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MAYOR OF LONDON

THE WOMEN WE SEE

We're challenging London's
creatives to show women
as they are.

#BehindEveryGreatCity

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Research Report
The Women We See: Experiences of
Gender and Diversity in Advertising in
London's Public Spaces
UCL Institute of Education

Professor Jessica Ringrose and
Dr. Kaitlyn Regehr

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1. Introduction to research

In 2018, gender equality remains a problem in advertising and the women we see in adverts are not representative of the diversity we see around us. This study, conducted by the UCL Institute of Education, collected the stories of 16 diverse women (aged 21-65) and 22 diverse teen girls (14-16) and explored their experiences of gendered advertising at 18 sites across London's public spaces (including public transport and outside areas). Qualitative findings informed a wider quantitative survey, which captured the views of 2,012 women and men's views on gender, diversity and advertising in London's public spaces.

The research conducted for this report set out to respond directly to the prevalence of gender stereotypes in advertising. Decades of research have documented a long history of advertising which has objectified women's bodies and used a 'sexualised gaze' to sell products (Badger, Bronstein and Lambiase, 2018).

Roeswarn (2009) argued, powerfully, in the Australian context that sexualised advertisements of women's bodies in public space operate like sexualised pin-ups (which were banned in workplaces in Australia due to her research). Sexism in advertising has been excused or justified in a myriad of ways – as a joke or as a marketing strategy – 'sex sells' (Reichert and Lambiase, 2014; Chang and Tseng, 2014). Research has also found that almost all women represented in Western advertising tend to conform to very limited idealised body types of either very thin and white (Gill, 2008) or more recently, hypersexualised women of colour (Lamb et al., 2016; Ringrose et al., in press).

In the UK, women's rights groups, lobbyists and activists all agree that women and girls should be free of sexist imagery in public spaces (EVAW, 2014). It has also been recognised that a higher standard of advertising can have important social effects, setting an example of equality and fairness. The Advertising Standards Authority (UK) has equally committed to cracking down on advertising that promotes stereotypical gender roles, sexism and sexualisation.

What our report demonstrates, however, is that working towards greater gender equity in advertising is not a single-issue problem. Tackling gender and sexism only makes sense if considered intersectionally in the context of other aspects of diversity characterizing London's highly diverse population.

It follows that the lack of gender diversity in advertising images relates strongly to other missing aspects of diversity in London's advertising landscape. According to the UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, London is a city categorized by "super-diversity" with multiple small ethnic groups and multiple social, legal and cultural differences that cut across ethnicity (Mintchev and Moore, 2017). Yet a survey carried out in 2016 by Lloyds Bank showed that just 19% of people featured in advertising were from minority groups, and, of that 19%, just 0.06% of people portrayed are disabled or from the LGBT community and just 0.29% are single parents (Rogers, 2016). The lack of diversity has traditionally been a result of privileging assumed consumption patterns of normative white, middle class

advertising audiences (Gill, 2009). There is less consideration given to culturally, ethnically or religiously diverse women or women of diverse body shapes and sizes in advertising. There is also a lack of diversity in terms of seeing older women or differently abled women or non-heterosexual or gender diverse people in advertising content.

Limited work has been done to explore attitudes and perceptions of advertising amongst culturally diverse populations in a metropolitan context like London.

To address this gap, we sought to explore diverse girls and women's experiences of currently running advertisements in their local context. Our aim was to foreground girls and women's voices and opinions on what they liked and didn't like about out-of-home advertising. Our study included a highly diverse sample of women and girls (inclusive of: ethnicity, class, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, educational background, income etc.) we investigated how these diverse participants experience the imagery and language used to depict women in

advertisements. By exploring what they think is positive and negative and what they think should change, we can offer a rich and nuanced picture of salient issues in the public's response to advertising. Importantly, these unique stories and narratives that come out of participants' complex and multi-faceted experiences of gender, diversity and advertising in and around London have been accessed through in-depth qualitative research methodologies. These findings are then contextualised in relation to a wider set of experiences of both women and men drawing on the survey results.

The report shows we are seeing some important positive changes in advertising content in London, but there is still considerable room for improvement. Our recommendations indicate the answer to creating more equality in advertising is

not simply to add in a higher percentage of images of particular types of women and girls, but to consider the intersecting issues of age, ability, culture, religion, ethnicity, gender and sexuality shaping Londoners' identities and experiences. By listening to women and girls' views and ideas, we hope this report is an opportunity for brands and the advertising industry to respond positively. We hope this research helps them to forge deeper engagement with audiences and develop more relevant and inclusive advertising for the diverse girls and women in London's super diverse metropolis.





