Understanding the Relationship between Culture and Body Image: How do Asian American and Hispanic American Women Construct a Body Image?

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Dedication

The work in this dissertation is dedicated to women experiencing "normative discontent" related to their body image and appearance. My wish is for the need for this term to be nullified by and for future generations of girls including my dear nieces Isabelle, Grace, Olive, Emily, Kate, and Gwen. May you never experience discontent with your bodies, may you learn the power that they hold, and may you learn to value yourselves above and beyond the value society places on women's bodies. You are more than that!

To my parents, Barbara and Ed, I cannot thank you enough for setting me on this path and supporting me through this process. You were my earliest teachers and my earliest counselors. You taught me the value of education, appreciation for one's culture, caring for others, and most importantly, compassion. I have never known finer people and this dissertation belongs to you.

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Lastly to two very important people in my life who left me far too soon—my father, Ed Pula, and my dear friend Sabrina Salam Curow. How I wish you were here to witness this momentous occasion. I know you would both be very proud of me and would be cheering loudly at my graduation. I miss you both and you are with me in spirit!

Abstract

Understanding the Relationship between Culture and Body Image: How do Asian American and Hispanic American Women Construct a Body Image?

The purpose of this research is to better understand how women from diverse cultural backgrounds create and make meaning of a body image; one that is informed by cultural and societal values and expectations. A case study approach was used to explore the vertical depth of Hispanic American and Asian American women's experiences of the relationship between culture and body image.

Seven conclusions emerge from this study. First, diverse women experience issues of acculturation and adaptability, as well as feelings of not fitting in to mainstream American culture. Second, for women endorsing a negative or positive body image, body image requires both physical and mental work. Third, undergraduate women from diverse cultural backgrounds participate in a great deal of social comparison mostly with peers and strangers in their immediate environments. Fourth, body image ideals vary by and within culture and are specifically influenced by geographic location, class structure, politics, and religious history. Fifth, qualitative case studies benefit from the use of quantitative methods, specifically to engage participants more immediately in the topic and to reveal concerns not identified in the interview process. Sixth, qualitative studies on body image allow new body image issues to emerge. Seventh, culture is both a protective and risk factor when examining body image in an undergraduate population and varies by geographic location and developmental age.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

In the past two decades the rapidly increasing interest in body image and its related topics has inspired copious empirical investigations of body dissatisfaction in women. Interest in the area of body image and body dissatisfaction has grown rapidly because of the many risks it causes in women's health. Studies of body dissatisfaction (body shape and weight) among women and girls have shown that weight has become an issue of "normative discontent" (Rodin, Silberstein, & Striegel-Moore, 1984). Almost half of all women studied in the United States report global negative evaluations of their bodies (Cash & Henry, 1995; Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Body dissatisfaction and negative body image has proven to be a risk factor for clinical eating disorders (Stice, 2002; Levine & Smolak, 2006; Hall, 1995), disordered eating (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tanleff-Dunn, 1999), lower levels of self-esteem and greater depression (Ata, Ludden, & Lally, 2007; Jones, 2004; Tiggemann, 2005), and prospectively predicts girls' and women's depression (Rierdan, Koff, & Stubbs, 1989; Stice & Berman, 2001). The 1990s saw the publication of five scholarly volumes on the topic of body image: *Body Images: Development, Deviance, and Change* (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990), *Body Image Disturbance: Assessment and Treatment* (Thompson, 1990), *Body Image, Eating Disorders, and Obesity: An Integrative Guide for Assessment and Treatment* (Thompson, 1996), *Exacting Beauty: Theory, Assessment, and Treatment of Body Image Disturbance* (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999), and *Body Image: Understanding Body Dissatisfaction in Men, Women, and Children* (Grogan, 1999). Two other significant developments in the field were the publishing of *Body Image: A Handbook of Science, Practice, and Prevention* (Cash & Pruzinsky) in

2002 and the launching of an international peer-reviewed scientific journal *Body Image: An International Journal of Research*, which provided a dedicated home for body image research. Since then several more publications have been created, Grogan's *Body Image: Understanding Body Dissatisfaction in Men, Women, and Children* was updated as a second edition (2008), and Cash and Smolak edited the second edition of *Body Image: A Handbook of Science, Practice, and Prevention* (2011). This growth in the field is largely due to an inclusion of research in male populations, international populations, appearance-altering medical disorders, and diverse cultures.

Culture has a great deal to do with how beauty is conceptualized, how ideal beauty is defined, and whether ideal beauty is valued or devalued. Ideal beauty is never static and so cultural beauty standards must continually be evaluated and re-evaluated. Throughout history women have attempted to alter themselves to meet beauty ideals (Mazur, 1986). While earlier cultures tended to associate beauty standards with characteristics that were also biologically associated with reproduction, such as having wide hips that aided in childbirth, cultural influences have recently become more influential than biological ones (Fallon, 1990) just by the fact that they are valued. One can argue that many cultural ideals, for example female circumcision, feet binding, and breast implants have no biological value and are in fact contrary to optimum health (Fallon, 1990), and even claim that physiology and culture are in conflict (Brownell, 1991). Research has looked to sociocultural pressure and appearance-related myths, such as the promise of happiness, as the reason women strive toward beauty-related societal ideals (Brownell, 1991).

In the past two decades, a large shift has occurred in the research literature on body image, body dissatisfaction, and eating-related psychopathology to focusing on prevalence by ethnicity and identifying variation within, between, and across cultures (Cash & Smolak, 2011; Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001; Levine & Smolak, 2010). This shift initially focused on cultural influences and differences in girls and women in the United States (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999), but has broadened to girls and women in numerous foreign countries (Levine & Smolak, 2010). Of particular interest is how the terminology used to label culture has changed. As recently as 1999 (Mintz & Kashubeck) the term race was used to examine body image and disordered eating among Asian American and Caucasian men and women. In 2001, researchers Wildes, Emery, and Simons addressed the confusion around terminology within the cross-cultural literature and expressed concern over the interchangeable use of "race," "ethnicity," and "culture" as synonymous. "Race" was identified as an inappropriate term to use (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1998) and it was suggested that it be replaced by "ethnicity" (Beutler, Brown, Crothers, Booker, & Seabrook, 1996). Atkinson et al. (1998) explain that ethnicity is the preferred term because it does not focus on the physical characteristics of race and instead allows researchers to group people by their ancestry, language, customs, religion, culture, or nationality. In most definitions of ethnicity, culture is subsumed within. Levine and Smolak (2010) describe ethnicity as a cultural construct and a "group of people who are assumed to be related in terms of value and beliefs, and, often, in terms of race" (p. 224). Culture is often defined as a broader concept, the unifying aspect of which is a set of behaviors, norms, beliefs, and attitudes that are transmitted to its members (Matsumato & Juang, 2004; Atkinson et al., 1998). Further, Levine and Smolak (2010)

caution researchers not to use culture and ethnicity interchangeably. Despite the attempt to define and distinguish these terms, researchers still use them interchangeably; they still use the term race in addition to culture and ethnicity (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011), and use such terms as "ethnic minority" and "racial minority" interchangeably (Gordon, Castro, Sitnikov, & Holm-Denoma, 2010). In the current study, the term culture encompassed such micro-identities as ethnic heritage (or culture of heritage), country of origin, racial identity, and U.S. mainstream appearance-dominated society.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between culture and body image in college-aged women from diverse cultural backgrounds and to deepen understanding of how these women make meaning of body image. The study investigated culturally defined beauty ideals for Asian American and Hispanic American women; the representation of cultural beauty ideals in the media; cultural messages received from peers, family, and communities; and the type of beauty behaviors in which women from diverse cultures participate.

This study focused on hearing the words college aged women of various cultures use to define "beauty" in their culture and how this influenced their body image. While research in the past five to ten years has begun to focus on cultural aspects of body image and body dissatisfaction, much of this research is quantitative and evaluates rates of prevalence by culture. There is a dearth of qualitative studies. Findings to date show that qualitative studies expand the understanding of how women from diverse backgrounds experience beauty ideals (Hesse-Biber, Livingstone, Ramirez, Barko, & Johnson, 2010; Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011; Poran, 2006). They also express the need to explore racially defined physical features (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999, Hall, 1995). More qualitative

studies are needed to ensure that the experiences of diverse women are studied and reflected accurately in the research literature. Therefore, this study was conducted as a qualitative case study using a semi-structured interview with Asian American and Hispanic American women.

Gaps in Literature

There are numerous gaps and weaknesses in the literature on body dissatisfaction in women from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Little research has compared the body dissatisfaction of women from various cultures to each other. Information reported on women from diverse ethnic backgrounds focuses mostly on a comparison between African American women and White women (Smolak & Striegel-Moore, 2001). The differences among women from diverse ethnic backgrounds are not well understood.

Another gap in the literature is that the information reported from quantitative data is often conflicting and inconclusive (Grabe & Hyde, 2006), demonstrating that body image and body dissatisfaction in ethnic populations is not well understood. While a majority of studies have reported no differences in body dissatisfaction among Hispanic American and Caucasian women (Miller, et al, 2000; O'Neill, 2003; Cash, Melnyk, & Hrabosky, 2004), some studies report Hispanic American women having lower levels of dissatisfaction than Caucasian women (Barry & Grilo, 2022; Suldo & Sandberg, 200), smaller discrepancies between their current and ideal bodies (Demarest & Allen, 2000), and less focus on dieting (Franko & Herrera, 1997). Further, others report Hispanic college women (McComb & Clopton, 2002) and Hispanic girls (Robinson, T.N., Killen, J.D., Litt, I.F., Hammer, L.D., Wilson, D.M., Haydel, K.F., Hayward, C., & Taylor, C.B., 1996) having higher levels of body dissatisfaction than Caucasian women and girls.

Similarly, data from studies comparing Asian American and Caucasian women are conflicting. While some report Asian American women endorsing lower rates of body dissatisfaction than Caucasian women (Akan & Grilo, 1995) others report comparable levels of body dissatisfaction and weight concern (Koff, Benavage, & Wong, 2001; Yates et al, 2004). In college-aged women, studies have shown a similar level of body dissatisfaction and fear of fat between Asian American and Caucasian women (Saunders & Heiss, 1998), a contrasting greater concern among Asian American women compared to Caucasian women in regard to body dissatisfaction and body shape (Haudek, Rorty, & Henker, 1999), and more body dissatisfaction related to arms, breasts, height, and facial features for Asian American women (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999). In contrast to research findings for Hispanic and Asian American women, the research on body dissatisfaction in African American women is consistent, showing greater body satisfaction than Caucasian women. Despite weighing more on average than White girls and women, research indicates that African American girls and women tend to be more satisfied with their bodies and more accepting of different body shapes and sizes (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). These differences hold across varying populations including school children (Adams, Sargeant, Thomson, Richter, Corwin, & Rogan, 2000; Shaw, Ramirez, Trost, Randall, Stice, 2004), college women (Bissell, 2004; Demarest & Allen, 2000), and older women (Duncan, Anton, Newton, & Perri, 2003; Shulman & Home, 2003).

Acculturation has been widely researched among ethnic minority women. Theorists have proposed that with acculturation to American values and the internalization of Western body ideals, body image dissatisfaction would increase for Asian Americans and other ethnic-minority groups. However, the research has not found

this consistent relationship among Asian Americans (Smart, 2010; Kawamura and Rice, 2009) and has shown no relation between Asian American women's levels of acculturation and body dissatisfaction (Akan & Grilo, 1995; Ogden & Elder, 1998). Researchers suggest that the primary contributor to body dissatisfaction and the development of eating disorders is not acculturation but the conflict between traditional and Western values, particularly the shift of gender roles (Jung & Forbes, 2007; Jackson, Keel, & Lee, 2006). Other explanations suggested for varying levels of body dissatisfaction among ethnic subgroups include: difference in the construction of gender roles and gender identity, institutional racism, internalized racism, and varying preference of opposite-sex partners. For example, due to institutional racism, African American women have been raised to be strong, independent, and self-reliant and not to depend on men for economic success (Lovejoy, 2001). Further, African American women's gender identities have been found to be more androgynous than those of White women (Harris, 1996) and African American men not only prefer a larger body type for women, but favorably value larger women than do White men (Greenberg & LaPorte, 1996; Jackson & McGill, 1996).

A third gap in the literature is that body dissatisfaction symptomatology has largely been based on the experiences of Caucasian women. Researchers have criticized the use of standards and criteria originating from studies of mostly Caucasian populations to assess problematic eating behaviors and attitudes with ethnically diverse populations (Mumford, 1993; Ritenbaugh, Shisslak, Teufel, Leonard-Green, 1996). Researchers have also suggested that the use of Western-based criteria has resulted in misleading findings for non-White populations (Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001) and that patterns of

symptoms may present differently across cultures (Cummins, Simmons, & Zane, 2005). For example, studies on the rates of diagnosable eating disorders in adolescent girls and adult women in the United States have shown no difference among multi-ethnic populations (Cachelin, Veisel, Barzegarnazari, & Striegel-Moore, 2000), while others have shown lower rates among Asian American women compared to European American or Caucasian women (Tsai & Gray, 2000; Smart, 1999). However, some of these rates changed when researchers looked into the prevalence of specific eating disorder symptomatology, such as body dissatisfaction, binge eating, and compensatory behavior. They found more binge eating and out-of-control eating in Asian girls when compared to all other females (Story, French, Resnick, & Blum, 1995), and similar levels of body dissatisfaction but lower levels of other symptoms (dieting/restraint and binge eating) when comparing Asian American and Caucasian college-aged women (Akan & Grilo, 1995; Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999). This suggests that there may be higher rates of certain types of eating disorder symptoms in Asian American female populations when compared to other ethnic groups (Cummins & Lehman, 2007). This example highlights the importance of assessing and understanding culturally specific standards of beauty and symptomatology of body dissatisfaction. The issue of redefining patterns of symptomatology based on culture and ethnicity has been addressed for disorders such as depression (Chun, Eastman, Wang, & Sue., 1998). The need exists for this to be done in the study of body dissatisfaction with culturally diverse populations.

A fourth weakness is that information reported on body dissatisfaction in women from diverse ethnic backgrounds is mostly limited to such global assessments as satisfied versus dissatisfied (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002) or using the criterion of weight as the sole

factor of body esteem (Poran, 2006). The scales used in these quantitative studies are restrictive and have been standardized on Caucasian participants. It is likely that these measures and scales are missing information and issues that may be of specific concern to African American women (Poran, 2006) and other women of color. Research that assessed specific issues such as body evaluation and body investment—two core facets of body image attitudes (Cash, Morrow, et al, 2004)—in women from diverse ethnic backgrounds would be more expansive. It would also enrich the literature on the effects of culture on body image.

The last gap in the literature is the dearth of qualitative studies on women's body image/dissatisfaction by culture or ethnicity. Research in this area is predominantly quantitative and more often than not compares the results of one minority culture to those of the dominant Caucasian ideal. A review of literature that investigated women's body image/dissatisfaction by culture or ethnicity revealed a total of 156 studies. Of these, 15 were qualitative and only four pertained to college-aged women. Of those considered qualitative, most compared one culture with the dominant Caucasian body ideal rather than conducting comparisons among several cultures/ethnicities. Not one qualitative case study on body image in college-aged women from diverse ethnic backgrounds using a semi-structured interview was found. Further, the literature review revealed the use of such interview formats as focus groups (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011) and a formal qualitative instrument that elicited a written response (Altabe, 1998). Kelch-Oliver and Ancis found the focus group format to be limiting in that participants seemed to be responding to each other, rather than the questions asked by the interviewer. They also noted that, due to the pressure of a group setting, participants may have been responding

in socially desirable ways (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). Quantitative studies on body image have several limitations, particularly when used with a diverse population. Qualitative studies "generate meaning" (Poran, 2006) and expand understanding. "Much body image research with Black women has tended simply to verify that what concerns White women most does not concern Black women. Qualitative work has indicated more complex information regarding Black women and the body and beauty" (Poran, 2006, p. 741).

In quantitative studies participants are asked to endorse ratings of symptomatology on assessment tools that are designed to simplify and categorize responses, rather than understand at a deep level. Most of these assessment tools are based on the experiences and symptomatology of Caucasian women, not ethnically diverse women. They also tend to assess weight or general appearance concerns, rather than eliciting specific appearance concerns (Altabe, 1998). Some researchers propose that psychological research methodologies actually misrepresent and therefore add to the confusion regarding the body image experiences of women from diverse ethnic backgrounds, specifically African American women (Poran, 2006). Poran (2006) clearly states the need for qualitative methods to "hear more clearly the voices of women of color" (p.739).

Qualitative studies have enhanced and expanded the understanding of body image issues in women from diverse ethnic backgrounds. They have not only helped make assessment tools more culturally relevant, but have identified issues related to specific areas of the body, such as eye shape, nose shape, and skin tone, that would have been missed. Altabe's study (1998) of appearance-related cultural ideals yielded a list of the

five most common body ideal traits for African American, Asian American, Caucasian American, and Hispanic American men and women. For women these included height (wanting to be taller), hair (length and color), skin tone (darker or lighter), body shape (thinness, tonality), and eye color. These specific concerns would have been missed on a standard questionnaire. Similarly, Poran's (2006) research revealed that contrary to the belief that African American women are protected from negative body image cognitions by Black culture, they indeed feel pressure to be thin, pressure from the preferences of ethnically diverse men, competition from other Black women, and misrepresentation by media images of thin Black women. Further, in-depth interviews have rarely been used to understand the lived experiences of women of color. While numerous studies have been done on body image and racial identity "almost none of them include the actual words of those studied" (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 697).

These gaps and weaknesses not only highlight the need to research more thoroughly the difference in body dissatisfaction among college-aged women of varying cultures, but to do so with a qualitative methodology. Qualitative studies have done more to advance the understanding of how women from diverse ethnic backgrounds define beauty and experience beauty ideals than quantitative studies. Despite recent progress in the field there is still a lack of information specific to ethnic-minority groups including Asian American, Hispanic American, and African American women. There is a great need to understand body image symptomatology by culture, understand the specifics of how women from diverse ethnic backgrounds evaluate their bodies beyond the global measure of satisfied versus dissatisfied, what aspect of their physical characteristics ethnic women focus on when evaluating their body image, how much ethnic women

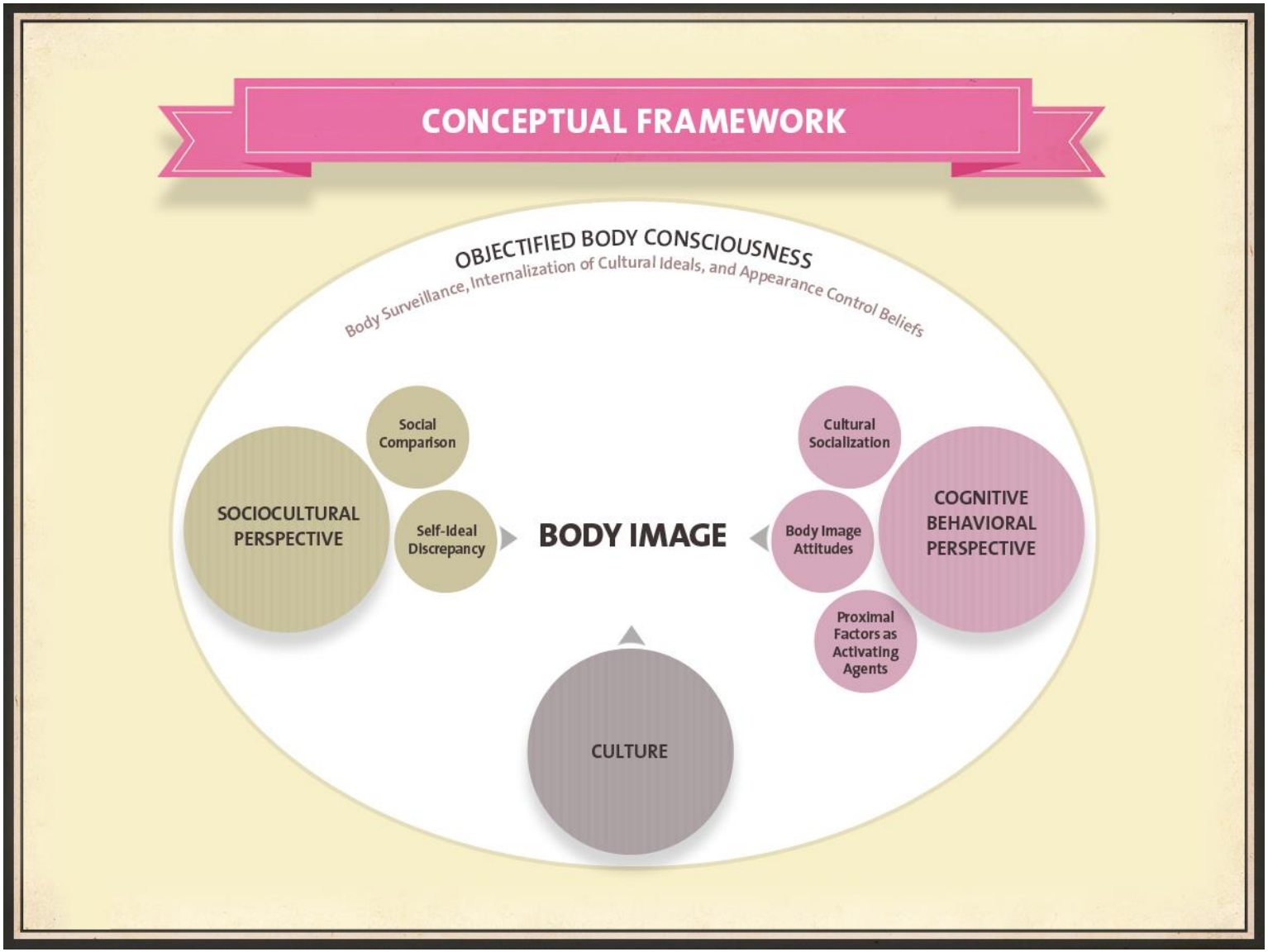
invest in their body image, and the differences in ideal body types across ethnicities. Most importantly, the research and academic fields need to hear about these issues directly from ethnic women—in their own voices and own words.

Conceptual Framework

As highlighted in *Body Image: A Handbook of Science, Practice, and Prevention* (Cash & Smolak, 2011) the conceptual foundations of body image development can be categorized into historical, contemporary, sociocultural, evolutionary, genetic and neuroscientific, cognitive-behavioral, feminist, and developmental perspectives. With the exception of the cognitive-behavioral (CB) perspective, most of these focus on one particular aspect of the psychological or sociological process. The CB perspective is an integrative model that examines the relationship between numerous factors—affective, cognitive, and psychological process, as well as environmental events and individual behaviors (Grogan, 2008). The current study focuses on the sociocultural, feminist, and cognitive-behavioral perspectives and how these interact with each other to construct one's meaning around body image. This is considered an intersectionality framework (Cole, 2009), which examines the consequences and meaning of belonging in multiple social categories (gender, race, class, sexual orientation) (Bowleg, 2008). Because there are no established guidelines for analyzing research questions based on an intersectionality framework (McCall, 2005), this is an underutilized foundation. Intersectionality examines the following issues: diversity within social categories and how these categories depend on each other for meaning, social structure that is created through hierarchies of power and privilege, and commonalities across categories that are typically considered very different (Cole, 2009).

The development of one's body image is a complex, multifactorial process. Which factor or process influences a woman's body image the most ultimately depends on where she feels the most judged. For example, if a woman receives messages from family members that she is fat and she feels very judged she may be compelled to engage in the social comparison process or she may be more prone to such behaviors as body checking (frequently checking in the mirror or wrapping hands around waist, stomach, thighs, or arms) and body surveillance. The graphical representation in Figure 1 demonstrates the conceptual framework of the current study. At the center is the construct of body image. Surrounding this are the processes and factors that may or may not influence the construction of body image. The current study sought to understand these interactions and how they may vary by culture. As explained in more detail in the theoretical foundations below, the meaning an individual places on his/her body image is influenced by a social context. One such social context that exists in the United States is the valuing of a thin-ideal in a society that objectifies the female body. It is the belief of this researcher that women in the United States cannot escape the context of this macro-level influence, as represented by the all-encompassing oval in Figure 1. While other processes in the conceptual framework may vary by individual and culture, the influence of the objectified body consciousness is not variable.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Theoretical Foundations

> There is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world…Meaning is not discovered, but constructed.
>
> (Crotty, 1998, pp. 8-9).

Constructing meaning around body image. Through the lens of a constructionist epistemology, which holds that meaning is personally constructed not discovered, this study explored how college aged women from diverse ethnic backgrounds make meaning of cultural beauty ideals and expectations and how this meaning influenced their body image. Constructionism claims that "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (Crotty, 1998, p.43). Meaning is not created but constructed as individuals work with "the world and objects in the world" (p. 44) around them. In order to understand how a woman constructs a body image one must then ask: what do women engage with in the world? How do they interpret their world? How do they make personal meaning of this? For women, the world they engage with involves beauty ideals, cultural norms, and expectations around physical appearance. Women hear, see, and experience what their communities, friends, parents, and siblings expect of them and use these expectations as standards against which to measure themselves. As women develop from young girls to young women they are immersed in a world that is full of judgment. These are the realities they engage with in their worlds and from this they construct a body image. Is this a positive or negative experience for women from diverse cultural backgrounds?

Social constructionism, an extension of constructionism, holds that meaning has a social origin. Literary critic Stanley Fish explained that all objects "are made and not

found" and "the means by which they are made are social and conventional" (Fish, 1990, p. 186). Further, the means by which these objects are made are "institutions which precede us" and are "the sources of the interpretive strategies whereby we construct meaning" (p. 186). Given this rationale, the meaning of body image has a social origin. What is this social origin? Is it cultural? Are the interpretive strategies used to construct this meaning culturally based?

In seeking to explain the social construction of meaning, anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) described a "system of significant symbols" that are a guide to human behavior. These symbols constitute culture, which is "best seen as the source rather than the result of human thought and behavior" (p. 44). Culture is "…a set of control mechanisms—plans, recipes, rules, instructions—for the governing of behavior" (p. 44). Crotty (1998) adds to this that "culture has to do with functioning" and humans "depend on culture to direct our behavior and organize our experience" (p.53). Social constructionism emphasizes that individuals are born into a system of symbols and when individuals first view the world it is through the lens "bestowed upon us by our culture" (Crotty, 1998, p. 54). Women are born into cultures and societies that endorse these systems of symbols, rules, and instructions. These rules range from how women should appear, what they can and cannot achieve, to how they should conduct themselves. The most prominent rules and instructions are around how women and girls should appear and focus on such aspects as: ideal body weight, thinness, style of dress (i.e., what they should wear), style of hair (i.e., length, color), skin tone, and how specific parts of the body (eyes, nose, arms, hips, thighs, buttocks, and waist) should appear. Women grow up

hearing these rules and instructions, whether implied or stated directly, and construct their body images based on these rules.

In addition to a social origin of meaning, women live in and engage in a social context that influences their body image. According to the feminist perspective on body image, the social context for women living in Western societies, such as the United States, is one in which women's bodies are objects to be watched and evaluated as to how they fit cultural standards. Girls and women learn to watch their bodies from the outside and to depend on others for approval (McKinley, 2011). Specifically, the objectified body consciousness theory of feminist psychology espouses that one's discontent with his or her body is a function of social context, not individual pathology, and is a result of gendered power structures (McKinkey, 2011). Women and girls are taught to objectify themselves and participate in body surveillance, internalization of cultural body standards, and appearance control beliefs. Body surveillance is the notion that people pay attention to how they appear to others and how they are perceived. Women survey their bodies to see if they are adhering to relevant standards. When a standard is not met, they feel bad about themselves. Women may also engage in such behaviors as habitual self-monitoring of the body, an activity that has been related to increased shame and anxiety (Frederickson and Roberts, 1997). Through a process of internalization, women tend to connect achievement of cultural body standards with their sense of self-worth; therefore, when the standards are not achieved women feel shame. When they do achieve cultural body standards or get close to achieving them, women feel empowered. Appearance control beliefs are the notions that body standards must be believed as attainable for one

to judge whether or not they have been met and that in order to meet these standards one just needs to exert enough effort or control.

Recent research on objectified body consciousness in diverse women has shown European American women conducting higher levels of body surveillance than African American or Latino women, and a relation between skin tone surveillance and body shame in African American women (McKinley, 2006). Research pertaining to age and objectified body consciousness has found higher levels of body surveillance and body shame in undergraduate women than middle-aged women (McKinley, 2006). Further, in undergraduate women, body surveillance has been found to be related to body satisfaction (McKinley & Hyde, 1996) and predicted body esteem (McKinley, 2006).

Transmission and processing of beauty ideals. In addition to having a social origin and a social context, cultural beauty ideals are transmitted through sociocultural channels and internalized by individuals, as proposed by the sociocultural perspective on human appearance and body image (Tiggemann, 2011). Sometimes referred to as the tripartite model, the three most important identified sociocultural transmitters of beauty ideals are peers, parents, and the media. Whether or not a person meets these ideals creates satisfaction or dissatisfaction with appearance (Tiggemann, 2011). Of these sociocultural transmitters, the most powerful one identified through extensive correlational, experimental, and meta-analytic evidence has been the mass media. Limitations of this theory include wide testing among White adolescent and college-aged women, but not with ethnically diverse populations, as well as evidence of a correlational relationship but not a causal one. This warrants more research attention as does the influence of other sociocultural agents, such as culture or cultural expectations. A further goal of future

research should be the identification of moderating variables that make some individuals resilient and some vulnerable to sociocultural pressures to conform to beauty ideals (Tiggemann, 2011).

In order to make meaning of cultural ideals one must first receive these culturally bound messages. What does this process entail? How does it vary by culture? Mechanisms that have been identified as major mediators between receiving societal messages and body dissatisfaction are the internalization of thin ideals and the process of social comparison. Internalization of thin ideals involves accepting and adopting societal ideals as personal goals while social comparison involves comparing one's appearance against idealized media images and finding oneself lacking (Tiggemann, 2011). According to Social Comparison Theory, people compare themselves to idealized images, and in doing this usually denigrate themselves, instead of the ideal (Festinger, 1954). This theory proposes that, within the context of a culture that endorses thinness and attractiveness, individuals have the tendency to compare themselves with others; it is the amount to which they do or do not do this that accounts for differing levels of body image disturbance (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Research has shown that social comparison is so prevalent that it is considered a primary, rather than a secondary, information-gathering phenomenon (Marsh & Parker, 1984; Ruble, 1983). Individuals choose universal comparison targets (comparing a specific physical attribute with strangers) or particularistic comparison targets (comparing self with immediate peers or group) (Miller, Turnbull, & McFarland, 1988). Individuals also perform upward (when the target is perceived as superior to the individual) and downward (when the target is perceived as inferior to the individual) comparisons. Adolescent girls have been

socialized to believe that appearance is an important basis for self-evaluation and for evaluation by others (Thompson, et al., 1999). This belief may follow adolescent girls into young adulthood.

The self-ideal discrepancy theory further explains the comparison process individuals go through. Typically used to understand the role of self-perceptions in the developmental psychopathology of disordered eating, self-ideal discrepancy theory assumes that individuals hold beliefs about (1) who they are (the actual self), (2) who they would like to be (the ideal self), and (3) who they ought to be (the ought self) (Ewell, Smith, Karmel, & Hart, 1996). The ideal and ought self—self-guides--can be from the perspective of the self or influenced by others. When the actual self is discrepant from these self-guides, an individual may experience emotional distress and be "motivated to attain a match between their actual self-concept and an internalized ideal" (Thompson et al., p. 134) through self-regulatory behaviors. Strauman and colleagues (1991) argued that the social environment may contribute to the magnitude of body-specific self-discrepancies by creating thinness-favoring self-guides and activating such guides. The current study explored whether culture may serve as a social environment that helps create self-guides such as desiring lighter skin tone. The study also explored if culture serves as an activating agent.

Another way in which cultural beauty ideals are transmitted to the individual is through cultural socialization, as elucidated in the cognitive behavioral (CB) perspective on body image. The CB perspective is an integrative viewpoint emphasizing the combination of social learning and conditioning processes and the cognitive mediation of behaviors and emotions (Cash, 2011). Through the cultural socialization process,

individuals acquire and internalize basic body image attitudes that reflect the norms, standards, and gender-based expectations of physical attractiveness, unattractiveness, femininity, and masculinity. Cultural messages can influence how one evaluates one's own body image and prescribe the time and effort one should invest in attempting to attain societal expectations. These body-altering means include dieting, exercising, body building, using beauty and fashion products, and engaging in surgical and medical procedures. Interpersonal experiences that influence an individual's body image attitudes include expectations, opinions, and verbal and nonverbal communications from family, friends, and peers that convey beauty standards and self-evaluation and self-comparison. Parents role model the degree to which beauty standards are valued in the family and siblings, particularly brothers, often engage in appearance-related teasing and denigration. Appearance-related teasing from peers is common and can predispose one to body image dissatisfaction.

The central construct of the CB model is body image attitudes. The model proposes that these attitudes are the combination and result of an individual's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes within one's environmental context. The two basic attitudinal elements are body image investment (the importance one places on their appearance) and body image evaluation (positive-to-negative beliefs about and appraisals of their appearance that result in body satisfaction or body dissatisfaction). Influences on body image attitudes are divided into two categories: historical and proximal. Historical factors are past experiences and attributes that influence how one comes to think or feel about his or her body and include such components as cultural socialization, interpersonal experiences, physical characteristics and changes, and personality variables. These

historical factors instill fundamental body image attitudes, including core self-schemas in relation to one's physical appearance. Proximal influences are current life events that serve as activating agents on pre-existing thoughts, emotions, interpretations, conclusions, and internal dialogues related to one's physical appearance. Such life events may include mirror exposure, weighing oneself, shopping for clothing, exposing one's body, exercising, wearing certain clothing (i.e., restrictive or revealing), and obtaining social feedback or scrutiny. The private body talk or internal dialogues that result from activating agents and cognitive processing are often habitual, faulty, and dysphoric and include such errors as: distorting, making biased social comparisons, overgeneralizing, overpersonalizing, magnifying perceived defects, and minimizing assets (Jakatdar, 2006). Do messages pertaining to cultural beauty ideals serve as activating agents for college-aged women? What historical or proximal influences affect college-aged women's body image, if any?

In the CB model, historical influences on body image attitudes include physical characteristics and personality factors. How well one's physical appearance matches cultural standards of attractiveness influences how an individual is perceived and treated by others, thus affecting one's body image attitudes. An individual's "goodness of fit" to a cultural ideal changes as one grows and develops. Individuals are continually adapting to physical changes and adapting their body image attitudes throughout the life span. Personality factors can foster resilience or create risk toward developing body image problems. Strong social supports and a positive self-concept may buffer against threatening events while poor self-esteem, lack of social support, public self-consciousness, an insecure attachment system, poor gender-role attitudes and values, and

perfectionism may serve as risk factors. Public body consciousness (similar to body surveillance) is the tendency for an individual to see herself as an object and for that individual to focus on her observable appearance and behaviors. Public body consciousness can lead to an increase in one's self-monitoring and an increase in processing appearance-related information. The personality trait of perfectionism may lead individuals to invest self-worth in physical ideals that are not only hard to achieve but may leave one feeling discontent when the ideal is not reached. Lastly, research suggests that women who advocate traditional gender attitudes in relationships with men are prone to invest more in their appearance, have maladaptive beliefs about their appearance, and internalize cultural standards of beauty more completely.

According to the Cognitive Behavioral Model of body image, individuals engage in adjustive and self-regulatory behaviors to deal with distressing body image thoughts and emotions and temporarily escape, reduce, or regulate body image discomfort (Engle, 2009). Adjustive, self-regulatory behaviors include: avoidance and body-concealment, appearance checking, appearance correcting, social reassurance seeking, and compensatory strategies. Little research in the area of coping related to body image has been done. Cash and colleagues (2005) identified three strategies for dealing with body image threats or challenges using the Body Image Coping Strategies Inventory: experiential avoidance, appearance fixing, and positive rational acceptance. Avoidance and appearance fixing have been shown to be linked to less adaptive body image attitudes, more body image dysphoria, and poorer psychosocial functioning. Another seldom-studied area is that of appearance self-management, a self-regulating body image behavior that allows one to control evaluative body-image consequences by concealing or

correcting certain physical characteristics or avoiding self-conscious thoughts and emotions. This would include such activities as everyday grooming, hairstyling, applying cosmetics, wearing jewelry, and choosing certain clothing.

Summary

The conceptual framework for this study serves three purposes. The first purpose is to explore how college aged women from diverse backgrounds construct meaning around their body image. The second purpose is to explore the role between culture and body image of college-aged women and whether culture serves as a protective or risk factor for this population. The third purpose is to expand the understanding of how women experience cultural beauty ideals and whether the objectified body consciousness prevalent in the United States is more influential than country of origin beauty expectations.

The theoretical foundations of the sociocultural, objectified body consciousness, and cognitive behavioral perspectives on body image highlight the numerous factors and processes influencing the development of a woman's body image, potentially resulting in body image disturbance or dissatisfaction. Further, meaning, such as the meaning one places on their body image, is constructed through social institutions and in a social context. It is the intention of this study to fully explore how these many factors interact to create body image in college-aged women from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Statement of Problem

Why do rates of body dissatisfaction vary by culture/ethnicity? Why do women from certain cultural backgrounds seem more resilient to beauty ideals, messages, and expectations? How do women from different cultures define beauty?

While a great deal of quantitative research has been conducted on the prevalence of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders in various cultures, there is still a lack of understanding as to how women from diverse ethnic backgrounds make meaning of their body images. The field is only just beginning to understand that women from non-White cultures define beauty differently and focus on different aspects of the body when evaluating themselves. By examining how college-aged women from diverse ethnic backgrounds define beauty and what they consider to be beauty ideals, I gained a better understanding of the role culture plays in developing a negative or positive body image. Qualitative research was needed to gain an in-depth understanding of this construct.

Research Question

This study explored the following research questions:

1. What role does culture play in the body image of multicultural college-aged women? Is it more of a protective or risk factor?
2. What are the current ideal body images for Asian American and Hispanic American college women? What similarities and differences will they entail? Will new ideals be identified?
3. How do college-aged women of varying cultures perceive beauty ideals represented in their cultures, relationships, and the media?
4. What type of assessment behaviors do college-aged women of various cultures engage in, such as body checking and body surveillance?

5. Do college-aged women of various cultures differ in how much time they invest in their appearance?

Need for and Significance of the Study

Research on body image and body dissatisfaction has shown a lack of understanding of how women from non-White cultures define beauty and construct a positive or negative body image. The current study investigated global and specific body image issues with Asian American and Hispanic American college-aged women. It proposed assumptions drawn from quantitative and qualitative studies to the participants and asked for their feedback on these findings. It elicited cognitive, emotional, and perceptual responses to body image-related questions through a combination of assessment tools and a semi-structured interview in an attempt to more thoroughly understand from the individual's perspective what has influenced her body image more and what her specific body image concerns were. This information was analyzed to assess the relationship between culture and body image, to understand how women from diverse backgrounds view culturally defined beauty ideals, and to determine if culture serves as a protective or risk factor in the development of body image. The overall areas assessed included: demographics, beauty behaviors (investment and evaluation), appearance control beliefs, cultural beauty perspectives, cultural representation in the media, and individual feelings on physical appearance. A complete list of interview questions is in Appendix G: Interview Guide.

This research is significant for the following reasons: 1) it sought to clear up confusion around how women from diverse ethnic backgrounds experience beauty ideals and the effect this has on their body image; 2) it sought to understand how women from

diverse ethnic backgrounds make meaning of culturally defined beauty expectations by hearing this directly from them; 3) it sought to understand whether culture serves as a protective or risk factor for the specific cultures/ethnicities being studied; 4) it expanded body image research by providing more culturally defined and relevant symptoms of body dissatisfaction; and 5) provided specific information on how women from varying cultures evaluate their bodies and how much they invest in their appearance. This study, therefore, contributes to the fields of negative body image symptomatology in diverse populations, understanding contributions to the development of disordered eating and other restrictive behaviors in various cultures, culturally relevant risk and protective factors, body image investment, and body image evaluation.

Summary of Methodology

This study was a qualitative case study to explore how college-aged women of various cultural backgrounds make meaning of their body images. Using a multiple case, embedded design, the study explored the relationship between culture and body image, culturally defined beauty ideals, and whether culturally defined ideals serve as protective or risk factors. Fourteen college-aged women from Asian American and Hispanic American backgrounds were recruited from colleges in Maryland and the District of Columbia and interviewed in a semi-structured format.

Data collected included demographic data, qualitative data from interviews and one body image instrument, quantitative data from two body image instruments, and observational data. Analysis of transcribed interview data included an open coding process, analytical coding, and within-case analysis. Validity was ensured through the use of triangulation, member checks, and the peer review process.

Sample

The sample for this study was recruited from a population of undergraduate women from colleges in Maryland and Washington, DC. Eligibility included being of a traditional college age (18-24) and belonging to one of two cultures: Asian American and Hispanic American. Exclusion criteria included: study abroad students, students on student visas, and students of South Asian descent.

Delimitations of the Study

Delimitations of the study included:

1. The study was delimited to college-aged women of Asian American and Hispanic American culture at local universities and community colleges.
2. The study focused on the body image experiences of women from diverse ethnic backgrounds who endorsed a negative or positive body image.
3. Cases were limited to the ethnic groupings being studied.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study included:

1. Data collection was limited to demographic information provided voluntarily, body mass index (self-reported), and semi-structured interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews, as opposed to open-ended interviews, may have limited the depth of the information obtained.
2. Because of the small sample size of each ethnicity being studied, findings cannot be generalized to the larger population.
3. Recruitment of participants from Psychology and Gender Studies courses may have presented biased findings.

Definition of Terms

The following operational definitions are included to clarify terminology used in this study.

1. African American—Refers to any person having origins in any of the Black racial groups. This includes Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Kenya and Nigerian, and Afro Caribbean countries, such as Haiti and Jamaica. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
2. Asian American—Americans of East Asian, Southeast Asian, or Pacific Islander heritage (excluding South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka)
3. Body image—a person's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about his or her body. (Grogan, S., 2008).
4. Body image dissatisfaction—the underlying shame and physical self-perceptions that may serve as precursors to clinical problems such as eating disorders, and severe disturbances in eating behaviors and patterns (American Psychiatric Association, 2002)
5. Body image disturbance—the umbrella term used to contain subcomponents or different types of body image (affective, cognitive, behavioral, perceptual)
6. European American—Term used to describe nonminority populations within the United States and having ancestral ties to Europe. This is preferred over the terms White and Caucasian because they are not linked to ethnicity. (Bhopal & Donaldson, 1998).
7. Hispanic American—of or relating to the people of Spain, Portugal, Latin American (Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Peruvian, Chilean, or Brazilian

origin) or South American (Honduras, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala) descent living in the United States.

8. Normative discontent—term coined by Rodin, Silberstein, and Striegel-Moore (1985) to describe the widespread dysphoria women have regarding their appearance.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction: Topics, Purposes, and Methods

The purpose of this study was to expand the research on the relationship between body image and culture/ethnicity in college-aged women from diverse cultural backgrounds. It explored how Asian American and Hispanic American women construct and make meaning of body image. It explored culturally defined beauty ideals identified by study participants, whether study participants compared themselves to these ideals, whether culture served as a protective or risk factor in the formation of body image, and how study participants felt about their body image. The literature review focuses on the main topics of body image, body dissatisfaction, and culture/ethnicity.

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section provides an explanation of the construct of body image. The second section provides an overview and broad literature review of body image ideals and factors that influence body image development for the cultural groups being examined in the study. The third section provides an in-depth review and critique of several specific quantitative and qualitative studies on body image.

The literature review for this study focused on two sources of information: seminal research and current research. Keywords included: body image, body dissatisfaction, culture, ethnicity, undergraduate women, and college-aged women. Search parameters were further restricted by age group (young adulthood 18-29 years) and only occurring in the United States. *Academic Search Complete, Anthropology Plus, Dissertation Abstracts International, ERIC, JSTOR, PsychInfo,* and *Sociological Abstracts* were the databases used to conduct this literature review.

Section 1: What is Body Image?

Defining body image is not a particularly easy task. Its conception dates as far back as the beginning of the twentieth century and the study of the neurological basis of body image and modifications in self-image one experienced as a result of brain damage (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). A major shift in the field occurred in 1926 with the focus on an integrative cognitive process and Head's coining of the term "body schema." This schema served as a "reference point for organizing new information about one's appearance" (Thompson et al., p. 5). Around the same time, a multidimensional conceptualization of body image came into existence with Schilder's focus on a psychological self-awareness of body image. Schilder believed that body image is the combination of one's conscious and unconscious processes and includes emotions, attitudes, wishes, and social relationships (Thompson, et al., 1999). Once the concept of body image was extended beyond the study of the brain, theorists with a psychodynamic background (Freud, Adler, Jung) continued to advocate a psychological concept of body image (Thompson, et al., 1999). Over the next few decades body image shifted to the study of self-perceptions of appearance and the resulting eating disorders of anorexia and bulimia nervosa. By the 1980s a body image criterion was added to the diagnosis of bulimia nervosa in the revision of the DSM-III. Research at this time showed a presence of "high levels of either dissatisfaction with appearance or overestimation of body size" (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999, p. 6) in individuals with an eating disorder and body image disturbance in women without eating disorders (Thompson & Thompson, 1986). In their seminal text, *Exacting Beauty: Theory, Assessment, and Treatment of Body Image Disturbance*, Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn (1999), elucidate that the body image field has become congested with

terms that define different aspects of body image, but are wrongly used interchangeably, noting at least 14 different body-image-related terms. To simplify this, Thompson and colleagues use body image disturbance as the umbrella term "including all subcomponents or different types of body image" (p. 9). They further describe body dissatisfaction as "the most important global measure of distress" (p. 9) because it captures an individual's subjective experience.

For the purposes of the current study, Grogan's (2008) definition of body image and body dissatisfaction was used:

> *Body image is a person's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about his or her body. Body dissatisfaction is a person's negative thoughts and feelings about his or her body. (p. 3-4)*

Grogan further explains that body image is a psychological phenomenon that is "affected by social factors," such as the "cultural milieu in which the individual operates" (p. 4), and "is largely determined by social experience" (p. 4). Although it has been widely established that gender differences in body image exist, cultural differences are not as well understood (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). The following sections highlight the body ideals of the cultures examined in the current study.

