An Exploration of 'Love Your Body' Advertising and how this is Perceived by Women.

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ABSTRACT

Empirical and feminist literature suggest that LYB advertising may not be straightforwardly helpful for women. Empirical literature elicited an understanding of women's responses and feminist literature has analysed the adverts themselves, however no research to date has conducted an analysis of both to understand how they relate. This research explored women's perceptions of two LYB advertising campaigns in the UK ; Boot's 'Let's Feel Good About Summer' and Dove's '#ArmsUp' and also conducted an analysis of these adverts themselves. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 women from a UK University and a Thematic Analysis was used to analyse both sets of data. Participants expressed overall ambivalence in response to two LYB advertising campaigns. Positive responses from participants included; the adverts setting a positive social norm for women, that the adverts portrayed diversity and the focus on the body was felt to elicit positive body image. Participants also discussed a number of more negative responses including; LYB adverts setting a problematic social norm for women, excluding marginalised bodies, maintaining a preoccupation with the body, and an awareness of the adverts' links to capitalism and their promotion of neoliberal ideology. Ambivalent responses were in part explained by the contradictory messages present in the advertisements which simultaneously represented a shift from traditional advertising whilst visual and verbal aspects remained reminiscent of traditional advertising. LYB advertising may contribute to unhelpful understandings of the body; as body dissatisfaction is a significant public health concern this is an important issue to address. Implications, recommendations and ideas for future research are discussed.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

Since 2004, in response to feminist critiques of the narrow representation of women in the media, there has been a shift in advertising to contain discourses of 'Love Your Body' (LYB). Although this shift may appear beneficial for women due to providing an apparent interruption to the negative judgment and monitoring of women's bodies which has become normalised in 'typical' advertisements (Gill & Elias, 2014), the limited research on the topic suggests that they may not be straightforwardly beneficial for women. This thesis aims to explore how women perceive the messages in two LYB advertising campaigns in the UK and explore the advertisements themselves.

This chapter begins with an overview of the relevant literature. An exploration of how advertising influences women's understandings of their bodies is presented, including; sociocultural theories of body image, the nature of consumer culture and the advertising industry and feminist theories. Subsequently, a literature review will be conducted which summarises the published research regarding LYB advertising. This will include a narrative literature review of non-empirical feminist literature on LYB advertising campaigns followed by a systematic literature review on empirical studies on LYB advertising. A critical review of the literature is provided and a rationale is provided for the present study's research aims and questions. The relevance of the research to the field of clinical psychology will be discussed.

1.2 Body Image as a Public Health Concern

Body image is a multidimensional construct reflecting how individuals think, feel, see and act toward their bodies (Thompson et al., 1999). Although often overlooked as one*,* body dissatisfaction is a significant public health concern, related to a number of negative physical and psychological health outcomes (Bucchianeri & Neumark-Sztainer, 2014). Negative psychological health outcomes include; low self-esteem (Paxton et al., 2006), depression (Paxton et al., 2006; Rierdan & Koff, 1991,1997; Sharpe et al., 2018; Stice & Bearman, 2001), self harm (Bornioli et al., 2019) and suicidality (Crow et al., 2008), with depression being a significant cost burden to society (Kessler, 2012). Body dissatisfaction is a risk factor for the onset of eating disorders and disordered eating (Bornioli et al., 2019; Stice, 2002; Stice & Desjardins, 2018) and eating disorders pose significant risks to physical and psychological health (Klump et al., 2009). The societal costs of eating disorders are profound (Simon et al., 2005). Poor body image is also a risk factor for poor physical health. Body dissatisfaction predicts increased levels of extreme and unhealthy weight control behaviours such as laxative use and self-induced vomiting (Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2006b) and body dissatisfaction is linked with decreased engagement in physical activity (e.g. Kavussanu & McAuley, 1995; Neumark-Sztaineret et al., 2004, 2006a). Other harmful behaviours are associated with poor body image, such as increased smoking, alcohol and drug-use (Bornioli et al., 2019; Kanayama et al., 2006).

1.2.1 Prevalence of Body Image

The UK Women and Equalities committee survey (Women & Equalities Committee, 2020a) found that 61 percent of adults felt negatively about their bodies and one third of UK adults reported feeling depressed or anxious as a result of body image concerns (Mental Health Foundation, 2019).