2. Methodology

This research study carried out between March and June 2018 set out to examine how women are portrayed in out-of-home (OOH) advertising in comparison to men in the contemporary London landscape, and to ask: What are the outstanding gender-based generalisations/ sexism / stereotypes in current advertising content as this is experienced by a diverse group of women and girls?

It was important that this research focused on OOH advertising in particular. Unlike advertising on a mobile phone, within a newspaper, or on the television; this form of advertising cannot simply be turned off or turned over. These images cannot be avoided and are encountered by women and girls every day. It can be said that OOH advertising contributes more to a city's culture than other forms of advertising.

As such, our research questions included:

- What messages are diverse women and girls receiving from OOH advertising in London?

- How do these advertisements make a diverse qualitative sample of girls and women feel?
- If gender bias is experienced, what are the range of views from participants about what should change?
- To explore the unique issues that participants have faced in their daily lives, our three-pronged methodology involved in-depth interviews, focus groups, and a quantitative survey.¹

We collected qualitative interview-based first-hand accounts from 16 diverse women. We met the participants



(outside of their homes) in London's public spaces and accompanied them on daily commutes and routines including: the tube, overground, network rail, shopping centres, newsagents, hospitals, libraries, schools and more across 18 London postcodes.

We also explored their views on OOH advertising images from current running campaigns through commenting on a standardised selection of currently running advertising content. These interviews were documented through voice recording, photography and film. 2) A second strand was conducting focus group interviews with 22 teen girls aged 14-16 in two London schools in diverse postcodes on their views towards advertisements. Subsequently, the girls worked in groups to create art collages (two per school) using advertising content and wrote messages about what they thought was problematic and what they would like to see done differently. These collaging images appear throughout this report.

3) Building on the qualitative findings, a marketing research company (Republic), conducted a representative survey of London adults (2,012 respondents aged 18+ men and women whom live in London) to provide robust, quantitative findings. The survey drew on qualitative results to measure attitudes and behaviours of over 2,000 Londoners about the representation of different groups in advertisements, the resonance of specific adverts for the different audiences and which spaces, channels, and advertisements are problematic.

This report combines the findings from the rich and detailed qualitative research with the statistics from a wider group, providing an important evidence base about how Londoners feel about gender, diversity and advertising through a triangulation of results.

The following sections contain the in-depth findings of the study.

3. The quality of advertising is improving but more work is needed

It is promising that 49% of people feel the quality of public adverts has improved over the last few years and further, almost 1 in 2 Londoners find the adverts they see during their commute interesting (47%). Interestingly, when presented with examples of ads, 18-34s were significantly more likely to say they like the ad, suggesting a higher level of resonance with millennial audiences. Some advertisements we reviewed were rated highly on aspects of diversity and empowerment, and advertisements in public transport were found the least problematic compared to TV and targeted advertising in social media. Interestingly, almost half of survey participants think adverts on social media are more problematic (47%) than adverts in London places (21%).

Interview participants agreed. Many noted seeing improvements in the representations of women in advertising in public spaces in London. Jane (64, White British - SW6) for instance, reported she was aware of previously

controversial advertisements in OOH advertising, 'especially on the tube'. She went on to add that in the last year, these type of images of women 'were not around as much anymore'.

Despite improvements, however, more work needs to be done. Some 39% of Londoners feel badly represented in London advertising, with less than one in three (27%) Londoners feeling that adverts are relevant to them. In relation to women surveyed, only 41% feel well represented and 26% said the city's advertising is relevant to them. Many advertisements reviewed received low scores on diversity and were seen as unhealthy, unrealistic or problematic. There is therefore scope and opportunity to improve the advertisements in London's public places by listening to the experiences of Londoners.



¹Further details of methodology including sampling, participant information and collaging can be found in the Appendix

4. Advertising in public spaces (OOH) has a greater social impact and contributes more to a city's culture than other forms of advertising

Participants felt that public advertising was very important and contributes hugely to London's culture. Public advertising was viewed by the women encountered differently than media consumed in private (such as viewing advertisements on television, computer screens, or mobile phones) because public advertising cannot be turned off, or as easily ignored.

The public impact of advertising was commented upon by many participants, but we draw upon the voice of Sierra (41, Black British, disabled) one of

our participants, whose experiences illuminate both the issue of the power of advertising and the need for high standards in London's public spaces.

At the beginning of our interview with Sierra, we encountered an advertisement for a fashion brand. Sierra explained that she worried about the impact this might have upon her seven-year-old daughter and twelve-year-old son.

Sierra said that unlike an advertisement on her daughter's tablet, where they had a rule of turning over problematic advertisements when they popped up, they couldn't simply "flip the bus stop over":

"If it's something I can walk away from then I will, but I cannot avoid it [the bus stop] ...I think they [advertisers] need to be more conscious about sexualising everything. Everything seems to be about sex nowadays, and it's not fair on the young people. They need to be able to grow and identify who they are, and what they want in life, without being forced to see certain images and think they have to comply with them" (Sierra, 41, Black British, disabled).