Section II: Beauty Ideals and Factors Influencing Body Image Development in Minority Women

In the past few decades, the issue of body image has become a central focus in girls' and women's health. Researchers in the fields of medicine, health studies, psychology, sociology, counseling, human development, and communication have conducted studies on body image, mediating and moderating factors, and the outcomes of

having poor body image. Of particular interest in the research literature on body image, body dissatisfaction, and eating-related psychopathology is prevalence by ethnicity and the variation within, between, and across cultures (Cash & Smolak, 2011; Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001; Levine & Smolak, 2010) within the United States (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999) and in numerous foreign countries (Levine & Smolak, 2010).

The literature reveals that minority women have differing body ideals and various factors that influence their body image. African American women accept diverse body types and body weights (Davis, Clance, & Gailis, 1999; Poran, 2006; Franko & Striegel-Moore, 2002); endorse larger specific body parts, such as hips, buttocks, and thighs (Thompson, Sargent, & Kemper, 1996; Grabe & Hyde, 2006); and focus more on personality traits to define beauty than physical aspects (Landrine, Klonoff, & Brown-Collins, 1992; Parker, Nichter, Nichter, Vuckovic, Sims, & Ritenbaugh, 1995). Asian American women idealize underweight body sizes (Sanders & Heiss, 1998), idealize a double eyelid and sculpted nose (Kawamura & Rice, 2009; Kaw, 1993), and prefer a smaller breast size than other ethnic groups (Forbes & Frederick, 2008), and Hispanic American women idealize a curvaceous body (de Casanova, 2004). Factors that influence the body image of ethnic minority women include body mass index (Kronenfeld, Reba-Harrelson, Von Holle, Reyes, & Bulik, 2010; Celio, Zabinski, & Wilfley, 2002), socioeconomic status, media, other-sex preferences (Thompson, Sargent, & Kemper, 1996), role of the family (collectivism), and racism (Kawamura, 2011; Thompson, 1994). It is important to acknowledge that the experience of body image is not a monolithic one and there is vast diversity among women and within cultures.

Another issue of interest when conducting body image research with ethnic minority women is the use of silhouette drawings to assess body image attitudes and perceptions. Concern has been raised regarding the cultural appropriateness and validity in using such an instrument with African American populations, which often resemble White morphology (Flynn & Fitzgibbon, 1998). Researchers Pulvers, Lee, Kaur, Mayo, Fitzgibbon, Butler, Hou, and Ahluwalia (2004) conducted a three-prong study to design and validate a more culturally relevant figure rating scale for people with a multiethnic background. A graphic artist was commissioned to draw nine male and female figures. Figures consisted of hair and facial features resembling multiethnic populations, consistency in the graduation of figures particularly at the larger end, and 16 to 40 increments of three BMI points (Pulvers et al, 2004). Figures were examined for content validity with medical experts and for criterion validity with 35 African American public housing residents (57% men, mean age = 42). Results of the study showed a strong correlation with participant BMI ($r = 0.89$ to 0.93 across observers and 0.81 for all participants) and percentage of body fat ($r = 0.77$ to 0.89 across observers and 0.76 for all participants), as well as participants indicating that the new scale looked most like themselves and other African Americans (Pulvers et al, 2004).

Asian American Women and Body Image/Dissatisfaction

Beauty Ideals. Traditionally, the Central Asian countries of Korea, Japan, and China have viewed plumpness as a sign of prosperity, health, and beauty. Physical features common to these populations include an epicanthic eyefold (fold of skin of upper eyelid partially covering the inner corner of the eye); a broad, flat nose; and yellowish skin pigmentation. Theorists have surmised that the idealization of Western beauty standards has led to the desire for a double eyelid, or eye fold, and a sculpted nose. In

metropolitan areas of Korea plastic surgery to create an eyefold is common and glues and tapes are used in Japan to create an eyelid crease (Kawamura and Rice, 2009). Mintz and Kashubeck (1999) revealed that Asian American women were less satisfied with their eyes and faces than European American women. The researchers hypothesized that this dissatisfaction with racial features was due to the presence of unattainable Western ideals of beauty. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons reported that the plastic surgery procedures most requested by Asian American women are eyelid surgery, nose reshaping, and breast augmentation (Kawamura, 2011). Kaw (1993) reported that Asian American women who had undergone plastic surgery for their eyes and noses hoped that this would enhance their beauty and elevate their social status.

Another beauty ideal to consider when addressing the body image of Asian Americans is skin tone. For centuries White skin has been idealized in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean cultures as a sign of upper social-class status, femininity, and purity, and continues to be valued today. Dark skin, on the other hand, has been viewed as a product of a lower-class field laborer, and is therefore not valued traditionally. In other Asian countries (e.g., India) White skin has been related to colonial power and is therefore entangled with messages of control and domination. To complicate matters, tanned skin is valued in the United States, as a sign of health, vitality, and a life of leisure. For Asian Americans, the issue of skin tone may further contribute to an internal struggle between upholding traditional values and trying to assimilate to Western cultural values, possibly exacerbating internalized racism and a devaluing of one's own physical appearance (Kawamura, 2011).

Factors Influencing Body Image. Many traditional Asian values are common in Asian American subgroups. These values include collectivism, promoting modesty, restraint of strong negative emotions, and filial piety (Kawamura & Rice, 2009). Interpersonal harmony within the family and community is greatly valued. Because of this, Asian American women often feel pressure to act in a manner that does not reflect poorly on their families or the larger Asian American community. This pressure is intensified when there are few Asian Americans present in the local community. Similarly, conformity is also valued and looks that deviate too far from the norm can be met with disapproval. Asian American women may also feel pressure to maintain perfect physical appearance not only as a way to avoid public embarrassment and shame, but also as a way to influence marital prospects, which are a sign of social success (Kawamura & Rice, 2009). In relation to modesty and restraining strong negative emotions, Asian American women may be reluctant to acknowledge pride regarding their physical appearance and if they are experiencing body dissatisfaction may be hesitant to disclose this to others, including mental health professionals. The value of filial piety includes duty to respect and honor one's parent. Asian American families tend to be characterized as authoritarian, with a lot of parental control and involvement. Because parental control is the norm and is desired in Asian American families, parental control and criticism may not lead to psychological distress, including body image dissatisfaction, as has been shown in European American populations. Another significant cultural factor for some Asian Americans that may play a role in body image formation is religious values. Some studies show a relationship between body

dissatisfaction and adherence to such religious practices as dietary restrictions and fasting, while others promote a positive body image (Kawamura & Rice, 2009).

A final factor that influences body image for Asian Americans is the experience of racism and negative stereotypes, both of which can lead to internalized racism, low self-esteem, and disapproving of their own physical appearance (Lee & Zahn, 1998). These physical qualities include skin tone, eye shape, body size, and height (Lee & Zahn, 1998; Kawamura, 2001; Kennedy, Templeton, Gandhi, & Gorzalka, 2004). In a meta-analysis of studies on the self-concept of Asian Americans, Lee and Zahn (1998) found that Asian American female youth preferred to be White and when compared to other ethnic minority groups were the most dissatisfied with their physical appearance. Negative stereotypes for Asian American women include being stereotyped as exotic, passive, and sexual objects (Lee & Vaught, 2003).

Theorists have proposed that with acculturation to American values and the internalization of Western body ideals, body image dissatisfaction would increase for Asian Americans (Kawamura, 2011). However, the research has not found this consistent relationship among Asian Americans (Smart, 2010; Kawamura and Rice, 2009). Researchers suggest that the primary contributor to body dissatisfaction and the development of eating disorders is not acculturation but the conflict between traditional and Western values, particularly the shift of gender roles (Jung and Forbes, 2007; Jackson, Keel, & Lee, 2006), as was the case in Reddy and Crowther's (2007) study of body image in South Asian women.

Media influences. Asian American women are presented with a double bind in that they are presented with the body ideals of two cultures—traditional body ideals and

those of dominant American European ideals as represented in the mainstream media. Although investigations on the body image of Asian American women are increasing, little is known regarding how the media affects Asian American body image (Lau, Lum, Chronister, & Forrest, 2006). Researchers express a concern over the lack of Asian American images in the media, the predominance of European American images, and how this may threaten Asian American women's body image and self-concept (Mok, 1998; Hall, 1995). A content analysis of 1,300 TV advertisements in the United States showed twice as many European American models as Asian models, depicting a sense of social invisibility and unimportance by the dominant culture (Taylor & Stern, 1997). In a 2006 (Lau, Lum, Chronister, & Forrest, 2006) study of values acculturation, media internalization, and overall body satisfaction with 59 Asian American female undergraduates in the United States (mean age = 20.43), Asian American women who reported higher internalization of media ideals showed higher body image dissatisfaction. Instruments used in the study included the Overall Body Image and Satisfaction Composite Score (OBIS), comprised of items from the Body Comparison Scale-Female (Thompson, Heinberg, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1991) and Body Parts Satisfaction Scale Bohrnstedt, 1977), Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Scale-3 (Thompson, van den Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg, 2004, Asian Values Scale (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999), and a self-report of hours spent watching TV per week. Results showed significant correlations between values acculturation and body image (r = .33, p <, .05) and media influence and body image (r = .59, p < .05) (Lau et al., 2006). No significant relationship between time spent watching TV and body image existed. The investigators suggest that other media forms not measured in the current study (magazines,

newspapers, as well as type of TV program), may contribute to media influence (Lau et al., 2006).

Hispanic/Latina Women and Body Image/Dissatisfaction

Beauty ideals. Research shows that Hispanic women endorse a body image with more feminine curves than the dominant White ideal (Cheney, 2011) and larger appreciation of diverse body types (Rubin, Fitts, & Becker, 2003). Instead of endorsing a thin ideal, they prefer a curvy body with a round behind, big breasts and hips, and a thin waist (de Casanova, 2004). This has been called a "thick" ideal and is very prevalent in Spanish-language media (Goodman, 2002).

Factors influencing body image. Stereotypically, women from ethnic minority groups, such as African Americans and Hispanic Americans, have been thought to be at reduced risk for eating disorders and body dissatisfaction as a result of endorsing larger, more attainable body ideals than White women (Gluck & Geliebter, 2002; Gilbert, 2003). Contrary to this, recent research has shown that ethnic minority women are less protected against the U.S. majority thin ideal than in previous years (Gordon, Castro, Sitnikov, & Holm-Denoma, 2010; n = 276), and that Latina and White women show similar levels of body dissatisfaction (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). Gordon, Castro, Sitnikov, & Holm-Denoma's (2010) study with White, Latina, and Black college women (n = 276, mean age = 18.88), showed ethnic group differences when assessing perceived ideal body size for one's own ethnic group. Latina women selected a slimmer ethnic body ideal (M = 3.83, SD = .66) when compared to Black women (M = 4.14, SD = .65) and White women selected a slimmer ethnic body ideal (M = 3.20, SD = .73) compared to both Latina and Black women. The sample in this study was 29% White (n = 79), 44% Black (n = 122), and 27% Latina (n = 75) (Gordon et al., 2010). Recent research has shown a strong

association between body dissatisfaction and mental health concerns in Latina girls and women. Further, some studies have shown Hispanic girls to be more dissatisfied with their bodies than White girls (*n* = 939, mean age = 12.4 years, Robinson, 1996; *n* = 177, mean age = 12.81 years, Ayala, Mickens, Galindo, & Elder, 2007). Evans and McConnell (2003) conclude that college-aged ethnic minority women (*n* = 54 Asian, 52 Black, 64 White) may be more at risk for body dissatisfaction when exposed to the mainstream White standard of beauty given that the mainstream ideal may be particularly unattainable for minority women whose physical characteristics are divergent from this ideal.

A contributing factor in this shift, and in influencing body image, is that of acculturation. Whereas acculturation has not been found to increase body dissatisfaction in Asian Americans Smart, 2010; Kawamura and Rice, 2009), acculturation has been found to be influential in the development of eating disorders, body dissatisfaction, and disordered eating in Latina and Mexican American women (Chamarro & Flores-Ortiz, 2000). More specifically, acculturative stress has been correlated with drive for thinness in Hispanic women (Gordon et al, 2010). Further, body dissatisfaction was correlated with bulimic symptoms in Hispanic women with high acculturative stress but not with women who had low acculturative stress (Perez, Voelz, Petit, & Joiner, 2002). Acculturative stress is defined as the maladaptive coping strategies one experiences when trying to fit into a culture different from their culture of origin. In Petti and Cowell's (2011) study of body image, body attitude, acculturation, and weight status in Mexican American women (*n* = 35 women; mean age = 38.7), results showed that higher levels of acculturation and higher weight status (BMI) were not associated with body image

perception. In addition, body image discrepancy did not increase as BMI did, suggesting that perceptions of ideal body size increase as actual body size increases. Participants' ratings on a figural rating scale were positively related to their actual BMI (r = .78, p = .00) (Petti & Cowell, 2011). Petti & Cowell's study raises the question as to why the acceptance of a larger body image in some Hispanic American women occurs and highlights the need for further study in this area.

Another factor influencing the body image of Hispanic women is that of dual identity and the idea that Hispanic women bridge multiple cultures, races, traditions, and communities and are often confronted with two sets of cultural values. Further, Hispanic individuals often identify as bicultural rather than as belonging solely in the mainstream or solely in an ethnic identity, thus creating a complex set of cultural values to negotiate through (Schooler and Lowry, 2011).

Related to the issue of identity is another influence on body image development—the media. Several studies have reported higher body dissatisfaction in Hispanic adolescent and young adults who watch and read more mainstream media than those who do not. The influence of Spanish-language media may be more complex than that of the mainstream media. According to dual role theory, Spanish language media can either inspire assimilation into mainstream values or it can advocate one's ethnic heritage and community (Subervi-Velez, 1986). Some research depicts women feeling that Spanish language media presents an alternative ideal to the mainstream media, while other research reports women feeling exposed to the same restrictive ideal of mainstream media.

The Influence of the Media

The effects of the media on body image, body dissatisfaction, and eating disorders in girls and women have been investigated and debated rigorously, particularly with adolescent populations (Harrison and Heffner, 2006; Harrison and Cantor, 1997; Harrison, 2001; Irving, 1990). Studies have also examined the processes by which messages in the media are interpreted and internalized and compared the effect of internalization versus awareness of sociocultural ideals, as well as scrutinized the effect of self-esteem on body image issues (Tiggemann, 2003; Clay, Vignoles, Dittmar, 2005). However, only a few studies have examined the relationship between the media's messages to adolescent girls and how this affects their overall self-esteem through body image.

Two recent studies have researched the relationship between body image and self-esteem. In a 2005 experimental study of 136 girls in the United Kingdom (aged 11-16), researchers looked at the mediating effects of body image on global self-esteem when exposed to images of ultra-thin models, average-sized models, or no models (Clay, et al., 2005). Using a digital imaging procedure, pictures of attractive models were varied to be either ultra-slim or more average. The results showed that when exposed to models (ultra-thin or average-sized) participants showed both lower body satisfaction and lower self-esteem. There was no difference between viewing ultra-thin or average-sized models. Further, analysis showed that "effects of viewing models on self-esteem were fully accounted for by changes in body dissatisfaction" (Clay, et al., p. 464), showing a causal relationship between the effect of media images on body image and self-esteem.

In 2004, Tiggemann conducted a study on 242 female high school students in an attempt to determine the direction of the relationship between body dissatisfaction and

self-esteem. Self-discrepancy theories of self-esteem predict that body dissatisfaction precedes self-esteem, while several etiological theories of disordered eating predict the reverse (2005). Measuring self-esteem, weight, body mass index (BMI), and body dissatisfaction twice in 2 years, initial results showed that body dissatisfaction at time 1 was related to self-esteem at time 2. Similarly, self-esteem at time 1 was related to body dissatisfaction at time 2. Regression analyses showed that BMI, perceived overweight, and weight satisfaction predicted self-esteem, whereas figure dissatisfaction did not. The study confirmed a correlational relationship between body dissatisfaction and self-esteem, but showed no evidence for temporal precedence or a causal role for self-esteem in body dissatisfaction.

Earlier investigations found that exposure to thin-ideal images resulted in moderate decreases in self-esteem and increases in insecurity, stress, guilt, depression, and body dissatisfaction among women (Irving, 1990; Ogden & Mundray, 1998; Richins, 1991; Stice & Shaw, 1994). Many of these investigations were based on such experiments as brief exposure to thin-ideal images through slides and images from magazines.

Magazine and television exposure. Some research has shown a difference in the effect of magazine exposure versus television exposure on body satisfaction. Marika Tiggemann evaluated the relationship between television and magazine exposure, body dissatisfaction, and eating disorders in 104 female undergraduates (2003). Measures of media exposure included number of different magazines read, total amount of time spent reading fashion magazines, time spent watching soap operas and music videos, and total time spent viewing television. Tiggemann's overall finding was that while both magazine

and television exposure were related to body dissatisfaction, they revealed different underlying processes. The results showed that "magazine exposure was related to internalization, but not awareness of the thin ideal standard, whereas television watching was negatively related to awareness, but not at all to internalization" (Tiggemann, 2003). Television watching linked directly to body dissatisfaction while magazines appeared to work through internalization of the thin ideal. Heavier television watching showed lower self-esteem and less awareness of sociocultural body ideals. Further, the correlation between television watching and body dissatisfaction was stronger for women with low self-esteem, rather than high self-esteem. Researchers Stice, Spangler, and Agras evaluated the effects of longer-term exposure to thin-ideal images on women through 15-month subscriptions to women's fashion magazines. Their findings suggested that exposure to thin-ideal images does not result in lasting adverse main effects, but instead only produces deleterious effects for vulnerable youth (those who initially reported feeling more pressure to be thin and higher levels of dissatisfaction with their bodies) (Stice, Spangler, Agras, 2001).

In a more recent study, Tiggemann examined the relationship between certain aspects of television viewing with the body attitudes of 1,452 eighth through eleventh grade boys and girls (2005). The aspects of television viewing considered were: total exposure, selective viewing of specific genres, and motives for viewing. Selective viewing of specific genres included 20 genre types, which were regrouped into five categories: information, sport, soap operas, music videos, and other entertainment. Motives for viewing were enjoyment, escape from negative affect, and social learning, and reflect the Uses and Gratifications theory of mass communications, which assumes

the viewer is an active consumer who deliberately chooses media to derive different gratifications. Motivations for viewing were examined in relation to body image. In a previous publication, Tiggemann identified three mechanisms that potentially increase the scope of influence of television on body concerns and disordered eating—social comparison, internalization of the thin ideal, and the development of elaborate appearance schemas (2002). These were factored into the 2005 study. Her results showed that girls considered themselves as more overweight, were less satisfied with their weight, and had higher scores on drive for thinness and bulimia. Further, they scored significantly higher on internalization and appearance schemas. Boys watched more television than girls but watched sports, entertainment, and information shows for enjoyment. Girls watched soap operas and music videos and did so for social learning purposes. Total television exposure was not related to any of the body image variables, but frequency of magazine reading was related to internalization, appearance schemas, and drive for thinness. Specifically, watching soap operas was related to drive for thinness and internalization of societal ideals for both boys and girls and to appearance schemas for girls. The watching of music videos was not related to any body image variable for girls, but was related to drive for muscularity for boys.

Harrison and Hefner (2006) studied the effect of media exposure on the current and future body ideals of 257 preadolescent girls at two points in time, one year apart. Using pictorial scales they measured girls' perceived body shape, current body ideal, and future body ideal. Number of hours spent watching television on a weekly basis was measured, as was number of magazines per genre (health and fitness, fashion, and sports). Whereas perceived body shape and current body ideal both increased from wave

one to wave two (in accordance with growth in body mass), future body ideal remained consistent. This reveals that at each wave, study participants hoped for a thinner body in the future and even as their bodies changed their future image did not. Further, at both points of the study, girls chose all body ideals from the leaner end of the scale. In terms of media exposure, television was a stronger predictor of body ideals than was magazine reading and greater television viewing at wave 1 predicted a thinner future body ideal at wave 2. These results, though not causal, display signs of thin-ideal internalization at the preadolescent stage.

Cable programming and music video exposure. Another sociocultural influence that affects the body image and self-esteem of adolescent girls is music videos and cable television, such as Music Television (MTV). Exposure data on time young audiences spend watching MTV vary. One study reported 80% of 9^{th} to 12^{th} graders watching more than 2 hours per day (Sun and Lull, 1986). A more recent study reported 75% of 16-24-year-olds watching MTV, 20% of whom watched for more than 1 hour per day (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2003). Either one of these figures shows adolescents spending a great deal of time being exposed to the messages on MTV, including those of music videos. A meta-analysis of research on the sexual content found in music videos and MTV reported that 60% of videos on MTV feature sexual content (Baxter et al., 1985), 47% of videos depict sexual references (Greeson and Williams, 1986), and 26.3% of music videos feature some sexuality or eroticism (DuRant, Rome, et al., 1997). A particular type of sexual content routinely shown in music videos is seductive clothing—36% of which is found on women as opposed to 4.2% on men (Seidman, 1992). Another aspect of cable television is reality-based shows. In a 2002 content analysis of 36 hours of

cable reality programming, it was found that sexual content occurs 3.9 times per hour—with a breakdown of sexual dialogue occurring 2.9 times per hour and sexual activity once per hour. This rate is more than twice that of reality programs on broadcast television per hour (1.6 per hour) (Parents Television Council).

In relation to sexual content in music videos, a more specific aspect to consider is the way in which female sexuality is represented and how this influences adolescent viewers. Media Studies specialists Railton and Watson (2005) contend that pop music videos, with a primary commercial agenda, strive to display a sexualized body that can be seen as an object of desire or fantasy and that the representations of White women and Black women are very different. In a very thorough comparison and analysis of Kylie Minogue's "Can't Get You Out of My Head" video and Beyonce Knowles' "Baby Boy" video, they show how White women are defined in a more asexual manner while Black women are defined in a more hypersexual manner. Further, Railton and Watson (2005) suggest that Black women are portrayed as primitive, animalistic, uncontrolled, and uncontrollable, while White women are portrayed as controlled, restrained, and unavailable, even when performing acts of seduction and sexual attraction.

Section III: In-depth Review of Studies on Body Image and Culture

In a recent literature search on the terms body image, body dissatisfaction, and body satisfaction using the *Academic Search Complete, Anthropology Plus, Dissertation Abstracts International, ERIC, JSTOR*, and *PsychInfo* databases, 12,875 articles were found. When restricted to quantitative, longitudinal, or empirical studies, this number was 8,676. When restricted further by age of the population studied (young adulthood 18-29 years old), the number of articles dropped to 2,441. When the literature search included

the terms body image and culture the number of articles was 678. In their meta-analytic review of articles on ethnicity and body dissatisfaction among women in the United States, Grabe and Hyde (2006) found similar numbers. Their initial search resulted in 5,773 studies. After eliminating studies that only evaluated one ethnic/racial group, those that were not conducted on a U.S. sample, and those that did not have a relevant measure of body dissatisfaction the total number included in their review was 438 (Grabe & Hyde, 2006).

In many quantitative studies participants are asked to endorse ratings of symptomatology on assessment tools that are designed to categorize responses and measure prevalence. Some quantitative studies are designed to test the direction or path of a process. While these investigations have added to the study of body image and body dissatisfaction, they have at times presented confusing results (Grabe & Hyde, 2006), presented misleading findings due to Western-based criteria (Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001), and used body dissatisfaction symptomatology based on Caucasian women (Mumford, 1993; Ritenbaugh, Shisslak, Teufel, & Leonard-Green, 1996). Quantitative studies also tend to assess weight or general appearance concerns, rather than eliciting specific appearance concerns (Altabe, 1998). Some researchers propose that psychological research methodologies actually misrepresent and therefore add to the confusion regarding the body image experiences of women of color, specifically African American women (Poran, 2006). Two quantitative studies on body image, body dissatisfaction, and disordered eating in women from diverse cultural backgrounds are reviewed below, as summarized in Table 1.

There is currently a dearth of qualitative studies on women's body image/dissatisfaction by culture or ethnicity, particularly with college-aged women. A review of literature investigating women's body image/dissatisfaction by culture or ethnicity revealed a total of 156 studies. Of these, 15 were qualitative and only four pertained to college-aged women. Of those considered qualitative, most compared one culture with the dominant Caucasian body ideal rather than conducting comparisons among several cultures/ethnicities. Not one qualitative case study on body image and ethnicity in college-aged women from diverse cultural backgrounds using a semi-structured interview was found. Four qualitative studies of body image and culture/ethnicity with college-aged women are reviewed below, as represented in Table 2.

Table 1: Quantitative Studies of Body Image and Body Dissatisfaction in College-Aged Women

Researchers	***n***	**Ethnic Breakdown**	**Findings**		
Mintz & Kashubeck (1999)*	114 men 138 women	Caucasian women (N = 105) Caucasian men (N = 80) Asian American women (N = 33) Asian American men (N = 34)	*Variable* Dieting behavior Body image satisfaction • Height • Eyes • Overall face • Breasts/chests • Arms Self-esteem • General self-esteem • Weight as source	*Asian women* 1.79 3.67 4.33 3.91 3.55 3.64 4.28 3.81	*Caucasian women* 2.39 4.63 5.10 4.45 4.28 4.27 4.96 4.15
Wildes, Emery, & Simons (2001)	16,214 women	Caucasian/White (N = 9,937) Black or African decent (N = 5,997) Asian (N = 1,004) Other ethnic groups (N = 843)	*Comparison of White &Black samples* Eating disturbance/body dissatisfaction Body dissatisfaction Dietary restraint Lower reported weight Smaller ideal body *Comparison of White & Asian samples* Eating disturbance/body dissatisfaction Body dissatisfaction Lower reported weight Smaller ideal body Weight and dieting concerns *Comparison of White & Other samples* Eating disturbance/body dissatisfaction Body dissatisfaction Drive for thinness Eating disorder Weight and dieting concerns		*Mean Effect Size* .39 .46 .93 .61 .81 -.05 -.29 -.42 -.27 -.08 .33 .50 .37 .32 .37

*Measures used: Weight Management, Eating, and Exercise Habits Questionnaire (Ousley, 1986); Body Parts Satisfaction Scale (Bohrnstedt, 1977); Supplemental Body Image Questionnaire (Mintz & Betz's, 1988); Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965)

Table 2: Qualitative Studies of Body Image in College-Aged Women

Researchers	**Methodology**	***N***	**Ethnic Breakdown**	**Findings**
Kelch-Oliver & Ancis (2011)	• Focus groups • Semi-structured interviews	16	African American (N = 11) African (N = 1) Black (N = 2) Caribbean (N = 2)	Themes • Standards of beauty within Black culture • Interpersonal influences on body image and beauty ideal • External influences on body image and beauty ideal • Black identity and self-affirmation • Beauty reflective of internal attributes/strengths • Journey toward self-acceptance
Poran (2006)	• Grounded theory • Focus groups • Open approach	15	Black	Themes • Critique of thinness as part of the beauty standard in America • Perception of pressures through different standards held by men of diverse ethnic backgrounds • Competition among young women • Perception of being misrepresented and essentialized by dominant cultural images of women
Cheney (2011)	• Ethnography • Semi-structured interview • Body narratives	18	White (N = 7) Hispanic (N = 3) Persian (N = 1) Filipino (N = 1) Jamaican (N = 1) Vietnamese (N = 1) Peruvian (N = 1) Black Puerto Rican (N = 1) Indian Italian (N = 1) Asian Indian (N = 1)	Themes • Body (dis)satisfaction linked to feelings of belonging and acceptance • Accepting the slender White body ideal • Rejecting the slender White body ideal • Slender body as social mobility
Hesse-Biber, Livingstone, Ramirez, Barko, & Johnson	• Grounded theory • Open-ended, non-structured interview • Focus groups	34	African American Black Haitian Biracial	Four racial identity groups: • White enough (n = 3) • Black and proud (n = 18) • Floater (n = 8) • Bridge builder (n = 5)

Researchers Mintz and Kashubeck (1999) examined the gender and race differences of a number of body image and disordered eating variables in Asian American and Caucasian college students. The sample size was 252 undergraduate students and was composed of 185 Caucasian students (80 men, 105 women) and 67 Asian American students (34 men, 33 women). The age of participants ranged from 17 to 28 years, with a mean age of 18.6 years. Participants were recruited through introductory psychology classes. Variables measured included weight control strategies, body satisfaction, accuracy of perceptions of weight category, concerns with and impact of weight/appearance, weight discrepancy, binging behavior, and self-esteem (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999).

Results revealed differences between Caucasian and Asian American women in four of the seven constructs examined—weight control behaviors, body image satisfaction, binging behavior, and self-esteem. The examination of weight control behaviors showed that of the weight control behaviors measured, the most common one employed by both Asian American and Caucasian women was dieting behavior, with Caucasian women reporting greater use of dieting behaviors (2.39 on scale of 1-5; *SD* = .67) than Asian American women (1.79 on scale of 1-5; *SD* = .54). In terms of body satisfaction, ANCOVAs showed differences between Caucasian and Asian American women on five body image variables: height ($F = 16.95$, $p < .0005$), eyes ($F = 12.26$, $p < .001$), overall face ($F = 10.77$, $p < .001$), breasts/chest ($F = 10.43$, $p < .002$), and arms ($F = 10.02$, $p < .002$) with Asian American women showing more dissatisfaction with each body area than Caucasian women in the study (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999). On the construct of self-esteem, Asian American and Caucasian women reported differing levels

of global self-esteem ($F = 7.31$, $p < .008$), with Asian American women reporting lower levers of self-esteem (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999).

While Mintz and Kashubeck's study found racial differences to exist between Asian American and Caucasian women, they could not explain definitively why these differences exist and offered potential explanations based on previous research and theory. One such explanation for the dissatisfaction with such individual body parts as eyes and face is the devaluation of racially defined facial features in American culture offered by Hall (1995) and Root (1990). Another possible explanation for this dissatisfaction offered by Hall (1995) is the minority status of Asian American women and having facial features that are contrary to the White ideal. Mintz and Kashubeck (1999) identify the need to continue studying cultural differences between women, particularly related to individual body parts. They highlight the following areas for future research: relationships between acculturation, cultural identity, and satisfaction with racially defined features, not just for Asian American women, but ethnic minority women in general; and more closely investigating the differences in dieting behaviors between Caucasian and ethnic minority women with a particular focus on the relationship between lower torso body dissatisfaction and weight control strategies. Limitations of the study include the use of self-report data, inability to generalize findings beyond a college population, and the small sample size of Asian American participants. A final, yet important, limitation of the study is the use of measures that were not normed on Asian Americans. For example, the Body Parts Satisfaction Scale (BPSS, Bohrnstedt, 1977) was used by Mintz & Kashubeck. However, they did not use the full scale (24-items) and chose to use 12 items that involved body parts that were alterable by weight loss methods

and represented what they considered to be potentially racially defined features (e.g., nose, eyes) (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999). While the BPSS was revalidated for construct and factorial validity and for use with ethnic populations including Asian American and Mexican American samples (Petrie, Tripp, & Harvey, 2002), again, the full scale was not used. Petrie, Tripp, & Harvey (2002) only used 14 of the 24 items and excluded items pertaining to eyes, teeth, and chin. This researcher contends that in order to understand how to incorporate cultural sensitivity and racially defined items into a standardized measure one must first understand how these aspects play into the formation of body image with women from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In a meta-analytic review, Wildes, Emery, and Simons (2001) examined 35 studies of body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance in White and non-White populations. The purpose of the review was to determine whether or not cultural factors influence the development of eating disturbances and to look at the relationship between ethnicity, culture, and eating disorders. Specific goals included determining the influence of ethnic group membership on the prevalence of eating disorders, determining the influence of the acceptance of general Western and white culture on the acceptance of thinness and weight-specific norms of Western and white culture, and examining rates of eating pathology among samples of ethnic minorities (Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001).

An initial 90 studies were located through *PsychInfo*, *Psychlit*, and *Medline* database searches of studies on body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance in non-White populations. Of these, 35 met the four inclusion criteria determined by the authors: containing at least one sample of non-white individuals and a comparison sample of White women, including female participants in both control and experimental groups,

including at least one quantitative measure of body dissatisfaction or eating disturbance, and the presentation of data had to allow for the calculation of an effect size (Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001). The collection of these studies resulted in the inclusion of 17,781 participants. Of these 16, 214 were female and the range of ages was 9.51 years to 73 years, with the mean age being 22.42 years. The breakdown of participants by ethnic identity was: 9,937 white or Caucasian; 5,997 Black or African descent; 1,004 Asian; and 843 belonging to other ethnic groups. Participants listed as Black were originally listed as African American (5,441), Ghanian (394), and African Caribbean (207). Participants classified as Asian were originally listed as Asian American (324) and included Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Filipino origins. Those classified as other in the Wildes, Emery, and Simons study, were originally identified as Arab (110), Hispanic (138), Russian (95), and non-White (500) (Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001).

Effect sizes were calculated using Rosenthal (1984) and Rosenthal and Rosnow's (1991) formulas. *F* ratios, *t* values, and chi-square values were transformed into correlation coefficients then converted to Cohen's *d* values using Rosenthal's formulas. Both significant and nonsignificant findings were transformed. Non-significant findings were assigned an effect size of zero, assuming a p value of .50. Outcome measures of body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance were coded into eight variables: body dissatisfaction, drive for thinness, smaller ideal body, weight and dieting concerns, dietary restraint, eating disorder, and bulimia. Effect sizes for each variable were calculated and compared separately. In addition, one composite measure, called eating disturbance/body dissatisfaction, was created by collapsing variable effect sizes together, thus allowing a quantitative comparison of eating and dieting pathology in white and

non-white samples between all the studies in the meta-analysis (Wildes, Emery, & Simons, 2001).

General findings from the Wildes et al. (2001) study show: (1) in more than three fourths of the studies included in the meta-analysis, white samples reported greater body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance than non-White samples and (2) across all outcome measures and all studies, White samples scored approximately one-quarter of a standard deviation higher than non-White samples. A mean effect size of .29 (*SD* = .41) for all outcome measures of body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance was found and the median effect size was .34. Specific findings regarding the eight body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance variables showed weak differences between white and non-white samples in the areas of bulimia ($M = .19$, $SD = .32$, $p < .001$), eating disorder ($M = .15$, $SD = .35$, $p < .01$), and weight and dieting concerns ($M = .16$, $SD = .33$, $p < .001$) (Wildes, et al., 2001). Specific findings showed larger differences between White and non-White samples on the variables of smaller ideal body ($M = .63$, $SD = .46$, $p < .001$), body dissatisfaction ($M = .41$, $SD = .37$, $p < .001$), dietary restraint ($M = .41$, $SD = .73$, $p < .001$), and drive for thinness ($M = .33$, $SD = .43$, $p < .001$). Sample sizes for some of these variables were quite small with studies of smaller ideal body and dietary restraint numbering six each. Findings regarding the relationship between acculturation and eating disturbance reported no relationship, with weak mean effect sizes ($M = .03$, $SD = .36$). Across all studies analyzed, the relationship between acculturation and eating pathology did not significantly differ between acculturated and nonacculturated women (Wildes, et al, 2001).

When comparing effect sizes for Whites against Blacks, Asians, and Others, the ethnicity of the non-White group played a significant role in the direction and magnitude for effect sizes in every outcome category. Effect sizes were largest when comparing Black and White samples and White samples showed more symptoms of body dissatisfaction and eating pathology than Black samples. Moderate to very large differences were shown between Whites and Blacks on the following measures: smaller ideal body (M = .81, SD =.16, p < .001), body dissatisfaction (M = .46, SD = .34, p < .001), lower reported weight (M = .61, SD = .18, p < .001), and dietary restraint (M = .93, SD = .34, p < .001). Of particular interest is the result when comparing White with Asian samples. Effect sizes were smaller and some were negative rather than positive, showing that on certain variables, Asian samples reported more symptoms of eating disturbance than White samples. This was the case for the following variables: weight and dieting concerns (M = -.08, SD = .54, p < .01), body dissatisfaction (M = -.29, p < .05), smaller ideal body (M = -.27, p < .05), and lower reported weight (M = -.42, p < .001). When taking ethnicity into account, results from this study showed that membership in a specific ethnic group may make an individual more vulnerable to developing disordered eating behaviors. Further, Blacks and Asians differ considerably in their eating-related psychopathology.

Concerns and limitations of the Wildes et al. (2001) study include the use of Western diagnostic tools on non-Western populations; the wide variety of women included in Black, Asian, and non-White samples; and the inability to draw conclusions for non-Black and non-Asian women (Hispanic, Arab, Native American) who were grouped together under the "other" category. Wildes et al. (2001) suggest that the

differences and similarities reported in the study may be a result of "inappropriate definitions of dysfunction in non-white groups" (p. 542). Another relevant issue raised by the study is the role of such sociocultural variables as ethnic group membership in the formation of subclinical eating disorders. While it appears that cultural factors play a role in this, the study is not able to address how this occurs and what the causes may be. The authors recommend that future research determine how differences between White and non-White samples develop and to understand more thoroughly the relationship between culture, ethnicity, and eating disturbance, highlighting the relevance of the current proposed study.

Karia Kelch-Oliver and Julie Ancis (2011) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the challenges and image-related experiences of Black women. Participants were 16 female graduate students ranging in age from 23 to 34 years of age (M = 28.4 years). The racial/ethnic breakdown of participants was: African American (n = 11), African (n = 1), Black (n = 2), and Caribbean (n = 2) (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). Focus groups and individual interviews were conducted with participants to examine how such factors as family, romantic relationships, society, peers, and the media effect body image experiences. Questions focused on culture-specific body image issues. Individual interviews were conducted first so responses could be used to develop themes and questions for the focus groups. Data analysis methods included transcription of individual interviews, coding of interview transcripts, creation of interview themes, creation of focus group questions, and transcription of focus group data. Using a peer debriefing method, independent analysis was conducted by each researcher first. Each analysis was then evaluated by the other researcher and checked for accuracy and further analysis. The

researchers then performed a joint review of the transcripts and creation of major themes (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011).

Results of the study revealed six themes. Each theme and its major corresponding findings are related below.

1. Standards of beauty within Black culture. Participants rejected the White thin ideal and expressed an ideal that valued being shapely and curvaceous. They did not use the thin ideal in their self-evaluations and were more concerned with maintaining a shapely figure. Shape mattered more than weight and weight gain was accepted as long as shape was maintained.
2. Interpersonal influences on body image and beauty ideal. While family had an influence on the women during adolescence, the most powerful interpersonal influence in adulthood was validation from men/boys as to their level of attractiveness. Participants also acknowledged a tendency to compare themselves to their female peers in terms of their ability to attract the attention of men.
3. External influences on body image and beauty ideal. Participants indicated several external influences as having an effect on body image. The most prominent of these was the media and what participants considered to be a "narrow portrayal" (p. 351) of Black women in the media. They expressed a lack of representation of the more "everyday Black woman" (p. 351) and more of a depiction of White standards of beauty. For example, Black women in the media tend to be light skinned, with long wavy hair, and on

the thinner side of the average Black woman. Participants further reflected a lack of appreciation by the media of the Black community's acceptance of a "wide array of body types" (p.351) as well as some facial features and physical characteristics. They even indicated feeling that these features and characteristics (buttocks and lips) were appreciated on other races. Another external influence was the environment or community participants grew up in. These included schools settings, such as attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and the setting of their reference group, being either White or Black.

4. Black identity and self-affirmation. While participants revealed pressure related to their physical appearance as Black women (hair, nose), this theme really focused on a wider feeling of not being accepted by society. Existing in the face of racism and oppression, some of the women expressed a need to "project self-love" (p.351) explaining that they feel very unappreciated as women and as Black women. They indicated that there is a level of internalization they don't see their White friends facing.
5. Beauty reflective of internal attributes/strengths. Participants revealed that society's definition of beauty relies on physical attributes, while their definition of beauty involved strength, confidence, self-assurance, and health. They also expressed the belief that Black women have a unique strength as a result of the burden they carry as Black women.
6. Journey towards self-acceptance. Most participants revealed a level of self-acceptance that included appreciating an aspect of themselves other

than their bodies. This self-acceptance was the result of a journey toward confidence and not valuing external influences as to their self-worth. Most were confident with their bodies and some even expressed the strength in having an internal locus of control versus external locus of control.

The strengths of this study include expanding body image researcher's understanding of African American beauty ideals. It is particularly salient because it highlights that, contrary to studies suggesting that Black women are protected from the beauty ideals of the mainstream European American culture (Arora, 2003; Franko & Striegel-Moore, 2002), they are susceptible to the influence of multiple factors that result in an internal struggle and frustration. These factors include external messages regarding beauty, trying to adhere to standard of beauty prescribed by Black men, and conflicting messages from family, peers, and the media. It further points out that while beauty standards may be different for Black women, they are affected by those beauty standards being dictated by the men in their lives. Kelch-Oliver and Ancis (2011) emphasize that it is important for therapists and researchers to understand the complexities facing Black women. They recommend shifting the focus away from weight-specific issues to other cultural standards such as skin color, hair texture, facial features, and body shape/size. Another strength of the study involves the use of participant quotes in presenting findings. Hearing the actual words the women used to express their struggles and challenges around body image is invaluable. The reader gets the full impact of how the women move through and experience their worlds, thus increasing understanding and perspective taking.

The weaknesses and limitations of this study are lack of generalizability due to the level of education and socioeconomic status (middle class) of the study sample and the use of the focus group methodology. The researchers indicate that at times, instead of responding genuinely, the focus group participants seemed to be "responding to each other's comments" (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011, p. 356) instead of the interviewer's questions. For this reason, the current study did not use a focus group methodology and employed individual interviews.

Indications for future studies include directly investigating the relationship between race and body image, as well as socioeconomic status and education level.

Maya Poran (2006) conducted a qualitative study using focus groups as part of a larger, multi-method study to investigate the body image and social pressures of young Black women.

The qualitative portion of the study used a generative theory approach, in the grounded theory vein, using open conversation rather than pre-set questions (Poran, 2006). This methodology was used so participants could collaborate together to form questions and conclusions in the exploration of the relationship between "women, the body, and social imagery" (p. 741). Specific research questions were:

1. How do young Black women experience their bodies?
2. How do these young women perceive and experience images of women from U.S. fashion magazines?
3. Are women's experiences of their bodies related to the representations of ethnicity in U.S. magazines? (p. 741)

Participants consisted of 15 Black female undergraduate students of varying body types and sizes, skin tones, and skin shades. Participants were of traditional college age. No additional information on racial breakdown or identification was provided. Three focus groups were conducted, each with three to eight participants. Focus groups were participant-led and co-facilitated by the author and another researcher. When a particular theme was identified by one focus group and then emerged in a later group the facilitators would identify this and ask for elaboration. In this way focus groups were able to influence each other and inform the generative process. Focus group sessions lasted 60-90 minutes and were broken into two phases. In the first phase participants were given an index card and asked to write what they hate and love about their bodies. These were collected, shuffled, and redistributed to group members who then read the cards out loud for general discussion. In the second phase participants were shown photographs of women from popular magazines (mounted on poster board) and asked to discuss. Data analysis methods included open coding and constant comparison processes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Transcripts for each session were examined alone and then in relation to each other to identify shared and distinct topics. Sessions were analyzed for themes, key words, topics, flow of conversation, and shifts of conversation topics (Poran, 2006).

Results yielded a greater degree of discussion than expected by the researchers and the four main themes below. Overall, participants revealed not feeling protected, but rather "facing a barrage of pressures from many sources" (Poran, 2006, p. 743).

1. Critique of thinness as part of the beauty standard in America. Participants in this study revealed not only an awareness of the thin ideal as a standard but frustration as to why this is the standard. They asked:

Who made us think that fat wasn't' attractive you know? I mean, who said it wasn't attractive?...they're telling us to be a size one is when like the average people are like a size 12, something's wrong, and why does small necessarily mean better? You know. It's like people they wanna have smaller feet that wanna have smaller hands…they generally wanna have smaller everything. Why is smaller necessarily better, I don't know. (p.744)

The standard was acknowledged and critiqued by the participants but instead of translating to immunity this becomes an "active negotiation" (p. 744). When they began to examine "who made us think that" (p. 744) they answered with magazines, TV, and men.

2. Perception of pressures through different standards held by men of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Rather than serving as a protective factor, participants in Poran's study revealed that the preferences of men of different ethnicities (Black, White) were a source of frustration and confusion. The women felt pressure to be Barbie-like (thin waist, long hair, large breasts, small hips) from White men and pressure to be more voluptuous from Black men. They found the preferences of men to be a source of sexism and oppression and that their primary concern "must be to look beautiful for men" (p. 745).
3. Competition among young women. Women in this study revealed that other women, friends or strangers, served as a source of competition and intimidation. They expressed women being highly critical of one another, other women as "bodies to compare against/with" (p. 746), and that even

viewing a beautiful woman (stranger or friend) could ruin their entire day. This competition with other women, known or unknown to them, led to such powerful emotions as hating other women who receive positive feedback due to their appearance. This shows not only a strong inclination toward social comparison processes but a deep internalization of beauty ideals.

4. Perception of being misrepresented and essentialized by dominant cultural images of women. This theme applied to the representation of black women in the popular media. Participants identified being included in the standards of media beauty as "positive in a negative kind of way" (p. 748) in that there are various categories of ugly or pretty and women have to fit into one of these categories. They described this as a form of "being tricked" (p. 748) because there is still a lot of stereotyping (of what is pretty) and advertising is really not about the product being sold but "what we're trying to live up to" (p. 748). Participants further expressed that instead of feeling included in media representations of beauty, they felt this was a "de-identifying experience" (p. 748). Instead of seeing oneself in the media, the participants expressed seeing what they have to try to live up to. Lastly, the participants acknowledged sexism in media portrayals of women, such as in beer commercials. They commented on the need to show skimpily clad women (i.e., in bikinis) and took note of the size of particular body parts (i.e., thighs) and their facial expressions. They felt that many women in advertisements showed the same facial expression women in pornography show and that if you just removed all the clothes in the advertisement, it could be a picture in Playboy magazine.

This also included a conversation pertaining to skin tone and how models are made to look darker, or too pale, or skin tone that is too even.

