its products in large volume hoping to get more profits. In order to get such profits the company owners sometimes go beyond their limitation and present vulgar scenes to attack on the consumers' interests. Because of this trend the consumer may not satisfy with the products they buy but mesmerized by such advertisements. The advertising companies have made assumption about consumers based on what they do, what they wear and the whole host of their traits and behaviors. And nowhere are stereotype and assumption employed more frequently

than in the words of advertiser which trades on pulling consumers in to familiar visual situation in order to sell a product.

### **The Negative Effects of Women's Advertisements**

For years, large number of retailers has used the working mother stereotype in order to appeal to targeted market. Many advertisements depict a typical overworked mother especially cereal, supermarket or beauty ads-then offer their product up as a way to help her save time. The fact that we are so frequently and consistently presented with these stereotypical images of woman and parenthood makes it even harder to call out the companies who do it really badly. We become lost in advertisers' persuasive nature. Watching a young model dressed in silk blouse and matching underwear for a day in the office is unrealistic for most women, let alone those who juggle dressing themselves with dressing their children.

### **The Negative Effects of Women's Advertisements**

*by Robert Vaux, Demand Media*



*Seemingly positive ad images can have a negative effect on women.*

We live in an age inundated with advertising, from commercials on TV to posters on the sides of buses. We see ads every time we open a magazine or call up a Web page on the Internet. All that exposure has a significant effect, and the stakes are

often more than deciding whether or not to buy a certain product. Women, in particular, can suffer some serious psychological blows from the subtle and pervasive effects of advertising aimed at them. According to DiscoverYourDaughter.com, many ads present consequence-free scenarios with beautiful people enjoying, say, junk food or video games. Such images imply that one can live a healthy lifestyle by purchasing such products, when in fact, the opposite is often true. When coupled with other images presented to women -- thinness, youth and sexuality -- it creates a dangerous impression that such a lifestyle is attainable, when in fact it can often result in low-self esteem and damaging habits. (Robert Vaux *Demand Media, Cover Page*)

## Chapter-2

### Implicit Capitalism in the form of Explicit Feminism

#### Feminism Versus Capitalism

Helene Cixous, a radical feminist in her seminal essay 'The *Laugh of the Medusa*' (1976) has adopted a very radical front of feminist advocacy and has argued that women should write their self body and past. "Women must write herself; must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies- for the same reason, by the same law, with the same fatal goal, woman must put herself in to the text-as in to the world and in to history by her own movement" (875). She has claimed that writing is the only activity which ensures a solid platform of truth, equality, justice and opportunity for women.

However this kind of writing is not found in the text in which female body is presented but controlled by media advertiser as Karl Marx has asserted. Women in media advertisements expose their body as artfully as an ideal image but there lays always the control of media advertiser behind the whole mechanism. In this sense for feminist, as for Marxist, the media have figured as a major instrument of ideological domination. Apparently in such condition it seems that explicitly media circulates feminist ideology by presenting female's images into the text but implicitly capitalism circulates its ideologies to which Antonio Gramsci words "capitalist hegemony" (52). However, this kind of domination is not the result of material base structure but the product of capitalism through their ownership of publication houses, newspapers, magazine and latterly electronic media. Although this fact is known by socialist feminism, it underplays the significance of capitalist forms of exploitation which is therefore criticized for being neither revolutionary nor radical enough to create lasting solution to the problem of female economic and social exploitation.

Representation of female body in advertisements do not raise living standard of women in general but creates unbalance between the women of higher class and working class. Since women in media present themselves as an ideal image that do not give the key solutions to the problems of the women in working class rather advertisements in media easily affects the perception of women that creates unlimited desires which ultimately leads them to face new social problems such as body dissatisfaction, negative thought, mental disorder, drug abuse and lower self-esteem. This is one of the capitalist mechanisms that create only desires in common people to which in return common people solve by investing larger amount of money and silently adopting the product. The people who do not have access to fulfill such desires have to face those social problems as mentioned above.

However the female who expose her body publicly in the forms of advertisement as directed by media advertiser are not free from sexual exploitation. The portrayal of women in advertisement has always been a controversial subject. Today more than ever before companies use half naked beautiful young women with sexual appeal in advertisements for their products that would determine the actual consumers with purchase intention. This is how capitalism exploits and maintains its capitalist hegemony as silently as in implicit way. Whatever it may be, the common consumers satisfy themselves by the innocent adoption of the suggested product. Since female models work following the direction of advertiser they become the working class people. The beautiful young women sell their beautiful images instead of the physical labor.

Although in industrial era, as Marx asserted, people from working class or proletariats work according to the interest of the bourgeoisie and in return they are provided with very low wages which is in fact determined by capitalist themselves, in

the same way female models sell their labor in the form of beauty and sexuality. The models are made to show their beauty as the wish of the media advertiser but unlike Marx in return the models are provided with greater wages which in fact is determined by the model themselves. Whatever it is, the media models get financial success but have to be sexually exploited, because the half naked body image can fulfill repressed sexual desires on male onlookers in the form of eye- sex.

### **Feminism and its Major Branches**

Although radical feminists want women to be totally independent challenging the existing value systems of patriarchal society, women could not get total freedom from capitalist grip even though they have overcome masculine society. The feminist movement after 1967, women have accessed in various fields of world society; they seem to have access in numbers of fields such as academic, intellectual, political, gender relation, social media and so on. They have developed their own culture aside from traditional culture. They have built their own ideology which we call feminism that basically focuses on equal rights, liberty, women empowerment, and gender distinction, education for women and equal opportunities for intellectual activities. This movement successfully uplifted women's position in society as the result many women have been involved in fashion world about dressing, food and decorating themselves as a beautiful object. This movement, however, did not only empower women against male oriented society but also limited their skill in a beautiful sexual object.

Many women took fashion as their professional occupation. They have begun to over emphasize on decorating themselves by using industrial cosmetic product which successfully work to beautify them. Realizing that beauty and sexuality can be



the powerful weapons to attack patriarchal ideologies they have begun to expose their body as publicly as in mass Media in order to circulate feminist ideologies.

Such representation did not only establish women as equal human race, rather created gender distinction. They even influenced the society by dressing fashion. Women in various media give equal emphasis on dressing from which other women learn what types of dress are suitable for them to keep beautiful. To our understanding beauty is not what camera represents but what our eyes feel about an object, image and things around us. Dresses artfully give the standard of beauty that is why many women from the world society are addicted and running behind fashion. However, garments and fashion companies are owned by bourgeois class. These companies have already shaped out the consciousness of female consumers, thereby created purchase intention. This Fashion influences female audiences to invest on such dressing items which ultimately benefits capitalism.