Although body image difficulties can be experienced by anybody, research demonstrates that specific groups are affected disproportionately, thus as well as

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a public health concern, body image is also described as an issue of equality and discrimination (Women & Equalities Committee, 2020b). Appearance related anxiety disproportionately affects certain groups and the dominant beauty norm itself is highly discriminatory, setting out a narrow range of bodies deemed as acceptable (Women & Equalities Committee, 2020b). Although body image concerns are rapidly rising in men (Jankowski et al., 2018), women and girls are disproportionately affected (Bucchianeri et al., 2013; Lacroix et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019). Scholars have suggested that negative body image and appearance anxiety are now normative experiences among women and girls (Rodin et al., 1984).

Other groups are also disproportionately affected by body image concerns including; adolescents (Lacroix et al., 2020) and sexual minority groups (which is thought to be result of minority stress and specific group appearance ideals (Austin et al., 2013; Calzo et al., 2017; Goldhammer et al., 2019; McClain & Peebles, 2016)). Transgender individuals are also disproportionately affected (Goldhammer et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2016; McClain & Peebles, 2016; Tabaac, et al., 2018), which is speculated to be a result of minority stress, gender dysphoria and pressure to adhere to gendered appearance ideals (Gordon et al., 2016). There are conflicting findings about whether certain ethnic groups are at higher risk of developing body dissatisfaction (e.g. Cheng, et al., 2019; Ricciardelli et al., 2007; Schaefer et al., 2018). Evidence suggests that some ethnic groups may experience added pressure related to their appearance due to the dominant beauty norm itself being highly racialised, commonly privileging skin tones that are neither too light or dark and stereotypically westernised facial features and hair texture (Women & Equalities Committee, 2020b) which can result in dissatisfaction with facial features, skin colour and hair (Awad et al., 2015; Craddock, 2016). The limited research investigating body dissatisfaction among individuals with disabilities suggest that physical disabilities can be understood as negative or linked with discrimination and stigma (Kowalski & Peipert, 2019), resulting in body dissatisfaction amongst these individuals (Shpigelman & HaGani, 2019). Weight stigma can be defined as the discriminatory acts and ideologies directed towards individuals due to their weight and size and is a consequence of weight bias which refers to negative weight-

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related attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and judgments toward those of higher weight (Washington, 2011). Individuals of higher weight are more likely to experience body dissatisfaction than those of lower weight (Algars et al., 2009; Harriger & Thompson, 2012; Hilbert et al., 2012) and weight stigma is a risk factor for body dissatisfaction (Diedrichs & Puhl, 2016).

1.2.2 Intersectionality and Body Image

Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991) is a term used to describe how aspects of a person's identities intersect to create different forms of disadvantage and privilege. Evidence is limited on intersectionality and the body. The research that has been conducted found that colourism (which refers to discrimination based on skin colour) disproportionately affects women than men, with women experiencing heightened pressure to have lighter skin than men (Jha, 2015). Women are disproportionately affected by weight stigma compared to men (Diedrichs & Puhl, 2016); and women have been shown to be at increased likelihood of being subjected to weight stigma at a lower weight in comparison to men (Puhl et al 2008). In order to conceptualise the high prevalence of body dissatisfaction, sociocultural theories will be explored, specifically the impact of the mass media and advertising.

1.3 Sociocultural Theories of Body Image

Sociocultural theory is a key framework within which body image difficulties have been conceptualised and it is widely acknowledged amongst scholars that it provides the most strongly supported theoretical account for the high prevalence of body image difficulties amongst women (e.g. Hesse-Biber et al., 2006; Thompson et al., 1999). Sociocultural theory posits that social agents including the mass media, family unit (Pike, 1991) and the peer group (Paxton et al., 1999) communicate strong messages regarding society's expectations of beauty. Specifically, the mass media is positioned as a key contributor to the development of body image difficulties (Anderson & DiDomenico, 1992; Levine

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& Smolak, 1996; Thompson et al., 1999; Tiggemann, 2003) through processes such as social comparison (Festinger, 1954).

<u>1.3.1 Social Comparison Theory</u>

Festinger (1954)'s Social Comparison Theory (SCT) is another theory which explains the impact of the thin-ideal portrayed in the media on body dissatisfaction in women. SCT posits that individuals evaluate their appearance by comparing themselves to those similar. Upward comparisons occur when a person compares themselves to someone who is perceived as more desirable on an important dimension (Collins, 1996). Models and celebrities portrayed in the media are often viewed as role models for beauty thus providing a focus for upward appearance comparisons. As their appearance is not representative or achievable for the majority of women (Spitzer et al., 1999), when women compare their own appearance with images in the media they frequently feel dissatisfied with their body when they realise they cannot achieve the thin-idealised body type (Frederick et al., 2017; Tiggeman & Pickering, 1996). Social comparison to superior others is associated with other negative consequences including; damage to self perception (Wood, 1989), feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt (Hogg et al., 1999) and negative appearance management behaviours (Rudd & Lennon, 2000). A specific form of media which greatly influences how women come to understand themselves and their bodies in a problematic way is the advertising industry which will be outlined below.