There are very few weaknesses in this study and the only one that can really be identified is the use of focus groups. Some researchers believe participants in focus groups are too influenced by each other and therefore their responses may be swayed in one direction or another. It appears that one of the groups may have only been comprised of three participants, which is a relatively small group. The strengths of this study include the use of an open approach and results that strongly contradict beliefs regarding African American women and body image. Through the open approach, use of notecards, conversation, and visual stimuli from media, the participants were able to access and express their cognitive and affective components of body image. In several of the discussions women begin with a cognitive, disconnected perspective but as they openly discuss whatever the topic is (media, men, and other women) they access their affective perspective and begin to reveal their true experiences. For example, in terms of the "misrepresentation" theme, the participants' awareness progresses from "positive," to "positive to a certain point," to "positive in a negative way" (p. 748). Another strength of the study was the thorough analysis procedures used. Through open coding and constant comparison processes, each focus group session was examined for themes, key words, topics, flow of conversation, and shifts of conversation topics (Poran, 2006).

Ann Cheney (2011) conducted an ethnographic study with 18 ethnically diverse college women to unveil experiences related to the "social meaning of the body" (p. 1349). Specific areas of focus included: family life; communities they grew up in; education, adolescence and social interactions; involvement with peers; and being

exposed to more than one culture. This included exploring the influence of parents' native cultures, participants'' own native cultures (if born outside of the U.S.), and American culture. Cheney (2011) collected "body narratives" through the use of semi-structured interviews which explored participants' relationship to food and their bodies, women's perceived beauty ideals, and dieting practices. The term "ethnically diverse women" was used to represent the varied ways in which the participants self-identified ethnicity, which included White (n = 7), Hispanic (n = 3), Persian (n = 1), Filipino (n = 1), Jamaican (n = 1), Vietnamese (n = 1), Peruvian (n = 1), Black Puerto Rican (n = 1), Indian Italian (n = 1), and Asian Indian (n = 1) women. The social class of each participant was also captured and included working class (n = 1), upper-middle class (n = 2), and middle class (n = 15) (Cheney, 2011).

Data collection methods included recording facial expressions, tones, unspoken communication, demeanor, and verbatim quotes throughout the interviews. Field notes were transcribed "as soon as possible" and expanded upon "immediately" (p. 1349), including the interviewer's own impressions and interpretations, and the emotional condition of the female participants before, during, and after the interview (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). Data analysis included a critical and reflective feminist approach, essential when conducting qualitative research with ethnic minorities (Adamson & Donovan, 2002). This method of analysis is relational and allows researchers to use their empathy to understand participants more fully (Tolman & Szalacha, 1999). Data analysis also involved analyzing the "contradictions, conflicts, and struggles" (p. 1350) present in the participants' lives, which allowed underlying patterns and theories to arise. When

saturation of themes was not reached in the analysis process, additional interviews were conducted until saturation was reached. Results included:

1. Body (dis)satisfaction was intricately connected to feelings of belonging and acceptance.
2. Accepting the slender "White" body ideal. Several participants expressed the desire for the body image of the slender White woman and reproduced "an Anglicized image of beauty" (p. 1351) in which the ideal woman had light-colored straight hair, light skin color (white, tan, or not-too-dark), and light eyes (blue, green, or hazel). Participants who endorsed this ideal were also aware of the difficulty in achieving this ideal, stating that individuals must engage in "extravagant" (p. 1351), expensive beauty practices that require the financial resources as well as leisure time and knowledge of the practices, such as strict dieting, exercise, and hair dying. Participants were also aware of the power and prestige that comes with the slender White ideal. A Puerto Rican participant included whiteness in her beauty ideal, stating that the ideal woman "should have a natural tan, not too dark and not too light; green or hazel eyes; and straight hair" (p. 1351). One of the White participants expanded this beauty ideal by relating slenderness with social, sexual, intellectual, personal, and economic success (Cheney, 20110). "Skinny girls are always portrayed as the sexy, intelligent, successful, and in-control woman." The chubby or fat girl is depicted as "fat, funny, and clumsy" (p. 1351).
3. Rejecting the slender "White" body ideal. Some participants rejected the slender body ideal, mocked it, and claimed that White women who follow this ideal are

weak, “like clones” (p. 1352), and succumb to the pressures of the media. They expressed that in the United States, the emphasis is placed on physical outer beauty and “the White girl is tall and skinny and blond” and “perfect” (p. 1352) and has a firm body and flat stomach. Participants who immigrated to the United States from a foreign country (Jamaica, Peru) explained that their countries not only preferred a more curvaceous body image but inner beauty and how a woman presents herself through her hair, attitude, and overall fashion. “Minorities are much more accepting of bigger bodies. Blacks and Hispanics want big butts, hips, a different body type altogether” (p.1352). Some of the participants expressed pride in rejecting the notion that they should reshape their bodies to fit the cultural ideal and in advocating a more extensive and expressive notion of female beauty (Cheney, 2011).

4. Slender body as social mobility. Some participants desired a slender body, sought to lose weight, and go down in clothing sizes, realizing a currency in the slender body as a way to gain acceptance from peers and American society in general. One participant who lived in Iran until the age of five and moved alone to the United States at the age of 17, described in detail her development of anorexia in her pursuit of thinness.

   I didn’t worry about what anorexia could do to me. I saw magazines and models and saw the perfect body. In America fashion and body image are intertwined….American standards are perfection. I went from a size 6 to easily fitting into a size 2, and before I went home for the summer, I was buying a size 0. (p. 1354)

> The women in this category expressed being preoccupied with being thin as a way to fit in and avoid alienation. The thinner they became the more praise and acceptance they received from peers and members of the opposite sex. Another participant wished she had grown up with more of a connection to her Spanish heritage, rather than being so Americanized. This would have given her more freedom and less worry about her physical appearance.

A potential weakness of this study was the lack of using a voice recorder, as well as not transcribing field notes immediately. It seems that some time could have elapsed between the interview and the researcher's write up of the interview. Did she lose any data through this process? Further, because Cheney did not audio record the sessions she had to focus on numerous facets of the interview at the same time. Did she catch everything? Was it off-putting to the participants that she was so busy writing while they were attempting to have a conversation with her? In the article, Cheney explains her rationale for using this method of data collection as "maintaining the integrity of women's narratives" (p. 1349) but this researcher feels that using an audio recorder would have reached this objective better. Another apparent weakness of this study is how it was reported on, which seems too unstructured. While the author claims that using the reflective analysis process allowed her to become critically aware of her subjectivity and the influence this may have had on her interpretation, she does not identify whether this happened, and if so, specifically how. Cheney uses such broad statements and relates her own work so often to other studies that it is hard to understand what findings resulted from her original work.

The strengths of this study include the heterogeneity of the population studied and the separation of participants into first generation and second generation immigrants. The findings are significant in that they expand how women from ethnically diverse backgrounds conceptualize beauty and use their bodies as a currency to avoid alienation and oppression and improve their social standings. The findings also offer a way to reframe the perspective from which eating disturbances are viewed. Rather than as an expression of control over one's body, Cheney proposes that eating disturbances be viewed as an issue of one's social position and relatedness to others, particularly for women from diverse ethnicities who use their bodies to "negotiate power imbalances that re embedded in everyday social relationships shaped by their ethnic and socioeconomic statuses" (p. 1356).

Hesse-Biber, Livingstone, Ramirez, Barko, and Johnson (2010) conducted a qualitative study investigating the body image and racial identity among Black women at a predominantly White college. The purpose of the study was to examine how participants' racial identity, self-esteem, and body image were affected by such factors as school experiences and family. These factors also included who participants identified with when growing up, whether racial identity was affirmed in their social circles, whether or not they reported positive or negative feelings about body image, and how their racial identity converged with their perception of their body image (Hesse-Biber et al. 2010).

The sample consisted of 34 Black women recruited using snowball sampling technique at a predominantly White college. Participants were both undergraduate and graduate students from various disciplines (political science, communication, nursing,

social work, chemistry, and mathematics), ranging in age from 18 to their early twenties. Participants self-identified as African American, Black, Haitian, and biracial. Most were from the United States but one was from Switzerland and one was from St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. While there was no structured list of questions for the interviews the investigators did touch on a set of domain areas: family, school environment, racial identity, body image. The interviews were flexible and each one followed a unique path, focusing on what was most salient for each individual participant. The interviewer's role was to help participants elaborate on the topics that were most relevant to them. A set of flexible guiding questions were used, some of which were: "What has it been like for you transitioning from high school to college?", "What does the term body image mean to you?", "Can you tell me about your views on dieting?", and "Tell me how you go about caring for your appearance each day." (p. 701). Analysis of data collected involved: iterative data collection, data analysis, and theory generation. The researchers used reflexivity, memo-writing, and coding with the assistance of the computer-based analysis program HyperRESEARCH (Hesse-Biber et al., 2010). An additional step was conducted to check for validity of findings from the individual interviews. Hesse-Biber, et al, conducted two interpretative focus groups with a different set of Black participants recruited from the same college as the as initial respondents.

Initial codes found were "perceived belonging," "raised primarily in white culture," and "strong identification with white peers during early schooling" which contributed to the focused code "sense of belonging" (p. 701). Four groups of women emerged from the analysis. These groups differed in terms of sense of racial identity and body image satisfaction. Group 1 was identified as "White Enough" and was comprised

of three participants. They identified with White beauty ideals and strove to reach the thin ideal. Two of the women in Group 1 were dissatisfied with their bodies and one was satisfied. Women in Group 1 also reported growing up in predominantly White neighborhoods and going to mostly White schools, and self-identifying with White culture. They reported not shifting their racial identity in the transition to college, feeling accepted by their White peers, and having high self-esteem (Hesse-Biber et al., 2010). Group 2 was identified as "Black and Proud" and consisted of 18 study participants. Women in this group had a high sense of body esteem and associated strongly with Black beauty ideals that concerned hair, skin tone, and "thickness" (p. 704). Women in this group had a heightened awareness of racial identity, identified with Black culture, and did not shift their racial identity while in college (Hesse-Biber et al., 2010). Group 3 was labeled as "Floaters: Not Black Enough, Not White Enough" and consisted of eight study participants. While these participants identified with both Black and White cultures, they vacillated between the two conceptions of beauty and did not adhere to the body image ideals of either group. While open to diversity, these participants kept their Black and White friends separate, experienced low self-esteem and poor body image if their Black or White racial identities were not validated, and felt like "outsiders" (p. 705) if their Black or White peers did not fully accept them. Group 4 was labeled "Bridge Builders" and consisted of 5 participants. While women in this group did not ascribe to a particular racial identity, they perceived race "as a primary means in their development of self-concept and self-esteem" (p. 707). They tended to report high body satisfaction and did not identify with the beauty ideals of any particular culture. Further, these participants

tended to "build connections between their friends of different races and cultures" (p. 707).

The limitations of the Hesse-Biber et al. study include small sample size and the potential that using a snowball technique resulted in an imbalance of biased participants (belonging to the same group). Two other potential limitations are the use of focus groups in validating initial findings, which have been criticized because they generate responses influenced by peer pressure, and the use of an open-ended interview process versus a more structured interview format. The strengths of the study include understanding more fully the lived experiences of Black women, understanding how factors that play into Black women's racial identity "…impacts their susceptibility to White western norms of beauty and body image dissatisfaction" (p. 709), and understanding how cultural and racial identity is related to body image. Hesse-Biber et al., recommend the following: more research to understand the lived experiences of women of color (particularly at, but not limited to, predominantly White colleges), and to avoid surmising that Black women are not affected by "weight-centered appearance dissatisfaction" (p. 710).

Chapter Summary

The quantitative and qualitative studies reviewed here add to the understanding of body image issues for women from diverse cultural backgrounds, stressing the need for additional research pertaining to such issues as creating culturally relevant assessment tools and identifying racially defined physical characteristics (Mintz and Kashubeck, 1999). They further highlight the complexity of the construct of body image and the influences of sociocultural factors (Tiggemann, 2011) and pressures from living in an objectified society (Frederickson and Roberts, 1997). The Kelch-Oliver and Ancis (2011) study elucidates the standards of beauty within Black culture showing a rejection of the

White thin ideal and an emphasis on shape rather than weight. This finding validates the need to assess Black women on shape-related issues rather than weight-related appearance. Rather than endorsing the belief that Black women are protected from the pressures of living in an objectified society, as some research purports (Silber, 1986; Milkie, 1999; Harris, 1995), the Kelch-Oliver and Ancis (2011) and Poran (2006) studies found that Black women feel a sense of frustration over the dominant White beauty standards and not being accepted by society. In three of the studies (Kelch-Oliver and Ancis, 2011; Poran, 2006; Cheney, 2011), ethnic women expressed a recognition of the White beauty ideal, where they felt the most pressure in terms of beauty expectations, and strategies for dealing with these pressures. Participants also acknowledged an awareness of the social comparison process taking place with strangers, as well as close friends, and the social mobility they felt when they adhered to the White ideal. These issues should be measured for Black women and other women of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Hesse-Biber's study is particularly significant to the literature on body image because it highlights the importance of cultural and racial identity in terms of body satisfaction/dissatisfaction. More importantly it highlights how critical it is to understand the range of perspectives held by individuals in racial and ethnic groups. The women who identify with particular ethnic groups are not all the same and identifying them as such runs the risk of devaluing individuals, ignoring diversity and missing critical information in understanding how body image is perceived and developed in diverse women (Hesse-Biber, et al., 2010).

Much like the qualitative studies reviewed here, the current study intended to expand the understanding of how women from diverse cultural backgrounds construct

and make meaning of body image. Current beauty ideals by culture; discrepancies between ideals and self-perceptions; pressures from communities, families, peers, and the media; beauty routines and behaviors; and the role culture plays in developing a negative or positive body image were investigated.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study explored the relationship between culture and the construction of body image (positive or negative) of college-aged women from diverse cultural backgrounds. The first section of this chapter presents the research question, rationale for employing a qualitative design, and rationale for using a case study methodology. The second section includes the following research procedures: participant recruitment, interview methods, data collection and analysis, trusthworthiness, human subjects and ethics precautions, and identifying researcher bias.

Overview of Methodology

Research Question

In order to better understand the relationship between culture and body image in college-aged women, this study attempted to answer the following central research question: in what ways does culture affect body image in a multicultural population of female undergraduates? This study explored the following sub-questions:

1. How do college-aged women of varying cultures make meaning of beauty ideals represented in their cultures, relationships, and the media? Do any of these have more of an influence than the other?
2. What are the current ideal body images for Asian American and Hispanic American college women? What similarities and differences will they entail? Are these ideals comprised of global body image constructs or do they pertain to specific areas of the body? Will new, racially defined, ideals be identified?
3. What role does culture play in the body image of multicultural college-aged women? Is it more of a protective or risk factor?

Rationale for Qualitative Design

> Any gaze is always filtered through the lens of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity…Subjects or individuals are seldom able to give full explanations of their actions or intentions; all they can offer are accounts, or stories, about what they did and why. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p.12)

The rationale for the use of a qualitative design in this study came from the constructivist nature of the research question. The purpose of the current study was to look through a constructivist lens at the role of culture and ethnicity in the creation of body image of young women and to understand this relationship thoroughly. Using a qualitative design allowed me to look closely at the language used by participants and to understand what Denzin and Lincoln (1998) describe as the filter through which a person's gaze is focused and how this filter influenced the meaning making of body image. This is something that cannot be done as deeply or represented as richly through quantitative research. "Experience has a vertical depth" (Polkinghorne, p. 138) that quantitative methods such as short-answer questionnaires and Likert scales are inadequate in capturing. While quantitative methods only gather surface data, qualitative methods were constructed to gather information on the "particular characteristics of human experience" and to "facilitate the investigation" (Polkinghorne, p. 138) of that experience. Polkinghorne explains that while people do not display their experiences to the public, they do have access to their experiences. "First-person or self-reports" of their own experiences are the type of data needed to study these experiences. Further,

qualitative data is "languaged data" that results from the "interaction between participant and researcher" (Polkinghorne, p. 138).

Much like Polkinghorne, this researcher believes that individuals have access to their experiences and they cannot be fully understood through quantitative methods. One needs to dig into the intricacies of an experience to fully understand and appreciate it, especially with a topic as convoluted as body image. Body image is an intensely personal experience and even when an individual is aware of the influences on this experience, they are often not immediately willing to divulge their thoughts and feelings. To facilitate access to these personal experiences, I initially used a quantitative instruments during the "warm up" stage of the interview process to (1) help depersonalize thoughts and feelings around body image making this safe to explore, (2) provide language that will help an individual connect to their experience, and (3) provide language from which the interviewer can delve into the topic. From this point I used an interview format, the "most used approach to qualitative data gathering" (Polkinghorne, p. 137)—to obtain first-person reports and languaged data pertaining to body image. The languaged data that results from personal interviews is not single words, but the combination of words into sentences and discourses (Polkinghorne, 2005). A qualitative design allowed me to obtain these first-person reports that ultimately resulted in discourses of how diverse women make meaning of cultural experiences and body image. For these reasons, a qualitative design was chosen for this study.

Theoretical Foundations

The current study was based on a constructivist epistemology, which believes that "truth or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in

our world…Meaning is not discovered, but constructed" (Crotty, p. 8-9). This applies directly in that I intended to identify how the cultural expectations of the participants influenced the construction of their body image and whether this was a positive or negative influence. Constructionism claims that "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (Crotty, p. 43). This describes very well the process young women go through when forming their gendered and sexual identity. As they are developing from girls to young women they engage with their cultural norms and expectations around beauty and beauty ideals, and make personal meaning of this. They hear, see, and experience what their parents, siblings, relatives, and communities expect from them as women and use these messages as standards with which they measure themselves.

Social constructionism, which evaluates the social origin of meaning, is also at the foundation of the current study. Fish states that "all objects are made and not found" and "the means by which they are made are social and conventional" (Crotty, 1998, p. 52). These meanings are made by institutions that precede us and are "the sources of the interpretive strategies whereby we construct meaning" (Fish, 1990, p. 186). Individuals are embedded in the institution of culture and "depend on culture to direct our behavior and organize our experience" (Crotty, 1998, p. 53). Geertz (1973) explains that culture is best seen as "the source rather than the result of human behavior…It is a set of control mechanisms—plans, recipes, rules, instructions—for the governing of behavior (p. 44). Most often, women follow the rules and instructions that govern how women conduct themselves within a certain culture or society. These rules range from how women should appear (how they dress; whether or not they use makeup; length of hair; tone of skin; and

size of nose, eyes, hips, thighs, buttocks, hands, feet, waists) to how they should conduct themselves. Women grow up hearing these rules and instructions, whether implied or stated directly, and frame their image of their bodies, and often their self-worth, around these rules.

Another theoretical underpinning is the sociocultural theory of Social Comparison, which proposes that "individual differences in the tendency to compare oneself with others accounts for differing levels of body image disturbance within the context of a culture that endorses thinness and attractiveness" (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999, p. 126). Research has shown that social comparison is so prevalent that it is considered a primary information-gathering phenomenon, rather than secondary. Individuals chose universal comparison targets (comparing a specific physical attribute with strangers) or particularistic comparison targets (comparing self with immediate peers or group). Another aspect of sociocultural theory that applies to this study is the Self-Ideal Discrepancy Theory, which states that individuals compare their real selves with an idealized self and that "individuals are motivated to attain a match between their actual self- concept and an internalized ideal" (Cash & Szymanski, 1995). The Social Comparison Theory and the Self-Ideal Discrepancy Theory are relevant to this study because they describe so clearly the internal process young women go through. In a society that constantly focuses on and endorses thinness, attractiveness, and beauty, many young women feel uncertain about at least one attribute of their physicality. They are left grappling with a feeling of "am I good enough/pretty enough" to be popular, to be liked, to be loved? In addition, many young women have a discrepancy between their real

selves and idealized selves and therefore become preoccupied, if not obsessed, with a particular attribute of their physical appearance.

Rationale for Case Study Research Methodology

> Yin provides a twofold, technical definition of case studies, stating that a case study is *"an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points…relies on multiple sources of evidence….and benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis" (Yin, 2009, p. 18).*

As Yin explains, case study methodology allows for the in-depth study of an issue within a bounded system and is the preferred method when attempting to answer "how" or "why" questions. The need to use case study methodology arises out of the desire "to understand complex social phenomenon" (p. 4), such as the topic of the current study. It is used to contribute to the understanding and knowledge of "group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomenona" (p. 4). Through multiple sources of information the researcher explores the bounded system with the end result being a rich, thick description of case-based themes. Case studies can use both qualitative and quantitative approaches and allow for the exploration and description of real-life phenomenon beyond the collection of data points (Yin, 2009). In this vein, the current study used a quantitative instrument to engage participants in the topic and prepare them for the qualitative semi-structured interview and to quantify their level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with their body. "Case study method allows investigators to

retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events." (Yin, 2009, p. 4) The case study methodology empowered me to capture exact words and feelings of young women of various cultural backgrounds to understand the relationship between culture and body image. These words and themes provided more description than allowed by categories on a survey, and allowed new themes on the topic to be revealed.

Case studies can be exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory; the current study was both explanatory and descriptive. Explanatory case studies present data bearing on cause-effect relationships; explaining how events happened. Descriptive case studies present "a complete description of a phenomenon within its context" (Yin, 2003, p. 5).

Further, case study research is "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" with the bounded system being "a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" and that a case could be "a single person who is a case example of some phenomenon, a program, a group, an institution, a community, or a specific policy" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Case studies are also particularistic (focusing on a particular situation, event, phenomenon, or program), descriptive (a thick description of the phenomenon under study), and heuristic (bring about discovery of new meaning, extend experience, or confirm what is known). Case studies can be single or multiple and embedded or holistic. An embedded design has several sub-units of analysis and uses a replication method between the multiple cases being studied while a holistic design looks more at the global nature of an organization or phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Holistic designs do not evaluate specific details of a phenomenon and are often vague and abstract. In a multiple case design, data are kept separate and are not pooled together (Yin, 2009). The current study employed an embedded design, analyzing the following subunits of data:

culturally defined body image ideals, representation in the media, assessment behaviors, and meaning of body image. Multiple cases included the Hispanic American and Asian American cultures. The current study used a multiple, embedded case study methodology to obtain an in-depth description and analysis of body image bounded in the system of culture.

Because the intent of qualitative research is not to generalize to the population but to elucidate a particular issue or phenomenon (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2006) sample sizes are relatively small. Creswell (2007) recommends no more than 4 to 5 case studies in a single study to identify themes and provide cross-case analysis. Yin (2009) explains that defining the number of cases needed should not be thought of in terms of sampling logic but in terms of literal and theoretical replication. He recommends utilizing enough cases for anywhere between 2-6 replications. Recent case studies have used 10-15 cases (Simpson, Kelly, & Morgan, 2013; Gasman, Kim, & Nguyen, 2011). Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) recommend approximately 3 cases and emphasize that the quality of the data per case is more important than the number of aggregate cases. Given the above recommendations and number of cases used, the current study examined a minimum of five cases and a maximum of 12 cases per culture and concluded interviewing when replication of themes occurs.

Sampling methods. Nonprobabilistic purposive sampling was used in this study. Purposeful sampling involves selecting participants because they can provide information relevant to the research topic (Creswell, 2007). Purposive sampling was chosen to achieve "representativeness" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 89) of the cases being examined. This requires identifying participants who "are known to be typical" (p. 89) to the topic being

studied. Because body dissatisfaction is a phenomenon of "normative discontent" it is assumed that most women experience some form of body dissatisfaction. I also assumed that women living in a society of objectified body consciousness, where the thin ideal is so vastly marketed, would have an experience pertaining to body image. Whether negative or positive, this is an experience worth studying and learning about. Purposive sampling can also expose heterogeneity in a population (Maxwell, 2005), in which a range of conclusions are represented. This goal of purposive sampling is linked to maximum variation sampling, further explained below. Lastly, purposive sampling was chosen because of its ability to establish comparisons and "differences between settings or individuals" (p. 90). This study was not designed to elicit differences between cultural experiences but they may evolve on their own. The cases involved in this study included traditional college-aged young women (18-24) who had low or negative body image and high or positive body image and belonged to one of two cultures: Asian American and Hispanic American. Women in Psychology, Gender Studies, and Women's Studies programs at local colleges were targeted for recruitment. Students from Psychology classes at the George Washington University were recruited due to their involvement with a department-wide participant pool. This allowed for credit to be given for study participation, thus acting as an incentive.

The specific sampling strategies used were criterion sampling, maximum variation sampling, and snowball sampling. Criterion sampling is when participants must meet a certain criteria to be involved in the study (Creswell, 2007). Participants were self-selected from a more general population of college-aged women. Criteria for participation were: female students, of traditional college age (18-24), U.S. citizen (no

study abroad students, no individuals on student visas), and identified as belonging to one of two cultures being studied—Asian American and Hispanic American. Maximum variation sampling is a strategy used to represent multiple perspectives and diverse cases (Creswell, 2007). It is thought that a generated theory is more useful if it is grounded in "widely varying instances" (Merriam, 2009, p.79). Maximum variation sampling was used in two ways in the study—first, by interviewing women from two different cultures and second by interviewing women with both positive and negative body images. In the first conception of this study I considered interviewing only women with negative body image. This was expanded to include positive body image to understand more thoroughly the construction of body image, not just negative body image. Snowball sampling involves identifying cases of interest from people who know others who are information-rich on the topic (Creswell, 2007) and is one of the most common forms of purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2009). Snowball sampling was employed in the current study by identifying participants who were passionate about the topic of body image, showed a deep understanding of the issue, and who are highly communicative. These participants were asked to distribute recruitment fliers (via email) to other female college students they knew who might be interested in participating. The unit of analysis was each participant's experience and construction of body image bounded by culture.

Sources of evidence in this study included demographic data, observational data, qualitative data, and quantitative data. Demographic data included information on each participant's cultural, ethnic, or racial identity and information about height and weight from which body mass index (BMI) was calculated. I recorded observational data as a way to clarify data from participant interviews (Polkinghorne, 2005) and "shed light on

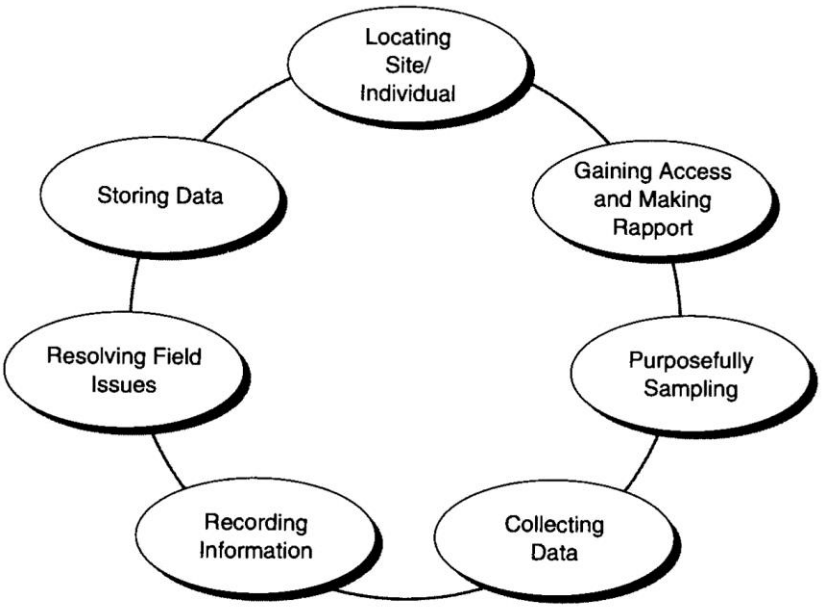
the meaning of a participant's oral comments" (p.143). Observational data can include "participants' behaviors, facial expressions, gestures, bodily tone, clothing, and other nonverbal indications" (p. 143). Observational data for this study included: behaviors, facial expressions, gestures, body tone, clothing, and additional physical characteristics often related to body image (length of hair, use of or lack of makeup). These observations were recorded immediately following each interview with observational notes or memos to allow for better recall of the observations (Polkinghorne). These memos were initially recorded in the interview packet for each participant. As recommended by Polkinghorne (2005), they were attached to interview transcripts during the data analysis process. Qualitative data was collected from semi-structured interviews with each participant. Semi-structured interviews are less structured than highly structured or formalized interviews (survey interview) and assume that participants define the topic in their own, unique ways (Merriam, 2009). A semi-structured interview encompasses the following: mix of more and less structured questions, no predetermined order of questions, questions used flexibly, specific data is required of all participants, and the largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored (Merriam, 2009). While this is considered a focused interview, that is, for a short period of time, it is more open-ended and conversational (Yin, 2009). The use of a semi-structured interview was chosen because it allows for standardization and flexibility at the same time. Participants were asked a series of questions pertaining to cultural beauty ideals, how they feel about their own bodies, the meaning of body image, and representation of cultures in the media. The flexibility of the semi-structured format allowed me to add questions specific to the culture of the participant being interviewed and to adapt questions to the level of

understanding of each participant. I specifically chose not to use an unstructured interview format due to its considerable risk. One such risk is the potential to wander too far off of the topic of the interview. As a professional counselor, I have been trained to let clients lead sessions. While a valuable technique for counseling, this is not conducive when conducting a research study, providing the potential to shift into counselor mode and away from the main topic of the interview. Another risk in using an unstructured interview is the potential to forget to ask each question to each participant, and therefore, not collect quality data. Qualitative data was also collected through the use of the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire (PADQ; Altabe, 1998). Quantitative data was collected with two instruments—the Body Satisfaction Scale (Rapoport, Clark, & Wardle, 2000) to quantify the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction each participant has with specific body parts and the Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Scale 3 General Internalization Subscale (SATAQ-3; Thompson, van der Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg, 2004). The Body Satisfaction Scale asks participants to rate their level of satisfaction with 11 different body parts (waist, hips, butt, thighs, face, ankles, calves, upper arms, lower arms, whole body) on a scale of 1 (*extremely satisfied*) to 6 (*extremely dissatisfied*). The SATAQ-3 is comprised of four subscales—Information, Pressures, Internalization-General, and Internalization-Athlete. The internalization-general subscale was used in the current study to assess participant's internalization of standards promoted by the media into their self-identity. All items on the subscale are rated on a Likert scale from 1 (*definitely disagree*) to 5 (*definitely agree*) and are summed to obtain the internalization-general score. High internal consistency has been reported for the internalization-general subscale ($\alpha = .96$, Thompson, et al., 2004).

Research Procedures

Figure 2

Data Collection Activities



Participant Recruitment

As demonstrated in Figure 2, the act of conducting research (i.e., data collection) involves numerous interrelated activities which must be well strategized (Creswell, 2007). The first of these involves locating sites and individuals to recruit into the study. Participants in the current study were recruited from local universities in Maryland and the District of Columbia. They were recruited largely from Psychology, Women's Studies, and Gender Studies classes, as well as the general college population. Only women and students from a traditional college age (18-24) were recruited. Recruitment strategies included posting an announcement with the George Washington University's Psychology department research participant pool, advertising the study through an IRB-

approved email (Appendix B) to undergraduate students at Loyola and GWU, and word-of-mouth snowball techniques. Recruitment procedures involved potential participants contacting me via email to express interest in the study. During this initial communication I began establishing rapport and screened potential participants by reviewing the purpose of the study, criteria for participation, and requirements for participation. Building rapport is an important part of the data collection process and in case studies involves "gaining access through the gatekeeper, and gaining the confidence of participants" (Crotty, 2007, p. 120). The gatekeepers for this study included Office of Human Research personnel, research participant pool managers, department staff, and classroom instructors. I established rapport with study participants by offering to meet at a time and location most convenient to them (within reason), explaining the purpose of the study, expressing appreciation for their interest and participation, explaining that they could drop out of the study at any time, and offering anonymity in final write-ups. The targeted sample population for this study was approximately 10-24 women (5-12 from each culture) and resulted in six Asian American women and eight Hispanic American women.

Enrollment procedures involved meeting the potential participant in person, reviewing study procedures and confidentiality, making sure the participant understood the requirements of the study, answering all questions posed by participants prior to obtaining consent, and reviewing an IRB-approved consent form (Appendix C). Participants were required to give verbal consent to participate in the study and were provided with a copy of the consent form. Participants were asked to provide verbal

consent for quotes to be used for the purposes of journal publications; only one participant refused this consent.

Data Collection

As explained above, four types of data were collected for the current study: (1) demographic data, (2) observation data, (3) qualitative interview data, and (4) quantitative data. Demographic data was used to identify a participant's culture for later analysis, as well as to calculate BMI. Body mass index was calculated by dividing weight (in pounds) by height squared (in inches) and multiplying this figure by 703 (CDC, 2011). This information was used to further understand each participant's perception of her body by knowing to which BMI category she belonged. Observation data was collected immediately following each interview session and was recorded in the form of observational memos in the interview packet for each participant. Qualitative interview data was collected through two processes. The first process was through a semi-structured interview, which was conducted from a list of questions pertaining to culture and body image asked of each participant. I had the flexibility to vary the wording of the questions depending on the maturity/developmental level of the participant, and whether or not she fully comprehended the content and phrasing of the questions. The second way qualitative data was collected was through the PADQ, which facilitated the collection of cultural beauty ideals. Quantitative data was collected through the use of the SATAQ-3 and Body Satisfaction Scale, as previously described.

Interview Method

The interview process was created with a great deal of thought and intentionality. The interview began with a rapport-building conversation and the introduction of the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Scale 3 (SATAQ-3; Thompson, van der

Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg; 2004) (Appendix E). The SATAQ-3 is a measure of one's awareness of sociocultural physical appearance standards. It was used to engage participants in the topic as well as to assess internalization of such standards. This was added to the interview process after I conducted and completed a pilot interview for a class exercise in 2011.

Pilot study. Pilot studies are called for in case study methodology (Yin, 2009) and as such, I conducted a pilot study as part of the current study to refine data collection procedures. I identified two participants to be used as pilot study participants and asked them for specific feedback directly at the end of the interview. The pilot study did not result any changes of data collection procedures. In 2011, I conducted a pilot interview on the same topic for a class exercise. Through this process I learned a great deal about the questions that were asked, how they were presented, and in what sequence. These lessons were incorporated into the design of the current study. Lessons learned from the 2011 pilot study included the following. (1) Preparing participants is crucial to the success of the interview, particularly when interviewing a young population. In the 2011 pilot interview, participants were slow to warm up and were much more talkative toward the end of the interview. When asked to provide feedback on the process they specifically stated that seeing the SATAQ prior to the interview would have helped them understand the interview questions better. To address this, I engaged participants in the current study in a "warm up" conversation prior to asking interview questions. The warm-up conversation included asking participants to read the SATAQ-3 and think about how they would respond, as well as a conversation regarding culture-specific messages. This warm-up conversation was not audio recorded. (2) Allowing time for participants to think

about their personal experiences related to culture-specific messages should be done prior to the interview. This follows along with the idea of the warm up conversation. Participants need some time to immerse themselves in the topic and in their thoughts related to the topic. This allowed for richer, well-thought out responses.

Interview questions were created after an intensive review of qualitative body image research. Two studies were identified for inclusion in the current study. The first was Watt and Ricciardelli's (2012) study of body image and appearance among men of Chinese ancestry in Australia. This study used a semi-structured interview format and had the following goals: to gain detailed information pertaining to body ideals, to examine men's body image concerns, and to learn how men of Chinese ancestry might be influenced both by Western and non-Western media sources. Men's body image concerns included examining thoughts, behaviors, and feelings related to both positive and negative body image experiences. The questions used in the Watt and Ricciardelli study were used as a model for the current study because of the similarity in domains being studied and the conversational style of the questions. Questions 5 and 15 from the Watt and Ricciardelli study pertain to country of birth and were not used in the current study.

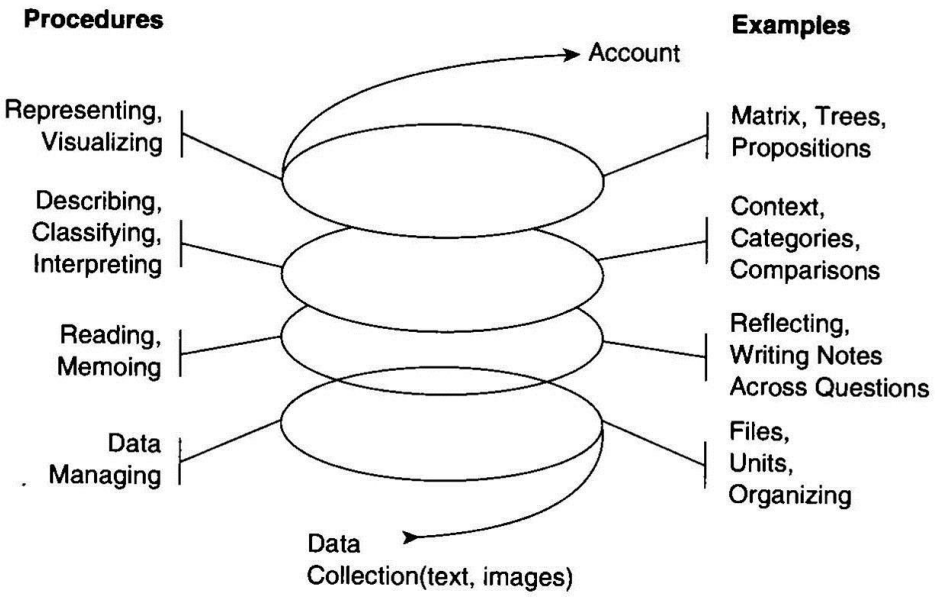
The second study used in creating the interview questions and process for the current study was Altabe's (1998) study of cultural diversity in body image using quantitative and qualitative methods. The qualitative portion of the study used the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire (1996) which asked individuals to "list traits associated with their actual physical appearance, their ideal, and their perception of what their culture idealizes" (Altabe, 1998, p. 155). The instrument yielded a list of participant-reported traits and was scored to show actual versus ideal discrepancies as

well as actual versus cultural ideal discrepancies. In the current study the instrument was not be used for scoring purposes and was only used to generate lists of physical traits idealized by participants. Permission was given, via email, by the Altabe to use this measure in the current study. (See Appendix F for complete Interview Protocol.)

Data Analysis

Figure 3

Data Analysis Spiral



Data analysis is a choreographed, custom-built process (Huberman & Miles, 1994) that is revised and inter-related to the data collection and writing processes as seen in the data analysis spiral (Creswell, 2007). This process begins with data management and converting data to text files. It then moves into getting a sense of the data by reading transcripts in their entirety, getting immersed in the details, and starting to get a sense of

the data by writing memos in the margins of the transcripts. Memos are "short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occur to the reader" (p. 151). As the researcher moves from reading, to memoing, to describing, classifying, and interpreting the data, a loop is formed. Descriptive data is observational and plays a central role in case studies (Creswell, 2007). In the current study observational data in the form of memos was analyzed at two stages, immediately after the interview process and during the coding process. During this process of describing, classifying, and interpreting, codes are created (Creswell, 2007). Creswell recommends starting with "lean codes" (p. 152) that are shorthand labels and are expanded and reviewed as the process continues. Creswell also recommends limiting categories of information to no more than 25-30 and reducing this to 5 or 6 themes by the end of the process. Interpreting data involves making sense of the data, uncovering "lessons learned" and can be based on hunches, intuition, or insight (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Demographic data was used to calculate BMI and classify participants as "normal weight," "overweight," "underweight," or "obese." These classifications were used to further understand how participants view themselves and any discrepancies between actual and ideal body images revealed during the study. I transcribed interviews through the use of Audacity (audio editor program) and Word, as well as with the assistance of a professional transcribing company. Transcripts were analyzed for themes/categories through the open coding process—the "process of making notations next to bits of data that strike you as potentially relevant for answering your research question" (Merriam, p. 178). Once initial codes were assigned to all the interviews, I performed analytical coding, or the grouping of open codes, "from interpretation and reflection on meaning"

(Richards, 2005, p. 94). The next step performed was within-case analysis, which allowed me to build explanations between the individual interviews and within the cultural cases. Three analytic techniques used in this study were pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2009). Pattern matching involves comparing a predicted pattern to an empirically based one. The current study compared the theories of the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 1 with the patterns revealed in participant interviews. I focused particularly focused on the presence of, or lack of, objectified body consciousness. Explanation building is a particular type of pattern matching and involves analyzing the data to provide an explanation of the case (Yin, 2009). It is used to explain how or why, such as how culture effects the construction of body image. Cross-case synthesis is used in analyzing multiple cases. Each case is treated as a separate study and findings are aggregated across studies (Yin, 2009).

Quantitative data included responses to the Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance 3 (SATAQ-3) and the Body Satisfaction Scale (BSS). The SATAQ-3 was scored by summing individual item responses. Similarly, the level of whole body dissatisfaction was calculated with responses to the BSS, as well as satisfaction/dissatisfaction with individual body parts. These scores were used to compare participants' objective and subjective responses. Scores on the BSS were used to categorize participants into groups of "extremely dissatisfied," "somewhat dissatisfied/satisfied," and "extremely satisfied."

Trustworthiness

Similar to quantitative research, qualitative studies strive to establish the validity and reliability of their work and findings. Alternate terms that adhere more to naturalistic

research to describe validity are used, such as trustworthiness, credibility, authenticity, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The following methods were used to increase the trustworthiness of the current study: triangulation (Lather, 1991; Maxwell, 2005), member checks or respondent validation (Maxwell, 2005), and peer review (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are four types of triangulation: the use of multiple methods, multiple sources of data, multiple investigators, and multiple theories to confirm emerging findings (Denzin, 1978). Using multiple sources of data means "comparing and cross-checking data collected through observations at different times or different places, or interview data collected from people with different perspectives or from follow-up interviews with the same people" (Merriam, p. 216). Multiple sources of data used in this study included demographic data, observation data, interview data, and data from member checks. A participant's response as to how they feel about their body was compared against which BMI category they fell into. Similarly, I was able to identify whether participants indicated cultural ideals through open-ended questions as compared to the more specific questions on the PADQ. Secondly, member checks or respondent validation was used. This is the process described as taking "your preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation 'rings true'" (Merriam, p. 217). In member checking, a researcher solicits feedback from study participants regarding the accuracy of his or her interpretations and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). It was very important to me that the experience of diverse women be represented precisely and accurately. Therefore, this was a very important part of the research study. For participants recruited through the Psychology department's research participant pool, follow-up, or feedback interviews, were

scheduled within two to three weeks after the initial interviews. This was due to the constraints of the participant pool and time of the semester. For participants recruited through other means, feedback interviews were scheduled either at the convenience of the participant or after their interviews were transcribed and analyzed. Most feedback interviews were conducted in person or over the phone, while some were conducted via email. The third method of validity this study employed was the peer review process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which is similar to interrater reliability in quantitative research (Creswell, 2007). Findings were shared with colleagues familiar with body image and diversity issues and I conferred with colleagues at several stages of the study—during development of the interview protocol and during coding and data analysis. In studying different ethnicities, it was important to examine whether language or cultural barriers on my part interfered with coding and data analysis.

Human Subjects and Ethics Precautions

The following ethical issues exist in qualitative research: informed consent procedures, deception or covert activities, confidentiality, benefits of research to participants, and participant requests that go beyond social norms (Creswell, 2007). In accordance with the George Washington University's OHR guidelines, I made every effort to protect against these risks. Informed consent was obtained in person and expressed the voluntary nature of the study (Yin, 2009). I avoided deception by fully explaining the procedures of the study and answering any questions or concerns participant's had prior to obtaining consent. All interview responses were confidential, which was explained to all study participants as outlined in the American Counseling Association's code of Ethics. (ACA, 2005). Sections B.7.c Confidentiality of Information Obtained in Research and G.2. Rights of Research Participants of the Code of Ethics.

These codes require researchers to explain in detail to study participants any violations of privacy that may occur and where and how information will be stored. Confidentiality was guaranteed through anonymity of answers with the use of an alias (as chosen by each participant). Participants were told that several colleagues would read their transcripts in the data analysis process but that their aliases would be used. I was the only person to know each participant's identity. Interview transcriptions were encrypted through the AxCrypt program, stored on my password-protected laptop, and on a password-protected external hard drive. Further, as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland, I was prepared if any participant indicated imminent risk during the interview process. It has been established in the research literature that negative body image and body dissatisfaction have been related to such mental health issues as depression (Ata, Ludden, & Lally, 2007; Jones, 2004; Tiggemann, 2005), disordered eating (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tanleff-Dunn, 1999), and clinical eating disorders (Stice, 2002; Levine & Smolak, 2006; Hall, 1995). Therefore, I was prepared to distribute a list of community counseling resources and local hospitals (Appendix G) if a participant appeared to present with any risk. Lastly, to ensure my physical safety and that of that participants, interviews were conducted in public places that were safe, yet provided a level of privacy. All interviews were conducted in university libraries.

Identifying Researcher Bias

As Peshkin (1988) explains, when a social scientist's subjectivity remains unconscious "they insinuate rather than knowingly clarify their personal stakes" (p. 17). They must not only acknowledge their subjectivity but attend to it throughout the entire research process. In this vein, I have enumerated possible biases and the intention to manage my subjectivity to "preclude it from being unwittingly burdensome" (p. 20). The

first potential bias was my deep interest and passion in the subject of body image and culture and the desire to secure interesting results. Although I ran the risk of losing my objectivity and becoming too engrossed in the process, I was keenly aware of my own processes, beliefs, and feelings regarding body image during the interview processes.

A second potential bias was my feelings regarding the level of objectified body consciousness in the United States. Again, I was aware of my own processes during the interview. This is where my training as a counselor benefited the process in that I knew how to focus on the person in front of me and not bring my own issues into the conversation.

A third potential bias resulted from the use of participants from Gender Studies and Psychology courses. Participants from these courses were more aware of the effect of sociocultural influences on thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. They were also more aware of the pressures of living in a society that objectifies women (i.e., objectified body consciousness). While this enhanced interview responses and enriched findings, it potentially reduced the generalizability of the findings. It is also possible that recruiting participants from Gender Studies and Psychology classes, as well as women who are passionate about body image, may have biased findings. These issues are discussed more in Chapter 5.