However, exploitation by capitalism is less found in feminist consciousness. Feminism like Marxism takes a micro approach for studying society. They argue that there is inequality between genders. Feminist sociologists argue that on account of their sex women experience injustices in favor of men. For feminist, living in a patriarchal society leads to inequalities for women. This means that men have tended to determine the lives of women. However there are striking differences between feminists in their values and perspectives. These differences can be divided into four abroad tendencies. These tendencies by numbers are as follows;

1. Liberal Feminism
2. Radical Feminism
3. Socialist Feminism
4. Black Feminism

Liberal feminists seek equal rights with men and believe individuals should be treated in accordance with their talent and effort etc as opposed to characteristic of their sex. They even seek the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Radical feminist believe that the main rival of women is patriarchy, which guarantees male supremacy and subordination of women at work and in the home. They assume men inflict physical and sexual violence over women and hold the majority of material rewards. That is why for radical feminists sexual inequality is institutionalized. Socialist feminists believe social class affect the life chances of women, it is the key factor in the relationship between men and women. Due to capitalist conflict women have become reserved army of labor who are exploited for free labor at home. They believe men are socialized into exploitive role. Black feminists have developed in recent year as an attempt to highlight the importance of race and ethnicity. It is argued that a racist model exists to imply pay lip- service to anti –racist struggle rather stands as persecutor. It also argues that the racist model neglects the women from other ethnicities.

From the above point of view media cannot reflect the mirror image of society. There is no single oppressor leaving women back-warded as subordinate class of society, rather multiple factors are working together behind social inequality. Capitalism is one of the factors creating inequalities in different feminist tendencies. However, the feminists are less concerned about this fact and they have been accusing patriarchy to be the base structure for creating ideological superstructure. As for Marxist ‘matter’ is over determining factor, for feminist gender determines and controls the society.

## The Neo-Marxist Thought

Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their joint work *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception* (1944) have criticized Media for mass deception. Basically they criticize the Enlightenment movement as a failure: instead of making people free by promoting rationality and individuality, it makes them too much obsequious to the capitalist ideology (94-136). Science did not follow objective development; it served the capitalist by commercializing arts and culture. Unlike Walter Benjamin they argued that art has been industrialized by means of technological reproduction. The originality has been lost and the value of art is dissolved in illusion. The capitalist associated culture with economy and make money by unconsciously brainwashing the commoner. The common people are made to pay for their own art, which is even in debased form. They decry the culture industry for promoting illusion propagating for farfetched copies of reality. Televisions, newspapers and magazine are under the control of capitalists and despite their apparent differences and ownership; they keep the people in illusion by misrepresenting reality. Formally we are free to think, but our thoughts are already shaped by the mass media and advertisements as we think beauty is what the camera presents to us rather than what our eyes see. Truth is established by mass media. We are free to think but within the boundary set by the culture industries.

The stronger the position of the culture industry becomes, the more summarily it can deal with consumer's needs, producing then, controlling them, disciplining them and even with drawing amusement: no limits are set to cultural progress of this kind. But the tendency is imminent in the principle of the amusement itself, which is enlightened in a bourgeois sense. If the need for amusement was in large measure

the creation of industry, which used the subject as a means of recommending the work to the masses. (Adorno and Horkheimer 13)

Not only have the large scale companies but small business holders, now more than ever before use beautiful women to work in their industries as a receptionist in order to influence their clients with purchase intention. Banks, finance companies, star hotels, casinos, sales offices, automobile showrooms, and travel agencies and so on keep female receptionists to influence their clients with positive moods. A talented woman with beautiful appearance can easily get opportunities to work as a receptionist. These receptionists are even directed to dress up attractively with sexual connotation according to the interest of the owner of correspondent industry. These receptionists are thought to speak extraordinarily about their products and services. The female appearance sometimes misleads the customers about their expectation and quality of the product. However, this policy benefits the business holders by deceiving the missing favor of their products.

### **Media Encourages Young Women**

Today women has been accessed with various social media and networks such as Face book, Google Chrome, Women's magazine, Daily newspapers, Travelers magazines, Hoarding boards, Television, Fashion Magazines and so on which value dressing for beauty as female's quality. Media advertisers even advertise, looking young energetic beautiful candidate to work in their advertisements. Many young women show their interest to work in advertisements as impressed by persuasive nature of media advertisement as follows:

We are currently looking for good looking male and female for magazine, catalogues, TV commercials, poster, fashion shows and music videos. No experience necessary, no height restriction, age 15

years and above. You will be trained by our team on how to pose, to change different emotions and work on a runway or in front of the camera. You do not need to have experience but you have to be a confident person. A fashion model is required to have strong work ethic and positive attitude. Contact us: Artist Nepal Network Bagbazar Kathmandu. (Artist Nepal front web)

The above advertisement is advertised by Artist Nepal Network, a fashion magazine is looking models to work in advertising media such as magazines, catalogues, TV commercials, posters, fashion shows and music videos. The advertisement is under the control of media owner who holds means of production and circulates society's views. The owner of Artist Nepal Network belongs to upper-class therefore are so artfully and rhetorically impressing fresh models needed to work according to the owners interest. There is no limitation mentioned about experience and height but one should have positive attitude with confident. The fresh models are promised to have trained about how to expose their body with different emotion. Such media wants audience to be emotionally persuaded to which models are required to look sexually attractive. In this sense the models are being misused, therefore exploited, not only their beauty but sexuality as well. Even though the models are exploited, the message they convey works to promote capitalist ideology. Their beauty becomes a powerful weapon to influence people with false slogan about commercial products.

Many large scale companies, now-a- days, have other policy to sale their products using female beauty. They organize a grand fashion shows to invite common dealers and their agents for free entry somewhere in reputed hotels. The show however gives pleasure and makes the audience find the moment entertaining. The company even organizes half naked discos to win the favor of their dealers. In return,

dealers are persuaded to order the products produced by the organizing company. The same logic is adopted by casinos. The employment rates in casino shows that usually more than 50% workers are female and below 30 years of age. They look beautiful with attractive and posing dress, use full cosmetic products to keep them always as a beautiful object. Smiling face and attractive dress is not a matter of their attitude but a condition of their duty and responsibly. The casino management wants their clients to enjoy with beautiful appearance intoxicated with alcohol. In return, the clients are to lose their money in casino games. Here beautifully attractive women work to promote casino business.

### **Public Responses to the Body Image and Advertisements**

The following proportions are taken from internet blog-spot whose identity is clearly not mentioned here. These proportions are answers to the question “how do the media exploit women?” and some are against exploitation. The proportions in this argument however, are in favor of Marxism and some are feminism.