5. Londoners want advertisements to represent London's diversity

Overwhelmingly, this study found that Londoners love the diversity of people in the city. Indeed, survey participants listed the diversity of people and cultures as their second favourite aspect about London (after activities/things to do). This was significantly higher for women (52% rank it in their top three), BAME (61%) and minority religious groups (54%).

However, participants believe that diversity is not currently adequately represented in the advertising landscape of London:

- Just 27% of Londoners feel that advertising in the city is relevant to them. This figure decreases to just 9% for those aged 55+
- Almost half feel that London advertisements reflect the diversity of the city's population (48%)
- Less than one in four think women (22%) or men (23%) in London adverts are culturally diverse

- Three in four (75%) think that advertisements in London should reflect the diversity of the city's population (sig higher for women at 78% and BAMEs 79%)

It is important to note that the research did reveal that advertising in some forms of media are viewed as less problematic than others, with advertising across London transport rated the most positively of all channels in terms of the quality, diversity and portrayal of different audiences with 7% of Londoners stating that they found advertising on transport 'problematic'.

The most problematic advertisement platforms for Londoners were revealed to be online (35%) with targeted advertising presenting particular concerns for participants; this was followed by TV (13%), then newspapers and public space (e.g. high streets and billboards excluding public transport) both at 8%.

It is positive that OOH is currently the least problematic in terms of diversity and the representation of women in its adverts, however with less than one in four thinking that women (22%) or men (23%) in London adverts are culturally diverse, there is still a need to address, especially as it is a channel which we cannot avoid.

“I wanted to have lighter skin... When I got older I realised how messed up that was and, actually, I like my skin. But I feel like I saw no representation of Indian women or anything, or South Asian women. I felt like I was an outsider.”

Daria, 16, School 1 focus group

5.1. ETHNIC AND RACIAL DIVERSITY

Over half (51%) of BAME Londoners stated that their ethnicity is not well-represented in London’s advertising – compared to just over a fifth (22%) of White Londoners. Amongst the BAME groups, 71% of Black Londoners think that there are not enough Black people in London advertising; whilst 61% of British Asian/Asian Londoners think the same of Asian people. BAME men (55%) are more likely than BAME women (40%) to feel people like them are represented – a similar trend to White men (47%) and White women (41%).

Participants in the qualitative research noted similarly that advertisements they saw promoted ideals of White beauty as normal.

Alex said she found many advertisements exclusionary with respect to racial representation.

“You basically see a lot of White, beautiful people...If you look around London that isn’t what it is, it’s not a good representation...If you’re out in London...you see people of all shapes and sizes, all colours.” (Alexandra, 35, White British - NW3)

Participants were also concerned that hair and beauty products promoted ideals of White Western beauty, such as the issue of pressures around body hair waxing, particularly for dark skin, which came up repeatedly across all the age groups.

One of the teen school girls talked about the extreme pressures to have Caucasian-style hair and to remove dark body hair:

“I wanted to have lighter skin...When I got older I realised how messed up that was and, actually, I like my skin. But I feel like I saw no representation of Indian women or anything, or South Asian women. I felt like I was an outsider.” (Daria, 16, School 1 focus group)

The collage art below (fig.1 and fig.2) was produced by the schoolgirls which draws dark hair on the models’ bodies and asks questions about why they cannot see natural Black beauty and Black hair represented.

Fig. 1

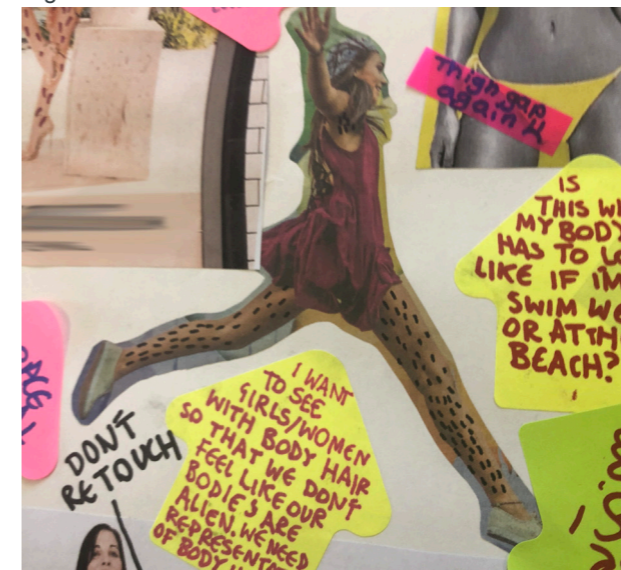
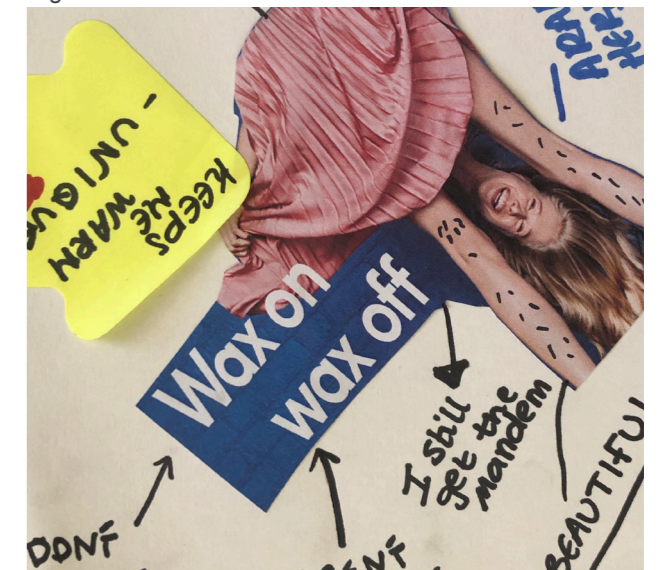