Lastly, it was originally proposed that I may have a "dual consciousness" (Tedlock, 2001, p.466) as a female and as a European American. While often this serves as a benefit to research because it enhances understanding, it also has the possibility of obstructing one's ability to recognize processes objectively. A potential obstacle that could have occurred was my own culture/ethnic identity interfering during the interview

process. Because I am a European American and conducted all the participant interviews, Asian American and Hispanic American participants could potentially have felt vulnerable to my judgment and therefore felt the need to defend their cultural norms and expectations. It did not seem that this occurred; rather, the participants seemed to be very comfortable and forthcoming with their responses.

Summary

This qualitative case study explored the cultural and body image experiences of college-aged women from diverse cultural backgrounds. Using purposive sampling, participants were recruited from psychology, gender studies, and women's studies courses at local universities and colleges. Demographic data, observational data, and qualitative data were collected through a semi-structured interview process as well as a member check validation process. Pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis were used to analyze study data and uncover words and themes used to describe the construction of a body image. To ensure trustworthiness of the study, triangulation, member checks, and peer review processes were employed. In this way, I validated that the interpretation was free of bias and rang "true" (Merriam, p. 217) to the participants' experiences.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this study of the relationship between body image and culture, eight Hispanic American and six Asian American college-aged women participated in a semi-structured interview and completed three measurement tools—one qualitative and two quantitative. The 19-item semi-structured interview consisted of questions pertaining to societal importance of appearance, culturally defined aspects of body image and appearance, thoughts pertaining to individual body image, and beauty routines. Questions also covered techniques and strategies used to change parts of body dissatisfied with, social comparison processes (how one feels when looking at an attractive woman vs. an unattractive woman), cultural representation in the media, importance of fashion and clothing, and three culture-specific questions based on current literature. The culture-specific questions for Hispanic American participants were: (1) The research literature states that Hispanic American women have a "thicker" body ideal and that they prefer: round buttocks, big breast and hips, and a thin waist. Do you agree with this? (2) Hispanic American women have to deal with a "dual identity" of belonging to multiple cultures and having to deal with several sets of cultural values. Do you agree with this? Do you experience this? (3) The influence of the media is complex, particularly if an Hispanic woman engages in Spanish-language media. Some research says that Spanish-language media presents an alternative to mainstream media, while other research says it is just as restrictive as mainstream media. What are your thoughts on this? The culture-specific questions for Asian American participants were: (1) Some research says that Asian American women strive to be the "perfect" Asian woman. Do you feel this pressure? (2) Asian American women strive to "correct" typical Asian features to fit

more into the Western ideal (e.g., breast augmentation, eyelid surgery). Do you feel pressure to do this? (3) Asian American women strive to change their skin tone (lightening or darkening?). For instance more traditional Asian women prefer a lighter skin tone, but White Americans tend to prefer tanned skin. Do you feel pressure around your skin tone? In addition, all participants completed the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire, a qualitative assessment of current physical appearance attributes, ideal physical appearance attributes, and a person's cultural ideal physical appearance attributes; as well as the quantitative Body Satisfaction Scale (BS; Rapoport, Clark, & Wardle, 2000) and Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Scale-3 (SATAQ-3; Thompson, van der Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg, 2004).

The purpose of this chapter is to present research findings relevant to the study's overall research question: *What is the relationship between culture and body image in a multicultural college-aged population?* Findings reported in this chapter are organized by the four overarching subunits of analysis of the study and a fifth relevant category: (1) culturally defined body image ideals, (2) representation in the media, (3) assessment behaviors, (4) meaning of body image, and (5) culture-specific questions. This organizing strategy allows the reader to see how discovered themes fell within the subunits of analysis for each population. Table 3 outlines the key themes that will be discussed in this chapter for each population studied.

Table 3

Key Themes, by Subunit of Analysis

Culturally Defined Body Image Ideals	
Asian American	*Hispanic American*
• White but not White • Importance of appearance • U.S. Body Ideals • Asian American Body Ideals	• American but not American • Importance of appearance • U.S. body Ideals • Hispanic American Body Ideals

Representation in the Media	
Asian American	*Hispanic American*
• Real Diversity • Representation of culture in media • How to change representation in media	• Poor Media Representation • Racial Ambiguity • Representation of culture in media • How to change representation in media

Assessment Behaviors	
Asian American	*Hispanic American*
• Appearance control • Social Comparison • Beauty routines • Strategies/techniques	• Cultural Norm • Body Acceptance • Social comparison • Beauty routines • Strategies/techniques

Meaning of Body Image	
Asian American	*Hispanic American*
• Effort • Struggle • Peer, family messages • Chart of participant definitions	• Healthy/Balanced • Growing up (peer/family messages) • Environment as cultural influence • Chart of participant definitions

Culture-Specific Questions	
Asian American	*Hispanic American*
• Strive to be perfect Asian woman	• Thicker body ideal

• Strive to correct typical Asian features • Strive to change skin tone	• Dual identity • Restrictiveness of Spanish language media

The semi-structured interview approach was used in this study to understand the filter (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998) through which Hispanic American and Asian American college-aged women view cultural and societal beauty expectations and how this filter influences the construction of their own body image. A constructivist lens (Crotty, 1998) was used to examine each participant's responses and to investigate the "vertical depth" (Polkinghorne, p. 138) of their experience. Trustworthiness was conducted through peer review, triangulation, and member checks.

Participant interview transcripts were examined through the data analysis spiral (Creswell, 2007) to inductively uncover lean or open codes and to describe, classify, and categorize data. Approximately 67 various codes and themes were identified for each study population and were eventually reduced to seven prominent themes in the Asian American population and six prominent themes in the Hispanic American population. For a complete listing codes/themes and their definitions see Appendix I for Asian American participants and Appendix J for Hispanic American participants.

Findings presented in this section include: participant demographics and profiles, key themes by population, within case analysis by population, body image ideals by culture, cultural definitions of body image and beauty ideals, and results of the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire (PADQ; Altabe, 1998). Lastly, findings from quantitative measures are presented, as well as a discussion of the study's trustworthiness processes.

Demographics and Participant Profiles[1]

Participants included eight Hispanic American college-aged women and six Asian American college-aged women. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 24 years and had lived in the United States for anywhere from nine months to 19 years. The Hispanic American participants, or their parents, were from the following countries of origin: Cuba, Haiti, Peru, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Asian American participants, or their parents, came from Vietnam, Japan, Korea, or China. Five participants were biracial/multiracial and the ethnicities of these participants were American (Irish decent) and Mexican, American/Armenian and Japanese, African American and Hispanic American, Haitian and Cuban, and Chinese and Irish/Italian. Two Hispanic American participants currently do not live in the continental United States and are only in the U.S. to attend college. They live in Puerto Rico and Venezuela. One Asian American participant was born in the United States but at the age of one-and-a-half moved to Switzerland where she lives with her parents.

Body mass index was calculated by dividing weight (in pounds) by height squared (in inches) and multiplying this figure by 703 (CDC, 2011). BMI classifications are: underweight (below 18.5 BMI), normal (18.5-24.9 BMI), overweight (25.0-29.9 BMI), and obese (30.0 BMI and above). BMI was calculated to further understand each participant's perception of their body by knowing which BMI category she fell into. Of the Hispanic American participants, five fell in the "normal" BMI (62.5%) category, two

[1] The names of all research participants have been changed.

fell in the "overweight" (25%) category, and one was in the "obese" (12.5%) category. Of the Asian American participants one was classified as "underweight" (7.1%), and five fell into the "normal" category (83.3%). See Table 4 for a summary of participant demographics.

Hispanic American Participant Profiles

LILY. Lily is a 19 year old Biology major, with a minor in Psychology. She was born in the United States and grew up in Pennsylvania. Her mother is of Dominican and French heritage and was also born in the United States. Her maternal grandmother immigrated to the United States when she was 10. Her father is of Dominican descent and Lily is uncertain of where he lives. Lily's parents divorced when she was quite young and he is not a part of her life. Lily has a younger sister.

EMILY. Emily is a 21 year old Psychology major and was born in the United States. Her mother was also born in the United States and is of Irish descent. Her father was born in Mexico and is of Irish, Mexican, and German descent. Her parents divorced when she was 16 and her mother remarried. Emily lived in San Antonio, Texas until she was four and then moved to a predominantly Hispanic community in Philadelphia. She expressed feeling that, although she lived in a White family, she grew up within Hispanic culture, due to her surroundings and mostly being around her father's family. Emily's new family is comprised of 7 children and is very diverse. She has four sisters, two older and two younger twins, and two younger brothers who were adopted from Zambia.

ANITA. Anita is an 18 year old Art History major and is of Haitian and Cuban descent. She was born in the United States and has lived in New Jersey and Florida. Her mother was born in Haiti and her father in Cuba and they have lived in the United States for 35 years. Her parents met in New York, where her mother's side of the family still

lives. Her father's side of the family lives in Florida. Anita has one sister and two brothers, all of whom were born in the United States.

ISABELLA. Isabella is an 18 year old Communications/Political Science major. She was born in Peru, as were her parents and brother, and is also of Spanish descent. When Isabella was 7 her family moved to Spain and lived there for 3 years. When she was 10 her family moved to the United States and has lived in New Jersey for eight years.

MILI. Mili is a 24 year old clinical psychology graduate student. She was born in Peru, as was her mother, and has lived in the United States for 19 years. She grew up in New Jersey and has one brother. (This participant offered minimal demographic information.)

BARBARA. Barbara is a 19 year old Psychology major. She was born in Puerto Rico and still lives there with her parents when not attending college. Her mother was born in Cuba and lives in Puerto Rico and is also of Spanish descent. Her father also was born in Puerto Rico and lives there but is also of Italian descent. Barbara explained that living in Puerto Rico is very similar to living in the United States because the culture is so influenced by American standards and politics.

OLIVIA. Olivia is an 18 year old Psychology major and a freshman. She was born in Venezuela, as were her parents, and currently lives there when not attending college. She has lived in the United States for 9 months. She has a younger brother and an older sister. (This participant provided minimal demographic information.)

DAWN. Dawn is a 21 year old Psychology major. She was born in the United States to an African American mother and Hispanic American father. Her parents divorced when she was young and while she lived with her mother, she spent significant

time with her father and his family, being influenced by both African American and Hispanic American cultures. Dawn's father was born in the Dominican Republic.

Asian American Participant Profiles

CHELSEA. Chelsea is a 22 year old Psychology. She was born in Korea, as were both her parents, and moved to the United States when she was 12. She has one sister who is older. (This participant provided minimal demographic information.)

YUKI. Yuki is an 18 year old Economics/Japanese major. She is Japanese American but identifies as Japanese. She was born in the United States but at the age of one-and-a-half, move to Switzerland with her parents. Yuki's mother was born in Japan and her father was born in the United States and is of Armenian descent. While Yuki attends college in the United States and has dual citizenship, she represents European ideals moreso than American or Japanese. Yuki has one brother who is older than she.

JANE. Jane is a 22 year old Exercise Science major. Her parents were both born in Vietnam and have lived in the United States for 25 years. Jane was born in the United States, has one older brother, and grew up in Northern Virginia. She explained that she has taken Developmental Psychology and Abnormal Psychology classes in preparation of pursuing a graduate degree in physical therapy.

KAREN. Karen is a 20 year old Chemistry major. She was born in the United States and her family has been in the U.S. for approximately two generations. Both of her parents were born in the United States but her mother is of Chinese descent and her father is of Irish and Italian descent. Karen has one sister and grew up in Massachusetts. Karen has been estranged from her father since she was thirteen years old.

CATHERINE. Catherine is a 19 year old Political Communications major and was born in the United States. Catherine's parents were both born in Korea; her father

moved to the U.S. when he was 14 and her mother moved to the U.S. when she was 26. Catherine has a younger sister and brother, grew up in a very White neighborhood, did not have many Korean friends, and stated that her family is very Americanized.

MICHELLE. Michelle is a 21 year old Criminal Justice major, with a minor in Psychology. She was born in Vietnam, as were her parents, and has lived in the United States for 15 years. Michelle has a younger brother who was also born in Vietnam. Michelle grew up in Tennessee. Her parents own and run a nail salon.

Table 4

Participant Demographics

Hispanic American Participants					
Participant	Ethnic Background	Age	Years Participant in U.S.	BMI	BMI Classification
Lily	Dominican Republic	19	19	21.8	Normal
Emily	American and Mexican	21	21	23.6	Normal
Anita	Haitian and Cuban	18	18	25.4	Overweight
Isabella	Peru	18	8	32.9	Obese
Mili	Peru	24	19	23.62	Normal
Barbara	Puerto Rico and Cuban	19	9 months	26.6	Overweight
Olivia	Venezuela	18	9 months	20.72	Normal
Dawn	African American and Hispanic American (DR)	21	21	21.5	Normal

Asian American Participants					
Participant	Ethnic Background	Age	Years Participant in U.S.	BMI	BMI Classification
Chelsea	Korean	22	10	21.9	Normal
Yuki	Japanese and American/Armenian	18	2.5	19.3	Normal
Jane	Vietnamese	21	21	22.6	Normal
Karen	Chinese and Irish/Italian	20	20	18.3	Underweight
Catherine	Korean	19	19	22.6	Normal
Michelle	Vietnamese	21	15	24.4	Normal

Asian American Themes/Within Case Analysis

The most relevant and prominent codes/themes that appeared in Asian American participants' narratives were: "White but not White," "In the Middle," "Effort," "Struggle," "Appearance Control," "Not Represented," and "Real Diversity." "White but not White" applied to the idea that Asian American women are seen as White women and put in that category due to their pale skin tone, but they are not White. Several participants explained that one reason they are not White is because they have higher standards than Americans. These standards pertain to level of intelligence, academic achievements, and career success. This notion shows a sense of cultural pride but it also expressed a sense of not belonging and not fitting into the mainstream culture. "White but not White" was closely associated with the theme/code of "In the Middle," which applied to being on a continuum of Asian and American. This code portrayed the feeling of not fitting into either category, struggling between cultural identities, and not being easily identified as Asian or American due to biracial physical features.

Through the "Effort" code/theme participants revealed directly or indirectly effort they were spending on achieving body image and appearance ideals. This pertained to actively working on something, such as purchasing grooming products, exercising, or studying makeup/hair techniques on fashion sites, to mental energy exerted in thinking about clothing choices, current trends, or simply what to wear on a daily basis. "Effort" is closely aligned to the code/theme of "Appearance Control," which is the idea that an individual can not only control their appearance if they put in enough effort, but their appearance can control certain outcomes of their lives. "Struggle" pertains to several aspects of participants' lives. One such struggle is the struggle to conform to White

mainstream standards and toward perfection. Participants also revealed the struggle to eat according to the customs of the culture, yet maintain the weight standard of the culture. Eating is a sign of respect and feeding others is very important, yet thinness is valued and there seems to be a weight standard that participants described as between 100-120 pounds.

Lastly, in terms of media representation, participants indicated almost unanimously that Asian American/Asian women are not represented in the American media, endorsing the "Not Represented" code. Some had difficulty even answering the question and sat in silence until further prompted. Further, when Asian women were represented in the media, participants felt this was more of a token representation in which an Americanized version of an Asian woman was shown. Some felt this was a marketing strategy and therefore offensive. For this reason they endorsed the idea of "Real Diversity" shown in how culturally diverse women are portrayed in the media. This includes accurate representation within racial subcultures, such as Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese.

Hispanic American Themes/Within Case Analysis

The most relevant and prominent codes/themes that appeared in Hispanic American participants' narratives were: "Cultural Norm," "Healthy/Balanced," "Environment as a Cultural Influence," "American but not American," "Body Acceptance," and "Growing Up." "Cultural Norm" pertains to the appearance-related references and messages participants described, portraying that a focus on appearance is a cultural norm in Hispanic cultures. Closely related to this is the code of "Body Acceptance." Several Hispanic American participants felt that the open discussion of

appearance growing up relayed acceptance of the body in a way that White culture does not. This leads into acceptance of a more realistic body with larger hips and buttocks.

Hispanic American participants also described the theme/code of "Environment as a Cultural Reference." Many of them described being raised in Hispanic-predominant communities and neighborhoods, even though most of them attended White-dominant schools. "Growing Up" in these communities gave them a stronger connection to their cultural heritage and protected them to a degree from mainstream expectations. They still felt the pressure of mainstream media and the beauty ideals portrayed in them but they were somewhat sheltered and had more nurturing cultural influences that balanced them out. (This is not to say that they didn't also experience culture-specific expectations and pressures.) Similar to the "White but not White" code in the Asian American population, Hispanic American participants endorsed the code "American but not American," particularly when they were attending White-dominant schools. This code also captured the notion of having their own language and culture but looking more and more toward the United States for their style of dress and other trends. Lastly, several Hispanic American participants endorsed the "Healthy/Balanced" code, which pertained to having a more healthy and balanced view of body image and appearance standards and expectations.

Key Themes

Key themes emerged from an inductive analysis of each participant narrative and further describing, classifying, and interpreting initial codes (Creswell, 2007). Categories of information were limited and reduced to five to six prominent themes for each case studied. These final categories/themes are presented in the within case analyses for each

population. Using an embedded case design (Yin, 2009) four sub-units of analysis were identified for the study: culturally defined body image ideals, representation in the media, assessment behaviors, and meaning of body image. Because the emergent themes from participant narratives were so compatible with the sub-units of analysis, it was logical to use them as the foundation for reporting research findings. A fifth construct or sub-unit of analysis was added due to its relevance to the study topic: culture-specific questions.

Culturally Defined Body Image Ideals

This section represents how culturally defined body ideals were presented by Hispanic American participants and Asian American participants, the themes that were most likely to fall into this subunit of analysis, and how each population viewed American body ideals. Results from the administration of the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire are also presented for both populations.

Hispanic American Body Ideals. Findings showed that Hispanic American participants believed their culture embraces the following beauty/body ideals: large, curvy hips; straight, long hair; shapely breasts; curvy buttocks; fit legs; tan skin tone; full thighs; and a healthy weight. Table 5 shows a complete listing, using participant words, of Hispanic American ideals versus American ideals by body feature.

Table 5

Hispanic American Beauty Ideals vs. American Beauty Ideals

	Hispanic American ideals	**American ideals**
Arms	Smaller upper arms	Thin
Breast	Big breasts (Venezuela) Shapely breasts	Decent bust size Not as busty as Hispanic Americans Big breasts

		Little breast development
Buttocks	Big, toned buttocks Big buttocks is a plus, but not essential Curvy buttocks Shapely buttocks	Big buttock
Facial features		Blue eyes
Hair	Straight (not wavy) Long (longer than U.S. ideal)	Blonde Straight Long Volume/wavy (but not naturally curly) Big If curly, has to be tame and thin (not thick curly)
Height		Tall
Hips	Big hips Large, but not too large Curvy hip	Narrow
Legs	Good legs (tone) Fit legs	Long Thin
Skin tone	Tan	Tan
Stomach/Waist	Less belly fat Less love handles/chicones	Flat Thin, small waist
Thighs	Full thighs	Small thighs
Weight	Healthy	Thin Not fat but not really skinny/slim Skinny Sexy and exposed (more important than being thin)
Overall	Full figured (bust, hips, thighs) Voluptuous and sexy Balanced Hourglass shape Softer curves (when more Hispanic) Shapely, tight curves (when more Americanized) Sexy without being vulgar Marilyn Monroe figure	Barbie like Model like Proportionate (small waist, big breasts) Skinny hourglass (not curvy hourglass) Bikini body perfect Victoria's Secret model (tones, slender, smaller than most women their height) Perfect balance

When they discussed Hispanic American beauty and body ideals, Hispanic American participants most reported on hips and having big hips. Isabella explained that it is a known stereotype that "Spanish girls have the best hips" (p. 7)[2] particularly for the purpose of dancing. Barbara explained that women in Puerto Rico focus on hips, weight, buttocks, and hair. According to her, Latino women naturally have larger hips and in Puerto Rico they complain about their hips routinely. Barbara clarified that Puerto Rican women do not strive to have bigger hips, but it is more accepted there than in the United States and the size of hips there would be seen as too big in the United States. Further, Puerto Rican women "obviously" strive to be thinner but it is more acceptable there to "not be as thin as in the U.S." (p. 8). Ideally, women in Puerto Rico strive to have curvy hips and a toned big "butt" (with emphasis on it being toned).

In terms of hair, the ideal is to have straight hair, particularly in Puerto Rico. Most of the Hispanic American participants described in detail the lengths that women go to achieve straight hair, including getting Brazilian blowouts at the salon. Interestingly, most of the participants did not discuss hair straightening and processes to control their hair when asked about beauty ideals and only did so when asked about their specific beauty routines. Barbara further went into an in-depth explanation of the history of hair in Puerto Rico. Because Puerto Ricans are a mix of Spanish and African slaves, there is a wide range of races in Puerto Rico and it is often difficult to distinguish whether someone is Black or White because most of them are "somewhere in the middle." Hair for this group of people is termed pelo malo, or bad hair, and is used to describe very curly hair. According to Barbara this term is not considered an insult.

[2] All quotes came from interviews with participants.

Olivia made the distinction that while the ideal for hair is long and straight it needs to be "totally straight" (p. 8). It is not preferred to have naturally curly hair even though sometimes in magazines women are shown with curls that are wavy and add a little volume. The ideal is straight hair "and like the curls with the iron machine, you know, like a little volume" (p. 8). Olivia's description of the complexity of Hispanic American hair portrays the themes of "Controlled Appearance" and putting "Effort" into appearance. A woman's hair has to have just the right combination of straight but with some volume added in through artificial means.

Curvy was the most used description of the ideal Hispanic American body type. Several participants made a distinction between tight curves, which are more Americanized, and soft curves, which are more indicative of being Hispanic. Mili explained that the curvy ideal is related to the separate ideals of having a tiny waist, big breasts, and a big buttocks. She described the efforts and strategies Hispanic American women go through to achieve this curviness, such as traveling to other countries (Peru, Colombia) to have plastic surgery (breast augmentation) or to receive injections in their buttocks. Women in Columbia are known for obtaining buttock injections. Mili also explained some personal environmental influences on her when she attended college in a heavily Latino-populated area. The cultural norm there was to wear corsets to make your waist smaller and emphasize the curviness of your body. Mili was introduced to this by a friend and they used to go to shop together for products that enhanced their bodies, such as leggings with buttock paddings to give the impression of larger buttocks and, therefore, more curves. Other purposes of the corset-like contraption were to induce sweat and make the consumer lose weight, as well as to push breasts up and out. The

corset was rather tight and did not allow the wearer to eat; "you had no room to like even breathe a little" (p. 23).

Anita also explains the focus on curves and being shapely.

> …If you're breasts look good and your butt looks good, you're set. And, sometimes to a lesser degree, thighs? But I feel like that's also included in, your butt, as long as you have like a shapely…Shapely, but like not, bad I guess? Shapely to the point that it's like, there's curves, but they're tight curves…And, it's, it's kind good for Hispanic women with that body type. 'Cause that's very easy for them to pull off. Um, but then again, there's Hispanic women that are very much immersed in their culture, and less Americanized? So, um, I guess in my opinion there's Americanized Hispanics, and there's Hispanics that are, not really interested? Like, how little Havana is like, half Americanized Cubans, and half Cubans that don't really care? So, um… the body image tends to vary?...They're a bit softer 'cause they're not interested in working that hard or working out to maintain that body type. (p. 6)

A discussion of facial features was almost non-existent, with the exception of Barbara's explanation of features in Puerto Rico. When asked to explain if there are stereotypical facial features for a Puerto Rican woman, Barbara explained that even though there is diversity of color and features and location contributes to this, there tends to be a dominant stereotype in San Juan because most people there are of Spanish descent. This stereotype is mostly White with Mediterranean Spanish features and Barbara represents this stereotype. People in more rural areas think she is a tourist and

initially speak to her in English. As for other parts of Puerto Rico, Barbara explained that there is not one Puerto Rican look and it is easy to misidentify Puerto Ricans as from South America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Spain, Jamaica, Africa, or America. "If you were to put a face on it, it would be like a mix between white and black, like a mixed race person" (p. 21).

Another finding related to the topic of culturally defined beauty ideals was the notion that beauty ideals are influenced by geographic location and environment in the United States and in countries of origin, including the college campuses where participants were recruited. This finding resulted in the code "Environment as a Cultural Influence." Participants revealed that this code related to style of dress and skin tone. Isabella explained that when she moved to the United States she wanted a community of Spanish people, not the all-Caucasian group of friends she normally had. But when she did find a Spanish community she did not like the way they acted or dressed. They were "acting so ghetto" (p. 9) and wore baggy pants, baseball caps, Rocawear or Beat brand clothing, and Timberland shoes (for boys). Those who were rich would wear tight jeans, Puma shoes, and a shirt that showed off the midriff. Further, the girls would always wear their hair in a bun and a thin, red headband. Isabella preferred the way people dressed in Spain, which was more polished and well dressed with women always wearing skirts and almost never wearing pants. Adjusting to the fashion of the United States has been difficult for Isabella, particularly in wearing jeans. She has felt pressure to not only conform to this but to the styles worn by fellow students at Loyola University, which she described as wealthy and preppy.

In terms of skin tone, Mili explained that there are historical and socioeconomic reasons behind which countries think they are better than others and skin color is the most important factor in this. In general, Peruvians, Mexicans, and Ecuadorians all have similar skin complexions and therefore, are in the same grouping. Colombians, Argentinians, and Venezuelans are more associated with European features, are considered richer, and therefore "better." In terms of beauty ideals, Colombians prefer light skin, blonde hair, the same height ideal as in the United States, big buttocks, and big breasts. The Peruvian ideal is shorter, darker in skin tone, and dark hair.

Overall, Hispanic Americans were described as being more interested in a healthy weight and having balance than being "very thin" (Lily, p. 6) and as being more accepting of their natural body types. These findings contributed to the codes "Healthy/Balanced" and "Body Acceptance." According to Lily, Hispanic Americans are concerned about "belly fat" and "chicones" (p. 8) or love handles, but her experience of beauty ideals in her culture was of a more accepting attitude. She recalled being among groups of church women who talked and complained about their body concerns while congregating and cooking. She felt their complaining reflected an attitude of acceptance and openness about their bodies, more so than being critical of them. Further, Mili expressed feeling that the norm in Hispanic American culture has shifted to being heavier than the American norm and if an individual is considered normal or even thin by American standards she would be considered too thin by Hispanic standards. "If you're thin, what maybe here might be seen as normal? And thin? I guess? Um, in our family it's seen as like being too thin, you're not eating enough." (p. 5).

United States Body Ideals reported by Hispanic American Participants. In terms of the ideal body type in the United States, Hispanic American participants mentioned most being Barbie-like, like a model, or like a Victoria's secret model. Isabella explained that the Barbie image includes a flat belly, decent bust size, bigger buttocks, and small thighs. Barbie doll-like also includes blue eyes, blonde hair, tall, and thin. The ideal body that goes along with this is proportionate, with a small waist and big "boobs"; with an hourglass figure. Barbara qualifies that this hourglass figure is not a curvy hourglass, but a "skinny hourglass," reiterating that if one goes by television standards the ideal is that of Barbie. Mili indicated that the model type is someone who is tall, approximately 5'6" or 5'7", and thin and she thinks of a model when she thinks of what a woman should look like. Growing up, Mili wanted to "look like a white individual"; wanted to be thinner; wished her body were different; and did not understand how to embrace her hips and breasts. Mili also explained that these expectations and feelings make shopping a very difficult experience. Clothes are made for taller, model-like women, and these clothes do not fit her proportions. It is frustrating to consistently have a hard time shopping for clothes. Despite this, Mili felt that society is shifting a little bit in embracing a more curvy figure and creating a discrepancy between societal ideals and media ideals. Girls express wanting "booties" and more "boobs"—but "at the end of the day it's still that, like runway model that you see...tall and thin" (p. 7) and not as busty and with narrower hips.

Contrary to other Hispanic American participants, Olivia expressed that the U.S. ideal female body is one that is curvy, with big breasts. She felt that being "sexy and exposed" (p. 5) was more important than being thin and provided the example of "fat"

girls wearing mini-dresses even though "you don't have the body to wear that" (p. 5). Olivia felt that American girls just "want to show their body no matter how they [look]" (p. 5). She goes on to explain that women engage in this behavior to solicit the attention of men, providing the example of how college women dress for a frat party. She believes they "go basically like naked" (p. 6), questions "why do you expose yourself like that?" (p. 6), and believes women do this for men. Men just want to see more skin but women will notice that "that doesn't look good on you" (p. 7).She concludes that "you have to know your body…and what looks good on you and what doesn't" (p. 7).

Olivia also made a distinction between how American and Hispanic American (Latin American) women dress. She believes Latin American women strive to be classy, elegant, and sexy, but not vulgar. For her this means wearing a pretty dress or pretty skirt with shirt that might be a bit tight and shows you have a good body, but not showing everything and being appropriate to the occasion. Olivia made very clear distinctions of what is acceptable and what is not and expressed that American women can be vulgar and expose too much. She believed some of this behavior (over-exposing) is attributed to age (young, college women) and to media messages.

When talking about the differences between the U.S., Spain, and Peru in terms of beauty ideals, Isabella stated that Spain and the U.S. are fairly similar but that there is a different beauty standard between the United States and Peru. Women in the United States and Spain want to have a slim figure and particularly in parts of Spain that are near the water women want to have a "beach body." In Spain, legs are an important focus of beauty due to the fact that citizens walk everywhere and therefore have good legs. Peru differs from the United States and Spain in that beauty ideals depend upon your class.

Those in the upper class have more pressure to be dressed well and have "an obligation to look better" (p. 47) because others look up to them. Further, Isabella explained that in Peru there is not yet an obligation or pressure for girls to feel pretty and to be like "stick figures." A majority of people have substantial thighs and are fit, but not super skinny. The ideal there is to have thighs that are not thin and to have big hips.

According to Emily, the White ideal is to be slender, "straight up and down" but for Hispanic American women it is to be "curvy and voluptuous." Hispanic American women work to accentuate their fuller thighs and bust to create the illusion of a smaller waist while White women focus on making everything small and uniform. They are overworked, overtone, try to shrink their natural frames, and do not accentuate natural curves.

Results from Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire. Verbatim responses for each Hispanic American participant on the PADQ are presented below in Table 6. Results showed that individual's ideal physical appearance attributes largely matched and were informed by the physical appearance attributes of their culture. Results from the PADQ differed and supplemented responses from the semi-structured interview pertaining to cultural ideals by identifying the importance of height and thinness in Hispanic American cultures. These physical attributes were not identified in individual narratives and were identified more as American ideals. Other results from the PADQ confirmed such culturally identified beauty ideals as being curvaceous, having large breasts, having big buttocks, and having long, straight hair. Administration of the PADQ presented some problems with participants. Many participants asked for clarification of the directions, indicating a misunderstanding of what information the questionnaire was

seeking. Some of these misunderstandings were not identified until the data analysis phase and required me to contact participants to clarify the meaning of their responses (e.g., Barbara and Dawn).

Table 6

Responses on Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire for Hispanic American Participants

Physical attribute appearance NOW	Physical appearance attributes IDEALLY	Physical attributes appearance of CULTURE
Lily		
• Nice complexion • Frizzy hair • Big thighs • Big smile, nice teeth • Average/short height • Average waist/hip size • Good bust size	• Nice tan complexion • Beautiful soft hair • Long, athletic legs • Big smile/nice teeth • Slightly taller (5'5" or 5'6") • Thinner waist/same hip size • Same bust size	• Thin • Average bust size • Tall • Shiny soft hair • Nice smile and teeth • Nice complexion • Small waist • Symmetry
Emily		
• Fit • Healthy • Muscular • Curvy • Full-figured	• Fit • Healthy • Strong • More toned • Full-figured	• Thin • No muscle • Visible bones • Small
Anita		
• Short • Good hair • Decent bust • Little more weight than I'd like • Decent wide hips • Thighs too big • Calves are fine • Feet are too big • Lower arms are fine • Upper arms not as good as I'd like	• 5 feet two inches • Softer, shinier hair • Same bust size • 115-120 pounds • Same or smaller hips • Smaller thighs (maybe better butt) • Same calves • Feet size 7-8 • Same lower arms • Toned upper arms/upper body	• Height doesn't really matter • Softer, shinier, straighter hair • Same, or bigger, bust • 110-115 pounds • Same or smaller hips • Same thighs (bigger butt) • Same calves • Same feet • Same arms • Same upper body/maybe heavier
Isabella		
• Don't like my waist • Big boobs • Tan skin	• Smaller boobs • Smaller waist • Firmer thighs	• Thinner everything

• Broad shoulders • Swimmer's thighs	• Light eyes • Better back	
Mili		
• Short • Petite • Bigger waist • Smaller buttocks • "Asian" looking • Thick, black hair • Small feet • Tan	• Smaller waist • Bigger feet • Taller	• Smaller waist • Taller • Bigger feet • Bigger buttocks • Lighter hair • Skinnier legs
Barbara*		
• Mediterranean • Beautiful • Pale • Dark straight hair • Moderate weight • Short • Small lips • Small eyes • Slightly big nose	• Brown straight hair • Slightly taller (but not too tall) • Pale • Thinner in certain areas • Less freckles	• Small waist • Blonde hair • Blue or green eyes • Big boobs • Tan skin • Big, tone butt
Olivia		
• Normal height • Small breasts • Nice legs • Skinny (have gained a little bit of weight)	• Little bit taller • Go back to my normal weight • Maybe bigger breasts (not much thought) • Straight hair (naturally, not blow dried)	• Thin • Big breasts • More curves • Straight hair • Nice facial appearance (eye brows, some makeup)
Dawn^		
• Curvy • Small hips • Large butt • Light brown • Short hair	• Curvy • Small hips • Large butt • Big boobs • Long hair • Light brown	• Big breasts • Big butt • Light skin • Long full hair

*Barbara also listed ideals for "others": brown, straight/wavy hair; smaller nose; bigger eyes (big, round); big eyelashes; slightly taller (but not too much); pale; thinner in certain areas

^Dawn also listed ideals for Black individuals: big butt; nice hair (soft, long, full); light skin

Importance of Appearance for Hispanic American Participants. Included in the construct of Culturally Defined Body Image Ideals is the theme of "Importance of Appearance." This theme conveys the principle that appearance is significant in American society and was highly endorsed by all study participants. Reasons for importance of appearance included the following themes: "Benefits" to the participant such as being more likable, indicating or improving career success, and status; "Pressure"—from peers, media, or family to look a certain way; and "Media"—placing importance on appearance standards and having the ideal female body.

Lily discussed the pressures she has felt from the media to achieve the ideal body. She commented that her response was activated by items on the SATAQ-3 in the warm-up portion of the study, validating its function of engaging participants in the subject matter. She explained that looking good is not just about fitting in and looking nice, but has larger implications such as natural selection, sexual attraction, and finding a mate. Similar reasons for caring about appearance were indicated by other participants as well. Olivia equated being thin with being healthy and explained that women care about their appearance for two reasons: (1) to look good for men and (2) to compete with other women. Isabella believes that appearance is important and "women base their image on how society will view them" (p. 2). She sees people around her trying to achieve the Barbie doll look and even friends of hers who are healthy and not overweight feel pressure to lose weight. She believes people care about their appearance because it gives them more confidence, higher self-esteem, and makes them attractive to potential love interests.

Mili indicated that women care about their appearance for the purposes of pleasing and appealing to others, to improve self-esteem and self-worth, and that caring about appearance is more related to concern about weight than health concerns. Further, women seem not to care about their appearance are most likely comfortable with their identity and have "embraced who they are" (p. 4). Mili feels this is more true for Hispanic Americans and African Americans than Caucasian Americans.

Other reasons participants provided for caring about appearance were "Pressure" and "Media." Lily admitted to having felt a lot of pressure around appearance, particularly from growing up with a Caucasian influence in her community and from media messages. Lily felt that she was doing something wrong when she did not achieve societal beauty ideals and expectations. She expressed feeling frustrated that these expectations, to look like a model on television, were not even attainable. These influences made Lily feel like she needed to change and didn't "fit in very well" (p. 3).

Some participants reported identifying more with people who do not care about their appearance, such as Isabella. Isabella extolls the belied that people should not base their self-worth on how they are viewed by others and lives by the adage "don't judge a book by its cover" (p. 3). Isabella explained that she if often offended when people judge her as Mexican instead of Peruvian. Her offense is not just the result of a strong cultural identity, but because she has been the victim of racist and off-putting jokes due to people thinking she is Mexican. This cultural misidentification has happened to Isabella both in the United States and in her birth country (Peru), where she attended a predominantly Caucasian school. People in that school thought she was from a different country.

Isabella's experience has been that people make incorrect assumptions and judgments based on others' appearance.

When asked about the importance of appearance, another participant, Mili, indicated cultural differences between Americans and Hispanic Americans. Mili has observed that in the United States there is a need to have the ideal or perfect image, whereas the Peruvian or Latino culture embraces who they are naturally (i.e. curvy). Americans have a need to be thin, rather than curvy.

Olivia's response to the importance of appearance (and throughout the interview) made it evident that she had a higher standard of beauty and appearance than other Hispanic American participants. She was more critical of others and more conservative in her views on the roles of women, how they should and should not dress, and sexual identity. It was hard for her to answer the question "why do you think some women don't care about their appearance," claiming she herself has never been in this position. She replied that people like this "…just don't really care…Like they have…maybe they think that the people who love her will love her the way she is, you know?" and "…maybe they consider important other things, like personality and being pretty inside. But I think you can be both, you know? " (p.4). Olivia seemed to struggle with the notion of women who do not care about appearance and perhaps value something else more. She recommended that I ask this question of a woman who does not care about her appearance.

Asian American Beauty Ideals. Cultural ideals reported by Asian American participants included facial features, hair, shape of body, height, and weight. Table 7 shows a complete listing, using language from participants, of Asian American ideals versus American ideals by body feature. Findings showed that Asian American

participants endorsed the following beauty/body ideals: big, wide eyes with a double eyelid; long, dark hair; long, thin legs; light skin tone; and an overall petite body. The most important ideals involved facial features, which every participant commented on, and weight. Most participants stressed eye and nose shape with some variation. Chinese participants endorsed a round face with a button nose and Korean participants idealized an elongated face with a narrow nose. Whereas hips were a main focus for the Hispanic American participants, they were not mentioned at all by the Asian American participants during individual interviews. Thighs and hips were deleted from Table 7. Body parts mentioned by Asian Americans but not Hispanic Americans were: fingers, toes, neck, and collar bones. These were added to Table 7. New findings included specific ideals pertaining to eyebrows and eyelashes, variations on nose shape based on Asian subculture, variations on shape of face based on Asian subculture, and preferring soft facial features rather than pronounced (e.g., not preferring an angular jaw or protruding nose).

Table 7

Asian American Beauty Ideals vs. American Beauty Ideals

	Asian American ideals	**American ideals**
Arms	Thin	Slender Thin
Breast	Flat chested (traditional Japanese) Bigger breasts (current Japanese) Larger breast size	Average breasts Big, but not too big
Buttocks		Big, but not too big
Collar bones		Visible

Facial features	Big, wide eyes Double eyelid High cheekbones Full lips Thin, straight nose Small ears Long face Egg-shaped face High nose Balance of face Long eyelashes (fake) Big irises (color contacts) Soft facial features	Big, wide eyes Small nose High cheekbones Full lips Thin, straight nose Small ears
Fingers	Long, thin	
Hair	Long Thick Sleek Fine Dark in color (not blonde) Short bob (for older women)	Long Brown Blonde Big
Height		Tall
Legs	Long Thin	Long Thin
Neck		Thin
Skin tone	Light White skin (fair skinner, not pale)	
Stomach/Waist		Flat
Toes	Thin	
Weight	Slender Thin	Thin Stick skinny Toned/muscular Not fat but not really skinny
Overall	Petite body Curvy, fit, and long body Not athletic (no emphasis on muscle definition)	Athletic/exercises Supermodel like Curvaceous (now more accepted and desirable)

Thin overall body and legs	Eats well
Proportionate	White
	Varies by ethnicity
	Thin features
	Hourglass shape
	Round body shape (not skeleton)
	Glamorous

Chelsea explained that the most important area of the body for Asian American women is the face and that they seek to look like Western individuals. It is important for the face to be balanced and to have big eyes, a high nose, and for some Asian cultures, to be egg-shaped. Comments regarding eyes included the shape of the eye (wide) and having a double eyelid. Participants also expressed the desire to have eyebrows that were fuller, grew only in one direction, had the typical Asian shape of the eyebrow (with a pointed arch), and were less "unruly." Participants also expressed the desire to have eyelashes that curled, rather than growing straight down. Karen explained the importance of eyebrows in the Asian culture due to their difference from other cultures.

> Eyebrows are like a huge thing in Asian culture. Asian eyebrows are so different like they point down… and like the hair is like usually a little bit thicker. It's like I know my mom and my aunt always plucked it like super super thin because otherwise you have like…it grows down a little bit so it makes it look really bushy and that's something I get annoyed about sometimes, like they don't naturally like swing back, they like hang down almost, even though they're not like long, but they almost point down almost, and they're usually like rectangles…they don't have a natural

shape. Like unless you don't pluck them they're like two rectangles and they don't have that arched shape.

In terms of body shape, thinness was a universal cultural ideal expressed by all Asian American participants. This included thin appendages to the main body frame—thin neck, thin arms, thin wrist, thin fingers, and thin toes. A slender, petite, model body was the ideal (very thin, skinny), with little to no muscle definition. It was important to appear feminine but not appearing too toned or muscular. Yuki explained that there are really two extremes of body types in Japan: those who are really skinny (flat chested and not much buttock) and then those who have bigger buttocks and breasts. It is also common in Japan for girls to have thicker thighs that lead to the saying that someone's thighs look like 'white radishes'—like upside down triangles with no thigh or calf muscle definition. Yuki stated that current ideals in Japan include: slim legs, flat-chested, thin overall body, and being proportionate.

Michelle explained that for Vietnamese and Vietnamese American women, the most important beauty ideal is "whether you're skinny or not" (p. 11). The second concern is how Caucasian, or American, you look; the more American or Caucasian, the prettier you are considered to be. This is the case both in the United States and in Vietnam. Vietnamese women are "trying to be as Americanized as they can be," including how they do their makeup, their style of dress, and the music they listen to. In addition, being thin in Vietnam represents whether or not a person is considered lazy. Michelle stated that she feels less pressure to be skinny in the United States than in Vietnam but this really depends on the type of Asian parents one has. For example,

Michelle's parents emphasize being healthy, so they do not focus on weight, but some of her friends' parents put great pressure on them to diet and lose weight. Vietnamese American beauty ideals also include larger breast and buttock size; long, thin legs; thin arms; long, thin fingers; thin, elongated toes; long, thick hair; big eyes; thinner, slimmer nose; high cheek bones; full lips, and a long face. This is different from other Asian cultures, which value a round, circular face. Vietnamese Americans value an oval, long face. Further, while they want a curvy body, it should be a long, fit, curvy body. In terms of height, Vietnamese American women are usually short and want to be taller.

With many of the Asian American participants, the conversation around weight led to a discussion of food traditions within the culture and how these traditions make maintaining thinness more difficult. Michelle described her mother welcoming her home from college by cooking a lot of traditional Vietnamese food. While Michelle has asked her mother to cut down on certain ingredients, such as sugar and salt, it does not result in any change. Michelle acknowledges that her mother encourages her to eat now when she is young and can afford to do so: "…she'd say, you know, you're at an age where you can eat and you have an appetite, and that's more important than, you know, worrying about your weight now, 'cause it shows that you're healthy" (p. 15).

Another important reported beauty ideal for Asian Americans was hair. It is a cultural norm and expectation that a woman's hair be dark, shaped nicely, and manageable so it can be styled in various ways. This includes being long and sleek and not appearing to be greasy. Chelsea explained that if an Asian woman does not wear makeup she should at least take good care of her hair and adorn it in some way, through various styles. Catherine also explained that Korean American women are divided on

what the ideal is for hair; some keep their naturally straight hair, while others perm it to get "more of a wave in their hair" (p. 8). Getting perms is very common for Korean Americans. Many of the Asian American participants expressed frustration with their hair including difficulty managing it, difficulty washing and conditioning it, and difficulty styling or coloring their hair. Generational differences were also indicated and Jane explained that she and most of her friends were born in the United States so they are more influenced by American beauty standards. For example, many of her friends either flat iron their hair to make it razor straight or try to curl it to give it some wave. They also dye their hair a lighter color, such as red or blonde, or put highlights in it so it is not "just jet black" (p. 9). Older women are expected to wear their hair in a short bob.

Skin tone was another important ideal reported on by study participants and ultimately resulted in the code/theme "White but not White." The ideal skin tone for Asian Americans is one that is white—not pale, but fair skinned—indicating innocence, purity, and high social status. A light skin tone is connected to socioeconomic status and being from a well-off family while dark skin indicates being outside and perhaps working in the fields and crops; "it shows that you work harder" (p. 17). Michelle reported that this issue of skin tone does not pertain to Vietnamese American women, who strive to be tan just like Caucasian women. Michelle explained that "being in America, your definition of what beauty is, changes" (p. 18).

Some Asian American participants indicated a struggle around their skin tone. Karen indicated feeling self-conscious about her skin tone because it is pale enough to be considered White by some, but still has some color that is not dark enough or yellow enough to be easily recognized as Chinese. As the conversation with Karen evolved it

became clear that "White but not White" was about more than just skin tone and was really about not fitting in to American culture.

> …And then I sometimes think like sometimes skin, because we um like we tan differently and we like also have like a more like, a more like yellow complexion sometimes…so, it's like we're White but we're not White. Like, actually I think you'd hear that a lot. Like we're not, like Asians always are like we're not like White people. Because we're White but we're not like…" (p. 6)

> I actually heard this not so much from my family but um like I had a very close friend who I like actually dated throughout high school and his mother was the one who's like first generation here…she was always like 'oh you know, we're not like White people.' I guess it's more of like a superiority thing almost, like we know how to discipline our children. We're different than them. Like we're White but we're not like White people. Like you conform to a different standard, like a higher standard almost. (p. 6)

> "Yeah, like skin tone we're White, and like I guess we live in a White society but like like the standards that we make for ourselves aren't like the typical White culture. It's more like a higher standard. Like you want to be of perfect intelligence, you want to like be respectful of parents and like you know, um, I don't know just like conform to different ideals. Like

> the White part I guess is just basically skin tone and like the fact that we live in that culture…" (p. 7)

Karen further indicated a somewhat negative impression of White people, describing them as aggressive and using social climbing as a way to be successful in their careers. This is considered a form of cheating in Asian culture and is discouraged. Karen explained Asian Americans do not engage in this kind of behavior and will only rely on their individual intelligence to progress in their careers.