 1.4 Consumerism and the Advertising Industry

Consumer culture has come to be a significant phenomenon of everyday life in modern Western societies (Lury, 1996; Mackay, 1997; Miles, 1998) and the advertising industry is a major marketing institution committed to the unceasing encouragement of consumption. It is estimated that between 2018 and 2022, spending on global advertising will reach near to 790 billion US dollars (Statista, 2020). Advertising is ubiquitous in our society and is both powerful and unavoidable (Dyer, 2008). It is unknown for certain how many advertisements a

typical citizen views, however it is estimated that in the UK, the average number of television advertisements viewed daily per person in 2018, was 41 (Statista, 2020).

1.4.1 Advertising and Consumer Discontent

Consumer culture requires advertising in order to manipulate consumer spending which it does by creating desire (Packard, 1957). Desires are generated by creating ideals to which consumers unfavourably compare themselves, creating discontent in humans in order to encourage the buying of products (Richins, 1995; Veblen, 1899). Richins (1995) draws on social comparison theory and claims that surrounding consumers with idealised images in advertising, results in consumers comparing, often unconsciously, their own lives with those portrayed. Repeatedly being exposed to idealised images increases consumers' expectations and aspirations and influences their views of how their lives should be, often resulting in discontent. Advertising attempts to remedy discontent by associating the purchase of consumer goods with the consumer becoming more like the idealised image. Through portrayals of 'ideal femininity' in advertising, this has a powerful impact on how women understand themselves and their bodies.

1.4.2 Advertising and Gender Stereotypes

Schroeder and Zwick (2004 p.24) state that "advertising discourse both reflects and creates social norms". Cultivation theory demonstrates that the media shapes an individual's perception of social reality (Gerbner, 1998). Individuals tend to include stereotypes portrayed in the media into their own perceptions of reality; shaping the individual's beliefs, values, attitudes (Gerbner, 1998) and behaviours (Döring & Pöschl, 2006).

Feminist thinkers view gender identity as socially constructed. Butler's (1990) theory of gender performance argues that gender is constructed socially through the repetition of regularised and restricted norms in performativity. A large body of work has demonstrated that representations in the media and advertising produce and communicate individual and cultural perceptions of gender identity,

'femininity', and cultural standards of beauty (Schroeder & Borgerson, 2015; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004; Thompson & Hirschman, 1995). They inform women of what 'ideal femininity' looks like through the display of stereotyped images (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). Stereotypes are beliefs about a social group (Vinacke, 1957) and become problematic when they result in expectations or restrict opportunities for one social group versus another. Advertisements heavily rely on stereotypes regarding the appearance of the body and how it should be performed (Gill, 2007) and thus significantly contribute to public understandings of the body (Gill, 2007). The woman's body is portrayed in a number of problematic ways.

1.4.3 The Portrayal of Women's Bodies in Advertising

Advertisements use stereotypes that privilege able-bodied, white males as shown in analyses of disability (Nemeth, 2000), race (Taylor et al., 2005) and gender (Goffman, 1979; Kilbourne, 1994). On gender specifically, in an influential study, Goffman (1979) conducted an analysis of gender in magazine advertising. He found that advertising belittles women via five displays, where women are depicted as subordinate and submissive to men. Kilbourne (1994), a feminist activist and media scholar, conducted observational analyses of advertisements in a series of films (Cambridge Documentary Films, 1979, 1987; Media Education Foundation, 2000, 2010). Similar to Goffman (1979), Kilbourne argues that although advertising portrays everyone inaccurately, women are portrayed in more destructive ways than men. She asserts that advertisers represent female models as flawless and highly airbrushed, advertisers commonly objectify women, women are portrayed as more passive than men, are portrayed in physically defensive positions and are often in insubordinate roles to men. More recent research systematically investigated how men and women are portrayed in advertisements. In support of Kilbourne's findings they found that women were shown to be more passive, flawless and dismembered (portraying only certain body parts, such as breasts or legs) compared to men (Conley & Ramsey, 2011).

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The advertising industry has been associated with establishing and reinforcing beauty standards for women of a slim female body, frequently referred to as the 'thin -ideal' (Grabe et al., 2008; Harrison, 2000). The 'thin-ideal' is a prevalent and problematic construct in the media. Content analyses show that advertising on television, in print, and online is replete with young, tall, and extremely thin women who meet the current beauty ideal (Slater et al., 2012). Frequent exposure to the thin-ideal leads to thinness being accepted and internalised by most women as beautiful and desirable (Thompson et al., 1999). In response to the problematic way that advertising portrays women, this has been critiqued by feminist scholars.