#### **Proposition 1**

I have to do an English oral, and I have chosen to talk about how the media exploits women. No, I am not a feminist, but I thought this was something interesting to talk about. Here is what I have so far: Today I am going to discuss why I hate women being exploited by media. No, this is not a ‘feminist issue’; it is a genuine problem that our society faces. We are bombarded with obscene images morning, noon and night. And what is the reason for this? Sex sells. It is the biggest human desire, and advertisers and media know this, which is why it is thrown in our faces. The media sets the trend within a society, it sets the moral values within a society and most importantly it controls what

a society will aspire to. The fact of the matter is, the exploitation of women in the media has become so common place, particularly in advertising, that most people fail to get outrage or even notice it any more. Not only women are exploited in advertising and pornography, but even in music videos. Think about it, would you honestly sit in front of the television, watching a music video if it weren't for some stick insect prancing about? No you wouldn't. Advertiser use female sexuality to sell their products. It seems that men are obsessed with viewing the female body as an object of their desire, but it also seems that women are too naive to do or say anything to prevent it, because, let's face it; they want you to unbutton your blouse to see a better view of your heart! This world is male dominated, and females are seen as nothing more than a thing to entertain you. (Yahoo Answers 1)

### **Proposition 2**

The Medias are market-led. They show what people want to see. The women who appear in advertisements are well paid for their appearance, and so are the women who appear in porn. If they don't want to be exploited by these media, they shouldn't appear in advert or porn. And in case you hadn't noticed, beautiful women also sell products to women. In ads aimed at women, you will also see beautiful women. Beautiful women appear on the cover of women's magazine. Beautiful women are used to sale products to men, and to women. By constantly portraying women as helpless naïve victims, with no ability to decide things for themselves, or control their own lives, do you really think you are doing women any favors? Women, as portrayed in

your speech, seem totally pathetic and feeble. Why do you think it is a good idea to talk about women in this insulting fashion? (Yahoo Answers Louise C 2)

### **Proposition 3**

If it were somehow hurting these women or they weren't getting paid for it, yeah it'd be exploitation. But they are being well compensated. Many of these hot chicks make way more money being a model dancer in a couple days than most people will make in a month. So exploitation is currently not the right term here. You just think that allowing people to broadcast sexual materials is morally wrong, which, isn't for you to judge. Society, as a whole, gets to regulate what's acceptable in your media. If you don't like it, don't watch it. If you are bitter that these good looking women are talking the spotlight and look better than you. Again, that's not anyone's problem but your own and calling these women "stick insects" leads me to think that this is probably the case. Exercise and eat healthy for a few months and see how you feel after that. (Yahoo Answers, Soul Miner 2)

### **Proposition 4**

Think about it, would you honestly sit there in front of the television, watching a music video if it weren't for some stick insect prancing about? And calling women 'stick insect' is what, fighting for women's rights? This is not a male dominated world, have you noticed that even homosexuality is being "exploited" by the media to get money? Everything/everyone that the media sees as something they can gain



money from is being “exploited” and is not just women.” (Yahoo Answers, The above Normal 3)

### **Proposition 5**

“Empowered or exploited? It is men’s weakness for beautiful or shapely women that is being exploited, or it is the women? It is women’s weakness for fashion and shopping and babies that is being exploited when they show new cars and clothes and babies? You could choose to be more objective about these topics- know that some ad agency got paid to check the demographic and appeal to them, no matter what your feeling about the demographic or how the message is formulated, and you can choose to ignore it knowing that it wasn’t really meant for you anyway. (Yahoo Answers Morchaffi 3)

### **Proposition 6**

Sure those women become sex objects, but they make themselves sex objects, not the media. If the women did not want to become sex objects they would not take the job. These women get paid very well for little work. And there is nothing more natural than nudity and sex. The only reason you take offence is because someone taught you to take offence or you are jealous, may be both. By nature, humans are not offended by human nudity or sexuality. “Today I am going to discuss why I hate women being exploited by the media” This tells me that you do in fact, take this issue personally. You can’t hate something if it doesn’t bother you. Any way the reason people are going to take this seriously is because this sort of thought police activity is very serious. Trying to oppose peoples’ sexuality because you believe it is

wrong, well, wrong. It's a free country and when someone tries to take away one of our freedoms, it's not going to be taken lightly. (Yahoo Answers Voice of Reality 4)

### **Proposition 7**

Desire creates the predator so you could build up your story with that issue. Predator=stalker, telephone abuser, unhealthy interest in the victim and seeking private knowledge about the victim. Giving men the impression that only certain types of women are desirable hence the predator. Men are brainwashed by the media sell. Everyday women are not on show but because they may look alike they get the kind of attention that is intrusive. (Yahoo Answers Jupiteress 4)

### **Proposition 8**

I am sick and tired of hearing this issue about society (alienated from the society since women are so helpless they aren't included in society apparently) exploiting women. Women have enormous consumer power and they don't have to buy these products if they don't want to. Sex does sell and women are buying. Look at all the glossy female magazines women buy. Advertisers know that if they show a picture of a plain or unattractive woman against a product, women will be less likely to purchase it. (Yahoo Answers Soul Miner 4)

If the Media have been the mirror image of society as a whole, why do not these represent the actual condition and living standard of the common people? There are many women who are under the poverty line and hardly managing basic needs of their family. The male of the family also get very low wages to feed their family. The women from such class neither protest against patriarchal ideologies nor are against

capitalism but seeking always a good way for betterment of their family. To general understanding poverty is not only the product of capitalism and patriarchy, rather multiple factors are working together in order to create social inequalities which are neither economic nor social. Since it is proved that capitalism exploits both men and women through unconscious domination, feminists are against anti feminism and sex oppression of the established power and institution. But the bourgeois feminist also have become power holders and show their oppressive nature towards the working women.

Feminism itself has been divided into two fronts; Bourgeois feminism and Marxist feminism. Bourgeois feminists are usually better but miss the point raised by Marxist feminism i.e. the question of women's right from the point of view of the basic social issue, by making it a separate question to capitalism whereas bourgeois feminism focuses their question on the basis of gender inequality and fight for liberation against male oriented society.

The Marxist women of the German movement had to carry on a war on two fronts-just as all socialist lefties have always had to combat not only the direct enemy capitalism but also those reformers who offer substitute for the social alternative. In women's field the direct enemy was of course the antifeminism and sex oppression of the established power and institution: but alongside this conflict was the associated need to counter act the influence of the bourgeois feminism. (Draper Hal and G. Lipow Anne II)

This nature of feminist ideology leads them to two social feminist classes' i.e. Marxist feminism oppressed by capitalism and bourgeois feminism oppressed by gender

distinction. Because of some common issues these feminists do not have strong class struggle as Marx has associated in his work.

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes'. (Marx and Engels/ *Bourgeois and Proletariats* 14)

However all the feminists have some common issues like equality of opportunity: self esteem, gender equality and so on. Here the women are oppressed by male ideologies therefore stands in constant opposition to fight for either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending class. Though women stand in constant opposition to one another, the class formation is not strong like bourgeois and proletariats and these classes are not the product of material base structure. Whatever it is, there has been always the unconscious domination to women by both institution; patriarchal society and capitalism as well. But women are standing less against capitalism and more against the patriarchal society, as they assume, overcoming the males society is only the key factors to ending class distinction in society.