Plastic surgery was another topic that was widely discussed by Asian American participants. The most common facial surgeries discussed were obtaining a double eyelid and obtaining a different type of nose. Catherine explained that Korean women engage in a lot of plastic surgery, it is very accessible in Korea, and this is where she would go if she were to get plastic surgery. Korean women engage in nose surgery to obtain a thinner, skinnier, more slender nose, "like a White person's nose" (p. 8). Korean women do not want a button nose and want "more of like a thinner, longer nose, so like, elongate their face" (p. 8). Catherine explained that these areas are focused on because they are the two areas that separate Asian women the most from White women and they obtain these surgeries to conform to the White ideal. Another procedure Korean American women engage in is botox injections, particularly when they are older. Catherine explained that the Korean American ideal is closer to the White woman's ideal because in the United States "that's what we're surrounded by every single day, rather than a Korean woman who's the ideal physical beauty. I think that since we're around these White actresses and just White icons, and just like White women all around, I think that's probably what my

mind, especially, is geared toward" (p. 10). Similarly, Japanese women are now pursuing breast enhancement surgery, succumbing to media messages promoting larger breasts. Yuki explained that Japanese fashion magazines, in particular, promote taking pills to enhance breast size.

United States Body Ideals reported by Asian American Participants. In terms of the ideal body type in the United States, the most prominent responses by Asian American participants were being tall, thin, toned/muscular, and with an hourglass shape. Some participants added that this ideal is of a White woman who is thin, but healthy; not the model type, but someone who clearly takes care of their body, exercises, and looks athletic. Other ideal American features included: average breast size; high cheek bones; small ears; full lips; thin, straight nose; slender arms; thin neck; small nose; big eyes; long legs; flat stomach; being athletic; having visible collar bones; and having long, blonde or brown hair. These ideals include pressure from the media to learn how to hide flaws or emphasize positive features through fashion. In terms of breasts and buttocks participants varied with their responses and indicated that this ideal fluctuates. Sometimes large breasts are valued, and sometimes they are not. The same phenomenon occurs with buttock size.

In terms of how Japan and the U.S. differ or are similar regarding body concerns, Yuki feels that both Japan and the U.S. emphasize being slim overall. She feels they differ in that girls/women in the U.S. are much more aggressive in their pursuit and participation in sports (particularly after high school) and in working out at the gym.

> I've never been to a place where so many, especially girls go the gym. Like, everyone goes to the gym and I'm like, "Wow, [laughs] people are really big on

> going to the gym." Like, you know, and a lot of people run as well. I mean I've had friends who run, went running, but nobody really went to the gym. It's just kinda like some people would, but it's mainly guys who'd go or they just buy like, weights and stuff or work out at home. It's not like, go to the gym and at most it's more like doing yoga or Pilates or like, doing dance or an actual like, exercise of some sort. (p. 67).

Karen expressed that beauty/body ideals in the United States vary by ethnicity. For White women it is important to have "bigger boobs but look very proportionate and like very slim" (p. 4) and the ideal for African American women is to have "bigger proportions in general" (p. 4), such as a "big butt" and "big assets" (p. 4). For Asian Americans, the ideal is to be "much thinner" and to be in shape. "Having like boobs or a big butt" (p. 4) does not matter so much. Michelle also expressed this perspective and explained that when she thinks of the skinny celebrity, or looking like a celebrity, she thinks of a Caucasian woman; yet when she thinks of a curvaceous woman she thinks of an Hispanic American or African American woman.

One participant offered a more historical perspective on American beauty ideals, stating that from a traditional Hollywood, or media, perspective being "stick skinny" was the ideal. However, Michelle now believes that America is more accepting of a curvaceous body. She resisted providing specific characteristics of the ideal female, explaining that these things (e.g., height, hair color, eye color) do not define beauty because individuals do not have control over these issues. Beauty to Michelle depends on "how you are" (p. 10) and on how you take care of your body.

Results from Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire. Verbatim responses for each Asian American participant on the PADQ are presented below in Table 8. Results showed numerous differences from cultural body ideals revealed during the interview process. These included valuing wide hips and thighs that do not touch. These body parts were so absent in the interview process that they were removed from Table 7. Other differences reported include large breasts and minimal emphasis on facial features, whereas during the interview process facial features were a focus of discussion.

Table 8

Responses on Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire for Asian American Participants

Physical attribute appearance NOW	**Physical appearance attributes IDEALLY**	**Physical attributes appearance of CULTURE**
	Yuki	
• Short overall • Somewhat curvy with decent bust • Athletic • Hairy • Wavy hair (a lot and thick) • Middle eastern, Turkish, Armenian, Spanish looking	• Somewhat longer legs with less athletic thighs • Possibly straighter hair but might get bored • Maybe slimmer bone structure • Less hairy • When younger wanted more typical beauty but now might have not been happy as it's not unique or interesting	• Taller • Less athletic legs • Straight hair • Possibly less strong facial features • Less of a bust • Longer legs
	Jane	
• Large butt (not necessarily bad) • Bulging stomach • Round chubby face • Stick straight hair • Thunder thighs • Square torso • Nice light brown	• Tall • 32D breast size • Hourglass shape • Thin • Long thin legs • Thin arms • Flat stomach • Toned body	• Large breasts • Wide hips • Tiny waist • Thighs not touching • Long blonde hair • Light colored eyes • Tanned skin • Big eyelashes

eyes • Thin lipped	• Long hair • Big eyes	• Full lips • Small feet
Karen		
• Strong jaw • Small bust • Medium height • Straight, sleek hair • Thin waist • Long legs • Small hands • Small eyes • Smooth skin • Small feet	• B cup bust • Round face • Wide eyes • Abs (more tone) • Thinner thighs • Better naturally arched eyebrows • Taller • More athletic/toned • Rounder jaw • Shorter arms (less gangly)	• Tall (5'7") • C cup bust • Big butt (but not saggy) • Wide eyes • Long, straight hair • Wider hips • Long legs • Small feet • Victoria's Secret model abs • No glasses
Catherine		
• Dark thick hair • Small nose • Smaller eyes • Average bust • Larger stomach • Average hips • Thick thighs and calves	• Dark thick hair • Smaller waist • Longer neck • Thin legs • Toned arms • Flat stomach	• Tall • Blonde/brunette • Long legs • Toned arms • Flat stomach/abs • Big eyes • Full lips
Michelle		
• Short • Curvy • Asian • Black-eyed • Dimples	• Toned • Athletic	• Tall • Stick skinny • Naturally pretty

*Results for Chelsea were not reported; she did not consent to publishing direct quotes.

Importance of Appearance for Asian American Participants. Similar to Hispanic American participants, the importance of appearance was widely endorsed by Asian American participants. Reasons provided for this included: pressure from peers (particularly in college) and media, attracting romantic partners, competing with women,

pressure to conform, social comparison (comparing to other women), portraying competence, and work success. Another reason was that appearance facilitates communication because people listen more through how one looks and through verbal cues, rather than what an individual actually says.

Michelle explained in a very passionate response that looking good is "extremely, extremely important. More so, I think, than women are willing to admit" (p. 2). Women are so bombarded "by all these great images and what society and what men want women to look like" (p. 2) that there is no way to get away from it. Michelle is identifying the process of objectification and validating the conceptual framework of the study. "I don't think that it does not affect anyone, I think it does affect a lot of women" (p. 2). She further explained that women are either willing or not willing to admit how important appearance is in American society, and that beauty ideals are so indoctrinated that women may not even be aware of them.

Several participants also described a frustrating lack of progress on this issue. While campaigns exist (i.e., Dove Beauty campaign) to appreciate and enhance a woman's natural beauty, there is still an expectation in American culture that women should look the best they can whenever they are out in public. Catherine labeled this expectation and pressure a stigma: "I think that being beautiful is definitely a stigma that is engrained in women's minds" (p. 2). This is a "culturally constructed" concept. "We've grown up in a world where women are always looking nice, or women are portrayed in you know, cultural things like TV, the movies, and media, as always looking nice when they go out, having their hair done, having their makeup done, making sure that they have the proper fashion…" (p. 2-3). She attributes this cultural construction as

existing from a time in women's history when their lives and outcomes depended on attracting a male partner who would serve not only as a romantic partner, but as someone to provide for them. Catherine is also identifying objectification by the media and the pressure that results from this.

Participants indicated that beauty and looking good play important roles in American society, such as relaying a certain level of competence or ability, representing oneself to the world, and expressing a high level of confidence. These beliefs endorse the notion that when women look their best they are seen in the best possible light. Without this, individuals might be overlooked and lose potential work opportunities. These beliefs relate to the code/theme "Benefits," which expresses that there are benefits to looking good, such as succeeding in a career, reaching a certain status, and being more likable. Some participants expressed feeling that because of the benefits gained from looking good, women should at least make an attempt to look the best they can through such efforts as using makeup.

One other perspective on the importance of appearance came from Yuki, who explained that the importance of appearance depends on how one defines looking good. It is important to think about how one comes across to others and to look presentable, particularly in the professional world. She notes that people should consider what a situation dictates, such as how to wear their hair, how to dress, and how they are going to act and speak. Yuki defined "presentable" as fitting the situation, such as somewhat formal or business casual for the work world (not sweatpants and sneakers). She makes the further distinction that "fitting the situation" includes being utilitarian and practical for the purposes of the activity. For example, when going to the gym one should wear

"actual gym clothes instead of like wearing something that's not for sports or exercise. However, Yuki also explained that it is acceptable to not look presentable as long one understands the consequences this will bring. Yuki is the only Asian American participant to express this.

A last motivator for looking good and adhering to appearance standards is the media and the messages it portrays. For example, the media shows popular girls (i.e., pretty) as getting all the attention and having friends. Yuki explained that one starts to believe that these people have such wonderful lives and when one is popular life is easier. "…you know, people always want what they don't have, so they're always aiming for something that they currently don't have. So like I think women always think it's important to look…well, a lot of women think it's important to look good, to be attractive, because they think that they might be liked more. And that might affect their overall lifestyle" (p. 4).

Asian American participants indicated several reasons why women do not care about their appearance. These include: being too busy, being confident in themselves and how they look, being raised in a supportive environment, and having received positive body messages from those around them. Women who are already confident with themselves may not feel the need to conform to the same expectations as women who care about appearance. A last reason offered for not caring about appearance was rebelling against society's expectations around appearance.

Representation in the Media

Representation of Hispanic Americans in the Media. In terms of representation of Hispanic Americans in the American media, most of the Hispanic American participants indicated that there is little to no representation and very small variation in

what is represented, resulting in the code/theme "Small Variation." Olivia indicated that the American media mostly shows White, young, skinny, pretty women in their 20s to 30s. Lily explained that young, Caucasian women are usually depicted; then a smaller number of African Americans; even fewer Hispanic Americans; and she could not even recall whether Asians are represented at all. Participants also indicated feeling what little representation did occur was so poor that it was difficult to identify a woman's race or ethnicity due to ambiguous physical characteristics, which resulted in the theme/code "Racial Ambiguity." Lily explained that because of this racial ambiguity of multicultural images, she often cannot tell if a family or person portrayed is Hispanic, Black, Middle Eastern, or Asian. She wondered "where did they get such racially ambiguous people" (p. 31) and thought the media's tactic is to appeal to a much wider audience but she finds their supposed inclusivity to be confusing and inaccurate. Lily, and other participants, had a very difficult time trying to identify any Hispanic Americans in the media.

Isabella agreed that there is small variation in cultural/ethnic diversity or representation in the media. Isabella felt this so strongly that she purported that the media is trying to make a statement that it is acceptable not to show other minorities as long as they are portraying Black people. Isabella also felt that the media has a significant influence on society's expectations of body ideals, which is demonstrated in how celebrities are depicted as perfect; for example, losing weight after having a baby and focusing on diets and exercise. She believes this sends the message "if I just do this I'll be like this celebrity and I want to be like this celebrity because they have money, they have everything I've ever wanted" (p. 41). The interview with Isabella revealed a personal struggle with the amount of influence the media has on her. She discussed

avoiding magazines in the supermarket but then "someone on the treadmill next to you at the gym has a Victoria's Secret catalog, showing Barbie image, so it's hard to avoid." She also wrote a poem for an English class called Barbie Doll in which the main character resorts to plastic surgery after receiving negative comments from a male. The character further engages in exercise to change her body and adapt to society's expectations and by the end of the poem is happy with herself. Isabella's struggle was made very clear when she stated how mad this poem made her because "you should be happy about how you look and you shouldn't care what society says" (p. 42), but it is very clear that she does care.

When asked whether the American media depicts all women equally, Mili responded "definitely not" (p. 36). She is pleased to see actors such as Sofia Vergara and commercials such as the Dove Beauty campaign trying to represent women of various shapes and sizes and to see more Hispanic celebrities in the media, but still feels there is too little of this. She stated that one used to only see Jennifer Lopez in the media and now there are "many more of them and they're just, they look great, and they're proud, and they're open about it and so, it trickles down to us" (p. 32). Yet when asked who these Latina celebrities are she could only think of Sofia Vergara and even said, "I don't know who else is Hispanic."

When the conceptual framework/theory of the current study was explained to Mili, she stated that she does not believe individuals can escape the objectification of women that occurs in the American media; it is too present. Mili described how this objectification plays out in her life and the internal struggle she and Hispanic Americans go through with their dual identity. She explained that Hispanic American women are

essentially shown two sets of images—the American one depicted in the media and the images painted/described by your family members. The dichotomy between these two is never really discussed and creates confusion between family messages, influence of culture, and the influence of American society.

> It was never brought to your attention, or comments never made like in your immediate family, but you have images being shown to you, like this is how you should look but you're not hearing that from the people who care about you, who are raising you. So it's like you're struggling, you're like what, which way, what do I do? Like what's right for me? (p. 31).

Mili explained that these internalized messages still affect her today, even though not to the same degree. She does not want to be a "skinny Minnie" but "I'm still looking to like, outside sources, like, magazines and stuff on Instagram" (p.31). Mili was frustrated to realize that this is still affecting her and more so than she realized.

Changing Representation of Hispanic Americans in the Media. In terms of changing how Hispanic American women are represented in the media, participants indicated showing women with larger waists, because even when women are shown with curves they still have tiny waists that are unrealistic and unachievable; less representation of the hourglass figure; depicting regular Hispanic women, not just famous ones; and representing women of all shapes and ages. Another change some participants indicated wanting to see in the media is simply representing them minimally. Because they see so few Latin/Hispanic women, they first have to start showing them—and not just famous women such as Sofia Vergara and Jennifer Lopez.

Two participants had unique responses to the question about changing Hispanic American representation in the media. The participant from Venezuela, Olivia, stated her displeasure of how homosexuality is being represented more and more in the media, and as natural. Because she has more traditional values and does not agree with gay marriage or gay partners having children, this is something she would change. The second unique issue pertained to cultural identity, claiming a heritage, and distinguishing one's place of birth. Barbara, who lives in Puerto Rico, explained her frustration with people in the United States confusing being Puerto Rican with a stereotype called Nuyorican. Nuyorican is a combination of people of Puerto Rican and Dominican descent but born in New York City. To Barbara, this is a separate culture that has nothing to do with Puerto Rico and she finds this misrepresentation offensive. Closely related to this is the distinction of a person's place of birth. Barbara feels that individuals should be more careful in claiming their cultural heritage and should only do this if there were actually born in that geographic location. For example, individuals should not claim they are Cuban if they were not born in Cuba. For her, having a parent who was born in that region is not claim to that heritage. Barbara encounters this a lot in the United States and specifically at GWU with students claiming they are Puerto Rican if their parents were born there. Barbara stated that she "would never be comfortable with using my parents' ethnicity to describe me. I feel like in America, because American isn't a thing they would say, like people use their heritage to describe their ethnicity" (p. 47). It is acceptable to identify with one's parents' or grandparents' culture, but that does not mean that individual is that ethnicity.

Representation of Asian American Population in the Media. In terms of representation of Asian Americans in the American media, all of the Asian American participants indicated that there is little to no representation and very small variation in what is represented, resulting in the code/theme "Small Variation." Representation is so small that some participants indicated that it does not exist. When the American media tries to market to various ethnicities it is a very token, Americanized version of that culture. This relates to the finding and coding of the theme "Token Representation" in which ethnic groups are presented as Americanized versions of those groups. Participants found this to be an irony because on one hand they want to see more cultural representation, but they do not want it to be a stereotypical representation just for the sake of diversity. This comes across as disingenuous and offensive. This discussion sparked one participant in particular to question the status quo, asking why are White people still the chosen ethnic group when minority groups now outnumber White populations? And why does the American media present the same ideal through Americanized looking ethnic populations, instead of marketing different ideals to various populations? This is represented by the code "Minorities New Majority."

Participants expressed that the media representation of Asian American women is poor and the American television and movie industry feature "White, slim, tallish," (p. 61) thin, young women, even in commercials. These reportings resulted in the theme/code "Poor Media Representation." Asian American participants indicated that the next most represented culture after Caucasian women is African American. Women in general are not represented equally and television and commercials show attractive women of the same size, Chelsea reported. In terms of Asian American women, Chelsea

indicated they are rarely seen and when they are it is as a background character, not a main character. Further, these portrayals of Asian American women are not accurate in that they usually show stereotypes, show them in an unfavorable light, and show them trying to look beautiful in the American definition of beautiful.

Yuki stated that of the minimal representation of Asian women in American media, what is portrayed is too one-dimensional and restricted. She feels "they're giving off the same image all the time" (p. 62). She thinks this is a real "shame" (p. 62) because it gives others who consume media images the wrong impression of Asian American culture. The only Japanese American actress Yuki could think of was Sandra Oh, from the television show "Grey's Anatomy." Oh is actually of Korean descent and was born in Canada, so this is not even an accurate correlation. Besides Oh, the only other Japanese American figure Yuki could think of was a sports figure—Kristi Yamaguchi.

Two Asian American participants indicated feeling that the media is moving in the right direction in terms of race and showing more diversity. For one participant this diversity also included age, shape, and size. As evidence, the participants cited the Dove Beauty campaign and the television show "The Mindy Project." Regardless of this positive movement, both participants expressed disappointment in these diverse women being "Americanized." The American media "has this very narrow thinking, perhaps, of what beauty is…and so they try to fit everyone in there" (Michelle, p. 56). This showing of diversity is not a genuine celebration of all cultures, but a strategy "to show that if you can relate to, if you're of the same race of this girl in the media, then you can relate more to it, so you buy more of their product" (Michelle, p. 57). The media is still "super dominated by the like, idealistic kind of person…tall, thin arms, skinny, flat stomach,

long legs, a toned like all over body" (Catherine, p. 58). This is seen on the Internet, media, awards shows, and more. Lastly, Michelle was particularly incensed about how young girls—as young as 13, 14, 15—are presented wearing a lot of makeup and looking older, instead of celebrating the innocence of their age.

Changing Representation of Asian Americans in the Media. Related to how Asian cultures could be represented better in the media, Yuki made two recommendations. The first was for Asian characters to be shown more in-depth because she believes they are depicted in a traditionally superficial and weak way. She explained that Asian cultures, particularly the Japanese, emphasize acting one way in front of certain people—showing a "façade"—and then acting differently in front of family. The second recommendation Yuki made was for the media to show a greater variety of Asian people because there is such a variety of Asian cultures. Michelle agreed with Yuki's assessment that Asian women tend to be shown in stereotypical characterizations, such as always being obedient, being passive, and as under the control of their husbands. To correct this, Michelle recommended showing more accurate portrayals, for example women taking on more male-like roles, taking care of the family, and keeping the household running, which occurs in real life.

One participant (Karen) expressed that there is no point in changing how Asian American women are depicted by the media because the American media would try to market the same [White] ideal just using a different population. They would still market the ideal of straight hair, nice makeup, good body, and big breasts. To truly change the representation of Asian American women, the media would have to offer "Real Diversity" and show ethnic women in their true forms, not an Americanized version.

> …I think that would be great like if they, if they were working more towards more like, um, toward like showing different types of ethnic groups, in their true like form not in their Americanized forms. You know like ethnic groups are really really different. And like, I just think that like it's such an American thing to like pretend that everyone's the same like no matter what ethnic group you are. We're not. Like every ethnic group is different and like you need to like I guess like stop being so PC about it and accept like the fact that people are, like ethnic groups are different, people look different, they have different standards for themselves no matter what, no matter what ethnic group you're in so it would be great if they could like acknowledge that but it's hard because they want to pretend that like everyone's the same. They don't want to offend anyone by like portraying someone like the way it is, like they don't want to offend anyone by putting in a like a stereotypical representation or something, so it's hard, but it would be nice if they could put more, like more, like we are, we are all Americans, we're different ethnic groups so like I don't understand why they can't market it to like different types of Americans. (Karen, p. 45)

When asked what she would change about how Korean/Korean American are represented in the media Catherine focused on the topic of plastic surgery. She stated there are many beautiful Korean women who do not get plastic surgery and she would like to see more of this. However, Catherine feared that plastic surgery is such a cultural thing and "very ingrained in Korean culture" (p. 61) that this change would not occur.

Assessment Behaviors

This section represents findings regarding the third subunit of analysis and organizing construct, assessment behaviors. For the Hispanic American population this included findings along the codes/themes of "Cultural Norm," "Body Acceptance," and "Social Comparison." For the Asian American population this included findings along the codes/themes of "Appearance Control," and "Social Comparisons." Findings reported for both populations also included discussions related to beauty routines and strategies or techniques to change body areas dissatisfied with. Beauty routines for each population are listed in Tables 9 and 10.

As the theoretical foundations for the study stated, mechanisms that have been identified as major mediators between receiving societal messages and body dissatisfaction are the internalization of thin ideals and the process of social comparison. Internalization of thin ideals involves accepting and adopting societal ideals as personal goals while social comparison involves comparing one's appearance against idealized media images and finding oneself lacking (Tiggemann, 2011). Both of these processes were represented in the Hispanic American and Asian American populations. According to Social Comparison Theory, people compare themselves to idealized images, and in doing this usually denigrate themselves, instead of the ideal (Festinger, 1954). This theory proposes that, within the context of a culture that endorses thinness and attractiveness, individuals have the tendency to compare themselves with others; it is the amount to which they do or do not do this that accounts for differing levels of body image disturbance (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). The current study validated past research (Marsh & Parker, 1984; Ruble, 1983) that showed social comparison as being so prevalent that it is considered a primary, rather than a secondary,

information-gathering phenomenon. Further, the use of both universal comparison targets (comparing a specific physical attribute with strangers) and particularistic comparison targets (comparing self with immediate peers or group) (Miller, Turnbull, & McFarland, 1988) were evidenced in the social comparison processes of the current study. Participants reported engaging in upward (when the target is perceived as superior to the individual) and downward (when the target is perceived as inferior to the individual) comparisons. Specific assessment behaviors that were reported by participants included body checking, body surveillance, public body consciousness, experiential avoidance, and appearance fixing (Cash, et al. 2005; Frederickson and Roberts, 1997). Specific behaviors of appearance fixing were captured in participants' individual beauty routines. Enumerating these processes highlights the amount of work participants put into preparing themselves for public presentation and display. It also highlights how cultural and U.S. expectations affect specific behaviors, which in turn affect body esteem.

Social Comparison among Hispanic American Participants. Findings from the current study showed that the social comparison process is a prominent activity, occurring on a daily basis, for most of the participants regardless of culture. Participants described performing both upward and downward comparisons and sometimes judging others in the process, resulting in the code/themes "Judging" and "Judging and Critical." A majority of Hispanic American participants endorsed comparing themselves to peers and people in real life, explaining that they have more of an influence on their body image than images in the media. People they compare themselves to included friends, people in the surrounding community (even strangers), other college students, and co-workers.

When discussing how comparing oneself to other women made participants feel, several participants indicated a form of jealousy or envy, resulting in the code/theme "Envy." Isabella revealed an internal conflict based on a Peruvian cultural construct. She expressed feeling envious and sometimes wanting to look more like someone else, but then being happy that she does not have the physical characteristics of someone she finds unattractive. Isabella is influenced by the Peruvian norm of being fascinated when you see a White person with blonde hair and blue eyes. She has internalized this cultural message and often wishes she had green or light-colored eyes.

Discussing the topic of social comparison raised the issue of pressure from parents, particularly mothers, for many Hispanic American participants. This resulted in the code/theme "Family Messages/Mom." The examples Isabella provided of messages from her mother included suggesting that she tint her eyes "for other people" (p.32), stressing the importance of wearing earrings, and sometimes wearing makeup. On her graduation day from high school Isabella's mother yelled at her and told her she could not go without wearing earrings; so Isabella wore them. Wearing earrings is clearly very important to her mother; she pierced Isabella's ears the day she was born and often commented that she would look good with a second earring hole. Isabella explained that even now, when she is an independent college student, her mother asks her to put earrings and mascara on, saying "come on, look pretty" (p.36). Isabella stated "even my own mother thinks I'm ugly," (p. 36) clearly showing the power of her mother's messages. These examples testify to family messages Isabella received growing up related to appearance behaviors girls should engage in.

Mili's response regarding social comparison revealed developmental and age-related differences. She admitted that she used to engage in much more social comparison that led to very critical negative self-assessment when she was younger. Now, when she compares herself to others, it is more in terms of being healthy and fit and it does not make her feel bad about herself. "I know that I'm doing the best that I can right now. I know that I'm taking care of myself and I'm going to the gym" (p. 29). While Mili still appeared to struggle with this process, her response supports one of the study's conclusion that older/more mature participants have a stronger sense of identity and feel more positively about their body image.

Mili's response to the question of who she looked to when she was younger and who she would have looked to to compare herself against—friends, strangers, celebrities, people in the media, such as in magazines—yielded an interesting result. She responded that there was not one particular group of people she compared herself with, but that she compares herself to an image, a type. When asked where she got that image, she replied "from the media. Just when I was younger, looking at magazines. Like, I kind of like, created this, this image that just stuck around." (p. 30) The participant indicated the process of social learning and more specifically the process of internalization, in which an individual takes in a social standard for attraction and makes it their own. She believed she was the one who created the image, not the media. Mili was demonstrating the insidiousness of the internalization (specifically commercial image internalization) process.

Participants at both George Washington University and Loyola University expressed a strong comparison process on their college campuses, noticing that the

women in both locations seem to dress up more on a daily basis and pay great attention to their appearance. Isabella indicated that Loyola has a distinct culture and women there dress in a particular style. Students there "always dress really nice" (p. 28) and look like they came "off the runway." She and her roommate have even given one of the other girls the title of "our little model" (p. 29). Isabella does pay attention to what this other girl wears and "even if you don't want to" you see the other girls in the nook and think "oh wow, I really like your outfit" (p. 29). Isabella is definitely indicating a pressure to conform to how other Loyola women dress and admits that this pressure often influences her to wear jeans when she would rather wear sweatpants.

Olivia's response to who she looks to to see what looks good or bad resulted in an interesting finding; one that validated the conceptual framework of the study. Olivia responded that she looks to magazines for what looks good and from pop artists. She then clarified that individuals in the United States do not really have to pay attention to the media and fashion and style icons because these messages are so pervasive that they just come to people.

> "It's not that I have to pay attention, it comes. You know? I think it's impossible to get rid of that, to not pay attention to that. It's everywhere. But I don't look for it. You know?"
>
> Interviewer: Do you think it's everywhere in your country? Or are you saying in the US?

"In the U.S. In my country it's because people go to the U.S. You know?" (p. 48-49)

Further, Olivia seemed to have little understanding of her personal social comparison process. It was clear that she accepts participating in social comparison easily and justifies it by externalizing it to the situation or context in which it occurs. Secondly, she claims that social comparison does not make her feel less about herself but then seems to contradict that. For example, Olivia explained that women look at each other to see what they are wearing and if they are appropriately dressed for an occasion. During this process she may realize that she is under or overdressed but it does not make her feel bad about herself. Yet on the other hand she seemed to be admitting that the social comparison process, particularly an upward comparison, does make her feel bad about herself and it serves as the "trigger" to remind her that she needs to work harder and get to the gym to lose the weight she has recently gained. She has a certain standard that she wants to live up to and the social comparison process reminds her of this.

> Yeah, or maybe you are uncomfortable because of the context, you know, of the situation, but...and if I see someone skinny, like, it will remind me that oh, yeah, I need to work out. But not because I want to be like her, I feel less. It's just because that remembers...like, that...oh, I have been gaining weight. Like, I have to...you know? It goes back to the part of myself. It's like she's just the trigger that made you remember that you have to work out. It's not that you want to look like her. (p. 53)

When asked if they look more toward American culture or Hispanic culture for what looks good, most of the Hispanic American participants indicated American culture. Lily explained that she uses her style of clothing as a way to differentiate herself from her Hispanic American culture, preferring to dress in a preppy, classy style rather than the bold, colorful patterns Hispanic women dress in. Isabella indicated that Hispanic culture has never influenced her in terms of what to wear, mostly because her mother bought her clothes for her and these were always classic and preppy. During the interview Isabella did not reflect on what has influenced her mother's choice of clothing for her; whether this was just her mother's personal preference or perhaps her desire for her children to become assimilated/acculturated. Similarly, Barbara also explained being influenced by American culture. This was mostly due to Puerto Rico's similarity to the United States, stating that Puerto Ricans are "sort of American but not really American" (p. 39).

Contrary to most Hispanic American participants, when asked who she looks to for fashion/appearance standards Olivia claimed she looks to Latin American women. She explained that she feels Latin American women are more likely to be presentable than American women. Olivia again provided examples of how American women do not meet her appearance-related expectations. One example was of how prevalent flip flops are in American society and that she believes they look "dirty" (p. 51) and are only appropriate to wear at the beach, not other places. And the second example was of how young women may dress up nicely for a party but for every day "they'll be a mess" (p. 49), wearing flip flips and a big shirt with writing on it.

Beauty Routines for Hispanic American Participants. Beauty routines reported for Hispanic American participants focused on hair upkeep and management, makeup

routines, nail polishing routines, face routines (washing, applying lotion), and hair removal (waxing, plucking). These routines resulted in the codes/themes "Effort," "Grooming Product," and "Appearance Control" and the amount of effort ranged from minimal to moderate.

The most discussed topic for Hispanic American participants was hair and the difficulties they have controlling it. This was particularly true for participants with curly or thick hair. Lily reported washing her hair, using a leave-in conditioner, towel drying it, and "I might, um, try to brush it out a little bit" (p. 14). Lily, as well as other participants, reported that getting a comb through her hair can be quite difficult and sometimes she uses an anti-frizz oil product. Several participants (Anita, Lily, Olivia) reported using techniques to straighten their naturally curly hair such as using a straightening iron (this takes 30-40 minutes) or doing a keratin treatment every four to eight months depending on hair type. Some also explained the difficulty of having such thick hair; that is "like a sponge" (Anita, p. 28) and holds on to the moisture all day. Participants also commented on experimenting with their hair by coloring it, cutting it, or trying new products.

Some Hispanic American participants reported engaging in minimal beauty routines (Mili, Barbara, Isabella) while others engaged in moderate beauty routines (Lily, Olivia, Anita, Dawn). Minimal routines involved daily cleaning of bodies and faces and only wearing makeup for special or rare occasions. As reported by Mili, some participants felt that wearing makeup made them look less tired, more alert, more presentable, and as though they were taking care of themselves. When Mili does wear makeup this includes mascara, eyeliner, and a little bit of eyebrow pencil. Barbara expressed engaging in what she considers to be few beauty routines, compared to her

peers/friends. She expressed a healthy balance of needing less control over her appearance and prioritizing sleep, elucidating the codes/themes "Healthy/Balanced" and "Appearance Control." Barbara explained that she does not wear makeup on a daily basis like many of her friends and tries to encourage some of them to wear less makeup. She attributed this to living in Puerto Rico where the drinking age is 18. There she does not have to strive to look older to get into a bar; therefore, she does not get dressed up in special clothes or put on makeup to go to a bar in Puerto Rico. In the United States, however, she explained her friends put on makeup and dress up to go out to bars in the "Effort" to look older and gaining admission. Barbara expressed not wanting to put this much effort into going out and she does not want to conform to this behavior.

Barbara did however describe herself as being "obsessed with skin care" even though she has never had acne. For example, she forced her mother to buy Proactive (commercial acne treatment) and uses it every night. She likes how clean it makes her skin feel. Similarly, she reported buying creams and lotions (particularly ones that smell good) and applying them to her face and body before she goes to bed. This routine also included applying cream at night to correct under-eye circles. Barbara admitted that most of these products do not actually do anything—"it really doesn't work" (p.28)—such as the under eye cream and the Proactive (because she never had acne); she just enjoys putting them on and it has now become a routine. This use of unneeded and ineffective products speaks to the power of advertising and the media and the influence this has on women.

Moderate beauty routines included more daily and monthly effort applied to appearance control, such as using foundation, eyeliner, and mascara on a daily basis

(Lily). Olivia reported being particular about the hair on her head and waxing her eyebrows. She stated that she gets a keratin treatment every four months to make her hair straight and gets her eyebrows waxed or plucked every month. She further claimed that when she is in Venezuela she does more, such as having her nails painted, because it is less expensive than in the U.S. The participant showed that she engages in appearance control, with a moderate degree of effort.

Lastly, some participants reported that the type of beauty routines they engage in are dependent upon the tasks they will be accomplishing on a specific day. In other words, their appearance control behaviors vary based upon the social expectations of particular roles. For example, Anita reported that if she is going to a party, meeting up with someone, or has a professional function to attend, she will put more effort into her appearance and engage in more beauty strategies. On a daily basis she stated that she washes her face, showers, and brushes her teeth. When she has more time to add makeup it will include coverup, foundation, eyeliner, mascara, and lip gloss.

Table 9

Beauty Routines for Hispanic American Participants

Participant	**Beauty Routines**
Lily	• Makeup—powder foundation, eyeliner, mascara daily • Hair—wash, leave-in conditioner, towel dry • Uses anti-frizz products • Nails—gets manicures and pedicures rarely
Emily	• Face—wash every night • Oral hygiene important • Makeup—every day (concealer)

	• Hair—wash every few days; uses Moroccan oil once a week • Nails—polish every 2-3 days
Anita	• Basics—brush teeth, shower, and wash face • Makeup—if has more time or if occasion calls for it; trying to use makeup to cover up skin discoloration (birth mark) • Makeup—when has time uses coverup, foundation, eyeliner, mascara, lip gloss • Nails—gets manicures and pedicures every now and then (in the spring) • Hair—depends on what condition it's in when she wakes up; when straight just combs it and goes; if curly uses straightener on it (30-40 minutes); if knotty, washes it, uses leave-in conditioner (does not blow-dry it) • Washes hair 3-4 times per week
Isabella	• Showers daily after swim workout • Applies acne cream daily • Makeup—does not wear daily unless needs to coverup something on face; sometimes wears mascara and chap stick • Nails—does these weekly • Hair—washes daily; does not color; does not try to curl (does not hold a curl)
Mili	• Hair—does not color; used to apply coconut oil 3 times a week (does not now due to time) • Makeup—wears for work and special occasions; mascara, eyeliner, eyebrow pencil • Face—used to use facials masks (does not now due to time) • Nails—does not do, wishes she did
Barbara	• Daily basics—wash face, brush teeth, put bobby pin in hair (to hold back bangs) • Hair—sometimes colors it herself out of boredom • Nails—used to get done monthly; paints her own toenails • Skin care—obsessed with it, loves applying lotion to face and body; uses Proactive but does not need to; applies under eye cream
Olivia	• Hair—keratin treatment every four months; washes every day • Eyebrows—waxed/plucked every month

	• Nail—does them more regularly in Venezuela • Makeup—wears every day but applies to look natural
Dawn	• Hair—goes to hairdresser every other week; on alternating weeks washes it, conditions it, dries it herself; sometimes leave in conditioner for few hours • Uses bronzer every day (makeup only now and then) • Lotion—uses every day after shower • Face—washes every night • Waxing—once a month

Social Comparison among Asian American Participants. Findings from the current study showed that the social comparison process is a prominent activity, occurring on a daily basis, for most of the participants regardless of culture. Participants described performing both upward and downward comparisons and sometimes judging others in the process. A majority of Asian American participants endorsed comparing themselves to peers and people in real life. Asian American participants also reported comparing themselves to celebrities in the media, as an example of the Caucasian ideal. People they compared themselves to include friends, people in the surrounding community, other college students, and people in the media.

One participant indicated engaging in upward social comparison with her friends on a daily basis (Chelsea). This included a head-to-toe comparison of herself with any girlfriend, followed by a visit to the restroom to check herself in the mirror (i.e., body surveillance). Comparison with celebrities on television and strangers was also engaged in. Chelsea described this as a different process because it is much more unrealistic to

reach those standards. Chelsea obtains information on what looks good from Asian American women, television, and fashion bloggers on the Internet.

Yuki explained that she is very critical and observant of things around her, such as how people stand, how they walk in all shoes, particularly in heels, and how proportionate their bodies are. She attributed this to being a dancer and being raised in the competitive and detailed world of ballet. She stated that she was more influenced by the media, peer pressure, and what others thought (such as brother, mother, and father) when she was "Growing Up." She admitted that she does not entirely know where she got her sense of what looks good and what does not but stated that it did not come from her friends or family and credits it to just thinking that way and at this point in her life "it's probably a mix of everything" (p. 51). What was clear was Yuki's acute awareness of stimuli in her environment and that she thinks a great deal about what defines beauty. While Yuki claimed that she tries not to let others influence her she was also aware that dance most likely has.

As part of her social comparison process, Jane explained that she definitely does not look to Vietnamese women for what looks good. Jane explained that she really struggled with being Vietnamese, or Asian American, because she grew up feeling that "the ideal kind of person was Caucasian, like light skin, light hair, light colored eyes, and um like even into my high school years I didn't think I could be pretty unless I was Caucasian…I was settled with the fact that I couldn't be pretty" (p. 41). She attributed this to the fact that everyone she compared herself to was not Asian American and even in magazines or the movies she could not find a beautiful Asian woman to identify with. "I just kind of concluded with myself that like I can't get my hair to be blonde. I can't get

my hair to look like that because she's naturally like that whereas I'm very different" (p. 42). Even now, when she has a lot more pride in her cultural identity, Jane admitted that she stills struggles and has conflicting sides with one saying "…you're beautiful and like um, you're different but you're still like good looking and like confident" (p. 43) with the other side saying "You still can't reach those characteristics because of your race…because I still have that idea that um, to be pretty you have to be like white and blonde and blue eyed" (p. 43-44). Being perceived by men as different and exotic, Jane admitted that she does sometimes feel pretty. However, the result of this is when she is with a group of Asian Americans she is not so different or exotic and, therefore, she often surrounds herself with Americans. Jane did show some sense of a "Healthy/Balanced" perspective on this inner conflict in stating that "..the feminist in me is screaming" (p. 45) and she should appreciate herself just as she is. Jane also addressed the issue of "yellow fever" and explained that while she takes pride in being different she does not just want to be liked for her Asian features. "…I'm more than my features. I don't want guys to like me because they like Asian girls" (p. 45). Jane attributed a lot of this to how she was raised—by parents who were so busy working that she and her brother were basically raised by the television and by peers. She does not think her parents were neglectful, but busy working to give them everything they needed. She also remembered being taken out of Vietnamese classes when she got older to focus on reading and writing in English in preparation for the Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSATs) and the Scholastic Achievement Test (SATs). She also stopped Vietnamese girl scouts and other activities when her parents were concerned that she was not adjusting to American culture, particularly in terms of school. Jane is aware that her parents struggled too with how

much Vietnamese and American culture to expose her to, and in fact, her mom still struggles even though she is very Americanized. Jane explained that her mom still expects to tell her what to do until she is married and does not quite know how to deal with it when Jane explains that she is now an adult and her mom's rules do not apply to her anymore.

Michelle admitted that she engages in social comparison with celebrities and with real women. "Growing Up," celebrities provided her with motivation. She reported finding this ironic as an adult because she now realizes many celebrities do not use natural means to obtain their physiques. Even so, she admitted that celebrities still motivate her. She tries very hard not to have automatic negative thoughts about herself but again she realized that she has been thinking in this critical way for a while and it is internalized, expressing an understanding of the social learning process. She has learned through psychology classes how to reframe these negative thoughts for herself but she does still find herself being critical of others she may find unattractive. She stated that she tries to be kind in her thought process, but it does not always happen. Michelle does not see this comparison process with celebrities as putting too much pressure on herself but as a way to set high standards and goals, wanting to achieve the highest she possibly can. For these reasons Michelle compares herself to celebrities, who she believes to be "the king of the jungle" (p. 53). Further, Michelle stated that she looks more toward American women than Vietnamese women for what looks good because American women seem to be more open about their struggles. It was her opinion that Vietnamese women always pretend that their looks are natural even if they have worked hard to obtain them.

When asked if she compares herself to other people for ideas of what looks good and bad, and if so, is this usually friends, strangers, or celebrities on television or in magazines, Catherine responded that she does engage in the comparison process and it is usually with friends and celebrities. She surmised that comparing yourself to others is natural because images are so prevalent in our every days lives and she just accepts this.

> Um, but I think that, you know, I think it's just really – I guess it's just natural for me to compare myself to those kind of people. I think it's – it's IN your face ALL the time – how to lose weight, she tells you how to lose ten pounds in ten days, you know, that kind of thing? Like, I think that it's just SO – it's out there ALL the time, one hundred percent. You know, when you walk into CVS, you're paying for your things, and you see the magazine there. They strategically place it for you, for you to look at, and buy it. But even if I read it, it says, like, oh my god, she's one hundred and whatever pounds, I can't believe it, like – who cares?...and any kind of slight change will be noticed by the media…And, I don't think that that necessarily translates to like, the general public…and, I guess it – it does affect people more than it should? But it does affect me. You know, naturally, it does affect me. Because when you look at that person, you're like – that person looks great! I could do that! But you, like, you know. Like, sometimes it's hard (p. 45).

Similar to Michelle, Catherine stated that images on television, in the movies, and on the Internet affect her even though she knows the celebrities have endless benefits that help

them look as good as they do. Catherine was aware that she still automatically compares herself to them and holds them up as the ideal. While she knew this was completely unrealistic and takes a lot of mental energy, she still admitted participating in this.

> Yeah. I really do. And like, when I sit down and I'm like, I KNOW why they look like that, and I know why, you know, I know what the media does to these people, and I get it. But, it still affects me. Cuz when you see the image it just, clicks in your mind, it's something that's so… instant, like when you see an image, it just processes so quickly? And you can see it, and you – you're like, oh, why can't I look like that? Even though you KNOW, even though I KNOW in the back of my mind, like, it's impossible, like, you know, these people are like this because, you know, blahblahblahblahBLAH, but, you know, I just – it's still, it's a person, it's a body, it's there. And it looks great, you know? (p. 45-46)

Catherine was clearly reflecting the inability to escape the influence of the American media and the pressure and expectations this places on women; validating the conceptual framework of the current study. While Catherine reported that negative feelings about her body do not really stop her from participating in such activities as going to the pool or beach, she expressed feeling insecure and self-conscious when participating in these activities and that this influences her to modify her behavior while there. For example, she will lie down and try not to walk around too much, or she will stay in the water longer.

In terms of looking more toward American women or Korean American women for what looks good, Catherine claimed looking more toward American women. She feels they are more attractive than Korean women and she does not like the way Korean women are portrayed in the media. According to Catherine, American women are portrayed as more healthy and with stronger bodies than Korean women, who are portrayed as weak and frail. Further, Catherine admitted that when she compares herself to other people she feels like she has failed in that she has not reached the same ideal as that person. However, when comparing herself to someone who is unattractive she feels better about herself. Catherine was aware of the unfairness of this dichotomy but claimed she is very susceptible to media messages. Catherine indicted the media for creating these culturally constructed ideals that dictate what is attractive and not attractive to society and offered the following example.

> I think that ideal that I have in my mind is obviously culturally constructed. You know, that ideal – you know, if the ideal WAS a size ten woman? Then, you know, let's just say like, in a completely alternative world, the size ten to twelve woman. And – would women be trying to gain weight to get to that level? Probably. If that was what MEN wanted, and what the MEDIA thought was right. And like, you know, instead of a size zero, like, a size ten…It's very, like, I think I'm very susceptible to culturally constructed things. So, um, it makes me feel like I'm inadequate, like I don't have the kind of, um, mental strength? To control myself…I feel, probably better about myself… I guess like, when I look at someone immediately, when I think of someone who has an unattractive

> body? It's cuz of what the MEDIA tells me that's an unattractive body! You know, that woman might be MORE fit, she might eat a lot healthier, and exercise more than the woman who's naturally a size two, you know. She might – her BODY might be a lot healthier, you know? …But the media's telling me that's not pretty. And like, feel better about yourself 'cause you don't look like that. But it's all because external forces are telling me that's ugly. (p. 48-52)

Beauty Routines for Asian American Participants. Beauty routines reported for Asian American participants included focusing on hair upkeep and management, makeup routines, nail polishing routines, face routines (washing, applying lotion), and hair removal (waxing, plucking). These routines resulted in the codes/themes "Effort," "Grooming Product," and "Appearance Control" and ranged from minimal to extreme. Two reoccurring themes among this population were difficulties with hair and difficulties wearing eye makeup.

The most discussed topic for Asian American participants was hair and the difficulties they have getting it to maintain a curl or wave (for those with thin hair) or difficulties getting hair to be straight (for those with thick hair). Participants reported taming their hair through the use of a straightening iron (40 minutes) or a straightening treatment, such as an in-home Brazilian treatment. This involves applying a cream to one's hair for 3 days and not showering. Catherine stated "so you have to do it when you're like, locked up, you have nothing else to do for 3 days…so you should not be going anywhere important" (p. 36). Catherine has also experimented with numerous

commercial shampoos and conditioners and done deep conditioners at the salon, as well as haircuts that thin her hair out. Participants with fine hair explained how difficult it is to style their hair, from putting a save or texture into it, to even braiding it or putting it in a ponytail. Several participants described using numerous hair products at the same time (paste, hairspray) and sleeping with this in their hair to get it to hold a minimal wave. Participants also commented on how difficult it is to color Asian hair, particularly if making it a lighter color. The hair has to first be bleached in order to hold a lighter color. Some participants, such as Michelle, commented that they would not do this because it is too damaging and unnatural. Michelle likes the way this looks on other Vietnamese women but she cannot bring herself to do it.