1.5 Feminist Critiques of Media Representation of Women

From the 1970s onwards or what is referred to as the 'second wave' of feminism, feminist scholarship and activism critiqued advertising due to it's role in setting unrealistic beauty standards that are oppressive for women, inhibit women's personal power and self-acceptance as well as promoting a destructive relationship with the body (Johnston & Taylor, 2008).

Naomi Wolf in her seminal book, "The Beauty Myth" (Wolf, 1991) referred to the rigid and nearly unattainable beauty standards and the idea that beauty is universal and objective as 'The Beauty Myth'. She argued that these standards for women are used as a political weapon and backlash against women's advancement, maintaining their subordination to men. At a time of revival of the women's movement and women's liberation, Wolf (1991) argued that institutional power structures looked to the body as a way to control women which she asserted was a form of 'gender violence' (Wolf 1991). Susie Orbach (1978) argued that it is gender inequality in Western culture that makes women 'fat'; that for many women, compulsive eating and becoming 'fat' have become a means to avoid being marketed or being viewed as an ideal woman.

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1.5.1 Objectification Theory

Another key idea developed by feminist theories of body image concerns is Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) which holds that women's lived experiences are affected greatly by the way the body is portrayed in society. Visual images in the media of women frequently separate a woman's body or body parts, from the individual they represent. Objectified bodies are portrayed as existing solely for the consumption, pleasure and evaluation of others. Agency is then shifted from the subject to the viewer (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). As a consequence of living in a society that primarily values bodies for their appearance and sexual qualities, this can result in individuals internalising this objectified perspective, in a process known as self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Those who self-objectify view their own body from a third-person perspective and adopt a fixation with their appearance. These individuals tend to understand their bodies as an object to be evaluated and critiqued based on appearance as opposed to conceiving of the body as a subject with agency. The literature has demonstrated a link between media exposure and self-objectification, including experimental studies (Harper & Tiggeman, 2008), longitudinal studies (Aubrey, 2006; Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2016) and a meta-analysis (Karsay et al., 2018).

Self-objectification has been found to a be a harmful process. Higher levels of self-objectification have been related to negative psychological outcomes including depression and reduced self-esteem (Thompson et al., 1995), disordered eating (Harrison, 2000 ; Tylka & Hill 2004; Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2016) and reduced physical self-esteem (Harrison & Hefner, 2014). Self- objectification is also linked to restricting opportunities for women as women who evaluate themselves on their image primarily, have been found to view themselves as less competent than individuals who evaluate themselves in other ways (Gapinski et al., 2003).

1.5.1 Negative Outcomes of the Media

Empirical psychological researchers and feminist scholars agree that beauty ideals in the media and advertising are deeply problematic due to their powerful impact on the way women come to understand their bodies. A substantial body of empirical psychology research documents that exposure to the portrayal of women in the media, specifically the thin-ideal, is associated with negative body image outcomes. Women's and girl's own reports provide evidence for the link between media and negative body image and eating difficulties (Grau & Zotos, 2016; Tiggemann et al., 2000; Wertheim et al.,1997). Correlational studies demonstrate a consistent positive relationship between exposure to consumption of appearance-focused media and poor body image (Harrison, 2001; Stice et al., 1994; Tiggemann & Pickering,1996). Longitudinal studies demonstrate that exposure to body focused media results in negative body image among vulnerable women and girls (Stice et al., 2001). Meta-analyses conducted to date confirm that thin-ideal media exposure is related to several negative body image outcomes among women including increased body dissatisfaction, increased eating disorder symptomology and increased thin-ideal internalisation (Grabe, et al., 2008; Groesz et al., 2002; Want, 2009).

Feminist authors also point to the damaging consequences of the media's portrayal of women. Orbach (1993) argues that women, as a consequence of their exposure to women's bodies being objectified in society, where women's bodies are presented as the "ultimate commodity", are led to continually work on improving their bodies. The woman's body becomes an object that can be acquired and refined in order to achieve successful femininity. Kilbourne (2000) argued that narrow representations of women in advertising can be blamed for many gender specific issues such as; body hatred, eating disorders and low self-esteem. In response to the damaging thin-ideal, researchers have experimentally investigated the impact of different sized models on women.