Not only the males dominate women by their hegemony but women also become a means to cheat male publicly. Now- a -days public places such as night clubs, discos, pubs, folk-evenings are crowded with female workers. They are not

only so illusive in their dress accordingly to the interest of the owner but also sexually attractive. These female workers are taught and are trained enough to emotionally blackmail their male customers. Usually, most of the costumers are the males therefore alcohol lovers, want to enjoy both alcohol and female beauty, which leads then to a state of intoxicated mind. The costumers in such case use their money-power to get both; alcohol and female; want psychologically rape the female workers. The females also become polite enough to win the favor of male costumers in order to get more tips. The more they are emotionally presented in front of the male costumers, the more chance they get to win the tips. The owner also makes maximum utilization of female beauty to sell the product in a double price. Here costumers' focus lays on beauty and sexuality; female workers concentrate on more tips and present themselves as a beautiful sexual object, whereas the owners intends to sale their goods in a double price to get more profit. In this case the female beauty has been exploited and has become a means to cheat male costumers that ultimately benefits the company owners. In this sense female body has become the most effective means of advertisement in this modern corporate world, no matter what age they belong to. This is how it seems implicit capitalism in the form of explicit feminism.

## **Chapter-3**

### **Commercialization of Sex**

#### **Introduction**

Naturally females are polite, tolerant, beautiful, emotional, physically weak, soft, cooperative, subordinate, intuitive, neat and clean and supportive. Therefore they are forward in selling commercial products. However, the most important factor is their sex keeping them forward as successful sellers. Poul, an advertising expert, suggests that simply put sex in advertising is the use of sexuality provocative or erotic imagery (or sounds, suggestion and subliminal messages) that are specifically designed to arouse interest in a product, service or brand. Typically sex refers to beautiful women (and increasingly, handsome men) that are used to lure in a viewer, reader or listener, despite a tenuous a non- existent link to the brand being advertised (Poul main page).

Naturally and culturally women use variety of cosmetics and dresses compared to men because they have varieties and unlimited desires to be more beautiful or retain their beauty. This is the reason why female models are successful in selling varieties of cosmetic goods to women. Being women, female models can easily understand the basic desire of women because they have better understanding about women's intention. In this sense females are the best sellers to their female costumers. Similarly, males are the lover of beauty but to our understanding beauty is not what camera represents but an object image or thing that satisfies our senses. Using variety of cosmetics and dresses women keep them as beautiful objects for the men so that they could satisfy male onlookers. Placing a female model in advertising, a company can draw the attention of audiences that ultimately forces them to rethink

about the product advertised. All these factors make a conclusion that women are the best sellers not only for female consumers but for male costumers as well.

### **The Trend of Advertisements**

The contemporary society has adopted a trend of selling products and services with the help of sexually related performance and elements. In many cases women are seen as sex object such as in music videos, cosmetics and clothing ads, food products and other services. Even teens are seeing advertisements, screen to them that have sexual influence, which gives them a sense of being sexy is cool and trendy while it is natural the old saying of “sex sells” is true.

Makeup products to instant food have used the theme of sexuality to help it sell. Jewelry and a wide section of services also use some form of sex to promote their business it is a genuine idea of getting touch with the younger generation or a way to set people fixed on a product long enough to gain attention to sell it. There are consumers who are not bothered by whole selling of sex idea. While others feel it is an exploitation that is not being a positive role model for youth and young adult.

Commercialization of sex gives the false impression that you have to look a certain way in order to enjoy a product or have certain amount of money. It often gives the perception that it is acceptable to dress provocatively in order to get attention to a certain product or cervices. Many marketing policy seems to have some short of sexual appeal to increase the sales rate of their products.

You would think most companies have ideas that would not involve promoting or selling a product with a sexual appeal. Nowadays it is difficult to not look at some form of media advertising and see a product or service being promoted with an individual that looks visually appealing. It is understandable profits need to be made in order to maintain your business, but the idea of using sex to sell content has

gotten out of hand. Some companies make promotion attempts look desperate when they need to resort to doing something with a sex appeal.

For women born in the early 1980s, sex in the media has been a constant companion. Sex is everywhere, on prime time television programs, movies, and music videos. It is rare to view an hour of television and not see a suggestively dressed or undressed female, whether in a program or a commercial. Sexual imagery appears in magazine articles and advertisements. A recent issue of *Cosmopolitan* might contain hundreds of half-naked women, stories of sexual mishaps, and even instructions for the ancient art of Kama Sutra.

(Zimmerman 71)

### **Feminist Perspectives on Sex Markets**

Feminist debates over sex commerce extend to a number of social practices, including pornography, prostitution, trafficking in persons, erotic dance and performance, and the use of sexual images of women to promote products and entertainment. Feminist theorists are divided on the question of whether markets in sexually explicit materials and sexual services are generally harmful to women. Accordingly, some feminist philosophers have explored and developed arguments for restricting sex markets, while others have investigated political movements that aim to advance the rights of sex workers. Whatever it may be, social feminists are appose to this practice and argue that women shouldn't confined in erotic scene and shouldn't regard as sexual object. However radical feminists are neutral and haven't much concern about feminist erotica, rather they want to attack males using sexual weapons. Social feminists do not see women as a "sex class", nor do they see all men as the class enemy. Not all male/female relationship characterized by oppression and exploitation,



for example, technological solution to female exploitation are also viewed with suspicion; since control over development and exploitation of technology has traditional been a male preserve, as is the idea that a matriarchal society is somehow superior and preferable to a patriarchal society.

Pornography, in the feminist view, is a form of forced sex, a practice of sexual politics, an institution of gender inequality. In this perspective, pornography is not harmless fantasy or a corrupt and confused misrepresentation of an otherwise natural and healthy sexuality. Along with rape and prostitution in which it participates, pornography institutionalizes the sexuality of male supremacy, which fuses the eroticization of dominance and submission with the social construction of male and female. Gender is sexual. Pornography constitutes the meaning of that sexuality. Men treat women as who they see women as being. Pornography constructs who that is. Men's power over women means that the way men see women defines who women can be.

Pornography is that way. (C.A. Mackinnon 120)

### **The Politics of Beauty**

Female beauty is compared with an object which enforces others to rethink about suggested products. In this regard meaning of beauty is contextual and subjective, because it depends on viewer's perception. Similarly the effects of beauty depends on, in what level the beautiful image can satisfy our sense of watching and the perception we may get from that beautiful object. However in an advertisement in which female body is used for selling products suggests us beauty has a political role where the level of beauty is replaced by erotic sceneries which is valued by consumers.

Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher in his research work defines beauty in terms of judgment made by viewers based on their sense perception. In his essay *Critique of Judgment* Kant distinguishes between teleological and aesthetic judgment of beauty. According to him, teleological judgment looks for the purpose or utility of things at the practical or functional utility of things at the practical and functional level. Since we associate our judgment to some external purpose it becomes aesthetic judgment. Aesthetic judgment can be necessarily classified in to the judgment of sublime and that of beautiful. Although sublimity and beauty do not required any standard norms, parameter or any free established value: they are just the products of the satisfaction that we get from objects without seeing recourse to their use or application. The ideas of sublime stands for the satisfaction we get within our mind is excited with or wonder to find the qualities in objects which are rare and exceptional in their magnitude, structure and dimension.