Fig. 2



6. Advertisements need to consider mobility/(dis)ability

Just 18% of survey participants could recall ever having seen an advertisement featuring a disabled person and 65% of women and 51% of men said they did not see enough images of disabled people.

During the period of this study we did not find any advertisements that reflected experiences of being disabled in London – either mentally or physically. Advertisements assume a healthy and able-bodied individual in ways that were understood as highly exclusionary by our differently abled participants.

Laura (29, White British, major disability - NW10), who uses a scooter, was very concerned by how advertising didn't consider people "of all different backgrounds" and was "still fixated on

thinness and able-bodied" people. She also said that advertising was failing to represent any positive messages for those who are differently abled, both physically and also with mental health and/or learning disabilities. This was particularly important for Laura; whose son has autism. She'd like for him to see positive role models of people living with autism.

Cathy also wondered why there are no advertisements in wheelchair elevators and passageways:

"Disabled people? Don't care, don't matter, don't know, because we buy things like everyone else, we go to the theatre, well we try to, like everyone else. It's a nice prime spot actually...it's not as busy as the stairs, but people still use it" (54, White British, minor disability - W3)





7. Age diversity is not well-represented in London adverts

The survey showed that group that feels the best represented in London are 18-34 men, with 69% saying they felt 'very well' or 'fairly well' represented). Those that feel the least represented are women over the age of 55, with 55% of this group saying that they felt 'fairly badly' or 'very badly' represented.

The majority (54%) of surveyed participants also agreed that older people are not represented enough in London adverts, whilst less than one in four (26%) recall seeing London adverts with people that have wrinkles. The older participants interviewed also reported feeling 'invisible' and 'irrelevant'.

"I'd like [women featured in advertisements] to have a few grey hairs...Looking more realistic, because we don't all grow old gracefully or beautifully with perfect skin, do we?" (Cathy, 52, White British, minor disability - W3)

"Do we judge men by their faces? When men get grey that's debonair, that's sexy... You know, but if his wife decided to go grey? It's very sad isn't it...when you get to a certain age you become invisible." (Linda, 65, White British -SW15)





8. Advertisements need to include a range of sexual orientations (LGBT people)

Individuals from the gay and lesbian community felt unrepresented and excluded. The lack of representation of gender and sexual diversity or gender neutrality was also noted by several participants. Cathy discussed her concern for her gay daughter, who she noted worried about the lack of representation of 'gender fluid' content:

"I do worry all the time that she'll encounter prejudice or get a hard time for it. And there's nothing in [current advertisements] around that" (52, White British, minor disability - W3)

Julie said she would love to see more representations of the LGBT community in advertisements in London:

"I'd say that 99% [of adverts] are of people that are heterosexual. It's really, really rare to see two girls having an Indian takeaway or you know, just day to day things... it is always straight couples ...it would be really nice to see two girls just having a sandwich" (47, White British, lesbian - SE21)

When surveyed participants were asked specifically about their sexuality, just 35% of LGBT Londoners feel it is well represented.

9. Lack of body size diversity continues to be a concern

Women in this study feel more concerned over the lack of diversity in relation to their body size and shape in London adverts than men, with over half (51%) of the women surveyed feeling that their body shape is not represented in London adverts. Slim people were seen as the most over-represented in all London adverts (43%), whilst over half (52%) felt that plus-size people are not represented enough.

Many advertisements promote beauty products, clothes, gyms and slimming products with messages that pressurise women and girls around their bodies. This constant pressure was spoken about at length by most participants aged 14-65.