1.5.2 Average Sized Women and Body Image

A series of four UK studies (Dittmar & Howard, 2004a; Dittmar & Howard, 2004b; Halliwell & Dittmar, 2004; Halliwell et al., 2005) and a non-UK study (Deidrich &

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Lee, 2011) investigated the impact of an experimental stimulus designed to simulate print advertisements which displayed average-sized, attractive female models on women's body image. Participants were allocated to one of three conditions: exposure to thin models, exposure to average-sized models, or the control image where no model was present. The authors used the same model in each condition but they digitally stretched the bodies of the thin models to make them appear average size. All studies found that for the majority of women in the sample, exposure to attractive average-sized female models was associated with significantly lower body-focused anxiety amongst women compared to those exposed to adverts portraying thin models. Furthermore, in some studies (Dittmar & Howard, 2004a, 2004b; Halliwell et al., 2005, Deidrichs & Lee, 2011) a 'relief effect' was observed whereby participants reported feeling more positive about their bodies after they had been exposed to average-sized models compared to viewing no models. However, for a minority of women, exposure to average-sized models was not found to alleviate body-related distress (Dittmar & Howard, 2004a) and for a minority, resulted in increased body focused anxiety rather anxiety relief (Dittmar & Howard, 2004b). Therefore, the utilisation of average-sized models as opposed to thin models was not straightforwardly beneficial to all women. Although the use of the same model in each condition allowed the researchers to control for factors such as facial attractiveness, the results do not show the effects of real world advertisements on women. Furthermore these studies were all experimental, every day exposure to real life magazines or television advertisements may produce different results. These studies empirically investigated the visual images of women in an experimental condition, however around this time, a shift in real life advertising began to increase in popularity which incorporated other key elements other than an increase in size of women models which will be explored below.

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1.6 'Love Your Body' Advertising as an Emerging Trend in Response to Social Change

In response to feminist critiques and consumers' discontent with the harmful and unrealistic beauty standards portrayed in the media and advertising (Deighton 2008; Gill & Elias, 2014) (also known as the 'body positive movement'), in 2004, adverts began to adopt a 'Love your body' (LYB) message (Gill & Elias, 2014). Adverts of this kind have been termed 'body positive' advertising or LYB advertising. The term 'LYB' was used by feminist scholars Gill and Elias (2014) and Gill and Kanai (2019) and their definition will be drawn upon in the current research. They define LYB advertising as being targeted exclusively at women and girls. They are positive, affirmative and ostensibly feminist-inflected media messages. They emphasise confidence and self-esteem and produce positive affect. They focus not on what's wrong with a woman's body or how it can be improved but "exhort us to believe we are beautiful, to 'remember' that we are 'incredible' and that tell us that we have 'the power' to 'redefine' the 'rules of beauty'." (Gill & Elias, 2014, p.1). They are also notable for their display of 'diversity' (Gill & Kanai, 2019). Another defining feature of LYB adverts is their use of 'real' women. In order to represent 'real' women, advertisers use average-size and plus-size models who appear confident, happy, and comfortable with their bodies or images of women that have not been digitally altered to remove 'flaws' such as stretch marks or cellulite.

1.6.1 Examples of LYB Advertising Campaigns

Personal care brand, Dove were the first brand to carry messages of LYB in their 'Campaign for Real Beauty' (CFRB) advertising campaign which first appeared in the United Kingdom in 2004. Initially it consisted of a series of advertisements called "Real Women Have Curves" which promoted Dove's skin firming cream. The campaign was on billboards, televisions, and magazines globally and was considered bold and ground-breaking at the time (Neff, 2014). The advert featured women of varying body-shapes, ethnicities and ages wearing plain-white

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underwear as they posed in "natural" positions (Hoggard, 2005; Vega, 2013). Each advertisement concentrated on one physical attribute traditionally deemed as "flaws", including freckles, stretch-marks, or women who might be considered "fat" (Johnson & Taylor, 2008). Dove claimed that these images were free from digital retouching. Dove's other well-known LYB advert is the 'Real Beauty Sketches' advertising campaign from 2013 (Gray, 2013). In the advert, an artist sketched women in the way other people described them (conventionally beautiful) as well as in the ways they described themselves (less beautiful). The tagline at the end of the video read; "You're more beautiful than you think." A well-known American brand to adopt this form of advertising was Aerie, a lingerie company which released a new advertising campaign entitled 'Aerie Real' in 2014 in which the brand promised to use "real girls", rather than supermodels and to cease digitally retouching images of models in their campaigns.