Thus if we say, e.g., That is a beautiful woman, we do in fact think nothing other than that nature offers us in the woman's figure a beautiful presentation of the purposes [inherent] in the female build. For in order to think the object in this way, through a logically conditioned aesthetic judgment, we have to look beyond the mere form and toward a concept. A natural beauty is a beautiful thing; artistic beauty is a beautiful presentation of a thing. (Kant 180)

The beautiful posture of woman which is used by media advertiser to give a false impression about their products is somehow related to aesthetic beauty which is in fact rare and rare and exceptional to common consumers. Since such beauty is powerful to give people a false impression and divert peoples mind with purchase

intention. In this sense it has a political role that finally works in favor of capitalism to propagate its ideologies.

It is natural that, women should make an advertisement for the pure women's consumption goods like women's garments, cosmetics related to women, Sanitation pads, and women's magazine and so on but a woman being used to advertise automobile, alcoholic liquor, fresh juice, paints, novels are the matter of their sex sold and it is true that sex sells.

## **Chapter-4**

### **Exploitation in Hegemonic Form**

#### **Empowered or Exploited?**

Apparently the massive use of female beauty seems that women have empowered themselves to achieve progresses in social, economic, ethical and political standard. However, there is unconscious domination upon them by advertisers; the way female beauty used is directed by media advertisers for promoting their business. Sometimes the advertised standard of beauty may not be the natural beauty of particular woman; it may be promoted by modern technologies used to cheat viewer's perception about beauty and sexuality. To our understanding, beauty is not what camera represents but what satisfies our sense of watching along with attraction. More or less, the Media do not only cause false impression on viewer's perception but also exploit the models whose beauty is used for advertising. Their image is taken to satisfy human sexuality. Exposure of female body fulfills repressed desire of male onlookers, however onlookers are not free from other problems created by unrealistic media representation and body image leads women to carry objective physicality as materiality rather than subjectivity. They are, therefore, pushed to passive side of human rationality.

Beauty and sexuality has become the most powerful weapons for advertising in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, no matter about their age, race, ethnicity and cultural background. Moreover beautiful and famous women play effective role catching viewer's perception. The excessive use of women's beautiful image has already shaped viewers perception and most of the young women express their desire about beauty and fashion presented in particular advertisements. Their orientation and media presentation leads them to create passion to become similar to ideal image.

It is therefore many young women invest their time, money and creativity to make themselves just like that ideal image. That is why many young women are involved in the world of fashion as models and media workers. Apparently it seems that the models are achieving their goal according to their desire but many young girls are not free from its negative impact. Women have begun to use many artificial methods to keep themselves beautiful, slim and thin. Media has so badly shaped the mind of those women that they are not only dissatisfied with their present body structure but also badly exploited by the producers and promoters of the beauty products. The women who are dissatisfied with their present body status suffer from negative thought, eating disorder, level of depression and lower self-esteem. This is how exploitation of women works in hegemonic form.

Sometimes advertisements help build concept of what is good and what is not while making purchase. Advertisements also help to find out new products and their qualities and to generate interest in some particular items. Numbers of products come in market as per the need of society and comfort of the people. But presentation pattern of the goods, materials and items need to be associated very minutely.

Since advertisement is one of the most influenced parts of media while studying media and body image, advertisement plays a significant role in institutionalizing gender and may often exploit females through pornographic presentation. Generally contemporary advertisements represent existing society and culture. As per the study and analysis of the contemporary advertisements on magazines and television channels, there is a sort of gender discrimination.

The most common object of projecting women in ads is s beautiful attractive girls/ladies. Projecting women as housewife and caring mothers or wife is another very common pattern. Though, in most of the ads in Nepal both males and females are

projected, the projecting pattern is completely different. Men are either shown more authoritative or powerful than women or they try to impress the ladies making money or winning motorcycle as a gift. But the girls in the ads try to be beautiful and attractive, who make her hair brighter and smoother, dandruff free, cleanse their teeth to be closer to boys and so forth.

Yubaraj Sangroula and Geeta Pathak argue that women in Nepal have lower status and they are virtually second class citizens. The defective value system is another outcome of a society with an imbalance of power between its members. A patriarchal value system is at the foundation of the Nepali social structure and is jealously protected by men wishing to sustain their control over it (Sangroula and Pathak 1-17).

Promoters do not only exploit female beauty in visual advertisements but advertiser use sexuality in a number of different ways and for a variety of purposes. One of them is using advertisements to make them viewers desires of sexual relationship by using images of attractive young women and suggestive language that are design for sexual arousal. Women in general, are shown in various stages of nudity using suggestive body languages or in scenarios in which sexual activity is implied, which is often reinforced by the language used. In the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault dismisses the common view that sex has been a freely expressed unproblematic part of life, throughout history until it had been suppressed and hidden from public in the last couple of hundred years. Tracing the history of disclosures about sex, Foucault argues that sex was brought into the spotlight by Christianity in the seventeenth century, when it was decreed that all desires; not just forbidden ones, but all of them should be transform in to disclosure, in the form of Christian confession (Foucault 20).

### **Unconscious Domination or Hegemony**

Raymond Williams, a Welsh writer and Neo-Marxist thinker brought the concept of Cultural Materialism at the onset of New Historicism and argue that literature like magazine is a special type of language use. Like politics, society, economy and morality, literary media also change with the advent of capitalism. In the past literature was a marker of rhetorical excellence, learnedness, politeness and gentility. Whatever printed was said to be literature. But within capitalism, taste and sensibility become the standard of literature; these standards, however, are nothing but the ideological apparatus of the bourgeois class. Everything printed and advertised through media are not the standard of truth. High imagination and imaginative truth have become the standard of literature. For imagination is our only potential that we can freely exercise against repressive force of capitalism; it is essential to preserve the creative human faculty at the onset of organized bourgeois hegemony. The imaginative potential has been too much narrowed by mass media. Advertising in media has become exclusively fictional. The media too have been made professional by capitalism to propagate its ideology and keep its control in hegemonic form.

### **Nudity and Cultural Change**

The excessive use of female images in advertisements has brought cultural change. Since socio- cultural standard of female beauty is presented in almost all forms of popular media. Images in the Media today project an unrealistic and even dangerous standard of feminine beauty that can have powerful influence on the way women view themselves from which young girl of new generation learn how to pose themselves in public places. Young girls have learned how to be looked more beautiful attractive with various stage of nudity. Today, college girls, receptionist at bars, discos and working ladies are seen almost in half naked cloths. They are made to

look attractive with sexual appeal is the product of Media advertisement. Most of the teenage girls assume wearing shorter dress is the key to be looked beautiful and attractive for winning males' attention with particular purpose.