When looking at advertisements promoting protein supplements, Saffron, a 21-year-old dance student, noted her anger and felt this type of advertisements is dangerous for young women.

“It’s saying that everyone should be small, like that’s the ideal body...And I don’t think that’s right, I don’t think that’s positive, and that’s what causes people to be so self-obsessed and negative and lose their self-esteem” (Saffron, 21, Iranian-White British - KT1).

This was reflected by schoolgirls who also worried about pressures around cosmetic surgery:

“It’s realistic for women to be curvy... people have weight, like they are not just like all size zero and what are you saying to these young girls and boys... I’m too fat?” (School 2)

10. Photoshopping is regarded as unacceptable

Survey respondents were highly critical of photoshopping and the alteration of pictures, which was understood as an all too common practice. Just over a third (35%) of participants stated that photoshopping was acceptable, with more of the participants stating that it was unacceptable (42%). Over two thirds (69%) said that companies should state when they used photoshopped images.

Below, a schoolgirl expresses how photoshopping is harmful:

“In the ads, everyone is photoshopped, so everyone has really smooth skin...I think skin retouching is harmful to girls because they are going to think they’re ugly and abnormal.” (School 1)

“It’s saying that everyone should be small, like that’s the ideal body...And I don’t think that’s right, I don’t think that’s positive, and that’s what causes people to be so self-obsessed and negative and lose their self-esteem.”

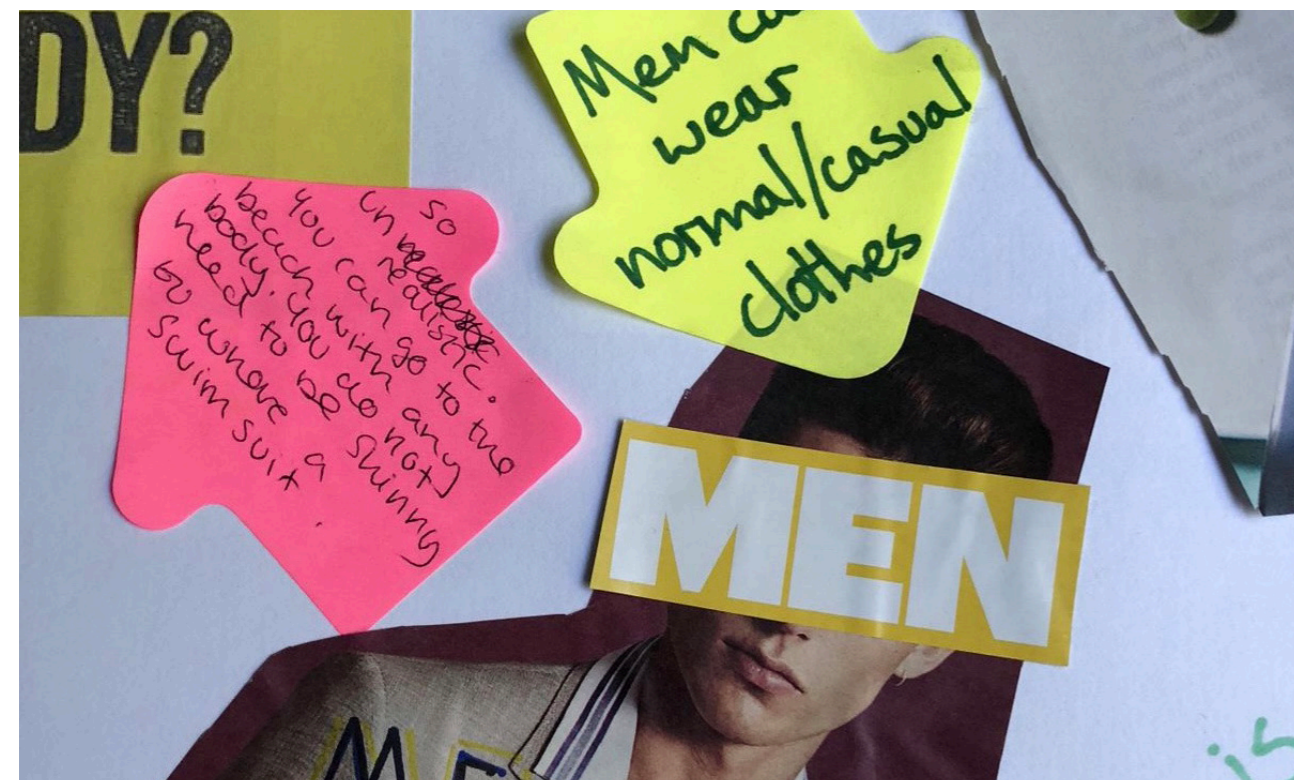
(Saffron, 21,
Iranian-White British - KT1)

11. The sexualisation of women and girls' bodies is inaccurate and unacceptable

Participants were highly critical of products that used women's bodies to sell an unrelated product or that used sexualised slogans and taglines. Two in three Londoners (68%) feel that women are often shown in revealing clothes when it's not relevant in London adverts. Below, Alexandra responds to an advert by a furniture company:

"Why is it women who look like they have either just had sex or want to have sex, and they are selling furniture, where are the men in this? What has she got to do with what you are trying to sell me?" (Alexandra, 35, White - NW3)

The sexualisation of women and indeed men was also the top answer given as to why respondents found advertisements inaccurate and unacceptable, with the most unacceptable adverts in London being women in revealing clothing (36%), followed by men in revealing clothes (34%).