LYB advertising campaigns have since become widespread in the advertising industry due to their financial and commercial success for brands (Neff, 2014) and as a result of a rise in social media (Messaris, 2012) as promotional messages can be circulated by consumers. Short video adverts such as the Dove 'Beauty Sketches' was the most widely shared video at the time (Stampler, 2013). Since 2004, several other companies have followed suit and used feminist messages to attract female consumers and its popularity continues to increase year after year (Bahadur, 2014a; Bahadur, 2014b). This new and growing trend of feminist advertising is referred to as 'Femvertising' which refers to "advertising that employs pro-female talent, messages, and imagery to empower women and girls" (SheKnows Living Editors, 2014). LYB advertising can be seen as one example of 'Femvertising'.

1.7 Narrative Review of Feminist Literature

Here, feminist research on scholarship on LYB advertising campaigns will be reviewed. The studies included analysis of the adverts but did not include empirical studies of human participants' responses to the adverts which will be considered in the systematic literature review later in the chapter.

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1.7.1 LYB Advertising and Neoliberalism

Gill and Elias (2014) critiqued LYB advertising for promoting neoliberal ideology. Neoliberalism can be described as a macro-political and economic rationality characterised by; privatisation, deregulation and withdrawal of the state from social and welfare provision and emphasising the value of 'free market' competition. Neoliberal ideology redefines citizens as consumers and individuals are viewed as rational economic maximisers (Hahnel, 2003; Steger & Roy, 2010). The notion of free choice is promoted in neoliberal ideology (Gill, 2007) and is usually expressed via consumptive practices (Leve et al., 2012).

Understandings of neoliberalism are extended from a focus on economic and political power to neoliberalism operating as an 'every day sensibility' (Gill & Kanai, 2019) which produces a particular kind of subjectivity, or ways of being in the world and thinking about ourselves. Underpinned by notions of choice, entrepreneurialism, competition and meritocracy, it calls into being subjects who are; "self-managing, autonomous, and enterprising" (Gill & Scharff, 2011, p. 5) and subjects who are self-optimising, who will work hard, remain positive, be self-confident (Turken et al., 2016) and take full responsibility for their own success or failure (Ringrose & Walkerdine, 2008). It also calls into being subjects who will understand their lives through discourses of freedom, responsibility and choice regardless of how limited they may be by structural inequalities. Gill and Kanai (2019) discuss LYB advertising to be a form of mediated neoliberalism which calls on individuals to transform their 'inner' lives, referred to as the "psychic life" and "affective life" of neoliberalism (Gill, 2017; Scharff, 2016;), calling into being, subjects who will make sense of themselves and the world in the ways mentioned above.

1.7.2 The Regulation of Women

Gill & Elias (2014) argue that LYB discourses do not serve to liberate women from beauty standards, but instead are involved in a deeper and more insidious regulation of women that has simply moved from bodily to 'psychic regulation'. They assert that women are now tasked with not just working on and disciplining their bodies but now they must also work on their subjectivity too. Women are pressured to embrace an affirmative confident disposition, irrespective of how they truly feel.

1.7.3 Simplistic and Individualistic Solutions to Women's Body Distress

Neoliberal discourses of individualism and personal responsibility are said to materialise through LYB advertising (Gill & Elias, 2014). Scholars state that a simple and individual solution of 'loving one's body' and 'choosing' to feel better is provided to remedy women's body difficulties (Lynch, 2011). LYB discourses have been critiqued for positioning the blame and responsibility on women, with the implication that women bring this on themselves' and therefore have the power to simply stop this behaviour (Gill & Elias, 2014), with a lack of acknowledgement of the structural factors that contribute to the difficulty of women loving their bodies, such as sexual politics and social media pressures (Johnston & Taylor, 2008).

1.7.4 Reinforcing The Same Message They Claim To Oppose

LYB advertising campaigns have been critiqued for reinforcing the same message that they claim to oppose. In their analysis of the Dove CFRB, Johnston and Taylor (2008) highlight that the campaign advocates for freedom from beauty ideals, self-acceptance and a disapproval of disciplining the body, whilst messages in the advertisements simultaneously reproduce the same beauty standards that they claim to oppose, through the message that self- acceptance can be gained through the purchase of their brand's products. They note that what is absent is a critique of; the encouragement of women practicing self-care and channelling dissent via consumerism and of beauty being integral to a

woman's personhood (Johnston & Taylor, 2008) or the association of successful femininity with image (Elphick, 2010).

Gill and Elias (2014) note the disconnection between the visual and verbal messages in LYB advertisements; with the verbal text rejecting beauty pressures but the visual being in line with these. Similarly, in Heiss's (2011) analysis of Dove's CFRB, she argued that such campaigns represent an ideology of 'naïve integration' (Kreps, 2000), that although the campaign embraced acceptance of diverse physical bodies, simultaneously the textual and visual messages exhibited numerous conventional beauty norms and practices.