Archana Paneru teen girl studying at class 10 at Little Buddha Academy form Kanchanpur has published her bikini and naked photos in her facebook. No one knows why she has posted such kind of photos, maybe she want to be star model or top actress but this is not the way to be star. Before posting such kind of photos she must know about modeling, difference between sexy, glamorous photos and vulgar photos. Although Nepal police arrested Archana Paneru and her family for their pornographic activities in social network Facebook, Sunita Paneru, mother of Archana Paneru says “she will make her daughter porn star in coming future” (Main Page).

The beautiful photograph of Archana Paneru is not simply beautiful rather attractive with sexual appeal. A girl of 16 years shows her desire to become a porn star in future which is easily expressed through her photograph in *Nari* magazine. A question arises whether Nepali society easily accepts her desire to be a porn star in future. Her mind is already shaped by media and advertisements by presenting erotic scenes and advertisements. Does Nepalese society expect a girl of teenage to be a porn star in future? Whatever it may be, there is contrast in between her desire and society's expectation and she has been badly exploited by mass Media to be so beauty and notorious (See Appendix-10).

Another question arises, do the radical feminists are concern about such exploitation? They are rather more concerned about equality of sex and gender. They think there is no real evidence that women constitute a ‘sex –classes’ since it is clear that, apart from common biology, women may have no real shared interest as a class apart from men. It is difficult to see, for example what common interests are shared



by upper class and working-class women; aside from the fact that they are women?

The experiences and life chances of upper-class females are significantly different to those of working class females where the position of the former may be closer to that of men than to their working class counter parts.

In short, unrealistic media presentation has brought new social problems like sexual dissatisfaction, rape, anxiety, mental disorder, depression, and homosexuality and so on which are very difficult to cure, not only to Western society but gradually in Eastern society. Women have been fighting for the right to be equal members of society for centuries. In the past women were treated as second class citizens and didn't have the same rights as men did. Women later lead a movement to change these ways. Although some drastic changes did come about from these movements, equality wasn't fully attained. In this day and age, equality between men and women still hasn't been achieved and the media is to blame for that. For decades, the media has dominated society's views and perspectives of others. Due to recent media, it has been difficult to regulate how women are being influenced and treated by other people in society. The media influences society tremendously and subconsciously steers the way we treat and think of others. Advertisements, television shows, movies, the internet, magazines and other forms of the media have all targeted women in a very erroneous manner. Women are still being highly misrepresented and misunderstood through media all over the world.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix-I

The propositions from 2-8 were presented to 30 different respondents to show their orientation with the best answer to the question ‘How does the media exploit women?’ in which the result was as follows:

**Table**

<b>Proposition Number</b>	<b>Orientation</b>
2	9
3	2
4	5
5	2
6	6
7	2
8	4
<b>Total Proposition=7</b>	<b>Total Numbers of Respondents=30</b>

### Result

Proposition 2 becomes the best and striking answer since it presents the actual condition how women are being exploited;

“The Medias are market-led. They show what people want to see. The women who appear in advertisements are well paid for their appearance, and so are the women who appear in porn. If they don’t want to be exploited by these media, they shouldn’t appear in advert or porn. And in case you hadn’t noticed, beautiful women also sell products to women. In ads aimed at women, you will also see beautiful women. Beautiful women appear on the cover of women’s magazine. Beautiful women are used to sale products to men, and to women. By constantly portraying women as helpless naïve victims, with no ability to decide things for themselves, or control their own lives, do you really think you are doing women any favors? Women, as portrayed in your speech, seem totally pathetic and feeble. Why do you think it is a

good idea to talk about women in this insulting fashion?" (Yahoo Answers Louise C 2)

### Appendix and Comments

Here are some examples that prove how sex sells and promotes the sale of industrial products significantly.

#### Appendix-1



Image taken from "Nagarik" National Daily' newspaper, on 19 September- 2015, page-5

आश्विन ३, २०७२ /हरेक वर्ष आयोजना हुँदैआएको सवारी साधनको मेला यस वर्ष पनि भोली सम्पन्न हुदैछ। नेपाल अटोमोवाइल डिलर्स एसोसियसन (नाडा ) ले राजधानीको भृकुटीमण्डपमा आयोजना गरेको नाडा अटो शा सवारीसाधनहरूको े नेपालकै सबैभन्दा ठूलो मेला हो । नेपालमा सवारी साधनहरूको माग बढ्दै जाँदा यो शो नेपालीहरूको प्राथमिकतामा पर्ने गरेको छ । उक्त शो मा १२ वटा ब्राण्डका ४ पाइन्ट सवारी तथा ११ ब्राण्डका २ पाइन्ट सवारी साधन प्रदर्शित छन् । मेलामा सवारी साधनका साथै बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थाहरूका स्टल पनि छन्

This picture belongs to NADA show, an automobile demonstration in Nepal held on 20 September 2015 where crowds of national and international female models were invited to promote the significance of the show. Many stalls used international models; there were international models in the stall of the **Fiat Vehicle**. In the show most of the models were arranged to seat on two wheeler vehicles where some were to stand on four wheelers. According to the president of the show Shambhu Prasad Dahal “females are second face of attraction, therefore to increase the rate of production females are most important to keep in the show. Standing in front of the stall and decorated in miniskirt in addition with beautiful smiles the models have influential role in attracting their customers. One of the unique things is that the models’ dresses are matched with the color of the vehicles to which they are promoting. The color of Yamaha Pulsar is blue therefore the dress is blue to give special attraction to their visitors. However, dress is not only sufficient for the attraction rather model’s fair appearance with open thigh is the most effective means of attraction.

## Appendix-2



A woman is enjoying RUSLAN VODKA/Image taken from 'HIMALAYA TIMES TGIF' on 4<sup>th</sup> January-2015

This image shows that the beautiful woman with her attractive dress posing Ruslan Vodka, a typical Nepali vodka with the cocktail recipe. Basically males are alcohol lovers in compared to women, when someone looks at her one gets influenced and her image leads people to think about the product Ruslan Vodka. She is exposing her thigh to the customers. Since she is beautiful, her beautiful posture is used by the company in order to sell their product. However, she is highly paid for her posture and she is happy with her duty. If the image has influential role in viewer's mind about sexuality and desirability to which they solve by silently accepting the suggested product Ruslan Vodka. The women who do not use alcohol also learn how to beautify themselves, copying ideas from this image. Instead of beautiful young



woman if there were an image of an old drunken man the audience would not be convinced. There is unique combination between the background of the image and the dress of the woman. The background is red therefore her dress is red, similarly the vodka is white and therefore her open parts are shown fair and white. This is how sex is sold with industrial goods.