"It's all the same type of women. It's very sexualised imagery ... They are just offensive... maybe the straplines are not as sexist as [previous ads] but I think the prevalence of the same type of model and the poses and clothing... that's been lost under the radar because it doesn't trigger a protest... we are so used to it." (Sally, 33, White British, new mum - N18)

For example, almost half of participants (45%) can remember seeing adverts of women in swimwear in London vs less than one in three (28%) for men in swimwear.

We followed a case in point of sexualisation of women's bodies through an advertising campaign that shows a clear difference in how men and women are represented (fig 3 and fig 4).

Fig. 3



The survey also showed that less than four in 10 (38%) of the respondents liked the female-focused advert above, whilst over half (55%) viewed it as sexualised. Over a fifth (22%) viewed it as sexist and 20% as unrealistic.

This opinion was felt by the students too, whose school was located very closely to this advertisement:

"it's very...revealing and if you see advertisements with men they are wearing more clothes... I get frustrated that they would do that. I think there's a lot of body image pressure, especially [on] young girls like us that we feel insecure about our bodies...it's been edited in places and it doesn't seem realistic for me to relate to her at all." (School 2)

Fig. 4



11.1. RACIALISED SEXUALISATION

Sexualised imagery of Black women was not seen as evidence of positive representation of diversity, but as something contributing to racist stereotypes about Black women. This included sexualising larger Black women, which was viewed as a new form of racialising stereotyping of Black female bodies. This made some Black women interviewed feel uncomfortable.

Naomi said about this advert below featuring a Black woman was 'stereotyping' (fig.5):



Fig. 5

"Right, you are stereotyping how all Black people... look, the large bust, the large buttocks," (Naomi, 36, Black British Gay - N17).

The women interviewed had similarly mixed responses to this type of advertising below (fig. 6). Some found it more inclusive:

"I like that the advert is more inclusive, showing different body types" (Cara, 31, Mixed Caribbean Black British - E17)

Other participants found it problematic or contradictory because it was not a realistic or attainable body, which was enforcing a new racialised "fake" ideal:



Fig. 6

"These bodies are slightly bigger than the norm, but this is the new ideal body... the Kardashian body... is what everyone is now trying to get, but is again unattainable for the average woman" (Alexandra, 35, White British - NW3)

"This is an artificial ideal body type. They have created this thing known as 'slim thick' where you've got a really tiny waist but at the same time you've got a big bum and big boobs...It's completely unrealistic without the money and surgery to produce that body." (School 2)