The advertising campaigns have been critiqued for perpetuating the objectification of women. Heiss (2011) critiqued Dove's CFRB for separating women's bodies into parts to be examined. In the advert, placed beside the women portrayed in the advert, were questions about an aspect of the model's body. Similarly, Luck (2016) highlighted objectification in her analysis of the 'Swimsuits for All' advertising campaign which used plus-size women. She critiqued the display of the exposed and 'flawed' female body as a sign of body positivity in the adverts. She asserts that the presence of the male gaze sexualises and objectifies the plus-size model, reaffirming femininity as a sex object which has minimally extended to allow for bigger bodies.

The advertising campaigns have been criticised for adopting the same 'fakeness' that they claim to reject (Gill & Elias, 2014), for example, recruiting models when they claim to use 'real' people or using make-up, filters or digital- retouching while claiming to be completely natural (Murray, 2012). The message implicit in this is that real bodies, or plus size bodies without the use of such technologies are deficient and must be enhanced (Allyn, 2005) and are not lovable enough in their natural state (Gill & Elias, 2014).

Critics argue that LYB advertising relies upon the normalised cultural pathologising of a woman's body (McRobbie, 2009). Such adverts as the Special K cereal advertisement analysed by Gill and Elias (2014) were critiqued for 're-citing' (Butler, 1997) the same hateful discourse of the female body which they

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claim to oppose; repeatedly focusing on hostile comments about women's bodies by referencing cellulite or 'fat thighs' whilst stating that we should "shut down fat talk". Scholars claim that they rely upon reinforcing and repeatedly making visible the notion that the woman's' body is inherently difficult to love (Lynch, 2011; Murphy, 2013). With many companies at the forefront of using LYB advertising being the same ones who have been invested in women hating their bodies or wanting to change them, scholars state that this raises concern (Murphy & Jackson, 2011; Johnson & Taylor, 2011).

1.7.5 'Diversity'

Advertisements have been critiqued for reinforcing normative bodies and the diversity being 'fake' (Gill & Elias, 2014). Scholars argue that although Dove's CFRB sought to challenge oppressive beauty ideals by depicting "real" women, the bodies depicted only vary slightly from typical advertising norms and would still be accepted according to conventional beauty standards (Gill & Elias, 2014; Johnson & Taylor, 2008) which has been described as a 'diversity paradox' (Rodrigues, 2012).

Dove's CFRB's depictions of beauty in their body love messages have been critiqued for excluding bodies that significantly deviate from cultural standards, including bodies with visible disabilities (Heiss, 2011). This exclusion she argues, serves to validate and reinforce dominant preferences for the able body and contributes to societal attitudes that marginalise bodies that do not lie within cultural standards (Heiss, 2011).

Scholars discuss that diversity is incorporated into campaigns such as Dove's CFRB (Johnson & Taylor, 2008) through images of women of various races, however the structural inequalities that these groups experience, such as the disparate, racialised effects of appearance norms are ignored. Similarly, in their analysis of a recent LYB advertising campaign by, 'L'Oreal', Gill and Kanai (2019) discussed a new shift in advertising with adverts displaying "differences" of; religion, race, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, and gender. However, in this display, each person is positioned as primarily having one difference such as

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being black, 'plus size' or having a disability. Inequality is portrayed as one individual difference from the norm and is presented implicitly as a challenge that can be overcome individually through self-belief. They contend that images of minority groups are deployed in advertisements in order to "take diversity into account" but differences are not acknowledged in a context of power relations; described as a 'hollowing out of diversity' (Gill & Kanai, 2019).

1.7.6 Post-Feminism

LYB advertising have been critiqued for employing post-feminist discourse (Gill & Elias, 2014). Post-feminism can be understood as 'sensibility' (Gill, 2007; McRobbie, 2004) that is exemplified in recent media and advertisements (Gill, 2007) where feminism is simultaneously incorporated but the idea of requiring gender activism is rendered 'past' and redundant (Press, 2011), neutralising feminism's political force. Exemplifying post-feminist discourse, in LYB advertising women are shown to be powerful through consumption, the choice to purchase their products is framed as empowerment, while neglecting to acknowledge the greater structural inequalities at play (Luck, 2014; McCleary, 2014).

Feminist critics argue that companies which participate in promoting positive feminist messages about women's bodies are appropriating and depoliticising messages regarding feminism, emptying them of their attention to gender inequalities and oppression and capitalising off this trend of LYB (Gill & Elias, 2014; Johnston & Taylor; 2008; Luck, 2016). Dove's approach has been termed 'feminist consumerism' (Johnson & Taylor, 2008), also known as 'commodity feminism' (Goldman, 1992) as it urges women to practice self-care and channel opposition through the engagement with commercial marketing campaigns and the purchasing of beauty rather than engaging in social change; feminist anger is taken and offered back in a depoliticised and consumer capitalist friendly way (Gill & Kanai, 2019).