## Appendix-3



Nari/ 16 August-2014, Sanchita Luitel on cover page/ A Teej festival special

The photograph indicates the typical Nepali woman who is fully decorated typical Nepalese dress Saree with heavy jewelries. In the right image, model Sanchita Luitel is giving multiple messages together. Since her image is kept on the cover page of Nari magazine, she is appealing all the Nepali women with her beautiful posture to select this magazine as usefulness. Primarily she is addressing the magazine itself; secondly her image is related to Nepali women's great festival Teej in which women usually put all the jewelries, cosmetics, beautiful sarees and gather together to have

delicious meal invited by different people, especially at mother's home and relatives. In this sense, when she is on the cover page she is not solely advertising the Nari magazine but also jewelries, cosmetics, garments and different variety of foods along with the magazine. Because of this, most of the Nepali female magazine lovers get influenced with the image on cover page and easily make their desire to buy this magazine as well as the jewelries. Moreover this cover page consists of 'Papaya Sun' a kind of lotion that protects our skin from being damaged by hot sun which is said to get free with this magazine, is also a policy of selling goods. Similarly Sanchita is in red saree, red garland and red lips which are also a metaphor of Nepali women's great festival Teej their sexuality at the time. Using female model's image on the cover page the magazine has played a crucial role in selling commercial goods. Moreover, this image also proves that women are forward in selling goods not only male costumers but female consumers as well.

## Appendix-4



Nari /16 August-2014 page gatefold-2

The image is purely advertising 'Papaya Sun' a kind of body lotion. In the photograph a woman is sitting on a wooden box. Her dressing pattern is really impressive. Her hands, down part of her knees and upper chest are bare that could be damaged by the heating sun but she is free of this tension because of the lotion 'Papaya Sun'. Papaya is usually yellow in color, so the lotion is. Beside her we can notice a quarter part of the round sun is the metaphor of heating sun. Over the lady we can see written "Sun is Joy" that gives special focus to the lotion tube of sun. However, the woman is using sunglasses to protect her eyes from effective rays of sun. Whatever it is, there is no doubt that she is beautiful enough to appeal her audiences to buy this cosmetic to care their skin by preventing ruthlessness of the sun. A beautiful woman is inviting other women to use this cosmetic product for fair and white skin. The letters in devanagiri are small therefore less important than the body image itself.

## Appendix-5



Published on 18-09-2015 on weekly Nepali magazine 'Saptahik'

"In an interview to a weekly magazine 'Saptahik' Nepali beautiful model Smita Thapa had told that she longed for a man rather than a husband. In the interview in the sister magazine of Kantipur publication, model Smita Thapa told that she uses men as toys and only for her sexual needs. Nepali young model talked about her decade- long sex life in the influence of whiskey.

The statement of this Nepali model Smita Thapa has been an inspiration for the Nepali popular writer Rajendra to write a novel on sex and glamour. After the approval from model Smita Thapa, the novel is all set to be titled 'Khelauna'. The

novel 'Khelauna' has been published. Nepali glamour model Smita Thapa had denied that she was a call girl. Some people even called the interview of Smita Thapa as an advertisement of 'her business'. Saptahik Model Smita Thapa is one of the most famous and beautiful Nepali model. Smita Thapa's interview in Saptahik Magazine.

This picture is taken from cover page of recent Nepali novel 'Smita' where a real life story is presented. Smita is the real name of a Nepali model as the novel is. In the story model Smita is looking for a man not for husband shows that women are also deceiving men. Her opinions can be questioned by a male society and feminists themselves. Do the men want to be only man instead of husband? Or do they, all sorts of feminists really want this deception to their counterpart males? Is it the result of paradigm shift in feminism after the feminist movement of 1967? Whatever it may be, there is no doubt she wants to be independent challenging male dependency but she had to scarify her beauty and sexuality which is in fact opposed by socialist feminism. However, the photograph is apt in the novel which matches the inside story. Moreover, there is no doubt that the image is really attractive in addition to sexual appeal. She is wearing black brassiere and small red piece of garment on her heap. The rest of the parts are open enough to be looked sexy that wins men's eyes to think about the novel and purchase it.

## Appendix-6

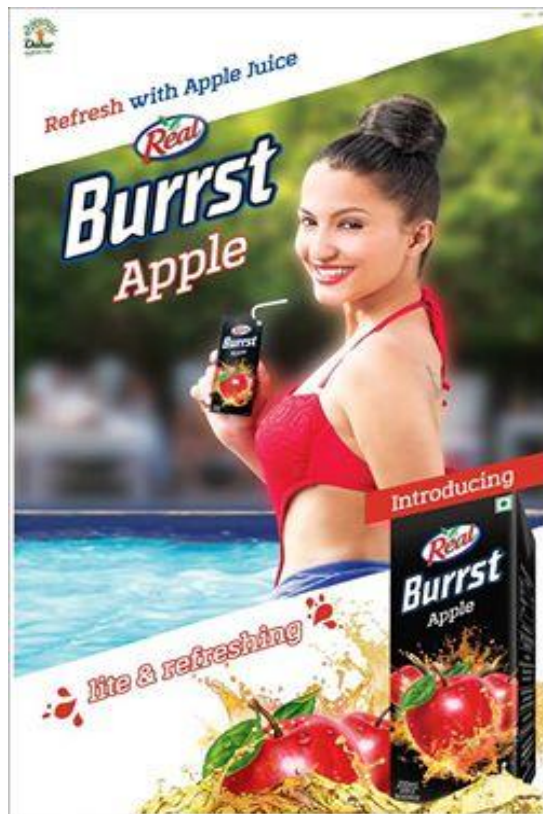


Image taken from Nagarik Daily, 23  
September-2015



Image taken from a hoarding board  
attached at BP Trade, a provision store  
at Damside Pokhara

Both the images above are the advertisement of Real Burrst (a kind of fresh juice) in which Gaurika Singh; a national swimming award winner conveys a message that the burst juice gives us physical energy. Gaurika, in a swimming costume holding the product 'Real Burrst', is appropriate for this advertisement; primarily as she is national swimming- award -winner and she is famous and known to all. She has great prestige therefore people honor her. Whatever great people say, or do it seems to be believed by common people. Secondly she is female and beautiful as well. She looks attractive in her swimming costume that emotionally appeals her audiences to select Burrst juice to drink which in return gives lots of energy in order to increase our

physical strength. A question rises why doesn't the juice company use ugly ordinary women instead of Gaurika or male models to advertise this product? It is because fame, sex and appearance matter in selling goods. So it is true that sex sells.

Moreover, the left image sexually appeals its audiences which ultimately create purchase intention in customers mind. Both the images have swimming background; both pictures are shown in swimming costumes therefore looks attractive. Both the faces look smiling which meets the expectation of audiences that is enough to persuade its consumers with purchase intention.



**Appendix-7**

Khukuri rum is readily available in every nook and corner of Nepal. It is also exported to Japan, Korea, Hongkong, Italy, USA, Dubai, Australia, etc.