One participant (Karen) commented that most Asian women do their own nails and would not go to a salon to get this done.

Minimal beauty routines (Yuki, Karen) included washing hair a few times a week, only wearing makeup on special occasions, waxing every now and then, and painting nails. Yuki explained that taking care of certain things is very tedious, and she seeks to avoid this.

Moderate beauty routines involved wearing makeup "65 percent of the time" (Catherine, p. 30) and includes wearing foundation, darkening of the eyebrows, eyeshadow, mascara, bronzer, blush, and lip gloss/stain. Mimicking the television show "What not to Wear," Catherine called this her "under 5 minute face" (p. 31). Several participants explained that learning how to wear makeup was a challenge because "there's not a lot of makeup that's geared toward, you know, Asian American women" (Catherine, p. 31). Without a double eyelid it is very hard to wear eye makeup. This was

presented as a "blessing and a curse" (Catherine, p. 32) in that Asian American women know they cannot achieve the look others do and therefore do not focus on makeup as much as others. However, it was clear that Asian American participants still exerted considerable time and energy toward makeup and appearance. Catherine explained that trying to wear makeup makes her feel good (1) knowing that she tried a little bit on that day (put some effort into it) and (2) that it makes her look more awake in the morning and "okay to go out" (p. 33).

Michelle revealed a lot about the time and energy she puts into her appearance. Even though she claimed being low-maintenance on a daily basis, it was clear that she gives fashion, beauty routines, and image a great deal of thought. The portion of Michelle's interview on beauty routines encompassed 18 pages of transcript (out of 68). Michelle stated that on a daily basis she does not do much before leaving her dorm. She showers and may or may not wash her hair, washes her face, applies moisturizer and sunscreen, brushes her teeth, and leaves her room. Michelle explained that she uses lotion on her body every day and does not wear makeup on a daily basis. On days when she is working a professional event for her job, she will take more time to get ready. This routine included wearing a dress and putting on makeup. Her makeup routine involved: moisturizer, sunscreen, foundation, bronzer, mineral powder, eyeliner, mascara, and lip gloss. She recalled putting special emphasis on making her eyelashes extra long, feeling reminiscent of the glamorous 1920s look and stating "…it's classy for me, like long eyelashes and I think the movement of it makes me feel very feminine. I especially don't do it every day 'cause I want that special feeling, when I do do it?...and you have to be patient with it, versus everything else…" (p. 28-29). Other beauty routines Michelle

discussed were painting her nails (which she does herself to relax), shaving her legs every other day, waxing her eyebrows once every two weeks, and wearing perfume regularly. She also expressed that she loves jewelry and wearing earrings. She explained that she does not really have time for all of this at school, so one thing she loves about going home is that she has more time "to do all this feminine stuff" (p. 38).

Extreme beauty routines involved daily routines that took up to two hours of preparation and included showering, washing hair, applying body lotion, and applying makeup (foundation, eyeliner, mascara, and lip treatment), as reported by Chelsea. She also reported getting her nails done up to two times a week and going to the salon for hair treatments up to four times a month. Chelsea's beauty routines also included an exercise routine. Techniques she has employed to change the parts of her body she is dissatisfied with were exercise and diet, including fad diets.

Similar to Hispanic American participants, some Asian American participants indicated that beauty routines are dependent upon the day's activities and roles of these activities. For example, Michelle explained that fashion is an important part of appearance and what one wears depends on the event an individual is going to and how a woman wants to come off to others. Michelle explained several types of roles or personas she dresses for and gave them titles and descriptors. These were: (1) the girly girl/pretty girl, who is classy and wears dresses (not too short though) or a skirt with a colorful blouse, and brighter colors, such as a lot of pink. In terms of makeup when you want to portray this look an individual would wear less and have less emphasis on the eye; lips would be pink or orange color. Colors for eyeshadow and lipstick are brighter for this look. This persona is appropriate when someone wants to "go to the mall or go on dates

during the day" (p. 2 of follow up interview). (2) The fierce girl is when one dressed for nightlife; for clubbing and going to bars, or "feeling like a strong woman" (p. 2 follow up interview). In this persona a woman's outfit would be darker, more fitting to the body and sexy, but still classy, not too short, with very high heels. The makeup for this look is darker with major emphasis on the eye, for example "the eyeliner is intense black and bolder with mascara that elongates the lashes and darker hue of blue as the eyeshadow" (p. 2 follow up interview) and the lipstick is red. (3) The tomboy look is used when someone wants to be more "chill" and "laidback" (p. 44). For this persona, an individual would wear a hoody and sneakers, would be ready to study, and "you don't have to worry about looking nice" (p. 44). (4) To represent a professional woman, Michelle would wear tighter clothing, but not too tight, more tailored looking, and collared shirts with skirts. This would be for a business setting and would include "conservative outfits" (i.e. no cleavage, no short skirt, and no spaghetti straps). The makeup would be more natural with a "tint of pink or different shades of natural lip color for lipstick, and heels" (p. 2 of follow up interview).

Jane explained that the beauty routines she engages in depend on her energy level and how much "Effort" she wants to put into her appearance. Depending on this she has an entirely different routine. The first two paragraphs below highlight Jane "trying."

> I, I feel like it's hard to say 'cause there're like days that I try and days that I don't try. But um, it's like usually at the beginning of the semester like I renew myself and say I'm gonna try hard every day. But these days I'll, if I have the energy I'll get up, well even before actually I'll put some product into my hair, kind of like a paste and I'll put my hair in a bun um

and I'll sleep on it and in the morning I'll take out the bun and it will maybe be wavy and I'll put some hair spray on it so it maybe stays wavy during the day, um, and then I'll put on some eyeliner on both my top and bottom lashes and if I'm feeling particularly good I'll put on some mascara even though I think the mascara bothers my eyes by the end of the day. I always feel like I need to rub my eyes.

And then sometimes I'll put on, like if I wanna use blush I'll use this like primer, that's like a lotion and I'll put it all over my face so that the makeup stays so I'll put like blush on my cheekbones and then I might use chap stick or if I'm going out I'll use a lip stain. Yeah, um, and then, yeah, other than that sometimes if I feel I have time after a shower I'll put skin cream all over my body [excuse me] and um I think that's it. I think, um, as an As-, because I'm Asian I don't have to shave that often so I'll only shave like every maybe three or four days…the other thing about trying, especially over the summer when I was feeling really confident, I would wake up in the morning um I would like maybe, I would take my phone, and I would like check my Facebook, look through the news and look through a Pinterest or Tumblr site, which is like a fashion site and look through like the fashion section, and look for an idea what to wear that day…and then I would like literally change out of like three or four outfits until I had an outfit I wanted, that looked nice on me. (p. 31)

The following quote describes Jane's routine when she is "not trying."

> Um, on days I don't try I think, I kind of pull my hair into a ponytail, I put on a baseball cap to hide my hair…my face especially, when I'm walking down the street. I might put on some eyeliner and more often than not I wear my contacts no matter what, but sometimes I do like wear my glasses. But usually only if my contacts have been bothering me. (p. 32)

Lastly, some Asian American participants expressed objectification, peer pressure, and peer messages as justification for their beauty routines. For example, Catherine explained that her insecurity is heightened by the critical and judgmental comments she hears from her peers regarding people who are unattractive or overweight. Peers have made verbal comments asking why someone is eating so much when she is so fat. Catherine knows they are saying this not out of concern for the woman's health but because the woman is not skinny and not adhering to the standard/ideal. This has made a strong impression on Catherine and she does not want to be the subject of this type of judgment and ridicule. Similarly, when asked about the importance of fashion to appearance Catherine responded that this seems to be particularly important at the George Washington University. She felt that because the population there appears to be wealthier they seem to focus more on fashion and how they look. In addition, Catherine explained that if she had a more ideal body type, she would be more experimental with her wardrobe; but she feels the fashion industry caters to the model body type. Catherine was also envious of women who are bigger than she, who wear fashions she would not even attempt to wear, and looks good in them. She would not even attempt these looks because

she would "feel personally the whole world is looking at me, like why is she wearing that, you know…" (p. 64).

Jane revealed that she has put a lot of thought and practice into trying to change her appearance in one way or another, whether it was trying to learn to use makeup to emphasize parts of her face (high cheek bones, bigger eyes, fuller lips), considering breast augmentation surgery, exercising to achieve tone legs and a flat stomach, or learning her true breast size and how to buy the correct bra. Jane described a relationship with her breasts that ultimately helped her feel defined as a woman. "Growing Up" she recalled feeling that she had very small breasts, her mother reiterating this, and wearing an A cup size through high school into her freshman year of college. During one visit to Victoria's Secret to buy a new bra a salesperson measured her breasts and declared that she was a C cup, not an A cup. She admitted that this revelation finally made her feel like a woman. "…like once I got a new bra I was like this is how it feels to be a woman, like, I'm renewed" (p. 22). Having this new understanding of her true breast size, as well as a boyfriend who values her female features, Jane admitted that she no longer thinks about breast augmentation surgery.

Jane explained that the media, peer messages, and peer pressure contributed to these thoughts and behaviors. She recalled her friends in high school discussing how they wished their breasts were larger and noticing that the more endowed girls received more attention from guys and were more popular. Even now peers have an influence on how she perceives breast size. Many of her friends look large to her and she only just realized that they have normal sized breasts but most of them wear push-up bras. She finds this a very strange notion and concedes that push-up bras hurt. While Jane indicated that peers

do influence her, the media does as well. She recalled choosing a 4 (mostly agree) for most of the media related items on the SATAQ-3. For example, "*I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to lose weight*," "*I would like my body to look like the models who appear in magazines*," and "*I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body*." Jane did, in face, choose a "4" for 21 of the media-related items on the SATAQ. For five of the media-related items (including those that are reversed scored) she responded with a "5," (definitely agree).

Table 10

Beauty Routines for Asian American Participants

Participant	Beauty Routines
Yuki	• Showers at night • Hair—washes every other day; sometimes blows it dry (if going out; if not lets it dry on its own); colors every now and then for fun (used to wear highlights) • Lotion—uses a lot on hands (which get dry easily) • Face—sometimes uses acne product • Makeup—only uses on special occasions; only uses lipstick • Nails—1-2 times per month (does herself; enjoys the down time) • Waxing
Jane	• Shower—and if have time apply skin cream all over body • Makeup—eyeliner (top and bottom) very day, mascara (if feeling good; but bothers eyes by end of day); primer, blush, chap stick, lip stain • Hair—attempts to put wave/texture in it by applying paste, putting it in bun, put hairspray on it, then sleep on it • Nails—rarely (as a treat) • Shave—every 3-4 days; wax (pubic areas) • Look at fashion web sites for input on outfit
Karen	• Showers at night

	• Makeup—only wears half the time; more so for nice occasion (dance, picture taken) • Nails—always painted (does these herself); touches them up when they get chipped • Hair—washes 3-4 times a week, conditions twice a week; just brushes on a daily basis • Washes hair 3-4 times per week • Waxes facial hair every now and then
Catherine	• Showers daily • Makeup—wears 65% of the time; includes foundation, eyebrow pencil, light eyeshadow, mascara • Face—washes and moisturizes every day • Nails—always has polish on (does it herself) • Hair—when she washes and dries hair it takes about 40 minutes; has tried Brazilian straightening product (sits in hair for 3 days); every other day uses straightening iron; when lets it go natural applies curl cream and curl gel' has experimented with dying it; experimented with a lot of products
Michelle	• Hair—if wants it to be straight uses straightening iron (5-10 minutes); if curly just wets it; currently permed (perming takes 2 hours and lasts 6-8 months) • Basic—brushes teeth daily • Makeup—wears for work sometimes or special occasions; foundation, bronzer, mineral powder, mascara, lip gloss • Face—cleans and moisturizes daily, applies sunscreen • Nails—tries to do weekly (as stress relief; does herself) • Waxes eyebrows every two weeks (does her own waxing) • Shaves every other day (legs) • Lotion—loves to apply this daily • Perfume—uses every night • Jewelry—uses often; loves to accessorize

**Results for Chelsea were not reported; she did not consent to quotes being reported.*

Meaning of Body Image

This section represents findings regarding the fourth subunit of analysis and organizing construct of the study, meaning of body image. For the Hispanic American

population this includes findings along the codes/themes of "Healthy/Balanced," "Growing Up," and "Environment as Cultural Influence." For the Asian American population this includes findings along the codes/themes of "Effort," and "Struggle." Findings reported for both populations also include discussions related to peer and family messages and tables of participants' definitions of what body image means to them. In the follow-up interviews, participants were asked how they defined body image with the following question: "How do you define body image? What does it mean to you? Is fashion/appearance more important than body image?" Most of the participants distinguished body image from fashion/appearance explaining that body image is a construct solely about one's physical body, how one feels about their body (self-esteem) and various body parts, or how one thinks others view their body. Body image encompasses all of one's physical features. Few participants felt that body image and fashion/appearance were intertwined and dependent on each other and some stated that fashion/appearance could help or hinder one's body image by helping them correct or cover their flaws or from keeping them from seeing their natural beauty. Posing these questions in the follow-up interview in this way was very helpful to the study; helping to clarify participants' feelings about these constructs, which was not always clear in the initial interview. Body parts participants were satisfied and dissatisfied with are listed in Tables 11 and 13. Definitions of body image for each population are presented in Tables 12 and 14.

Hispanic American Participants.

Body image (Isabella). Isabella expressed always having felt comfortable with her body and not paying much attention to it. But she gave a different impression

throughout the interview. Isabella reported that many others have made comments to her about various body parts. For example, people have commented on her "swimmer thighs" (p. 17) saying they are "awkwardly big" (p. 17). Her mother claims that Isabella's thighs are nice but Isabella stated they "didn't work out for me" (p. 17). Isabella also reported feeling that her bust size is too large, she is too short, her hair is too thick (although she still likes it), and her nose is too big. She indicated wishing she could correct her nose through surgery, such as her father did. Despite these negative feelings about her body, Isabella was pleased with her skin tone, hips, and hair. She stated feeling most satisfied with her smile, calling it her "best feature" (p. 19).

Isabella's mother clearly put a lot of value on appearance. Isabella explained that her mother went through the process of having eyeliner tattooed on and that she is self-conscious about not having grey hair, dying her hair often. Further, Isabella's mother has commented to her that she should lose weight (around 10 pounds) and has subtly encouraged her every now and then to go for a run.

Isabella's desire to pierce her ear cartilage shows her developmentally breaking away from her parents' image of her and trying to form her own identity, particularly around appearance. This is also happening around her choice of clothes and being more influenced by her peers than her family (i.e., choosing her own clothes) and more influenced by her father than her mother. Isabella did not discuss it directly but it seemed that gender roles and gender-related expectations around beauty had an influence on the development of her body image. She commented several times throughout the interview that she identifies more with her father and has always emulated his more casual style of dress, but in a female version (with skirts).

At the end of the interview, when asked if she wanted to add anything else that would be helpful to the study, Isabella had a moment of honesty. She admitted that, throughout the interview, when she has claimed that she does not care about how she looks, she has been lying, because she does care. She cares when she goes to class, when she goes to a party, when she goes to the cafeteria, explaining that even when you are comfortable in your body, you care how others perceive you. But she went on to say that judging others on how they look is just part of human nature, it is "like our sixth sense" (p. 48). And she admitted to doing this with her teachers, correlating how tough they will be by how they dress. Even so, she felt that women are judged more than men, men have different standards to live up to, and it is harder for women to please society than it is for men.

Body image (Mili). In discussing her own body image, Mili indicated that she used to be concerned with her height (wanting to be taller, she is 5'1") but has learned to embrace it because of positive body messages such as "you're so cute" (p. 12). But she has had issues with her stomach and at times wishes she had bigger buttocks "I think the issue I've had my whole life was my stomach, I've always felt self-conscious about my stomach" (p. 12). When asked how much she thinks about having a smaller stomach now and asked if it's on a daily basis she responds no, but then clarifies why that is: "No, 'cause now I'm going to the gym…So now it's like, I'm doing something. My goal is to get it smaller but at the same time I feel I'm becoming more and more comfortable with what I have, I guess" (p.13). It seems that as long as she is actively doing something to work on her stomach, she does not think about it as much and is not as self-conscious. This is still a form of work, effort, and control over her appearance. And as long as she's

doing something she does not have to feel guilty about it. She is clearly still indicating a mental and physical struggle to accept her body as it is.

Another experience Mili discussed having grown up in a very Latino community in middle school, was being surrounded by Hispanic women who had small waists and large breasts. This is what she compared herself to, always wanting to be skinnier. Her negative body image, and feeling self-conscious of being "overweight" influenced her to buy t-shirts that were loose. She didn't buy clothes that were fitting, because of her stomach. Mili is most satisfied with her legs, hair, and skin tone.

Body image (Dawn.) Dawn is African American and Hispanic American with divorced parents who both live in the United States. Because Dawn is biracial with influences from her African American mother and Hispanic American (Dominican) father, she has an intersectionality of influences on her body image and messages she received from various family members. Skin tone was an interesting aspect of growing up for Dawn. Her aunts on her father's side would express joy that her skin tone was getting lighter, saying, "'Oh my goodness I'm so happy you're getting lighter'" (p.7). However, she tans more quickly than most Dominicans because she is half Black. Dawn explained that her aunts do not hesitate to explain this to others when they introduce her: "They'll say, 'Oh yeah, like this is my niece. She's Hispanic. She's a little darker though 'cause she's half Black'" (p. 7). Dawn stated that this does not really bother her because when she is with her Black friends she is the light one. Dawn admitted that this was a bit confusing for her when she was "Growing Up," particularly in high school, when she did not quite know her identity yet. She recalled having two distinct environmental influences in high school: (1) that she went to a predominantly Black school and (2) that

she spent most of her time in her father's predominantly Hispanic neighborhood. She recalled being socialized with Hispanic friends and family members but then realizing that she did not really look like her family members, who had full, curly hair that they would straighten, and that she looks more like her Black mother. Further, she recounted being called "red bone" and being labeled the sexy light-skinned girl in the Black community. She recounted how moving in and out of these two environments affected her sense of personal attraction and that she was "very caught up in, like, the color system" (p.10).

> I spent a lot of time thinking about, like, what color am I? And I would feel like the lighter I was, the more attractive I would be. So then I would automatically feel less attractive around my Hispanic family, because they're so light. And then I realized, you know, there are beautiful people in all different colors, in different ways. It's not just one way to look pretty (p.11).

These experiences highlight the combination of "Environment as a Cultural Influence" and the "Importance of Messages" from family and peers. Dawn expressed the notion of not quite fitting in anywhere, or what she called being "on the border" (p. 10) between two cultures. This is similar to the themes "White but not White" and "American but not American."

Body image (Barbara). In terms of her own body image, Barbara stated that she is "super content" (p. 13) with her bust size and that she likes having "huge boobs" (p. 13). She claimed that "It would be the most sorrowful experience of my life" (p. 13) but

did not clarify what "it" was. It was assumed that she meant it would be a sorrowful experience if her breasts were too small after she stated "I'm glad that they're not too big or too small" (p. 13). Barbara also expressed feeling that her hips and thighs are "okay" but she would "enjoy them more if they were a little less big" (p. 13).

Barbara seemed to be self-conscious about her height in the United States, but not in Puerto Rico. She claimed that in Puerto Rico her height was acceptable but in the United States people make comments about how "super small" (p. 13) she is and call her "Little Barbara" (p. 13). While she claimed to be alright with this it seemed more like resignation and that she took this as a negative body message. "My height, I thought it as okay back home, but now I'm like, everyone says that I'm super small here. They're like, Little Barbara, and it's like okay, I'm small [laughter]. But I mean, I don't mind it either. It's not like I'm beating myself up about how small I am." (p. 13)

Barbara's discussion of her hair indicated how particular she is about it, in terms of its texture. As a child and toddler her hair was very curly. As she aged it got less curly and more so wavy. She has had two Brazilian blowouts and the first one was when her hair was still fairly curly. She liked the results because the treatment made her hair very healthy, a little bit less curly, and more wavy. But the second time she did the treatment it made her hair "super straight," which she does not like. She feels it is "too straight and it just looks weird" (p. 14). She now realizes that her ideal hair is slightly wavy and if she had the curly hair she was born with she would "be sad and I would get Brazilian blowouts all the time" (p. 15).

In terms of her skin tone, Barbara admits that it is difficult back home because she is paler than most Puerto Ricans. She cannot really go to the beach to get tan because she

burns instead of tans. While overall she expresses a healthy balance and body acceptance in stating that she really likes her skin tone and likes being pale even though this is not the norm, it is clear that sometimes being different bothers her. During the time of her prom this pressure to not look different influenced her to buy and use self-tanning cream. She explained that even though she engaged in this behavior, she has never felt like her skin tone was something she needed to fix and that she actually does not look good tan. She experienced getting very tan one summer when she hiked the Inca Trail in Peru and was in the sun every day for a month. When she returned her parents commented on how different she looked being that tan.

In discussing her facial features, Barbara stated liking her face and that her father tells her she looks Mediterranean and has a Botticelli mouth. She claimed being fine with her brown eyes but when she was younger she wanted green eyes like her father. In terms of her one dimple, she stated it is "weird" and "…a birth defect, but it's a cool birth defect" (p. 19). It was clear in her discussions of facial features that Barbara places a lot of value on her father's impressions of her and on his own physical features.

Barbara reported that the features she appreciates the most about her body are: face, breasts, shoulders, back of arms, and collar bones. She reported appreciating that her arms are not super bony or super fat. Regarding her collar bones, Barbara explained, "That's a weird thing to be satisfied with but I think it's cool. I think it's cool 'cause you know how you can see collar bones sometimes?" (p. 22). She did not provide any further explanation of her collar bone being appealing.

Barbara appeared to be very particular about her physical features and to prefer characteristics that were in the middle of two extremes. She expressed these feelings in

relation to her hair, arms, and thighs, explaining that she did not want super bony or super fat arms, hair that was not too curly but not too straight, and legs/thighs that were not as big as at the time of the interview but also not super skinny, or "chicken legs" (p. 22).

Body image (Anita). Anita indicated feeling fairly positive overall about her body image, but had undercurrents of dissatisfaction that she tried to shrug off or laugh off throughout the interview. Anita indicated that she is satisfied with her facial features, such as her smile, bust size, hair, dimples, eyes, lips, sand skin tone. She is dissatisfied with her thighs, saying "most of my weight is in my thighs" (p. 40), her height, and her weight. Weight for Anita is tied directly to her short stature. She is also sensitive about skin discolorations she has under her hair and just at the top of her forehead. She explained that these are birth marks and several people in her family have them. This is why she tries to wear some of her hair hanging over her forehead.

Factors that have contributed to Anita's body image are her short stature, being teased for this "Growing Up"; her thick thighs and having difficulty finding clothing because of her body shape; knowing that her mother, sister, and grandmother also struggle with their large breast size; and the discoloration of her skin. These negatives were countered by rich experiences, such as receiving supportive comments from her older cousins about her thighs "they were always like 'your thighs are awesome! Guys love that!'" (p. 39); being told that her height means she is "fun sized" (p. 40); and being around the racial diversity of South Beach, Florida. These experiences have helped Anita balance out her sense of body esteem.

Even though the above is what was reported by Anita, two important things have made me reconsider Anita's sense of body image, and in fact the genuineness of her

entire interview. The first matter is the statement she made at the beginning of her response regarding her own personal body image.

> Well, generally, I'm, generally satisfied with my appearance. I do not consider myself to be stunningly beautiful, I don't really think I'm ugly either? I'm pretty content with how I look? Um, but then of course there's certain things that I nitpick about. I feel like everybody- like, this could be a little bit like this, that could be a little bit (giggle). Um, my hair- I love my hair. It's very…flexible, with what I can do with it…It's, uh, it's work? (giggle). In, whether I have it straightened, or curly…but um, it's still one of my, favorite parts of my body. Um… facial features. I like my eyes…I like my lips, I like my face, it's- I could, always do with less acne, but, whatever. (p. 32)

These comments, the questioning tone used to relay them, and the giggling throughout indicated to me that this is an accurate portrayal of her body image and it is on the low side. The second matter was something that transpired at the end of the interview, once the digital recorder was turned off. Anita mentioned that there was a body image issue she did not bring up during the interview. When prompted, Anita explained that the topic of body modification is something she is very interested in, such as tattoos, nose piercings, and stretching earlobes. Anita expressed that for her there is a tension between the subculture of body modification and the rock scene versus Afro-Cuban cultural expectations (and individual desires). These issues are not understood or supported by her family. I felt that this response was so divergent from the responses provided in the interview that her responses may not have been genuine and some may have been

fabricated. (Or perhaps it was hard to talk about with a stranger.) It also struck me that Anita was dressed in a very conservative and formal fashion (business-like blue and tan skirt and matching sweater) even though the interview was conducted on a Saturday morning. I followed up on the issue of body modification during the member check-in. The following was Anita's response.

> Well firstly, I should mention that in either side of my family, body modification isn't necessarily "good" but it isn't hugely bad either. It really just depends. As far as tattoos go, I would like several. One large tree that will most likely go on my back, stained glass windows that I don't know where to put, and some symbols from my neo-pagan religion. You can imagine that my family will most likely completely freak out. I don't have any illusions that they will be accepting of them, but that won't stop me from getting them. However, I also plan on getting a tattoo of my Dad's name over my heart when he passes away. That will be a long time into the future, but even then because of what it means, my family would not say anything negative about that (at least not to my face). To me, body modification is both a religious and artistic expression…The other tattoos will be of my own creation, and I'd love to put my own art on my body, I'm very much in favor of the idea that "my body is a canvas." As far as piercings go, that's a different story. My family would not like me getting any crazy piercings anywhere (it was a bit of struggle to get my second piercing in my ear.....really). But luckily for them, I prefer piercings on

other people and not so much myself. When I started stretching my lobes, they didn't really understand it.

Body image (Lily). In discussing her own body image, Lily reflected a lot on experiences from her past, such as in middle school and high school, endorsing the code/theme "Growing Up." With some experiences she was self-critical, for example of her breast size, while with other experiences she reminisced about having more time for activities such as cross country running and how empowering this experience was for her. It was clear that these experiences were instrumental in forming her body image, which has stayed with her through her transition to college. However, as a freshman in college, she reported feeling slightly negative about her body. She explained that she does not currently have the time to work out like she used to (running every day) and has therefore gained some weight. Being an athlete has played into her sense of body image, because she judges herself against the standards of her athlete body.

The "Fine With It" code seemed very relevant for Lily, particularly in response to her own body image and how she feels about her own appearance. She expressed past dissatisfaction with the following areas of her body: height, breast size, and nose but stated in the interview that she is now fine with it. She used various phrases to express this such as "I've gotten used to it" (p. 11) and "I'm not really that uncomfortable with my body" (p. 11). These statements are not strong, positive statements and raise doubt about how Lily really feels about her body image.

Lily indicated that negative thoughts and feelings of discomfort have restricted her behavior in several ways. In middle school she did not go to pool parties or the beach

because she did not want to wear a bikini. Wearing a one-piece suit was not a solution because then she would have just felt that she did not fit in because everyone else was wearing a bikini; she knows she would compare herself to everyone else. In the past she has either not gone or she has worn a cover-up if she did go. Secondly, she is very self-conscious about her dark body hair, particularly in private areas, and this also restricts her from wanting to wear a bathing suit. She is considering laser hair removal so she no longer has to deal with this issue.

An interesting theme/code that Lily brings up is the influence of "Socioeconomic Status" versus culture on appearance and body image. She has noticed that money creates more ability for one to conform to media and societal expectations, highlighting how resources affect body image. This is an important finding for the study, demonstrating that not just one thing affects body image, such as culture, but a "combination of things" (p. 46).

Body image (Olivia). Olivia defined body image as "how does the body look? How do you look overall? Everything—your height, your hair, your weight, how you dress, everything about you, you know, like the outside of you." Factors that contribute to this included "Family Messages," "Appearance Importance," "Media," and "Cultural Norms." Despite having the lowest BMI for her population (20.72) she still indicated most of her body dissatisfaction being in her stomach and noticing a recent weight gain (of approximately 10 pounds). Olivia indicated that her mother puts pressure on her to lose weight saying, "…you're gaining weight. Like, stop. Like, care about yourself. Do it for yourself. Work out. Stop eating chocolate, you know?" (p. 15). She also expressed liking being "skinny" and that the cultural norm in Venezuela is to always look good, even if you are just going out to the grocery store.

> Yeah, personally, I like being skinny. Exercise, to be in shape, I like that. I don't know. I think it is because I have been raised like that also. Like, my mom is really thin, and she is really healthy. She just eats like fish and salad, you know? She's really healthy. She does a lot of exercise and she really cares about being thin, like I think to an extreme. But I have grown with that. (p. 13).

In addition to being dissatisfied with her stomach, Olivia indicated dissatisfaction with her height (wanting to be taller) and her hair (wishing she could do less to it). She is only satisfied with her legs. Working hard to achieve her culturally-constructed appearance schema, Olivia discussed engaging in such beauty routines as keratin treatments for her hair every four months, monthly eyebrow plucking or waxing, wearing makeup daily, and choosing her clothes carefully. These beauty routines change when she is in Venezuela to include regular nail polishing and more frequent trips to the salon. Olivia's own beauty expectations have led her to be critical and judgmental of Americans. Throughout the interview Olivia critiqued American women's poor standards for how they dress and appear in public. Lastly, another way in which Olivia worked to achieve her appearance schema was to employ techniques or strategies to change something she was not satisfied with. For example, Olivia stated that normally she would exercise for about a month prior to going to the beach to get in better shape. And when she feels she has put on weight she will wear a cover up or keep her dress on and not run on the beach; but these activities would not limit her from getting into the ocean or the pool.

Body image (Emily). During her interview, Emily expressed feeling overall good about her body as a young adult and being most satisfied with her face. Emily explained that she derives great pleasure and happiness knowing her face is a unique combination of her parents that even her siblings do not share (have different biological fathers). She revealed that she enjoys the fact that she is the only person in her family with brown eyes; the rest having blue or green eyes. Emily's response about her body image further revealed that she was not always comfortable with her body and she has only recently learned "to become more comfortable with my appearance, since starting college" (p. 6). Some of her past struggles included being taller than most girls her age and therefore weighing more. She has also "become comfortable with the fact that I'm a little curvier, and that I have larger breasts, and, um, yeah, I'm pretty comfortable with it" (p. 6). Even though Emily endorsed being comfortable with her overall body image, she also expressed acceptance of the fact that all girls/women feel insecure about some part of their body, stating "I mean there's always the point where every- where a girl feels insecure about a certain thing (p. 6). Emily indicated "there's like a few body parts that I would definitely want to change? Nothing, though, that's like, womanly about me. I like, like my thighs, and, stuff. That has taken a long time though, to come to like" (p. 6). The parts of her body she felt dissatisfied with were her feet , due to their lack of arch, and her long limbs, which she described as "annoying looking," and "gangly" (p. 6). She recounted being teased for them in middle and high school, wanting to be more "proportional" (p. 6), and feeling insecure.

"Family Messages" were an important part of constructing a health body image for Emily. Having a professional nurse as her mother, Emily recalled learning to value

her intelligence above her appearance as well as the importance of not letting appearance get in the way of one's work performance. An older sister who has children, has also helped Emily realize that body image and the expectations one places on oneself change as an individual ages and requires different things from one's body. This family message has helped Emily learn to value what her body does for her and how it functions physically, encouraging her to take better care of her body and not abuse it for the sake of vanity.

Another contributing factor to Emily's body image was her identification with her Hispanic culture. Emily explained that "Growing Up" she was in a mostly Hispanic community, where they were "more comfortable with themselves" (p. 19) and not as constrained by social expectations as American culture. She feels that Hispanic communities live in "more of a bubble" (p. 20), staying true to their cultural roots, staying connected to family, and being more collectivistic. She believed this leads to Hispanic women feeling "less of the influence of like, feeling objectified by the things that American women can feel objectified by? Because they're so shrouded in like, such strong like, fundamental, cultural roots in family and religion and tradition" (p. 20), indicating a protective factor of her cultural identity.

Despite endorsing acceptance of her body, having a healthy body image, and being aware of unrealistic beauty expectations in American culture, Emily still disclosed engaging in appearance control behaviors. These included painting her nails frequently (every two to three days), using Moroccan oil treatments to control her hair, using concealer on a daily basis, and experimenting with various fad diets and alternate eating behaviors such as being a vegetarian. Emily also expressed feeling the need to wear

clothing that is not too revealing due to the daily objectification she feels, particularly in the District of Columbia and the GW community. She has experienced blatant objectification at her job, during professional interviews, from male peers, and when running.

Table 11

Satisfied vs. Dissatisfied with Body Parts for Hispanic American Participants

Participant	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Lily	• Skin/complexion • Smile • Bust size • Height	• Nose (would like to be thinner) • Thighs (would like to be thinner) • Legs (would like to be thinner • Hair (wishes were not frizzy and curly)
Emily	• Face (proud of uniqueness)	• Feet (no arch, not good for dancing) • Long limbs (gangly)
Anita	• Hair (very flexible) • Lips • Dimples • Bust size • Eyes • Facial features	• Thighs (too big) • Stomach • Discolored skin (birth marks) • Weight • Height (in terms of weight factor)
Isabella	• Smile • Skin tone • Hair	• Height (wishes were taller) • Nose (too big) • Breasts (too big) • Back (not a body image related issue; about tumor and diving injury) • Eyes (wishes were light colored)
Mili	• Legs (from waist down) • Hair • Skin tone	• Stomach • Height (too short)
Barbara	• Face • Breast • Shoulders • Arms • Back • Collar bones	• Hips • Thighs (if lost weight would want to here); but would not want to have "chicken legs" • Hair (not too curly, not too straight)
Olivia	• Legs	• Height (would like to be taller) • Stomach (notices weight gain first in “belly”; uncomfortable to sit in pants)

		• Hair (would like to do less to it)
Dawn	• Thighs • Buttocks • Hips • Skin tone • Eyes • Nose	• Hair (too much work; too short right now, trying to grow out) • Body hair (always waxing or shaving)

Table 12

Definitions of Body Image, Hispanic American Participants

Participant	**How do you define body image?**
Lily	I think body image is definitely not just physically how you look. It has a lot to do with your self-esteem, how you feel. [You're always] sizing yourself up compared to other people. I think that how you feel maybe in regards to other people or how you feel despite other people, I think, is what your body image is.
Emily	As you grow older, it's what's beautiful, what's not, what's considered ideal, what's not. And when it comes to how you look physically, you literally just look at the people around you, and that influences how you are.
Anita	Body image is both your physical body and your sense of fashion. Physical body image is really important because it ties in closely with physical and mental health. But fashion is the body image you present to other people. It says a lot about how you feel about your body, and what you want other people to know about how you feel about your body.
Isabella	That's actually a really good question. I never thought of it, but if I have to, it would be someone's feelings on his or her own body, I would say. How someone feels about themselves.
Mili	Body image signifies one's own views and beliefs about the way in which they physically view themselves as well as the way in which others view them.
Barbara	Your perception of what you look like. It could be either

	negative, or positive or sometimes both. How you think other people look at you, also.
Olivia	I think it's a really good concept. It's like, how does the body look? How do you look overall? Everything—your height, your hair, your weight, how you dress, everything about you, you know, like the outside of you.
Dawn	I guess how you think about your own body. How you view yourself.

Asian American Participants.

Body image (Chelsea).[3] Chelsea indicated that she has low body esteem and feels a discrepancy between how she looks now and how she would like to look. Chelsea was most concerned with her weight and facial features. She would like to look American and compares herself quite often to Americans. Her barriers to reaching her ideal body image include lack of exercise and overeating. She also feels less confidence without makeup. Chelsea definitely identified with the notion of negative thoughts influencing her behaviors: she expressed feeling self-conscious in a bathing suit, so she has reduced her exposure to swimming pools; and negative thoughts have further restricted her from being more social with friends and meeting new people.

Chelsea expressed a number of negative thoughts and behaviors including poor eating behaviors, extreme exercising, constant participation in a comparison process, and depressive thinking. These things indicated a need for professional evaluation and intervention. She was provided with a list of community counseling agencies and strongly encouraged to visit one. She indicated the desire to do this. Further, she provided

[3] Consent was not provided by this participant to use quotations for the purposes of publication.

more information on parts of her body she is dissatisfied with through the Body Satisfaction Scale than through the qualitative interview. Through the BSS she indicated dissatisfaction with her hips, thighs, calves, and ankles.

Body image (Yuki). Yuki indicated wishing she were a bit taller, mostly because fashions are made for tall, skinny people (models). In fact, Yuki stated that she believes the idealized body type is that of a fashion model. "So in terms of clothing, I think that the ideal body type is still to look a little bit more like a fashion model just because it usually is made to accommodate their body instead of like everyone else, you know?" (p. 23). For her own personal body, she wished, growing up, for the body of a ballet dancer—tall, small bust size, long and lean muscles. She explained that her body is more athletic—she has a "decently big bust size," shorter legs than a ballet dancer should have, and somewhat stubbier legs because she picks up muscle so quickly in her legs.

Yuki recalled receiving negative messages from peers and being teased growing up regarding her dark body hair. As someone of Japanese descent, with Japanese features growing up in Switzerland, she was different and most people had lighter body hair that was not as visible, for example their arm hair. She also recalled seeing many media messages in Japan regarding waxing or shaving. She did not remember body hair being as big of an issue in Japan, but this was mostly because everyone waxed or shaved it off.

Yuki also recalled feeling self-conscious about her skin tone when she was younger. She would tan the most easily of her family members, having taken on more of her father's Armenian traits in this area, and just being out in the sun she would get darker. Through positive messages from her mother she learned to appreciate her skin tone and now appreciates it.

Hair was a big issue for Yuki. She spent a fair amount of time describing how difficult her hair is to work with. It is naturally thick and wavy and trying to care for it when she wore it long was a major hassle. She explained that it took a lot of time and effort to wash it, dry it, and even get a brush through it. Yuki used to straighten just the top of her hair (with a straightening iron) and leave the bottom portion wavy. Trying to wear bangs was difficult as well. She explained that straight hair is much better for wearing bangs. Yuki explained that she feels a certain sense of freedom with her hair—that she can experiment with its length or color. This does not come from disliking her hair, but from a desire to try different hair styles and have fun. She explained that she does not have a lot of attachment to her hair (unlike other women), so it is easier to experiment with.

Throughout the interview positive messages from mom seem very influential and relevant. Yuki's mother has helped her accept her skin tone and how she tans quickly and easily and to resist such fashion trends and peer pressure as wearing makeup. Her mother explained that she does not really need it and it is better to hold off and not wear it too early in life when you do not really need it. She also encouraged Yuki not to trim her eyebrows too much (i.e., do not go too thin) because eventually they will thin out as she ages and she will not be able to grow them back then. Similarly, she encouraged her daughter not to dye her hair because it is damaging and just to experiment with some highlights, which she did. When she got to college she dyed all of it for the first time, with a boxed hair dye (not salon).

Body image (Jane.) It was very clear through the interview process that Jane was struggling with her body image. Her weight was a very big issue and came up numerous

times. She explained that her current weight is 140 but she is always striving to hit 125. She weighed less in the previous summer and preferred that although admits that her current weight is probably more healthy.

> It's hard cause like I know I'm not fat but I always think that I'm um, a little bit chubby…I'm always striving to hit 125 when I like weigh 140, which is kind of hard. I lift weights. I exercise a lot. I know a lot of it is muscles. It's kind of contradictory case I am an exercise science major and I know, I know about like problems that people have like with their body image and like they're always like you should be more satisfied with how you feel than how you look but I just don't seem to be able to get over comparing myself to other people even when like, a lot of my friends are shorter and more petite and I know I'm going to have a different body shape than they do but I always seem to be comparing myself to them. (p. 110).

Jane admits to engaging in negative thoughts about her body, such as: her stomach is too big, her buttocks are too big, her breasts are too small, she has too much "chub" on her arms, her legs are not thin enough, and her thighs touch. She also wishes her eyes were bigger, she were taller (she is currently 5'6"), and her nose were longer and smaller. Jane does not currently think about her skin tone very much but described being teased for being so pale while growing up. Jane used to work hard to get darker, but now only tans a little bit in the summer.

Hair is also important to Jane in terms of her body image. She explained feeling better when it is long and prefers for it to have some curl or body to it. At one point she donated 12 inches to Locks of Love and could not look at herself in the mirror due to not liking how she looked with short hair. Jane has spent considerable time playing with her hair, changing the color and trying to get it to be more full and hold a curl. It is very frustrating to her because she spends a great deal of time trying to find products that will help curl her hair, including different curling irons, products, and shampoos. She prefers for it to look untamed and the only way she can get it to have some curl is to constantly put product in her hair, put it up in a bun, and wait for it to set. Jane commented that she is now proud of her jet black hair and overall likes the texture.

Jane admitted that how she feels about her body and certain body parts depends on the day. A "good day" to her is synonymous with a skinny day on which she feels like she weighs less and has a flatter stomach and is proud that her buttock is a little curvier. But on a fat day she feels like her breasts are too large and do not look right in her clothes and she is not proud that her buttock is curvier. She recalls the previous summer when she felt more confident in her body, explaining that this was due to being slimmer by about 10 pounds, working out 4-5 days a week (as opposed to 2 days a week now), and being single and getting a lot of positive attention from men. While Jane admits that her current boyfriend is very positive about her body and gives her positive feedback about her curves and weight, and he has helped redefine her ideal, it does not change what she sees in the mirror. She claims that prior to dating her boyfriend her emphasis was simply on being thin and "almost like not even really having curves yet still having large breasts" (p. 18). Now, she is proud that she has curves.

Jane admitted that negative thoughts about her body have restricted her from time to time and the main influence is not necessarily being self-conscious about her body, but how she fears others will perceive her and treat her. For example, she talks about her boyfriend's upcoming spring formal, which will include a weekend getaway at a location that has an outdoor pool. While Jane is excited to have this break from school and de-stress, she is worried about exposing her body in a bathing suit. She is not concerned about her boyfriend's reaction, but the reaction of the other women who will be attending that she does not know. Jane admits that women are judgmental of other women. "…they're gonna be girls there who aren't nice and are gonna be judging me and…I know from personal experience they're like 'oh that suit looks a little too small on her' or 'those jeans look a little too tight on her.' Um, yeah, it's hard to be around girls. Most of my friends in high school were guys" (p. 27-28).

Another example she provides is taking a route to class where she will run into fewer people she knows because she has not made the effort to put on makeup or do her hair after an all-nighter of studying and having had no sleep. Jane also does not like to be seen in her glasses, which she feels make her look too Asian. Because of this she will often wear her contacts when they are incredibly uncomfortable and her eyes are dry and itchy. Jane states that she prefers to be perceived as American or Americanized and "…I've just tried to be Americanized my whole like that I don't even want to wear my glasses" (p. 30). This particular part of the conversation launches Jane into a discussion and explanation of several terms within the Asian American community that hint at acculturation issues. One of these terms is appearing to be "fresh off the boat" or FOBY. And apparently, wearing glasses can make you look too Asian and therefore FOBY.

Another concern is in dying your hair. Jane explains that K-pop (or Korean pop) celebrities dress and behave in a very specific way that identifies them strongly with Asian cultures. They do not have to be Korean and could be Vietnamese or of another Asian background, but they would be labeled as K-pop if they did the following: dyed their hair a bright color, such as bright red or platinum blonde; wore outrageous outfits in bright colors; wore very square-rimmed glasses; and always spoke in their native language in a very loud, animated way (as if to gain attention). Jane explained that the K-pop behaviors are similar to the harajuku girls that have been popularized by Gwen Stefani. Harajuku is a Japanese fashion culture that some feel reinforce stereotypes of Asian women. (See Appendix K for pictures of Karajuku girls.) It is clear that when Jane uses this term she identifies this look as more stereotypically Asian and she does not want to be associated with it in wearing her glasses. She explains that there is a fine line between "being too American but also being too Asian" (p. 31).

Body image (Michelle). Michelle admitted that growing up—in middle school—she picked up some bad behaviors, such as snacking a lot and eating a lot of fast food. In high school she became more aware of her weight and more self-conscious and started to "pick out things I liked and didn't like about myself" and she would try to work on these things. For example, she started exercising more and eating less fast food.

Michelle received a lot of support from her family, such as positive body messages, and believes this helps her with her body image and self esteem. For example, her brother will tell her that, unlike other girls who are too fat or too skinny, she's "just the right size"; her father tells her that "…health comes before weight…don't ever go to the extreme that like you're doing unnatural things to your body just for a specific look

because that's going to come back to your body like tenfold when you're older" (p. 21); and her mother tries to her to embrace her body as it is telling her "…look at your waist, it's so small compared to other girls…and your breast size, that's part of growing up, that's puberty, like you have to embrace those things" (p. 22).

Negative thoughts Michelle revealed about her body were: thighs too big, too short, breasts are too big, not proportional, wishes eyes were bigger, wishes nose were smaller, wishes arms were smaller and more toned. Weight was her biggest concern. She associated large breasts with being more promiscuous and smaller breasts with being more studious and serious about career and she wants to be taken more seriously. This comes from comparing small-breasted Asian girls to bigger-breasted American girls who tend to expose themselves more. She realized this is stereotyping but also that it is a schema she just has in her mind. Even Michelle had a long list of things she does not like about her body, she showed a Healthy/Balanced attitude when she stated that:

> …I don't really mind it as much because I feel like. Maybe it's cause of who I am, like I don't think that I'm the prettiest girl, but I do know that like I'm not a makeup person whether it's like a bad or good day I know I just can't do makeup every day. And that's something that I love about myself, that I have that kind of esteem that I can walk out and have no makeup on and be fine. So it's like I don't really mind what other people think, I'm like I'm good, I'm okay. (p. 23)

Body image (Catherine). When asked to talk about her own body image, Catherine readily admitted that she has low body-esteem based on her weight and does not enjoy

discussing this topic. Because she is neither Korean nor a White woman, Catherine feels that she does not fit either category, nor does she fit the ideal that both men and women look for. Further, because she is "bigger than the Korean woman but also bigger than the White woman, I don't know which one I fit into" (p. 11). Catherine was describing the code/theme "Doesn't Fit" or "In the Middle"—when the participant indicated feeling stuck between two cultures to the point that they do not fit in. Catherine went on to explain that she has always been an athlete and has a healthy body but does not feel that it looks healthy to others. She and her sister have the same body type and they have both struggled and exerted quite a bit of energy to conform to the American ideal. Catherine has dieted and tried to lose weight all the time and stated that "It's rough, because I'm an American but I'm also Korean at the same time. But I guess I've grown up in America, um, all my life, so I think that the White woman ideal is more ingrained in my mind" (p. 11). Complicating this was the fact that Catherine knows that she physically cannot fit the Korean ideal and this is something she cannot change. "I think it's gonna take time for me to accept the fact that I can't change that I'm not that person, you know?" (p. 12).