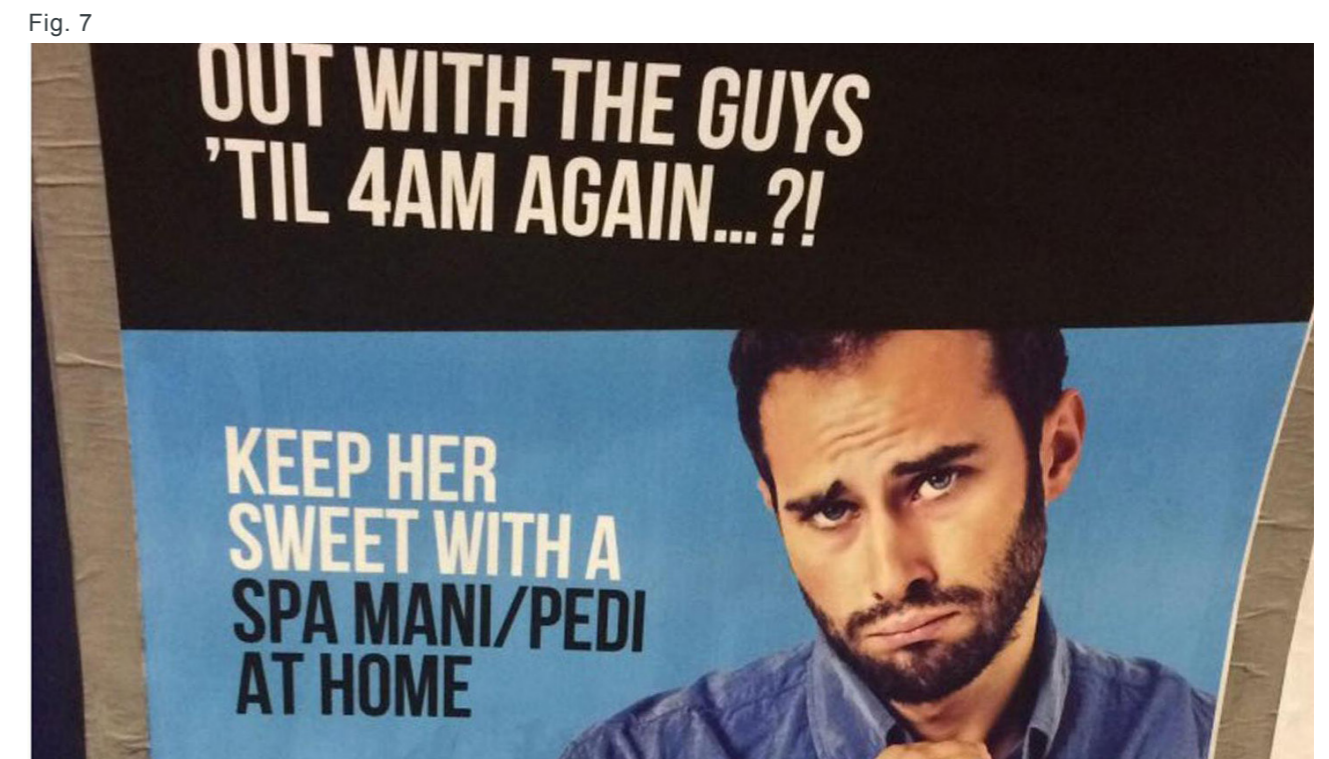


Fig. 7

11.2. SEXIST AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

Some content was viewed as outright sexist in how it constructed relationships between an assumed heterosexual man and woman. The below quote shows how participants responded to the advertisement for spa and beauty services (fig. 7).

"This is horrible and patronising. She can't even leave the house?" (Linda, 65, White British - SW15).

12. Recommendations

12.1. LONDONERS WANT ADVERTISEMENTS TO SHOWCASE DIVERSE, REPRESENTATIONS OF RACE, CULTURE, AGE, ABILITY AND RELIGION

Adverts described as the most empowering are the ones described as the most diverse too. The adverts rated the most diverse showed either BAME protagonist(s) or a non-slim body. A diverse representation tends to be associated with different ethnicities and a wider range of body shapes.

An important example of advertising transformation can be included in the following case. In this example, a brand which came under heavy critique for two previous advertisements - that were perceived to sexualise and objectify women - changed tack in the imagery and taglines used within their subsequent advertisement.

The latest advertisement signals a significant change in the brand's approach to advertising. It features men and women of diverse ethnicities working together positively. This was the best rated advertisement in the survey with two-thirds (66%) of respondents liking it.

Importantly, there was very little critique of this advert too. Just 4% found it sexualised, 3% problematic and 2% sexist.

Interview participants had the following to say:

“Everybody Works, I like that... Multicultural. You've got different shapes. I mean you've got a normal sized female... it's multicultural. He's not pumped up, she's not slim, they're not all naked, they are wearing normal sportswear gear, as opposed to over-sexualising.” (Naomi, 36, Black British, Gay - N17)

However, others did note there was still room for improvement as it only represented 'slim' body types:

“I think an improvement in advertising would be if they had different models, like that's OK, but also people of different sizes, because not everyone's body is like you.” (School 2)

The few advertisements that featured non-sexualised diverse women were noted as more empowering and had a positive reception across the qualitative and quantitative results.





Fig. 8

The second highest rated advertisement was the advert above (fig.8) which 49% liked and 35% found as representative of diversity.

Women also want advertisements to reflect greater age diversity, as reflected in the quote below. Julie noted that advertisements are focused on anti-age products for women but not men, regarding this as a gendered double standard:

“You don’t really see that many [older] women looking ‘cool’. It’s either ‘look at my wrinkles’ or putting face cream on. Why can’t we have more [clothing brands] showing older women, so that we have people we aspire to be?” (Julie, 47, White British, Lesbian – SE21)

12.2. LONDONERS WANT TO SEE DIVERSE BODY TYPES

Most participants wanted to see more realistic and diverse people:

“I’d like more diversity in terms of age and colour - there’s so many real people around that want to see adverts of real people as well (Cara, Mixed Caribbean Black British, 31 - E17)

“I’d like to see people of all different ages, sizes, you know” (Laura, 29, White, major disability - NW10)

Our interview encounters found numerous examples of advertisements that participants liked or felt was an improvement in representations of gender and diversity, with many participants describing a popular beauty campaign in positive terms – featured in the below collage created by the students.