This picture has unique background in the sense that it presents a crowd of ‘Khukuri Rum’ a Nepali typical liquor arranged in a systematic way. Behind that other branded liquor are decorated. The most significant thing is that a Mongolian faced young girl is holding a bottle of Khukuri Rum. The background image shows that it must be a place of alcoholic dealers shop. Here our concern is that men are alcohol lovers, despite this fact the rum company has used a teenage girl to play a role of a promoters who does not seem to be alcohol user. Very few women are found as alcohol users but companies use females to be the speakers about the quality of their product to win consumers favor and select the suggested product.

## Appendix-8

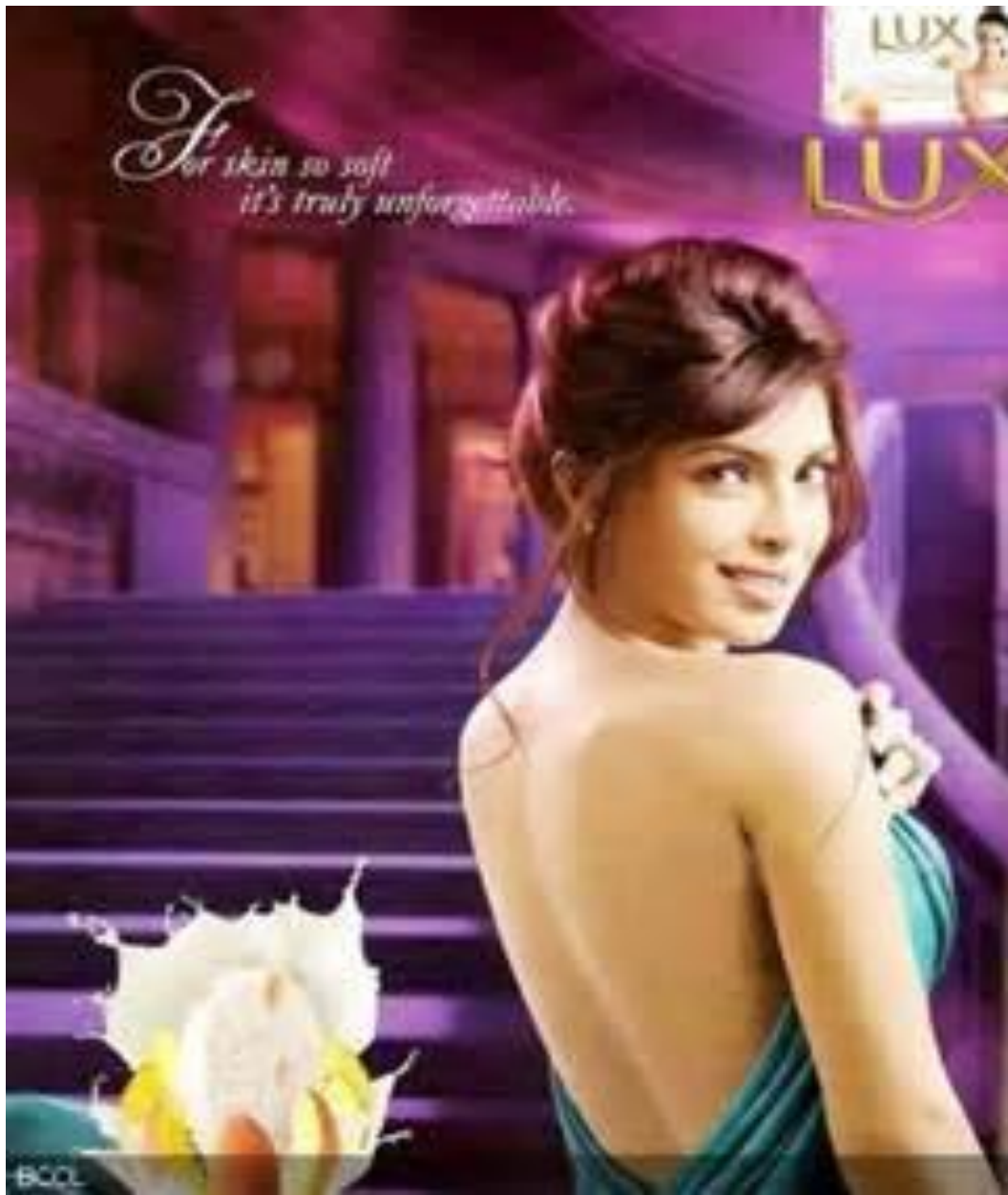


Sahana Bajracharya advertised on 19 December-2014, Himalayan Times page-7

This image is an advertisement of 'Pasupati Paints', a Nepali paints company. This company has used Nepali model, actress and miss Nepal-2010 Sahana Bajracharya as advertising model for marketing purpose. The advertisement shows that her color of hair matches with the color of the paint. In the image Sahana is projected in full screen and the paint and paint related text are presented in very small size. The audience cannot view any clothes either she is wearing or not. The texture is little bright therefore the color of the paint must be bright. The background of the image is a room and its walls seem to be well painted. It is true that Sahana is not any

share holder of the company but most of the advertisement of 'Pasupati Paints' are done by her appearance. The paint company has used her beauty to be the beauty and quality of 'Pasupati Paints'. There is no doubt that she is highly paid for her contribution in advertisement but using her beauty and sexuality along with her fame, the company manages to make a solid platform for its marketing which ultimately promotes the company economically. Instead of Sahana the company could use male member who has direct link with the company but there could be less chances to appeal the costumers with beauty and sexuality.

## Appendix-9



Priyanka Chopra miss-world and Bollywood actress on lux Soap, image taken from hoarding board located on prithivi chowk, on 12 January-2015.

This advertisement was laid out on the apex of a building nearby Prithivi Chowk bus park where thousands of people in a day could notice this image. 'Lux Soap' a multinational company product is advertised in Nepal on a large scale compared to other branded soaps. Priyanka Chopra, miss-world 2000 and bollywood star, has been used to advertise this product. The background of the picture is dark

bright and colorful. In this advertisement Priyanka looks fair and smiling towards her audiences. Her back is shown bare and she looks amazingly beautiful. Through this advertisement the company conveys a message that the beautiful appearance of Priyanka is the credit of 'Lux Soap'. It gives the impression that to become fair and beautiful like Priyanka one should apply 'Lux Soap'. Basically fair and beauty is attached with female quality therefore Priyanka is fit for the advertisement because this advertisement wouldn't be so appropriate if the company has used male promoter instead of a woman. However the soap is used by both male and female consumers. Naturally cosmetics are oriented towards female in compared to men. The basic human nature and culture shows that women are cosmetic lover where men are alcohol lover. The impact of sex is always there in advertisement, Therefore it is true that sex sells.

Appendix-10



Image and information taken from Google, [www.nepalglamour.com/archanaviral in Nepal/](http://www.nepalglamour.com/archanaviral%20in%20Nepal/) Last retrieve on 02-03-2016.

## Appendix-11

### The Negative Effects of Women's Advertisements



*Seemingly positive ad images can have a negative effect on women.*

*Robert Vaux, Demand Media*