Catherine compared what her lifestyle would be like in Korea versus what it is like in the United States and claimed that her lifestyle in the United State has made her larger. If she lived in Korea, She feels she would be studying 16-18 hours a day, would be stuck behind a desk, would not exercise, would not sleep as much, and simply would not have time to eat as much as she does. This would "make my body weaker, it would make my body skinnier, it would make my body you know, thinner, I think" (p. 12). Catherine also stated that the quality of the food in Korea is higher, that they eat more vegetables and healthier food. She eats less when she is there but feels fuller. Growing up

at home in the United States, Catherine's mother prepared healthy, balanced meals (Korean food 3-4 times a week) and she made sure the family ate fruit and healthy snacks. Now, being in college, Catherine has a lot more freedom and less restriction and therefore, eats more. Catherine was clearly struggling between trying to accept her body as it is but being angry that she does not fit either body ideal.

In terms of specific body areas, Catherine reported being most dissatisfied with her stomach and torso area, as well as her arms (upper arms), calves and thighs. She felt all of these areas are too large and was frustrated that exercises, such as abdominal exercises, do not help. Catherine expressed being very insecure about her stomach, but qualified that this does not factor into how she views her hips or her pant size. Catherine appreciates her height; is indifferent about her breast size; and wishes she had a more slender, athletic body, with toned arms and a toned body. Catherine explains that she particularly loves her hair, which is naturally curly and thick (a combination of her parents' hair). When she was younger this caused her stress because she didn't know how to manage it and it made her different from other Asian women, who had straight hair. But as she got older, learned how to maintain it, and then went to college where she was appreciated for this difference, she has learned to really appreciate her hair. This is an interesting commentary on how social expectations, cultural norms, and maturation play into ones disapproval or acceptance of oneself. Similarly, Catherine appreciates her skin tone, which is not as pale as her mother and of the typical Korean woman. Catherine's parents are both Korean but her father is a little more olive-toned; therefore, she and her siblings are a little more on the olive side and tan easily in the summer.

In terms of her facial features Catherine used to be self-conscious about her nose and eyes growing up. But now she does not "have a distaste" (p. 25) for either. However, she does wish her eyebrows were fuller, like her mother's, but she got her father's thin eyebrows. She also appreciates having full lips. Techniques or strategies Catherine has employed to try to change the parts of her body she is not satisfied with include: dieting, diet pills, exercising "all the time" (p. 39), and eating better.

Table 13

Satisfied vs. Dissatisfied with Body Parts for Asian American Participants

Participant	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Yuki	• Skin tone (appreciates her darker skin tone from her father's Armenian heritage) • Hair (feels freedom to change it; not attached to it like other women)	• Legs (too muscular and too stubby for a ballet dancer; not long enough) • Height (wishes were taller; better for fashion) • Body hair (too dark; wishes were lighter)
Jane	• Hair • Curves	• Breasts (too small) • Face (chubby) • Body (not fat but a little chubby) • Weight (gained 15 pounds; would like to weigh less) • Eyes (wishes were bigger) • Nose (wishes were smaller and longer) • Height (wishes were taller even though 5'6")
Karen	• Basic body shape • Slender build • Nose (okay because allows me to wear glasses) • Skin tone (fine with it now)	• Face • Jaw (too pronounced) • Eyelids • Eyebrows • Eyelashes (point downward) • Eyes (wishes were wider) • Height (wishes were taller) • Stomach (wishes had more abs) • Breasts (wishes were bigger) • Hair (hard to control)
Catherine	• Hair • Skin tone • Height • Lips (full)	• Stomach • Eyebrows (wishes were fuller) • Upper arms • Thighs • Calves
Michelle	• Self-esteem (does not feel need to be prettiest girl; feels "okay" walking around without makeup)	• Weight (biggest concern) • Thighs (too big) • Height (too short) • Breasts (too large)

	• Overall body (not proportional) • Eyes (wishes were bigger) • Nose (wishes were smaller) • Arms (wishes smaller and more toned)

**Information for Chelsea is not presented as she did not give consent for quotes to be used.*

Table 14

Definitions of Body Image, Asian American Participants

Participant	How do you define body image?
Yuki	How you think your body looks, on its own, and then how you think you can portray your body. It's not necessarily exactly how your body looks. It's more, like, how you think or feel about your body.
Jane	Body image is how you see your body and how closely it matches to someone's actual body shape will show how confident one is and can indicate how high one's self esteem is. How well kept one is can also indicate good or bad body image. Fashion in terms of clothes and beauty products can help someone feel better about their body image, but it can also be a crutch to seeing their natural beauty.
Karen	I think it's more about how you think you look than how you actually look. Body image is how you feel about the way that you look and the way you perceive your body, rather than how it actually is. Because you can be the skinniest, healthiest person around, but have a negative body image because you don't perceive yourself as having a good body.
Catherine	Personally, body image is the way society perceives how men and women physically. The "perfect" body image is usually influenced by celebrities in the media through television, movies, and the Internet. I believe that fashion and appearance contribute to the body image stereotypes that are cultivated in our society.
Michelle	Body image is how someone view himself/herself physically. It's how a person criticizes oneself with his/her body. I think fashion/appearance is part of what body image is for many people. It's how someone define his/her body image; it's a part of one's body image.

**Results for Chelsea were not reported; she did not complete a follow-up interview.*

Culture-Specific Questions

Hispanic American Participants—Thicker Body Ideal.

In terms of the research literature stating that Hispanic American women have a thicker body ideal, most of the participants agreed with this but provided important distinctions. Some felt this was dependent on the strength of an individual's cultural identity (Lily) and some agreed but added "curvy" to the description (Mili). Lily also expressed feeling that the "thick" ideal is changing, "going down in size" (p. 50), particularly for younger Hispanic Americans. She stated this was the result of exposure to the American media. Isabella believed this ideal is more of a socially constructed thing than a desire, explaining that Hispanic women "want JLo's ass, Sofia Vegara's breasts, and Shakira's hips. Society dictates everything, really. And unfortunately, so does your body" (p. 50). Barbara also expressed that the thicker ideal is not an ideal, but just the reality in Puerto Rico and people there are fine with this. Their ideal is still the American ideal of the Barbie doll look, but they do not really have that option so they do not complain about it.

Dual Identity. A majority of the participants agreed that Hispanic American women deal with a dual identity. Several of them referred back to her own struggles growing up between two cultures (Mili, Olivia). Both Isabella and Barbara made similar comments about going back and forth between two cultures. For Isabella, when she goes back to Peru she "has to be Peruvian" (p. 51) and when she is in the United States she "has to be American" (p. 51). She feels the pressure of adhering to the customs in both places, and maintaining the customs of being Hispanic American. Barbara explained that "you're constantly battling between what's like your culture and then what's the culture

that your culture wants to belong to basically…and it manifests itself not only in like social situations, but it's in politics and everything" (p. 59). She explained that Puerto Rican politics is based on whether or not they want to be independent or assimilate to a dominant culture and all the ramifications of that, for example losing your language or cultural traditions. Lily felt that whether or not someone has a dual identity when belonging to multiple cultures depends on how strongly they identify with those cultures and what their family values.

Restrictiveness of Spanish-language Media. In response to this question, which pertains to the restrictiveness of Spanish-language media, Lily made the distinction between Spanish news programs and Spanish soap operas. She explained that Spanish news programs are both less restrictive and more restrictive than mainstream media. They are less restrictive in that they offer more variety in the shapes and sizes of women they show. However, Spanish news programs are more restrictive in how provocatively dressed and sexual in nature the women are. As for Spanish soap operas, Lily expressed that they are more restrictive than American mainstream media because the women they present are much more stereotyped and dressed very immodestly. Mili explained that Spanish-language media is just as restrictive as the American media, citing commercials showing a woman in a bikini trying to sell a certain exercise video or miracle pills to lose weight. Women in telenovellas tend to be lighter in skin tone, and this is really the ideal.

Lastly, Isabella claimed that Spanish news programs are more restrictive in that they tend to present one political view, instead of representing both sides of an issue. Further, she felt that in Spanish language media women are presented as dramatic and having a Barbie doll face, instead of being intellectual. "Women are the victims in the

media. They either have a pretty face or they're the victim in the situation. You never see a woman be like the man in the family or like a single mom" (p. 53). She felt that American media gives women better roles than Hispanic media, indicating it is less restrictive.

Asian American Participants—"Perfect" Asian Woman. In responding to the culture-specific question of striving to be the "perfect" Asian woman, Karen indicated that this is a definite expectation in her culture. This sense of being perfect applies to all aspects of an individual, not just physical appearance.

> Oh yeah, you're supposed to be like very well rounded like and actually beauty is probably like the least part of being the perfect Asian woman. It's more about like having your intelligence, being respectful, like knowing how to raise kids, like knowing how to like make a husband happy, like more about your family and like your intelligence and, raising, and like a big thing is making, is making yourself so great that you can make your children greater, so like trying to be as perfect as you can, yeah, I mean why wouldn't you, why wouldn't you try to be perfect? …Yeah I think it is a lot of pressure like you have to be better than your parents like they worked so hard for you…and like doing everything that your parents want you to do because it like makes them happy and they worked, like they're the ones who made you what you are, you have to do what they want, ya know? (p. 50).

When asked if she feels pressure to be the perfect Asian woman, Jane responded yes, but clarified that this was not a culture-related pressure, nor is it about beauty, but just indicative of being a woman. She believes this is the pressure to do well in school, have a successful career (i.e., great job), have a family, have a house that is always clean, and always have dinner on the table. Jane further explains that while her mother is not the perfect person, she exemplifies the perfect Asian woman, which is defined by sacrifice and working hard. This sacrifice involves sacrificing what you want to do and "just doing what it takes to give what you can to your family" (p. 58). She believes this may be an immigrant mentality and explains that before coming to the U.S. her mother was a doctor in Vietnam. Wanting a better life for her children, she came to the U.S. and has always worked numerous jobs. Even now her mother works two jobs, no longer out of necessity, but because she is a "workaholic" and does not know what else to do with herself. She "has a mentality that she has to put everyone first" (p. 59). Chelsea also expressed agreement with the literature. She clarified that striving to be the perfect Asian woman applies to inner characteristics and outer appearance and is a lot of pressure to endure.

Both Yuki and Michelle disagreed with the literature for various reasons. Yuki disagreed and explained that it depends on whether one is trying to identify more with American society or their Asian heritage. She explained that some Asian Americans strive so hard to fit into American culture that they will identify themselves as Americans and will not acknowledge their Asian roots. For those women who expect at some point to return to Asia, she believes they strive more to be a perfect Asian woman. Michelle disagreed with the literature and claimed that she does not feel pressure to be the "perfect" Asian woman. However, she did state that her parents still remind her that she

is Vietnamese and they will say "before you go, honey, remember that" (p. 64). In terms of striving to be the "perfect" Asian woman, Catherine does not feel this pressure at all because she identifies much more with American culture.

"Correct" Typical Asian Features. In responding to this culture-specific question most of the Asian American participants indicated being aware of this pressure and expectation, but not feeling it themselves. Yuki validated that women do "correct" Asian features to fit Western ideals, particularly in terms of creating a double eyelid, but this also depends on the strength of your cultural identity. For example, the double eyelid Western ideal has become prevalent in Japan and is infiltrating Japanese beauty standards. However, she pointed out that this may change if someone moves from Japan to the United States and wants to hold on to traditional Japanese values more. Similarly, Jane commented that she has heard of people wanting to get the double eyelid surgery, but she has never known anyone personally who did it, nor felt pressure to do it herself. When she was younger Chelsea felt pressure to correct her typical Asian features and asked her mother if she could get plastic surgery to make her eyes bigger. Chelsea explained that to her, Western individuals are more attractive than Eastern people. Michelle was in agreement with the literature and provided examples of Asian women striving to change their noses, increase their breast size, make their eyes bigger, and dye or highlight their hair. But she expressed that she does not feel this pressure and actually tries to get away from being Westernized.

Skin Tone. Participants varied in response to the question about skin tone. Some (Chelsea) agreed with the literature and stated they would like their skin tone to be lighter and they therefore, stay out of the sun. But a majority of the participants either responded

that they did not agree with the literature (Yuki) pertaining to skin tone or they felt it was not relevant to this generation (Michelle). Some participants further found it ironic that tan skin is valued in the United States. Jane also states that she has never heard of anyone wanting to lighten their skin tone and she tries to stay out of the sun not to have lighter skin tone, but for health reasons. Lastly Catherine explained that skin tone is the last thing she thinks of in terms of her appearance, but admitted that if she were lighter/paler, she might think about it more.

Findings from Quantitative Measures

Quantitative data was collected with the Body Image Satisfaction Scale (BS; Rapoport, Clark, & Wardle, 2000) and the Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Scale 3 General Internalization Subscale (SATAQ-3; Thompson, van der Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg, 2004). The Body Image Satisfaction Scale was used to quantify the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction for 11 of each participant's body parts, including waist, bust, hips, thighs, face, ankles, calves, upper arms, lower arms, wrist, and whole body. Body parts were rated on a scale of 1 (*extremely satisfied*) to 6 (*extremely dissatisfied*).

The SATAQ-3 is comprised of four subscales—Information, Pressures, Internalization-General, and Internalization-Athlete. The internalization-general subscale was used in the current study to assess participant's internalization of standards promoted by the media into their self-identity. All items on the subscale are rated on a Likert scale from 1 (*definitely disagree*) to 5 (*definitely agree*) and are summed to obtain the internalization-general score. Item numbers on the subscale are 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, and 27. Items 3, 12, and 27 were reverse keyed to reflect positive statements; for example

item 3 reads “I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV.” It was reversed score to reflect the positive statement “I do care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV.” Scores on the Internalization-General subscale ranged from 19 to 37, with Hispanic American participants ranging from 19-31 and a mean score of 25.62 (SD = 5.04). Asian American participants ranged from 30-37 with a mean score of 34.33 (SD = 2.42), indicating higher comparison with and internalization of media messages by Asian American participants.

Results from the Body Satisfaction scale showed Hispanic American participants most dissatisfied with thighs (M = 3.13, SD = 1.9) and waist (M = 3.00, SD = 1.7) and most satisfied with lower arms (M = 1.38, SD = .51) and wrist (M = 1.38, SD = .51). The mean for whole body satisfaction was 2.0 (SD = .53). Asian American participants were most dissatisfied with upper arms (M = 4.50, SD = 1.76) and thighs (M = 4.17, SD = 1.32) and most satisfied with wrist (M = 1.67, SD = 1.21) and ankles (M = 2.50, SD = 1.37). The mean for whole body satisfaction was 3.17 (SD = 1.16).

Trustworthiness

The validity or trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the results of this study was confirmed through several processes, including peer review (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), triangulation (Lather, 1991; Maxwell, 2005), and member checks (Maxwell, 2005). Triangulation involved comparing multiple sources of data and using multiple investigators. A second investigator was used in the coding process and in the development of the initial open codes. Member checks were conducted with each participant following the completion of their initial interview and a pre-analysis of their responses.

In the peer review process, initial codes were analyzed by two professional psychologists, one belonging to the Asian American community and the other belonging to the Hispanic American community. The peer reviewer for the Asian American cases validated the following findings: the importance of being thin in Asian American cultures, that the Asian body ideal involves being less toned and muscular as compared to Americans, the accuracy of the theme "White but not White," the accuracy of the theme of "In the Middle" or "Intersectionality," and that some of the Asian American participants demonstrated extreme behaviors when thinking about nutrition (e.g., checking labels, counting calories, thinking about daily eating, and when comparing self to others). In addition, the Asian American peer reviewer helped me understand some differences between Asian subcultures (Chinese and Korean) in terms of facial features and expanded the findings by pointing out contrasting ideals. For example, one Chinese American participant characterized the ideal face as round, big cheeks, button nose, and a perfect circle face with soft features. Yet a Korean American participant characterized the ideal Korean face as more elongated and with a narrow nose. Further, as an Asian American herself, the peer reviewer stated that the pressure described by the Asian American participants resonated with her.

The peer reviewer for the Hispanic American cases validated all of the codes and themes revealed for that population and expressed particular interest in the following themes: "American but not American," explaining that she sees this in her own children; "Environment as a Cultural Influence," "Socioeconomic Status Influence," and "Growing Up." She validated my finding for the Hispanic American population of a developmental component to the participant's creation of their body image, as reflected in the "Growing

Up" code. Some participants had more insight than others (Mili more so than Isabella) that seemed to reflect age and maturity level and most of the participants referenced experiences as they were growing up, particularly in middle school, that informed the development of their body image.

The peer reviewer of the Hispanic American population expanded the findings by analyzing the quality of several participants' responses, explaining that some appeared less Hispanic than others. In particular, she contrasted Emily and Lily and assessed their level of Hispanic identity through their use of Spanish words during the interview. She also felt that Lily was more honest and authentic, while Emily was not. Perhaps the most important way in which the Hispanic American peer reviewer contributed to the study was to explain in rich detail the geographic and historical reasons for the diversity of cultural and physical characteristics among Hispanic women. This included an explanation of migration to the United States from various Latin American countries, migration from Asian countries to Latin American countries (e.g., Philippines to Peru), aboriginal cultures within Latin American countries (e.g., Incas living in Peru and Ecuador), and how these factors have influenced the physical characteristics of Hispanic American people. These characteristics can be so diverse that they lead to what was coded as "Racial Ambiguity"; the inability or difficulty to identify a woman's ethnicity/culture due to ambiguous physical characteristics. Isabella, of Peruvian descent, was often misidentified as Mexican or Indian because of her dark skin tone. This misrepresentation, as pointed out by participants and the peer reviewer, is also due to ignorance with in the United States.

Member checks were used to solicit feedback from study participants regarding the accuracy of my interpretations and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and to further clarify unclear responses from the initial interview. Due to the tight turnaround required of the George Washington University's Psychology Department participant pool, member checks were conducted prior to completion of the full analysis and prior to transcripts being created. This ensured that participants were still on campus to complete member checks and that they received full class credit for their participation. A majority of the member check interviews lasted thirty minutes, while some were longer. A list of follow-up questions was generated for each participant prior to the member check. These questions clarified individual responses to interview questions, demographic data, and responses on the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire. Several participants filled out the PADQ incorrectly, making their responses hard to understand. The questions during the follow-up interview also included five standard questions asked of all participants. These questions were: (1) How do you define body image? (What does body image mean to you)?, (2) Is fashion/appearance more important than body image?, (3) What do you think the relationship is between culture and body image?, (4) What do you think plays more of a role in forming your body image—American society or your cultural background?, and (5) Would you say culture is a protective factor?.

Further, the member check process involved the triangulation of multiple sources of data. I analyzed participant responses on the Body Satisfaction Scale, Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Questionnaire, and the PADQ and compared these to responses given during the interview. In several cases, body dissatisfaction was indicated

for a specific body area on the BS, but was not discussed in the interview. Similarly, a participant may have contradicted an item on the SATAQ in their interview response. Clarification on these issues was sought during member checks, providing validation of responses and, in some cases, richer detail.

Chapter 5: Interpretations, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Introduction

This study investigated the relationship between culture and body image in Hispanic American and Asian American college-aged women through a qualitative case study using an embedded multicase design. It involved eight Hispanic American women and six Asian American women attending college in the United States. All of the women studied came from diverse backgrounds and are either the children of first generation immigrants, are first generation immigrants themselves, have dual citizenship, or have parents from bi-racial backgrounds. All participants presented with culturally based identity and body image struggles.

The study focused on the sociocultural, feminist, and cognitive-behavioral perspectives of body image development and how these multifactorial processes interact with each other to construct one's meaning around body image. The study's conceptual framework involved the intersection of factors from the following: the Sociocultural Perspective on body image development (Tiggemann & Pickering, 1996), the Cognitive Behavioral Perspective on body image development (Cash, 2011), and culture, under the overarching influence of Objectified Body Consciousness (McKinley, 2011); and the intersectionality (Cole, 2009) of social constructs, contexts, and expectations around body ideals. The processes assessed and analyzed from each of these perspectives included: social comparison, self-ideal discrepancy, cultural socialization, body image attitudes, proximal factors as activating agents, body surveillance, internalization of cultural ideals, and appearance control beliefs. Cultural ideals included those represented in American society, as well as those endorsed by participant's culture of origin.

Intersectionality examines the following issues: diversity within social categories and how these categories depend on each other for meaning, social structure that is created through hierarchies of power and privilege, and commonalities across categories that are typically considered very different (Cole, 2009). The study sought to understand the interactions of these multiple factors and how they varied by culture. The premise of the conceptual framework was that body image development is influenced by the social contexts one lives in, such as community, school, and neighborhood; and that women living in the United States cannot escape the macro-level influence of the objectification of the female body by the American media. While other processes in the conceptual framework may vary by individual and culture, the influence of the objectified body consciousness was not variable.

This study responded to the need to move beyond quantitatively based rates of prevalence by culture, expand the understanding of how women from diverse backgrounds experience beauty ideals (Hesse-Biber, Livingstone, Ramirez, Barko, & Johnson, 2010; Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011; Poran, 2006), explore racially defined physical features (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999, Hall, 1995), and understand on a deeper level the constructs and factors that influence the creation of an ethnically diverse woman's body image in the United States. A qualitative semi-structured interview format was used to explore the constructs of culturally defined beauty ideals, media messages, family messages, peer messages, beauty routines, body dissatisfaction, and change strategies/techniques. The current study employed an embedded design and analyzed the following subunits of data: culturally defined body image ideals, representation in the media, assessment behaviors, and meaning of body image. The Physical Appearance

Discrepancy Questionnaire, a qualitative instrument, was used to generate lists of physical traits idealized by participants. Quantitative measures were used to engage participants in the study topic, measure level of body satisfaction, and measure level of internalization of media messages. Inductive data emerged through the open and analytical coding processes and were validated through peer review, triangulation, and member checks.

The purpose of this chapter is to present overall conclusions from analyses and interpret key findings. A more detailed reporting of findings is presented in Chapter 4. While findings are not meant to be generalized to a larger population, they do expand the current research literature and present new significant findings.

Interpretations and Conclusions

The following presents a number of conclusions resulting from analyses of participant interviews. A number of the codes and themes that emerged from participant interviews, as well as final conclusions, intersect and influence each other. This intersection at times made separating one factor from another difficult. As interviews were conducted and analyzed, it became more and more clear how convoluted and intertwined the creation of a body image is for ethnically diverse women, revealing the true intersectionality (Bowleg, 2008) of this construct.

Conclusion 1: Acculturation, Adaptability, and sense of "Fitting In"

Both cultures represented in the study expressed repeatedly the idea of not fitting in to mainstream American culture. This was mostly based on appearing different from the mainstream through such physical features as facial features, hair color and texture, and skin tone. This finding contributed to the codes/themes "White but not White,"

"American but not American," "Range/Intersectionality," "Not Represented," and "Racial Ambiguity." Asian American participants expressed that they were seen as White because of their pale skin, but not White because their skin is darker than Caucasian people. In this way Asian Americans feel that they belong but do not belong. Similarly, Hispanic American participants did not feel fully accepted and integrated into American culture, due to their skin tone.

Participants revealed that this feeling of "not fitting in" is further demonstrated by the lack of representation of diverse populations in the American media, resulting in the theme "Not Represented." Some participants felt this to the degree that they were initially unable to respond to the question about media representation, sitting in silence. Participants from both populations further indicated that ethnically diverse people shown in the media are only shown to present diversity and show more of a "Token Representation" than true diversity. Lastly, participants indicated that this token representation is done poorly in that the physical features of ethnically diverse people in the media are minimized, making it difficult to that identify the culture to which they belong. In other words, participants felt that these token representations showed a "Racial Ambiguity" that further frustrated participants and exacerbated their feelings of "not fitting in."

While participants expressed feeling that they do not fit in to mainstream American culture, they conversely expressed an adaptability and level of acculturation to mainstream America. Most of the study participants identified as American and wanted to be accepted into American culture as an American, not an Asian American or Hispanic American. Participants did not want to be identified by the cultural background of their

parents or grandparents; yet at the same time expressed pride in their cultural heritage and what they had gained from it. Participants were also quick to point out the differences between Asian American and Asian, or Hispanic American and their culture of origin (e.g., Mexican, Dominican). Lastly, skin color was related to socioeconomic status for both populations, with darker skin being associated with working outside in labor-intense jobs, and lighter skin being associated with a higher level of education and employment in an office job.

Conclusion 2: Body Image is Work

While many study participants struggled with body image issues and body dissatisfaction, most of them presented with an overall healthy and balanced body image and body esteem, hence the finding of the code "Healthy/Balanced." This was evidenced by their desire to reject societal beauty ideals and expectations, indicating that women should be judged on more than appearance alone and should be valued for their personalities and intellect as well. This was also evidenced by participants acknowledging another person's beauty without being critical of themselves and conducting the social comparison process. These feelings were revealed through such direct statements as "I don't care" (Emily, p. 29), "she realizes she's more than just her physical appearance" (Emily, p. 4), "I have become comfortable with the fact that I'm a little curvier" (Emily, p. 6), "I just really don't care like how society sees you as long as you're just like happy how you are" (Olivia, p. 3), "I really don't care what people say. I guess that's why I don't care how society views you or how you should look" (Olivia, p. 35), and "I'm generally satisfied with my appearance. I do not consider myself to be

stunningly beautiful; I don't really think I'm ugly either? I'm pretty content with how I look?" (Anita, p. 12).

Despite positive statements being presented at one point of the interview, participants often later contradicted them through opposing statements—"When I say I don't care that's kind of like a lie because I do care" (Olivia, p. 48)—or by providing examples of how they do care about their appearance and work hard to be perceived well by others. Some participants worked very hard during the interview to present as if they were immune to societal norms and expectations placed on women. However, it became clear by the end of the interview that these women were putting "on a face" and not being genuine. These participants in particular (Emily, Olivia, Anita, Barbara) indicated a deep struggle to be free from these expectations; a struggle that was more mental and emotional than physical. This struggle was further represented through the code "Fine with It" in which participants indicated feeling "okay" with a former area of body dissatisfaction and now accepting this feature. However, the participant's tone or body language indicated that she may not really be "fine" with that body feature.

Further, even when participants presented a healthy or more balanced body image, they all expressed an awareness of media/societal expectations and felt the influence and pressure of these expectations. Some countered this in a better way but not a single participant escaped this pressure, further validating the study's conceptual framework. Regardless of trying to present a healthy body image, it was clear that all the study participants worked very hard either at their physical appearance or accepting their appearance as it was. They put a great deal of physical and mental effort into their daily beauty routines, choosing clothing to wear, purchasing grooming products, researching

and staying on top of fashion trends, conducting social comparison processes, countering negative thoughts and feelings, and navigating cultural and environmental social pressures on a daily basis. Participants struggled to accept themselves and their bodies, find their cultural identity, and find a healthy balance. This level of work echoes the premise of Joan Jacob Brumberg's *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (1998), in which she postulates that girls turn their bodies into projects to be worked on. Each chapter of the book represents a different decade, focusing on what the body project and emphasis was for that time period. For example, in the 1980s the focus was on hair and the lower body, with a prevalence of short skirts, jeans, smaller bikinis, and the desire for leaning thighs. It is clear that Brumberg's notion of the body as a project to be worked on has continued into the 21st century as evidenced by participants in the current study. I would surmise that this level of work has increased from previous decades and become more critical and hyper focused.

Conclusion 3: Social Comparison Process

Throughout the interview and analysis process it was evident that participants conduct and engage in a great deal of social comparison; more than I assumed. Participants engaged this process numerous times daily; supporting research findings that this is considered a primary, rather than a secondary, information-gathering phenomenon (Marsh & Parker, 1984; Ruble, 1983). Most of the participants stated that peers and real women they encountered in their daily activities (even if they were strangers) had more of an effect on them in terms of who they compared themselves with than women in the media. This finding differs from Tiggemann's (2011) finding identifying the mass media as the most powerful sociocultural transmitter of beauty ideals. Reasons offered by study

participants as to why they did not compare themselves as much with women in the media included that they did not consider these women to be real and being aware that most images in the media are altered through Photoshop in the post-production process. Participants further discounted celebrities in the media due to their access to trainers, professional stylists and makeup artists, and money that affords them the time to focus only on their image. Even though participants expressed a level of awareness and made statements discounting celebrities in the media, they nonetheless compared themselves to them and to media images and internalized these images, participating in the self-ideal discrepancy process (Ewell, Smith, Karmel, & Hart, 1996). Self-ideal discrepancy theory states that individuals compare their *actual self* (who they believe they are) with their *ideal self* (who they would like to be) and their *ought self* (who they ought to be) (Ewell, Smith, Karmel, & Hart, 1996), which can be from their own perspective or those offered by others. This was evidenced through participants' references to pressure they feel from seeing fashion magazines everywhere, references to idealizing television and movie celebrities, and, in particular, references to Victoria's Secret models and catalogs. Further, when the actual self is discrepant from self-guides, an individual may experience emotional distress and be "motivated to attain a match between their actual self-concept and an internalized ideal" (Thompson et al., p. 134) through self-regulatory behaviors. Self-regulatory behaviors depicted by study participants included: exercise, restricted eating, calorie counting, checking of nutrition labels, replicating fashion trends, and using fashion to enhance positive physical features or reduce negative physical features.

It was also clear that all of the Asian American participants in the study were more critical of themselves than the Hispanic American participants, some even

bordering on obsessive thinking and behaviors (e.g., checking nutrition labels on food packages and calculating daily calories). Some were also highly critical of those around them. This was evidenced through the types of comments they made about themselves and others, which did not solely focus on physical beauty but on personal characteristics as well. Participants were highly critical of their own faces, going into detail about the shape of their eyebrows, the direction in which their eyebrows and eyelashes grew, their jaw lines, the shape of their ears, the fullness of their lips, the shape of their noses, and the shape of their faces. They were highly critical of other body areas as well, such as the thinness and length of their fingers and toes, the shape of their legs (upper and lower), the shape of their arms (upper and lower), and the shape/thinness of their wrists and ankles. (This is also evidenced by having higher body dissatisfaction scores than Hispanic Americans, while having lower BMI.)

Social comparison theory contends that the amount to which one compares herself to idealized images and denigrates oneself, accounts for differing levels of body image disturbance (Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). This was clearly evidenced in the study's Asian American population. One participant disclosed, at the end of the interview, that she had previously suffered from an eating disorder. Further, four of the six Asian American participants were offered referrals to community counseling centers due to concern over expressed levels of body dissatisfaction.

Another phenomenon revealed by both Asian American and Hispanic American participants was that of feeling more pressure to conform to ideals and expectations on their college campuses. This pertains to the code of "Environment as Cultural Influence." Participants indicated that both GW and Loyola had specific styles of dress and higher

expectations that served as sources of comparison. GW was seen as more metropolitan, with women who engaged in high fashion and cared a great deal about their outer appearance. Loyola was seen as preppy and having students who looked like they just stepped off the runway. Both schools were seen as having a wealthy student body that could afford expensive clothing.

Conclusion 4: Body Image Ideals Vary within Culture (Research Question 2)

Analysis of participant interviews revealed that cultural messages pertaining to body ideals do influence ethnically diverse women's construction of personal body image. It also showed a variation of body ideals within each culture (Hispanic American and Asian American) based on subculture within that broad category. For example, within Hispanic American culture it is clear that there are differences between Peruvian, Colombian, Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Venezuelan beauty ideals. For some participants these differences were revealed as far back as the heritage of maternal and paternal grandparents, even when participants have been living in the United States for more than 10 years. These differences are influenced by geographic location, class structures, and a long political and religious history. Similarly, differences were revealed by Asian American participants between Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Vietnamese subcultures, although fewer differences were revealed. These are important distinctions for future research and should be added to revisions of quantitative body image instruments.

Conclusion 5: Benefit of using Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

From the very beginning of the data collection process, it was evident that using both qualitative and quantitative methods to address the topic of body image was beneficial. Use of qualitative and quantitative measures engaged participants more deeply in the topic, resulting in higher quality and more thorough responses. Introducing the Sociocultural Attitudes Toward Appearance Questionnaire as a warm-up prior to starting the semi-structured interview allowed participants to connect to the topic from the very beginning of the interview, rather than later in the interview process. Participants attested to this during their follow-up interviews. Use of these instruments further resulted in richer findings, such as identifying more areas of body dissatisfaction, by culture, on the Body Satisfaction Scale; concerns that were not identified through the interview process. The Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire allowed for verification of cultural ideals, personal ideals, and self-image divulged in the interview process.

Conclusion 6: New Body Image Issues/Concerns

The importance of qualitative studies on body image that allow participants to provide subjective information rather than just endorsing or not endorsing predetermined wording on a standardized instrument was validated through this study. New body image issues emerged as a result of participant interviews. These included a new focus on collar bones, eyebrows, and eyelashes and a further clarification of preferred facial shape for Asian American participants, as well as a new focus on thighs for Hispanic American participants. A focus on collar bones was indicated by both Asian American and Hispanic American participants, who looked for collar bones that were "visible" and prominent and considered this a beauty ideal. This surprised me in that I generally consider bones

that are too prominent an indication of someone who is too thin, emaciated, and possibly suffering from an eating disorder.

Several Asian American participants expressed concern and frustration with their eyebrows and how they are thick and bushy, grow in many directions, point down, do not have a nice arch, and look "rectangular." Some also expressed frustration with their eyelashes, particularly in that they "point downward" and do not naturally point upward "like people of every other culture almost, like if you're not of Asian descent" (Karen, p. 22). Asian American participants indicated that these differences in eyebrows and eyelashes separate them even more from the mainstream and make wearing eye makeup even more difficult than typically experienced by Asian Americans without a double eyelid. Findings from this study pertaining to eyebrows and eyelashes are not reported in the current literature on Asian American body image ideals.

Similarly, Asian American participants reported valuing different facial features such as a button nose versus a narrow, elongated nose, or a round face versus an elongated face. These variations are reported in the current literature (Kawamura & Rice, 2009). However, the current literature does not indicate that Asian Americans specifically value "soft" facial features that are non-protruding and do not value typically European features such as a strong jawbone or high cheek bones. Only one Asian American participant in this study indicated valuing strong facial features.

Conclusion 7: Culture as a Protective and Risk Factor (Research Question 1)

One of the subquestions of the study was does culture play more of a protective role or is it more of a risk factor in the development of body image. For both populations studied most of the participants indicated feeling that their cultural identity was a

protective factor. However, this was qualified by identifying this protection as a variable of location and developmental age. Participants revealed that their families and cultural values protected them growing up, particularly before going to college. In their local communities and in the close proximity of their parents, friends, and siblings they felt supported; that they received positive body messages overall; and the endorsement of culture-specific beauty ideals which ultimately aided in self-acceptance. But participants also reported that this protective factor lessened when they left the protective barrier of their home communities and went to college. All participants expressed feeling more pressure and social comparison in their college communities. Some participants explained in detail that the longer one is away from their community, the farther one gets from those protective, positive messages and values, summarizing that this protective barrier can only last so long and once one leaves that community one is at more risk. In addition, many of the participants acknowledged that even though they have felt protected by their culture, there is an inherent risk factor of living in the United States and being subjected to numerous forms of media messages. This risk involves the perpetuation of American societal ideals that become more ingrained than cultural ideals. Some expressed feeling conflicted when asked whether or not their culture served as a protective factor.

Study Limitations/Weaknesses

All research studies have limitations and weaknesses and this one is not without exception. In terms of the study methodology and recruitment process, the study could have benefited from tighter inclusion/exclusion criteria. The study had more of a diluted pool than was desired. I strove to study ethnically diverse women who permanently live

in the United States but resulted in three participants who currently live abroad while attending college in the U.S. Two of these participants hold dual citizenship and, therefore, are American citizens. However, one of these participants (Yuki) is Japanese American (mother, Japanese; father, American) and while born in the United States, she has lived most of her life in Switzerland (approximately 15 years). She has visited Japan numerous times and therefore has a fair understanding of the culture and its norms, but presents more so as European American or European. Two of the Hispanic American participants do not live in the U.S. except when they are attending college. One of them is Puerto Rican (Barbara) and she contends that this is the same as being American or living in the U.S. because of Puerto Rico's proximity to the U.S. and because of their political and economic histories. The second Hispanic American participant (Olivia) lives in Venezuela. Even though these participants were screened prior to the interview through email communication, these particular details were not known until the interview was starting and the participant was asked to provide demographic information. They most likely should not have been consented into the study because they did not meet the criteria. However, the criteria were loose enough that I continued with the two participants with dual citizenship. The last participant (from Venezuela) was allowed to continue in the study because she had been promised research credit through the University's research pool. This issue could have been avoided if the inclusion criteria had required a minimal number of years living in the United States. Thirty-eight individuals self-referred themselves into the study, but 24 were screened out and denied participation because they did not meet eligibility criteria.

A second possible weakness of the study is that the interview may have included too many questions, covering too many aspects of body image and appearance. While the data collected is invaluable, beneficial, and very relevant to the topic, it was hard to manage, compile, and decipher due to the sheer volume. The study may have benefited from fewer questions, perhaps allowing for deeper responses. Of course, including fewer questions does not necessarily guarantee this. This having been said, the questions did provide much-needed structure and the necessary prompts to elicit responses.

A third and fourth weakness included the member check process and administration of the PADQ. Due to time constraints of the Psychology department's research participant pool and deadlines for administering research credit, I was required to conduct member checks within a shorter timeframe than anticipated in the design process. Most member checks were conducted within two weeks of the initial interview. Because of this, interviews were not fully transcribed or coded. Initial coding had begun and a review of all interviews was done prior to member check interviews. Lastly, the administration of the PADQ was flawed in that numerous participants did not seem to understand the directions. Many asked for clarification during the interview and prior to completing the PADQ, but some did not. In most cases, this was noticed prior to member checks being completed and responses were verified and clarified during the member check process. Even so, this misunderstanding of directions seemed to cause confusion for participants and some still seemed to respond to the question about physical appearance attributes by culture, as meaning American culture, instead of the culture they identified for the study (Hispanic American or Asian American).

Implications for Theory, Practice, and Future Research

Implications for Theory

The conceptual framework for this study was rooted in the intersection of Objectified Body Consciousness (McKinley, 2011), Sociocultural Perspective on body image (Tiggemann & Pickering, 1996), the Cognitive Behavioral Perspective on body image (Cash, 2011), and culture in the creation of one's body image. It examined how processes from each of these perspectives intersected to create body image for Asian American and Hispanic American women. The body image development processes evidenced in the study include: social comparison, self-ideal discrepancy, cultural socialization, body image attitudes (body image investment and body image evaluation), proximal and historical influences on body image attitudes, body surveillance, internalization of cultural body standards, appearance control beliefs, and culture (cultural messages, norms, and expectations).

The core hypothesis of the conceptual framework was that women living in the United States cannot escape the macro-level influence of objectification and valuation of a thin-ideal, even if culture serves as a protective factor. This study extends the current research literature by providing empirical evidence of this omnipresent influence for Hispanic American and Asian American college-aged women in the United States. It is the first study of its kind to include such an intersectionality of processes with an Asian American and Hispanic American population, in a qualitative design. This study further extends current research by narrowing the lens onto Asian American and Hispanic American women and how they construct body image, without including Caucasian and African American women, two widely studied populations.

In the field of body image research, thin-ideal internalization has been widely studied (Irving, 1990; Ogden & Mundray, 1998; Richins, 1991; Stice & Shaw, 1994; Stice, Spangler, Agras, 2001; Tiggemann, 2002, 2003; Harrison and Hefner, 2006) as has the topic of appearance schemas (Tiggemann, 2002). I believe that both of these notions need to be updated and expanded to include more specific types of internalization and appearance schemas, not limited to thin-ideal internalization. I propose that such an expansion include the term "commercial image internalization" (coined by the researcher). Commercial image internalization is the notion that the primary image women internalize is one represented by commercial media, such as in retail catalogs, television advertising, online advertising (including pop-up ads), magazine covers, and advertisements in magazines. Commercial image internalization was validated by participants in the study who made reference to the myriad advertisements they see in grocery store check-out isles, in Victoria's Secret catalogs, AT&T commercials, Banana Republic, Gap, Hollister, Abercrombie and Fitch, K-pop culture, Bratz dolls, and through Barbie doll images. These were also seen through celebrity representations of a commercial image, such as Marilyn Monroe, Blake Lively, Sofia Vergara, Jennifer Lopez, the actress in Little Nikita (television show), Selena Gomez, and Catherine Zeta Jones.

Implications for Practice

Understanding how body image is created, and the factors and processes that influence this body image, is critical for assessing and treating Hispanic American and Asian American women demonstrating symptomatology of body dissatisfaction. Being aware of the current beauty ideals for these populations will assist mental health

practitioners to identify whether a body image issue exists for an individual and whether or not this issue is progressing toward a more clinical diagnosis, for example Body Image Disturbance, Eating Disorder, or Body Dysmorphic Disorder according to the Diagnostic Statistical Manual 5 (DSM 5).

This information is relevant to any academic institution serving a multicultural, female population, particularly colleges and universities. Staff in these institutions, such as health science educators, clinicians in health and wellness centers, psychology professors, and women's studies professors should be aware of culturally defined beauty ideals and the rate at which the undergraduate population participates in the social comparison process, as described in conclusion three. They should also be aware of historical influences on body image attitudes, such as beauty-related messages from peers and family members, and proximal influences on body image attitudes, such as the community of the college or university and its own sociocultural influences on minority women. Asian American and Hispanic American participants from both Loyola University and The George Washington University indicated an awareness of campus-specific beauty/appearance expectations and feeling additional pressure from these expectations. Staff at campus counseling centers and health and wellness centers should be aware of this additional level of pressure and should include questions around the "environment as a cultural influence" construct when assessing for body dissatisfaction symptomatology. They should be aware that "normative discontent" (Rodin, Silberstein, and Striegel-Moore, 1985) or subclinical symptomatology may be exacerbated while on campus. Awareness of this additional pressure also applies when assessing for depression or anxiety-related disorders.

Lastly, parents and parent educators can benefit from the findings of the current study by better understanding the affective, cognitive, and psychological processes young women go through in developing a body image. Parent educators can inform parents of the social comparison processes women conduct, how positive and negative cultural messages and expectations affect young women, and can educate parents on media literacy. Further, parents and parent educators can benefit from being more aware of environmental influences that inform a young woman's body image, as well as understanding the objectification under which women live in the United States.

Recommendations for Future Research

In terms of methodology design and recruitment, similar future studies may benefit from the use of fewer interview questions with a more open-ended structure, allowing for even deeper information to be obtained. While recruitment of participants from Psychology courses may have presented biased and convoluted findings, this also provided richer, more informed responses. Several participants were not Psychology majors and therefore provided responses from a more generalized population. During their interviews, several participants endorsed participating in social comparison and social learning processes, awareness and knowledge of the term body schemas, and awareness of Jean Kilbourne's film on gender representation in advertising, Killing Us Softly (1979, 1987, 2000, 2010). They indicated that they should be able to mitigate negative effects of peer and media messages and social expectations because of their level of education and awareness of media literacy issues, yet were unable to do so. This indicated another level of pressure and expectation participants placed on themselves. While this is an interesting finding, it may be beneficial to replicate the study with a less

informed population to control for this level of awareness and the direct effects of the variables/factors of interest.

When using quantitative measures to assess body image constructs with diverse populations, I recommend using measures that were adapted for those specific populations, when available. When working with an Asian American population quantitative body image assessments must include items that specifically measure satisfaction/dissatisfaction with facial features. The Body Satisfaction Scale (BSS, Rapoport, Clark, & Wardle, 2000) currently includes the category "face" but does not specify facial features. This instrument, and others, should be revised to be as specific as possible and include ratings of such facial features as eye shape, eyebrows, eyelashes, face shape (round vs. oval), nose, chin shape, and overall strength of facial features (soft vs. strong/protruding), particularly when used with Asian American populations. Similarly, the BSS should include a rating for buttocks, particularly when used with Hispanic American populations.

Further, I recommend that more qualitative studies focus on the beauty ideals of each specific subculture within the Hispanic American population, focusing on specific country of origin. There are many variations and influences within Latin American cultures and this need was repeatedly expressed by the current study's Hispanic American participants. They expressed gratitude that their culture was being studied and very much want people in the United States to understand the differences among them. Further, when using a qualitative measure such as the PADQ (Altabe, 1998), I recommend that the directions be rewritten, or examples provided to aide in clarification. Perhaps a line should be added to the third question requiring the participant to identify

her culture on the PADQ. At this point the participant could then clarify with the interviewer which culture they are supposed to be representing.

A final recommendation for future research includes an extensive exploration of commercial image internalization within various age groupings and cultural populations of adolescent girls, young adult females, and older adult females. I am interested in how this topic fluctuates by age, culture, socioeconomic status, level of education, and level of development.

Chapter Summary

This study was conducted from a need to better understand the experiences of Hispanic American and Asian American women in forming a body image bounded in the system of culture. Research on body image and body dissatisfaction in women from diverse ethnic backgrounds mostly focuses on African American and White women (Smolak & Striegel-Moore, 2001) and the processes among women from diverse ethnic backgrounds are not well understood. Witnessing the degree to which study participants engaged in social comparison and appearance control and the amount of effort and physical and mental energy they spent on their body image, validated this exploration.