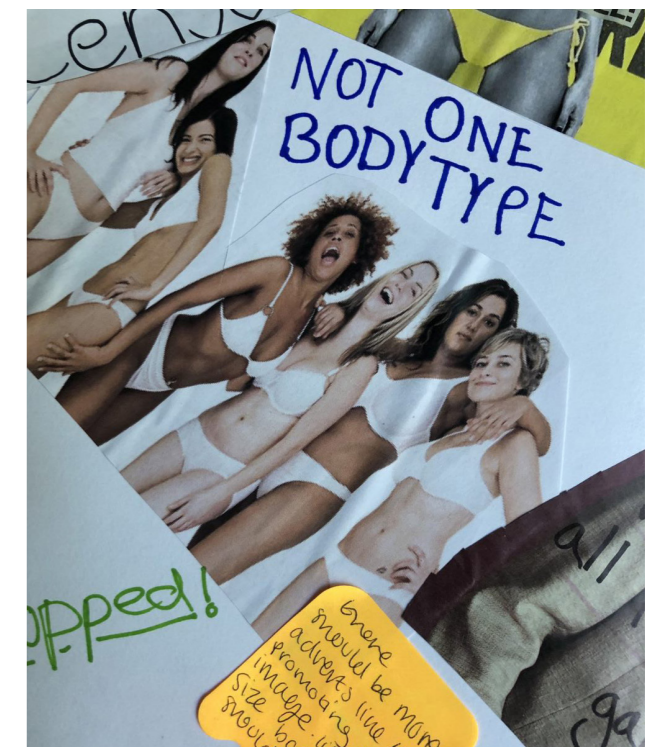
“Love it...they are having fun and they are with each other and their underwear isn’t sexy, so that makes a difference (Sally, 33, White - N18)

“That’s reality. Proper shapes on young women” (Claire, 56, minor disability - W14)

12.3. LONDONERS WANT ADVERTISERS TO STOP PHOTOSHOPPING IMAGES OR AT THE VERY LEAST STATE WHEN ADVERTS ARE ALTERED

“That’s just photoshopped, obviously... it’s just gross... I would flick past it, I wouldn’t look at it” (Sally, 33, White - N18)

“[it] saddens me that everybody feels that they’ve got to be this perfect figure all the time, and what is the perfect figure? (Linda, 65, White British - SW15).



12.4. LONDONERS WANT ADVERTISEMENTS BASED ON THE PRODUCT WITH REALISTIC, USEFUL AND INTERESTING INFORMATION

Londoners like to see advertisements based on the product and with useful and relevant information.

For example, a feminine hygiene company ran an advertisement that used to use a red liquid instead of a blue liquid on a feminine hygiene pad. Women and schoolgirls noted that this made them feel more comfortable about their bodies, as it lessened the stigma around menstruation.



12.5. WOMEN LIKE ADVERTISEMENTS THAT USE INCLUSIVE, POSITIVE HUMOUR

Humour was considered an important element but should be relatable to women and girls rather than sexist or insulting:

“I think humour is a good one to focus on. Humour, maybe something like a funny slogan, something that’s a bit catchy that could stick in your mind. Because I think there’s way that you can get your advert to be remembered by people rather than having like a hot girl in the advertisement. I think being able to relate to something is really, really important.” (Debbie, 24, Black British - WCX1)

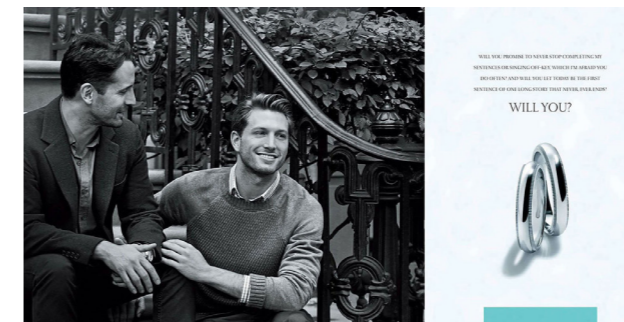
12.6. LONDONERS WANT MORE ADVERTS THAT PROMOTE GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY

Advertisements that promoted gender and sexual diversity were praised by many of our participants. Below are some examples, although it should be noted that these are not currently running in London’s public spaces.



“A good advert I saw which was for [high street fashion brand] which popped up before like a YouTube video, which was... actually quite cool, this is about non-gender clothing, it had lots of adverts of men and women and non-binary people, it was for everyone.” (School 2).

“My youngest daughter is gay, and I know she would fall for that ad.” (Cathy, 54, White, minor disability - W3)



“This year [jewellery brand], brought out a same sex engagement advert which was cool” (School 2)

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