This chapter presented seven conclusions, summarizing factors that interact in the construction of a body image. These conclusions condensed approximately 60 codes and themes that were revealed through the open and analytical coding of approximately 1,000 pages of transcribed interviews. This study also contributed to research by utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods, emphasizing the role of objectified body consciousness in the construction of a body image, and using an integrative theory

framed by intersectionality. Further, the utility of this study for clinicians and educators has been elucidated.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Fliers

George Washington University Psychology Students

Interested in body image and culture?

You may want to participate in a study!

What: A study of the relationship between culture and body image.

What's involved:

- Participants will be asked to answer questions regarding beauty ideals and the representation of Asian American and Hispanic American women in the media.
- You will be asked to participate in one in-person interview with the researcher (approximately 1.5 hours) and a second feedback session (approximately 30 minutes), totaling approximately 2 hours.

Who can participate:

- College-aged women (18-24)
- Asian American females (East Asian, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander), Hispanic American females
- U.S. citizenship or Legal Alien status

Benefits to participating:

- Participants from GW Psychology courses will receive required research credit.
- Participants will have a unique opportunity to review the results of the analysis and provide feedback to the researcher, thus directly informing the research.

How to participate:

- If interested, please contact Sara Pula (researcher) directly at **spula@gwmail.gwu.edu**.

About the researcher:

- Ms. Pula is a doctoral candidate in Counseling at The George Washington University. Ms. Pula is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland.

George Washington University Non-Psychology Students/Loyola Psychology Students/Anne Arundel Community College Gender Studies Students

Interested in body image and culture?

You may want to participate in a study!

What: A study of the relationship between culture and body image.

What's involved:

- Participants will be asked to answer questions regarding beauty ideals and the representation of Asian American and Hispanic American women in the media.
- You will be asked to participate in one in-person interview with the researcher (approximately 1.5 hours) and a second feedback session (approximately 30 minutes), totaling approximately 2 hours.

Who can participate:

- College-aged women (18-24)
- Asian American females, Hispanic American females
- U.S. citizenship or Legal Alien status

Benefits to participating:

- Participants will be enrolled in a raffle opportunity for two ***$100 Visa Gift cards***.
- Participants will have a unique opportunity to review the results of the analysis and provide feedback to the researcher, thus directly informing the research.

How to participate:

- If interested, please contact Sara Pula (researcher) directly at **spula@gwmail.gwu.edu**.

About the researcher:

- Ms. Pula is a doctoral candidate in Counseling at The George Washington. Ms. Pula is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland.

Appendix B

Recruitment Email

George Washington University Psychology Students

Are you interested in body image and culture? If so, please consider participating in this study!

What: A study of the relationship between culture and body image.

What's involved:

- Participants will be asked to answer questions regarding beauty ideals and the representation of Asian American and Hispanic American women in the media.
- You will be asked to participate in one in-person interview with the researcher (approximately 1.5 hours) and a second feedback session (approximately 30 minutes), totaling approximately 2 hours.

Who can participate:

- College-aged women (18-24 years of age)
- Asian American females (East Asian or Southeast Asian descent)
- Hispanic American females (Spain, Portugal, Latin American—Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Peruvian, Chilean, Brazilian; or South American—Honduras, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala)
- U.S. citizenship or Legal Alien status (no study abroad or student visa students)

Benefits to participating:

- Participants from will be enrolled in a raffle opportunity for two ***$100 Visa Gift cards***.
- Participants will have a unique opportunity to review the results of the analysis and provide feedback to the researcher, thus directly informing the research.

How to participate:

- If interested, please contact Sara Pula (researcher) directly at **spula@gwmail.gwu.edu**.

About the researcher:

- Ms. Pula is a doctoral candidate in Counseling at The George Washington University. Ms. Pula is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland.

Thank you for your time,

Sara Pula

George Washington University Non-Psychology Students/Loyola Psychology Students/Anne Arundel Community College Gender Studies Students

Are you interested in body image and culture? If so, please consider participating in this study!

What: A study of the relationship between culture and body image.

What's involved:

- Participants will be asked to answer questions regarding beauty ideals and the representation of Asian American and Hispanic American women in the media.
- You will be asked to participate in one in-person interview with the researcher (approximately 1.5 hours) and a second feedback session (approximately 30 minutes), totaling approximately 2 hours.

Who can participate:

- College-aged women (18-24 years of age)
- Asian American females (East Asian or Southeast Asian descent)
- Hispanic American females (Spain, Portugal, Latin American—Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Peruvian, Chilean, Brazilian; or South American—Honduras, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala)
- U.S. citizenship or Legal Alien status (no study abroad or student visa students)

Benefits to participating:

- Participants from will be enrolled in a raffle opportunity for two ***$100 Visa Gift cards***.
- Participants will have a unique opportunity to review the results of the analysis and provide feedback to the researcher, thus directly informing the research.

How to participate:

- If interested, please contact Sara Pula (researcher) directly at **spula@gwmail.gwu.edu**.

About the researcher:

- Ms. Pula is a doctoral candidate in Counseling at The George Washington University. Ms. Pula is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland.

Thank you for your time,

Sara Pula

Appendix C: Consent Form

Informed Consent Form: GW Psychology Students

"Understanding the Relationship between Culture and Body Image: How do Asian American and Hispanic American Women Construct a Body Image?"

GW IRB number: Assigned upon submission
Principal Investigator: Carol Hoare Telephone number: 202.994.3993
Sub-Investigator: Sara Pula Telephone number: 443.458.8176
Sponsor: *(if any)*

1) Introduction
You are invited to participate in a research study under the direction of Dr. Carol Hoare of the Department of Counseling and Human Development, George Washington University (GWU). Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. Your academic standing will not, in any way, be affected should you choose not to participate or if you decide to withdraw from the study at any time.

2) Why is this study being done?
You are being asked to take part in this study because we want to learn more about young women's body image and cultural expectations. Women who are at least 18 years old will be included in the study. The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between culture and women's body image. The research will be conducted at the following location(s): GW Gelman Library, Anne Arundel Community College Truxal Library, or Loyola-Notre Dame Library. Research may also be conducted in offices located in the Psychology or Gender Studies departments of each university/community college participating. A total of 24 participants at approximately three institutions will be asked to take part in this study. You will be one of approximately 24 participants to be asked to take part at this location.

3) What is involved in this study?
If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to read a questionnaire, complete questionnaires, participate in an interview, and review themes with the researcher. The questionnaires are about your attitudes on a number of subjects, including body image and appearance. Interview questions pertain to cultural beauty ideals and expectations and the amount of time you invest in your physical appearance. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Reviewing themes will help the researcher determine whether her understanding and analysis is correct. The following activities are specifically research related: completing study questionnaires, participating in interviews, and providing feedback.

The total amount of time you will spend in connection with this study is approximately 2-2.5 hours during a two-week period.

4) What are the risks of participating in this study?
Participating in this study poses no risks that are not ordinarily encountered in daily life. There is the possible risk of loss of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential, however, this can not be guaranteed. Some of the questions we will ask you as part of this study may make you feel uncomfortable. You may refuse to answer any of the questions and you may take a break at any time during the study. You may stop your participation in this study at any time.

5) Are there benefits to taking part in this study?
You will not benefit directly from your participation in the study. The benefits to science and humankind that might result from this study are an increased understanding of the relationship between culture and body image and women's behavior, beliefs, and attitudes regarding body image.

6) What are my options?
You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to**.** Should you decide to participate and later change your mind, you can do so at any time.

7) Will I receive payment for being in this study?
You will not receive payment for participating in this study.

Students recruited from The George Washington University Participant Pool will receive 1 credit for each hour of research participation. A total of 2.5 to 3 hours may be awarded for participation in the current study.

Please visit the following website for more information if you would like to complete an alternate activity to earn extra credit, instead of participating in research: http://research.psychology.gwu.edu/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f.

8) Can I be taken off the study?
The investigator can decide to withdraw you from the study at any time. You could be taken off the study for reasons related solely to you (for example, not following study related directions from the Investigator) or because the entire study is stopped.

9) How will my privacy be protected?
If results of this research study are reported in journals or at scientific meetings, the people who participated in this study will not be named or identified. GW will not release any information about your research involvement without your written permission, unless required by law. Participants will choose a pseudonym to be used in lieu of their birth name for purposes of publishing findings. Digital recordings of interview sessions will be destroyed once data analysis is completed.

All interview responses will be confidential. Confidentiality will be guaranteed through anonymity of answers with the use of an alias (as chosen by each participant). Members of the research team, for purposes of data analysis, will have access to aliases, but not

participant birth names. The only person to know each participant's identity will be the Researcher/Interviewer. Interview transcriptions will be encrypted to ensure privacy and stored on the researcher's password-protected laptop, and on a password-protected external hard drive.

As a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland, the researcher is mandated to report abuse or neglect of any kind, including the transmission of contagious, life-threatening diseases. Further, in the case of self-harm, confidentiality will be broken if the participant is at imminent risk and a family member or university staff person will be notified. In cases of non-imminent risk, a referral list to community service providers and hospitals will be distributed.

10) Problems or Questions

The Office of Human Research of George Washington University, at telephone number (202) 994-2715, can provide further information about your rights as a research participant. If you think you have been harmed in this study, you report this to the Principal Investigator of this study. Further information regarding this study may be obtained by contacting Sara Pula (sub-investigator), at telephone number (443.458.8176). For problems arising evenings or weekends, you may call Sara Pula at (443.458.8176).

If you wish to participate in this research study, please proceed with completing the interview. Please verbally inform the Researcher if you would or would not like direct quotes from your interview to be published.

Informed Consent Form: Non-GW Psychology Students

"Understanding the Relationship between Culture and Body Image: How do Asian American and Hispanic American Women Construct a Body Image?"

GW IRB number: Assigned upon submission
Principal Investigator: Carol Hoare Telephone number: 202.994.3993
Sub-Investigator: Sara Pula Telephone number: 443.458.8176
Sponsor: *(if any)*

1) Introduction
You are invited to participate in a research study under the direction of Dr. Carol Hoare of the Department of Counseling and Human Development, George Washington University (GWU). Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. Your academic standing will not, in any way, be affected should you choose not to participate or if you decide to withdraw from the study at any time.

2) Why is this study being done?
You are being asked to take part in this study because we want to learn more about young women's body image and cultural expectations. Women who are at least 18 years old will be included in the study. The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between culture and women's body image. The research will be conducted at the following location(s): GW Gelman Library, Anne Arundel Community College Truxal Library, or Loyola-Notre Dame Library. Research may also be conducted in offices located in the Psychology or Gender Studies departments of each university/community college participating. A total of 24 participants at approximately three institutions will be asked to take part in this study. You will be one of approximately 24 participants to be asked to take part at this location.

3) What is involved in this study?
If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to read a questionnaire, complete questionnaires, participate in an interview, and review themes with the researcher. The questionnaires are about your attitudes on a number of subjects, including body image and appearance. Interview questions pertain to cultural beauty ideals and expectations and the amount of time you invest in your physical appearance. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Reviewing themes will help the researcher determine whether her understanding and analysis is correct. The following activities are specifically research related: completing study questionnaires, participating in interviews, and providing feedback.

The total amount of time you will spend in connection with this study is approximately 2-2.5 hours during a two-week period.

4) What are the risks of participating in this study?
Participating in this study poses no risks that are not ordinarily encountered in daily life. There is the possible risk of loss of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential, however, this can not be guaranteed. Some of the questions we will ask you as part of this study may make you feel uncomfortable. You may refuse to answer any of the questions and you may take a break at any time during the study. You may stop your participation in this study at any time.

5) Are there benefits to taking part in this study?
You will not benefit directly from your participation in the study. The benefits to science and humankind that might result from this study are an increased understanding of the relationship between culture and body image and women's behavior, beliefs, and attitudes regarding body image.

6) What are my options?
You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to**.** Should you decide to participate and later change your mind, you can do so at any time.

7) Will I receive payment for being in this study?
You may have the opportunity to receive a minimal incentive for participating in this study.

Participants not affiliated with the George Washington Psychology Department Participant Pool will be entered into a lottery drawing for two $100 Visa gift cards. The odds for winning a Visa gift card are contingent upon the number of non-GW Psychology students enrolled in the study.

8) Can I be taken off the study?
The investigator can decide to withdraw you from the study at any time. You could be taken off the study for reasons related solely to you (for example, not following study related directions from the Investigator) or because the entire study is stopped.

9) How will my privacy be protected?
If results of this research study are reported in journals or at scientific meetings, the people who participated in this study will not be named or identified. GW will not release any information about your research involvement without your written permission, unless required by law. Participants will choose a pseudonym to be used in lieu of their birth name for purposes of publishing findings. Digital recordings of interview sessions will be destroyed once data analysis is completed.

All interview responses will be confidential. Confidentiality will be guaranteed through anonymity of answers with the use of an alias (as chosen by each participant). Members of the research team, for purposes of data analysis, will have access to aliases, but not participant birth names. The only person to know each participant's identity will be the Researcher/Interviewer. Interview transcriptions will be encrypted to ensure privacy and

stored on the researcher's password-protected laptop, and on a password-protected external hard drive.

As a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Maryland, the researcher is mandated to report abuse or neglect of any kind, including the transmission of contagious, life-threatening diseases. Further, in the case of self-harm, confidentiality will be broken if the participant is at imminent risk and a family member or university staff person will be notified. In cases of non-imminent risk, a referral list to community service providers and hospitals will be distributed.

10) Problems or Questions

The Office of Human Research of George Washington University, at telephone number (202) 994-2715, can provide further information about your rights as a research participant. If you think you have been harmed in this study, you report this to the Principal Investigator of this study. Further information regarding this study may be obtained by contacting Sara Pula (sub-investigator), at telephone number (443.458.8176). For problems arising evenings or weekends, you may call Sara Pula at (443.458.8176).

If you wish to participate in this research study, please proceed with completing the interview. Please verbally inform the Researcher if you would or would not like direct quotes from your interview to be published.

Appendix D

Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire

Please list the physical appearance attributes of the type of person YOU believe you ACTUALLY are NOW.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

_____

Please list the physical appearance attributes of the type of person YOU believe you would IDEALLY like to be (i.e., wish, desire, or hope to be).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

_____

Please list the physical appearance attributes of the type of person YOUR SOCIETY/CULTURE would IDEALLY like you to look like.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Appendix E

Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Scale 3 (SATAQ-3)

Please read each of the following items carefully and indicate the number that best reflects your agreement with the statement.

Definitely Disagree = 1
Mostly Disagree = 2
Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
Mostly Agree = 4
Definitely Agree = 5

TV programs are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive.

I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to lose weight.

I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV.

I compare my body to the bodies of people who are on TV.

TV commercials are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I do not feel pressure from TV or magazines to look pretty.

I would like my body to look like the models who appear in magazines.

I compare my appearance to the appearance of TV and movie stars.

Music videos on TV are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I've felt pressure from TV and magazines to be thin.

I would like my body to look like the people who are in movies.

I do not compare my body to the bodies of people who appear in magazine.

Magazine articles are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body.

I wish I looked like the models in music videos.

I compare my appearance to the appearance of people in magazines.

Magazine advertisements are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to diet.

I do not wish to look as athletic as the people in magazines.

I compare my body to that of people in "good shape."

Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to exercise.

I wish I looked as athletic as sports stars.

I compare my body to that of people who are athletic.

Movies are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to change my appearance.

I do not try to look like the people on TV.

Movie starts are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

Famous people are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

I try to look like sports athletes.

Appendix F

BODY SATISFACTION SCALE

Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which you are satisfied with the following body parts.

Response Options:
1 = Extremely satisfied
2 = Moderately satisfied
3 = Somewhat satisfied
4 = Somewhat dissatisfied
5 = Moderately dissatisfied
6 = Extremely dissatisfied

Items:
Waist
Bust
Hips
Thighs
Calves
Ankles
Upper arms
Lower arms
Wrist
Face
Whole body

Appendix G: Interview Protocol

1. Establish rapport.

2. Enroll participant into study. To do this, the researcher will:

    - review the purpose of the study
    - review what study participation entails (initial interview and participating in member feedback)
    - review confidentiality
    - review all aspects of the consent form particularly the participant's right to withdraw at any point
    - explain how data will be stored
    - obtain participant alias
    - elicit questions and concerns
    - Respond to questions and concerns
    - Obtain signature on consent form
    - Provide copy of signed consent form to the participant

3. Engage in "warm up" conversation with enrolled participant.

    - Distribute SATAQ-3 and ask participant to read this carefully and fill out the questionnaire.

4. Administer formal interview questions.

5. Administer Body Satisfaction Scale.

6. Administer Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire.

7. Close interview.

Appendix: G: Interview Guide

Part 1: (15 minutes)

Introduction to Interview: Build rapport, describe the study again (first time may have been through initial email contact), review commitment of study participation, review confidentiality, review and obtain consent, review benefits of participating in study, select pseudonym, respond to all questions and concerns.

Demographic Information:

a. What is your race/culture/ethnicity?
    a. If respond with "mixed" or "biracial" ask "What does it mean to you to be biracial or mixed?
b. How long has your family lived in the United States?
c. What is your height and weight (calculate BMI)?
d. What is your age?
e. What university do you attend and what is your current major?

Warm-up conversation: To segue into the interview portion of the meeting, begin with a warm up conversation about body image. This will entail presenting the participant with a copy of the Sociocultural Attitudes toward Appearance Scale 3 (SATAQ-3). Ask the participant to read through and **complete the scale**.

Space for observational data:

Part 2: (45-60 minutes)

Interview Questionnaire: Explain that the interview portion will now begin and will last between 60-90 minutes. Explain that this portion will be digitally recorded. Practice to

make sure the equipment is working and the participant can be heard on the device. Answer any questions about the recording procedure. Answer any additional questions.

Start with this sentence once recording begins: *"This interview is being conducted with (pseudonym name)."*

Introductory Statement: *"This interview is part of a study on the relationship between culture and body image. Thank you for your participation. Because your responses are important to me and to the study of body image and culture, I will be digitally recording your responses. I will also take some notes during the interview. Is this process acceptable to you?*

I can assure you that your responses will be confidential and all recorded material will be kept in a secure location. Digital recordings will be encrypted. When quoting from transcribed interview, the pseudonym you chose will be used. If you do not wish for your quotes to be used in publications, please indicate this now. As discussed, this is the first of two communications. You will be contacted once the interview is transcribed and analyzed to review what I have learned. The second interview can be conducted in person, through email, or over the phone. Do you have any questions about this process"?

1. In today's society, how important do you think looking good is for women?
2. What do you think are the main reasons that women care/don't care about their appearance?*
3. Based on what you've noticed and experienced from living in the United States, how would you describe the ideal female body? [prompt: Is there a certain type of physique/body that most women in the U.S. appear to like most?]
4. What specific body areas seem to be the main areas of concern for [insert identified race/ethnicity/culture] women? [prompt: Are there any body parts that this culture seems particularly interested in making look better or stand out?]
5. Now I'm interested in talking for a little while about your own body image. In general, or overall, how do you feel about your appearance? [prompt: how do you feel about your bust size, thighs, hips, height, hair, skin tone, facial features (eyes, nose)?]
6. Most of us have things we like and don't like about our appearance. What part are you most satisfied with? Which parts would you like to change or look different? [prompt: How would you prefer your (insert part dissatisfied with) to look?]
7. What are your current beauty routines? [prompt: Do you color or treat your hair? Do you apply makeup on a daily basis? Do you polish your nails? If so, how often?]
8. Have you ever used any techniques or strategies to change the parts of your body that you're not satisfied with? [prompt: For example, some women exercise, diet, or have cosmetic surgery performed to try and change their appearance]
9. Are you currently using any techniques to change the part of your body that you're not satisfied with?

10. Have negative feelings about your body ever stopped you from doing something that you've wanted to do? [prompt: For example, some people don't go swimming because they don't like how they look in a bathing suit, some women don't like to go to bars because they know they'll be scrutinized]*
11. Sometimes people get their ideas about how they would like to look by looking at, or comparing themselves to other people like friends, strangers, or famous people on TV or in magazines. Do you ever look at, or compare yourself to other people for ideas about what looks good or what looks bad? [prompt: where do you get your ideas about what looks good? [prompt: Which people do you find that you look at the most?] [prompt: Do you usually look towards (insert identified culture) women, non-(insert identified culture) women, or both (insert identified culture) and non-(insert identified culture) women?]
12. When you look at other women's bodies or compare yourself to other people, how does that make you feel?
13. When you see a woman with a body that you think is unattractive how do you feel? What do you think?*
14. Now, I'd just like you to think for a moment about the women that you see in the American media. Don't forget that "the American media" include TV shows, magazines, and commercials. Do you think American media depicts all women equally? [prompt: Does the media show women of all ages, all cultures, and all shapes and sizes?]
15. What would you change about how women from your culture are represented in the media?
16. Do you think much about what you wear? Is clothing an important part of appearance? (prompt: Is fashion something you take notice of?) (Do you think women in general are interested in fashion?)*
17. [for participants who have lived overseas] You've spent some time living in both (insert participant's country of birth) and the United States so you might have noticed some things about female body image in each of these countries. In what ways would you say that the concerns women have about their bodies in the United States and (insert country) are similar or different? [prompt: Can you tell me an example of how are they the same/different?]
18. Do you have anything else you would like to add that you think might be useful to this study? Do you have any further questions or comments?
19. Culture specific questions:

<u>Asian American women</u>

I've been reading a lot about beauty ideals in certain cultures. Some research says that Asian American women strive to:

a. Be the "perfect" Asian woman. Do you feel this pressure?
b. "Correct" typical Asian features to fit more into the Western ideal (e.g., breast augmentation, eyelid surgery, etc). Do you feel pressure to do this?
c. Change their skin tone (lightening or darkening?). For instance more traditional Asian women prefer a lighter skin tone, but White Americans tend to prefer tanned skin. Do you feel pressure around your skin tone?

Hispanic American women

I've been reading a lot about beauty ideals in certain cultures. Some research says that:

a. Hispanic American women have a "thicker" body ideal and that they prefer: round buttocks, big breast and hips, and a thin waist. Do you agree with this?
b. Hispanic American women have to deal with a "dual identity" of belonging to multiple cultures and having to deal with several sets of cultural values. Do you agree with this? Do you experience this?
c. The influence of the media is complex, particularly if an Hispanic woman engages in Spanish-language media. Some research says that Spanish-language media presents an alternative to mainstream media, while other research says it is just as restrictive as mainstream media. What are your thoughts on this?

Space for observational data:

Questions 1-19 (with the exception of questions 7 and 19) were adapted from Watt, M., and Ricciardelli, L.A. (2012). A qualitative study of body image and appearance among men of Chinese ancestry in Australia. *Body Image, 9*(1): 118-125.

Part 3: Body Satisfaction Scale (5 minutes)

I'm now going to ask you to complete the Body Satisfaction Scale. Please let me know if you have any questions on how to complete this form. Please return it to me when you are finished.

Part 4: Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire (5-10 minutes)

I'm now going to ask you to complete the Physical Appearance Discrepancy Questionnaire. Please let me know if you have any questions on how to complete this form. Please return it to me when you are finished.

Closing of Interview: Make sure all paperwork is accounted for and participant is aware of the remaining process. Provide receipt for GW Psychology students. Let non-GW Psychology students know when they will be eligible for the Visa gift card raffle. Close with: *Thank you again for your participation. I will contact you in 1-2 weeks to schedule a time to review your interview.*

Space for observational data:

Appendix H

Referral List

George Washington University Students

University Counseling Center
2033 K St NW # 330 Washington, DC 20006
(202) 994-5300

Community Counseling Services Center
Foggy Bottom
2134 G Street, NW, Room B-11
Washington, DC 20052
202-994-8645

Anne Arundel Community College Students

Counseling, Advising, and Retention Services
Student Service Center Building, 2nd Floor
Arnold, MD
410-777-7111

Anne Arundel County Crisis Response Warm Line
410-768-5522

Maryland Crisis Hot Line
800-422-0009

Loyola University Students

Counseling Center
Humanities, Room 150
Baltimore, MD 21210
410-617-CARE (2273)

Appendix I: Asian American Topic-related Codes

Category/Topic	Code	Meaning
Importance of Appearance	AppImp	
	AppImp	Participant expresses idea that appearance is important (or very important) in U.S. society
	Identity	Participant indicates that identity is equal to appearance. It portrays one's standing in society.
	Obj	Objectification as a result of how evaluated by others
	Pressure	Participant expresses feeling pressure from media, peers, society to look a certain way; to conform to standards
	Environment as Cultural Influence	Participant expresses that environment has an influence on body image, appearance, or expectations
	Control	Participant expresses appearance as a form of control (in personal or professional settings)
	Media	Participant indicates the importance the media places on appearance, looking a certain way, and having the ideal female body
	Benefits	Participant expresses positive benefits to looking good, such as status, success, career success, being more likable.
	SES influence	Participant indicates influence of socioeconomic status on body image, fashion, clothing, or appearance.
	Indoctrinated	Interviewer perceives participant's responses as so indoctrinated that she doesn't even realize it.
Why women care about appearance (motivating factors)		
	AppCare	Participant indicates caring about appearance
	Benefits	Participant indicates there are benefits to achieving certain appearance standards (i.e., being attractive), such as status, power, career advancement, being more likable
	Pressure/Conformity	Participant indicates pressure to

		conform to standard/expectations
	Cultural misattributions	Participant indicates people incorrectly identify cultural identity based on physical characteristics
Why women don't care about appearance	Why Don't Care	
	Rejecting stereotype	Participant indicates idea of rejecting societal standards/expectations, idea of non-conformity.
	Antipressure	Participant indicates desire to be free from societal standards/pressure.
	Positive family messages	Participant indicates positive messages from family members (often mother) valuing characteristics other than appearance
	Judgment by others	Participant indicates not wanting to be judged by others (and only valued for their appearance)
	Healthy/balance	Participant indicates healthy notion of having more to offer than just outer appearance
	Resignation	Participant indicates idea that some may not want to bother with appearance when they know they will be judged/held to expectations
Ideal Female Body	IFB	
	U.S. Ideal	Participant indicates that U.S. ideal includes being tall and having long, thin legs
	Perfectly balanced body	Participant indicates that ideal involves having a proportionate body from head to toe
	Unattainable	Participant indicates that the ideal is not attainable
	Look like model	Participant indicates U.S. female ideal is to look like a model—flat stomach, little body fat, little breast development, long thin legs, few curves (more so straight up and down), smaller than most women at that height, Victoria's Secret models in particular
	Self critical	Participant indicates ways in which she doesn't fit the ideal female body
	Self	Participant indicates different preference for ideal female body
	Varies by ethnicity	Participant indicates that the ideal female body varies by ethnicity in the U.S. Different ideals for White, African American, Asian American.

	Caucasian mainstream	Participant indicates there is one ideal for the Caucasian mainstream
Body areas of cultural concern	AsianBody	
	Asian eyes stereotype	Participant indicates Asian eyes stereotype of squinty eyes, not eyelids (not having double eyelid).
	Hair	Participant indicates that culture values dark straight hair (sleek, fine)
	Age differences	Participant indicates that culture holds different expectations/ideals for older women as opposed to younger women.
	Skin tone	Participant indicates that the Asian ideal is pale skin; paler than the White ideal
	Thin standard	Participant indicates that culture values thinness and there is an acceptable standard weight (between 100-120 pounds).
	Cultural norm	Participant indicates that culture makes references to appearance
	Weight pressure	Participant indicates pressure to maintain weight (even while being pressured to eat)
	Height stereotype	Participant indicated stereotype of Asian women being short and petite.
	Facial features	Participant indicates facial ideals: round face, softness (not protruding), perfect circle face, round cheeks
	White but not White	Participant indicates feeling White in terms of skin tone, but not White in terms of cultural standards (e.g., different, higher).
Personal body image issues (satisfied or dissatisfied)		
	In the middle	Participant indicates feeling in between two cultures. (Code similar to range, White but not White?)
	Struggle to conform	Participant indicates struggle to conform to White mainstream standards (due to not having double eyelid; hard to use eye makeup) (maybe this should be under Barrier to expected appearance code?)
	Barrier to expected appearance	Participant indicates a particular barrier (time, being in college, etc) that keeps her from achieving her appearance or exercise standard
	Growing up	Participant makes reference to an

		experience in the past, such as in middle school or high school
	Self-critical hair	Participant indicates being self-critical of her hair; particularly of it being too hard to manage
	Self-critical nose	Participant indicates being self-critical of her nose
	Self-critical legs	Participant indicates being self-critical of her legs; wanting the thighs to be thinner
	Fine With It	Participant indicates being "fine with it" or "okay with it"—some aspect of their physical appearance or an issue they used to have but now are okay with it; however their tone or body language indicates they may not really be fine with it
	Appearance control	Participant expresses a desire to control her appearance through grooming techniques/personal work.
Beauty routines		
	Appearance control	Participant expresses a desire to control her appearance through grooming techniques/personal work
	Effort	Participant indicates directly or indirectly exerting effort to achieve beauty or fashion standards/expectations
	Grooming product	Participant indicates the purchase of grooming products, such as hair products, makeup, lotions, etc
	Conforming	Participant indicates trying a particular beauty strategy or fashion because this is the trend, someone suggested trying it (such as at the makeup counter)
	Family messages/mom	Participant indicates having heard a message regarding body image/appearance/beauty routine from a family member
	Struggle to conform	Participant indicates struggle to conform to White mainstream standards (maybe this should be under Barrier to expected appearance code?)
Techniques/strategies to change		
	Exercise	Participant indicates participating in some form of exercise to control weight and influence appearance

	Healthy native eating	Participant indicates preference to eat food from native culture, citing that it is more healthy than American food
	Surgery	Participant indicates having considered some sort of plastic surgery to change her appearance
	Family message	Participant indicates having heard a message regarding body image/appearance from a family member
	Negative body message	Participant indicates having heard a negative message regarding body part that influenced thoughts of plastic surgery
	Food restriction	Participant indicates participating in various types of diets or changing food intake in some manner.
	Subject to fads/diet trends	Participant indicates attempting to follow a current exercise regimen
Negative feelings about body restricted you		
	Restricted activity	Participant indicates restricting self from some activity due to discomfort/negative feelings
	Social comparison	Participant indicates participating in the social comparison process (comparing self to others in upward or downward process)
	Growing up	Participant makes reference to an experience in the past, such as in middle school or high school
	Family message	Participant indicates having discussed issue with family member
	Self critical	Participant indicates being self critical as reason to alter behavior
	Positive peer influence	Participant indicates desire to restrict self being balanced with positive peer messages
Who Compare With		
	AppImp	Participant expresses idea that appearance is important (or very important) in U.S. society
	Real women	Participant indicates that women in real life have more influence than models or celebrities; make you think about your body image more
	Social Comparison	Participant indicates participating in the social comparison process (comparing self to others in upward

		or downward process)
	Judgmental not Critical	Participant indicates being judgmental (awareness) but not being critical of others
	Judgment and critical	Participant indicates being judgmental and critical of self or others
	Envy	Participant endorses body or clothing envy.
	Inability to escape	Participant indicates not being able to escape the influence of the American media
Compare with Asian American women or American women		
	Cultural identity/acculturation	Participant indicates strong or weak relationship to cultural heritage
	Family messages	Participant indicates having heard a message regarding body image/appearance from a family member (relaying family expectations)
	White but not white	Participant indicates feeling White in terms of skin tone, but not White in terms of cultural standards (e.g., different, higher).
How does comparing self to others make you feel		
	Healthy/balanced	Participant indicates ability to acknowledge someone else's beauty without being self-critical.
	Fine with it	Participant indicates fine with it or "okay with it"—some aspect of their physical appearance or an issue they used to have but now are okay with it; however, their tone or body language indicates they may not really be fine with it
	Envy	Participant endorses body or clothing envy.
When see an unattractive woman how do you feel		
	Judgment and critical	Participant indicates being judgmental and critical of self or others
	Effort	Participant indicates directly or indirectly exerting effort to achieve beauty or fashion standards/expectations
	Appearance Importance	Participant expresses idea that

		appearance is important (or very important) in U.S. society
American media depiction of women		
	Small variation	Participant indicates small racial representation in the media (mostly Caucasian, some Black, fewer Hispanic, Asians not represented at all)
	Racial ambiguity	Participant indicates difficulty identifying a women's ethnicity/race due to ambiguous physical characteristics
	Poor media representation	Participant indicates poor representation of women in the media; standard tends to be young, white, thin.
	Caucasian and young	Participant indicates that American media mostly depicts Caucasian and young women
	Media conformity	Participant indicates that media does not show women of all shapes, sizes, ages, and cultures; it shows mostly white, thin, young women
Change depiction of Asian American women		
	Token representation	Participant indicates feeling no point in marketing to ethnic groups because they're really just Americanized versions of those groups.
	Real Diversity	Participant indicates change in media representation would show real diversity in how ethnic groups are depicted; not in an "Americanized" version.
	Minorities new majority	Participant indicates that there are more minority populations now in the U.S. than White population. Wants media to represent this in more balanced fashion.
	Not represented	Participant indicates that there is little to no representation of Asian American women.
Clothing as important part of appearance		
	ClothingImp	Participant indicates clothing is very important, to the point that it equates to who you are.

	Barrier to expected appearance	Participant indicates a particular barrier (time, being in college, etc) that keeps her from achieving society's appearance standard
	Judging	Participant indicates judging a norm (but it not critical).
	Judging and Critical	Participant indicates judging and being critical of a norm.
	ClothingPower	Participant indicates the power of clothing, such as draws attention, makes more attractive, etc
	Self critical	Participant indicates being self critical as reason to alter behavior
	Clothing reflect personality	Participant indicates clothing reflects personality traits such as being adventurous, insecure, promiscuous, etc
	Peer pressure	Participant indicates pressure from peers to place more emphasis on clothes/appearance
Women Interested in Fashion		
	Environment Specific	Participant indicates that importance/interest in fashion is dependent on the environment and where someone lives (i.e., city versus rural environment).
	GW environment	Participant indicates culture specific to the GW university and community, particularly that GW students are better dressed, more into fashion, and there is more pressure to look good.
	SES influence	Participant indicates influence of socioeconomic status on body image, fashion, clothing, or appearance.
	Standard	Participant indicates that the standard is for women to be interested in fashion
Culture-specific questions		
a. Strive to be perfect Asian woman		
	Agrees with literature	Participant indicates agreement with research literature's portrayal of cultural ideal
	Influence of American media	Participant indicates cultural body ideal is changing, valuing smaller proportions
	Social learning	Participant indicates effect of

		cultural body ideal changing is due to adaptation to what is seen in society
	Pressure	Participant indicates feeling pressure to live up to cultural ideal of being perfect
b. Strives to "correct" typical Asian features to fit more into Western ideal	Range/Intersectionality	Participant indicates a range of identifying with one culture over the other, range of conforming and not conforming to stereotypes (culture, gender, race, body). Intersectionality between the two cultures.
	Agrees with literature	Participant indicates agreement with research literature's portrayal of cultural ideal
	Environment specific/geographic location	Participant indicates influence of geographic location or community surrounded by
	Disagrees with literature	Participant indicates this is an Asian thing, not an Asian American thing.
c. Strive to change skin tone (lightening or darkening?). For instance more traditional Asian women prefer a lighter skin tone, but White Americans tend to prefer tanned skin.		
	Agrees with literature	Participant indicates agreement with research literature
	Asian American ideal	Participant indicates Asian American ideal is similar to White American ideal of wanting darker skin
	Fine With it	Participant indicates fine with it or "okay with it"—some aspect of their physical appearance or an issue they used to have but now are okay with it; however, their tone or body language indicates they may not really be fine with it
	Depends on Individual	Participant indicates that this varies by the individual and what their skin tone is
	In between	Participant indicates feeling in between, sometimes wanting lighter (Asian) skin and sometimes wanting darker (American) skin.

Appendix J: Hispanic American Topic-related Codes

Category/Topic	Code	Meaning
Importance of Appearance	AppImp	
	AppImp	Participant expresses idea that appearance is important (or very important) in U.S. society
	Obj	Objectification as a result of how evaluated by others
	Pressure	Participant expresses feeling pressure from media, peers, society to look a certain way
	Environment as Cultural Influence	Participant expresses that environment has an influence on body image, appearance, or expectations
	Control	Participant expresses appearance as a form of control (in personal or professional settings)
	Media	Participant indicates the importance the media places on appearance, looking a certain way, and having the ideal female body
	Benefits	Participant expresses positive benefits to looking good, such as status, success, career success, being more likable.
	SES influence	Participant indicates influence of socioeconomic status on body image, fashion, clothing, or appearance.
	Indoctrinated	Interviewer perceives participant's responses as so indoctrinated that she doesn't even realize it.
Why women care about appearance (motivating factors)		
	AppCare	Participant indicates caring about appearance
	Benefits	Participant indicates there are benefits to achieving certain appearance standards (i.e., being attractive), such as status, power, career advancement, being more likable
	Pressure/Conformity	Participant indicates pressure to conform to standard/expectations
	Cultural misattributions	Participant indicates people incorrectly identify cultural identity based on physical characteristics

Why women don't care about appearance	Why Don't Care	
	Rejecting stereotype	Participant indicates idea of rejecting societal standards/expectations, idea of non-conformity.
	Antipressure	Participant indicates desire to be free from societal standards/pressure.
	Positive family messages	Participant indicates positive messages from family members (often mother) valuing characteristics other than appearance
	Judgment by others	Participant indicates not wanting to be judged by others (and only valued for their appearance)
	Healthy/balance	Participant indicates healthy notion of having more to offer than just outer appearance
	Resignation	Participant indicates idea that some may not want to bother with appearance when they know they will be judged/held to expectations
Ideal Female Body	IFB	
	U.S. Ideal	Participant indicates that U.S. ideal includes being tall and having long, thin legs
	Perfectly balanced body	Participant indicates that ideal involves having a proportionate body from head to toe
	Unattainable	Participant indicates that the ideal is not attainable
	Look like model	Participant indicates U.S. female ideal is to look like a model—flat stomach, little body fat, little breast development, long thin legs, few curves (more so straight up and down), smaller than most women at that height, Victoria's Secret models in particular
	Self-critical	Participant indicates ways in which she doesn't fit the ideal female body
	Self	Participant indicates different preference for ideal female body
Body areas of cultural concern	HispBody	
	Hips	Participant indicates Hispanic culture emphasizes hips that aren't too big
	Arms	Participant indicates that culture

		values thinner upper arms
	Balance	Participant indicates that Hispanic population has more balance in expectations; don't expect people to be too thin
	Waist	Participant indicates that culture values thin waist
	Environment as cultural influence	Women in Spanish church talking about body parts (particularly hips/love handles) while cooking
	Cultural norm	Participant indicates that culture makes references to appearance
	Body acceptance	Participant indicates growing up with openness about body
	Positive body messages	Participant indicates cultural messages about body are beneficial and non-critical (affectionate)
	Range	Participant indicates a range of identifying with one culture over another, range of conforming and not conforming to stereotypes (culture, gender, race, body). Intersectionality between the two cultures?
Personal body image issues (satisfied or dissatisfied)		
	Exercise standard	Participant indicates certain exercise standards (such as running, working out, etc)
	Barrier to expected appearance	Participant indicates a particular barrier (time, being in college, etc) that keeps her from achieving her appearance or exercise standard
	Growing up	Participant makes reference to an experience in the past, such as in middle school or high school
	Self-critical hair	Participant indicates being self-critical of her hair; particularly of it being too frizzy, curly, and hard to manage
	Self-critical nose	Participant indicates being self-critical of her nose; wanting it to be thinner
	Self-critical legs	Participant indicates being self-critical of her legs; wanting the thighs to be thinner
	Fine With It	Participant indicates being "fine with it" or "okay with it"—some aspect of their physical appearance or an issue they used to have but

		now are okay with it; however their tone or body language indicates they may not really be fine with it
	Appearance control	Participant expresses a desire to control her appearance through grooming techniques/personal work.
Beauty routines		
	Appearance control	Participant expresses a desire to control her appearance through grooming techniques/personal work
	Effort	Participant indicates directly or indirectly exerting effort to achieve beauty or fashion standards/expectations
	Grooming product	Participant indicates the purchase of grooming products, such as hair products, makeup, lotions, etc
	Conforming	Participant indicates trying a particular beauty strategy or fashion because this is the trend, someone suggested trying it (such as at the makeup counter)
Techniques/strategies to change		
	Exercise	Participant indicates participating in some form of exercise to control weight and influence appearance
	Surgery	Participant indicates having considered some sort of plastic surgery to change her appearance
	Family message	Participant indicates having heard a message regarding body image/appearance from a family member
	Negative body message	Participant indicates having heard a negative message regarding body part that influenced thoughts of plastic surgery
	Food restriction	Participant indicates participating in various types of diets or changing food intake in some manner.
	Subject to fads/diet trends	Participant indicates attempting to follow a current exercise regimen
Negative feelings about body restricted you		
	Restricted activity	Participant indicates restricting self from some activity due to discomfort/negative feelings
	Social comparison	Participant indicates participating in the social comparison process

		(comparing self to others in upward or downward process)
	Growing up	Participant makes reference to an experience in the past, such as in middle school or high school
	Family message	Participant indicates having discussed issue with family member
	Self-critical	Participant indicates being self-critical as reason to alter behavior
	Positive peer influence	Participant indicates desire to restrict self being balanced with positive peer messages
Who Compare With		
	AppImp	Participant expresses idea that appearance is important (or very important) in U.S. society
	Real women	Participant indicates that women in real life have more influence than models or celebrities; make you think about your body image more
	Social Comparison	Participant indicates participating in the social comparison process (comparing self to others in upward or downward process)
	Judgmental not Critical	Participant indicates being judgmental (awareness) but not being critical of others
	Judgment and critical	Participant indicates being judgmental and critical of self or others
	Envy	Participant endorses body or clothing envy.
Compare with Hispanic American women or American women		
	Body acceptance	Participant indicates growing up with openness about body
	American but not really American	Participant indicates notion of having own language and culture but looking more and more toward America for style of dress and other trends (similar to Asian American code of White but not White)
How does comparing self to others make you feel		
	Healthy/balanced	Participant indicates ability to acknowledge someone else's beauty without being self-critical.
	Fine with it	Participant indicates being "fine with it" or "okay with it"—some

		aspect of their physical appearance or an issue they used to have but now are okay with it; however their tone or body language indicates they may not really be fine with it
	Envy	Participant endorses body or clothing envy.
When see an unattractive woman how do you feel		
	Judgment and critical	Participant indicates being judgmental and critical of self or others
	Effort	Participant indicates directly or indirectly exerting effort to achieve beauty or fashion standards/expectations
	Appearance Importance	Participant expresses idea that appearance is important (or very important) in U.S. society
American media depict women equally		
	Small variation	Participant indicates small racial representation in the media (mostly Caucasian, some Black, fewer Hispanic, Asians not represented at all)
	Racial ambiguity	Participant indicates difficulty identifying a women's ethnicity/race due to ambiguous physical characteristics
	Poor media representation	Participant indicates poor representation of women in the media; standard tends to be young, white, thin.
	Caucasian and young	Participant indicates that American media mostly depicts Caucasian and young women
	Media conformity	Participant indicates that media does not show women of all shapes, sizes, ages, and cultures; it shows mostly white, thin, young women
Change depiction of Hispanic American women		
	Not represented	Participant indicates difficulty responding to question because there is so little media representation of Hispanic Americans
	Small variation	Participant indicates small racial representation in the media (mostly Caucasian, some Black, fewer

		Hispanic, Asians not represented at all)
	Traditional gender roles	Participant indicates Hispanic media depicts women and/or men in traditional gender roles
	Cultural stereotypes	Participant indicates cultural media depicts men/women in stereotypes, such as men as violent and drug oriented, Whites vs. Mexicans, etc
	Break down barriers	Participant indicates change she would like to see as girls being strong, reaching new goals
Is clothing important part of appearance		
	ClothingImp	Participant indicates clothing is very important, to the point that it equates to who you are.
	Barrier to expected appearance	Participant indicates a particular barrier (time, being in college, etc) that keeps her from achieving society's appearance standard
	Judging	Participant indicates judging a norm (but it not critical).
	Judging and Critical	Participant indicates judging and being critical of a norm.
	ClothingPower	Participant indicates the power of clothing, such as draws attention, makes more attractive, etc
	Self-critical	Participant indicates being self-critical as reason to alter behavior
	Clothing reflect personality	Participant indicates clothing reflects personality traits such as being adventurous, insecure, promiscuous, etc
	Peer pressure	Participant indicates pressure from peers to place more emphasis on clothes/appearance
Women Interested in Fashion		
	Environment Specific	Participant indicates that importance/interest in fashion is dependent on the environment and where someone lives (i.e., city versus rural environment).
	GW environment	Participant indicates culture specific to the GW university and community, particularly that GW students are better dressed, more into fashion, and there is more

		pressure to look good.
	SES influence	Participant indicates influence of socioeconomic status on body image, fashion, clothing, or appearance.
	Standard	Participant indicates that the standard is for women to be interested in fashion
Culture-specific questions		
d. Thicker body ideal (with round buttocks, big breasts and hips, and thin waist)		
	Agrees with literature	Participant indicates agreement with research literature's portrayal of cultural ideal
	Influence of American media	Participant indicates cultural body ideal is changing, valuing smaller proportions
	Social learning	Participant indicates effect of cultural body ideal changing is due to adaptation to what is seen in society
e. Dual identity	Range/Intersectionality	Participant indicates a range of identifying with one culture over the other, range of conforming and not conforming to stereotypes (culture, gender, race, body). Intersectionality between the two cultures.
	Agrees with literature	Participant indicates agreement with research literature's portrayal of cultural ideal
	Environment specific/geographic location	Participant indicates influence of geographic location or community surrounded by
	Strength of cultural identity	Participant indicates engagement in dual identity is dependent on how strong one's cultural identity is
f. Spanish language media being an alternative or just as restrictive as mainstream media		
	Variety of overall Spanish media	Participant indicates that Spanish media in general shows more variety of women than American media, in terms of shapes and sizes
	Spanish soap operas very restrictive	Participant indicates that Spanish soap operas are more restrictive in

		their portrayal of women; show women in more revealing clothing, very provocative and sexual in nature
	Spanish language TV is odd	Participant indicates that Spanish language TV has a different sense of humor, is cheesy, and women are dressed in strange manner

Appendix K: Harajuku Girls

http://petersterlacci.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/what-is-harajuku.jpg

http://tokyofashion.com/harajuku-fashion-walk/