Although feminist research provides an in depth analysis of the campaigns, as the research is not conducted on human participants, it does not provide insight

into women's responses to the campaigns. What is also not known is the extent to which ordinary women's experiences of these adverts accord with feminist critiques.

1.8 Systematic Literature Review Of Women's Responses to LYB Advertising

A systematic literature review was conducted on empirical studies examining women's responses to LYB advertisements.

1.8.1 Search Strategy

The inclusion criteria for the review included: adverts that carried a message of LYB as discussed in section 1.6, studies involving real life advertising campaigns (i.e. not experimental stimuli), published, peer reviewed articles (i.e. not including unpublished theses), in the English language. Two databases were searched, namely EBSCO; Psychinfo and Academic Search Complete. The following search terms were used; (DE "Advertising") AND ("empowerment" OR "average-size" OR "Aerie" OR "real women" OR "plus size" OR "Dove" OR "body positiv*"). 'Love your body' was used as a search criterion but produced no additional articles. Eleven articles were considered relevant and a description of the literature is displayed in Appendix 1 . See Figure 1 which outlines the process of identifying relevant literature.

Figure 1

Process of Identifying Relevant Literature

```
┌─────────────────────┐
│   Total studies     │
│      N=59           │
└─────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│ Filtered by 'scholarly peer │
│ reviewed'. 47 studies       │
│ identified.                 │
│ n= 47                       │
└─────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
┌─────────────────────┐
│ Filtered by 'empirical      │
│ studies', 38 studies        │
│ identified.                 │
└─────────────────────┘
           │
           ▼
```

38 articles searched via viewing title or abstract. Six relevant articles were identified.
 n= 6.
  1. Couture Bue & Harrison (2019)
  2. Beale et al. (2016)
  3. Millard (2009)
  4. Selensky and Carels (2021)
  5. Convertino et al. (2019)
  6. Plummer and Forestell (2019)

Bidirectional citation searching (checking references and citations). Five additional articles were identified.

N=5

7. Taylor et al. (2016)
8. Rodgers et al. (2019)
9. Kraus and Myrick (2018)
10. Scott and Cloud (2008)
11. Anschutz et al. (2009)

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Eleven relevant studies identified
Total n=11

From the eleven studies generated on women's responses to LYB advertising, a distinction will be made between the quantitative and qualitative studies.

1.8.2.1 Quantitative studies

Six studies used quantitative methods i.e. experimental studies comparing different conditions, evaluating women's responses to LYB advertisements. These studies produced mixed results, suggesting that the advertisements may not be straightforwardly beneficial to women.

Two studies were completed which shared research aims in that they evaluated the effect of advertisements using average-size or plus-size models on women's responses to food (Anschutz et al., 2009; Plummer & Forestell, 2019) and both found a negative impact on women. Anschutz et al. (2009) explored the effect of exposure to television advertisements using average-size or plus-size models (in a Dove advertisement) versus an advertisement of a thin-model (in a Nivea advert) on women's body-focused anxiety and food consumption. No difference in body-focused anxiety was found between conditions. However, after viewing the Dove advertisement, participants reported increased negative mood and their food consumption decreased when compared to those in the thin-model condition. These outcomes were speculated by the authors to have resulted from the verbal messages shared in the Dove advertisement which referred to the use of 'real women' and explicitly fixated on the thin-ideal, whereas the Nivea advertisement did not communicate such messages. Thus, using less thin models in advertisements which made explicit reference to the thin-ideal did not result in women feeling better. Plummer and Forestell (2019) found that watching appearance-related advertisements (with thin or plus-size models) versus a neutral advertisement did not impact on women's liking of different types of foods but viewing plus-size models may increase the desire for unhealthy foods. There were no differences between the groups on measures of body dissatisfaction.

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One study by Convertino et al. (2019) aimed to investigate the impact of viewing Aerie Real campaign images, (an American brand which used non-retouched models in their campaign) on young women's body satisfaction. Participants viewed either retouched Aerie images or Aerie Real campaign images. Mixed results were found; in the whole sample, no condition differences in body satisfaction were elicited, however, more promisingly, some participants (those who rated highly in their tendency to engage in appearance comparison) reported a smaller decrease in body satisfaction post exposure to Aerie Real images in comparison to women who viewed re-touched images.

Three experimental studies also elicited mixed results in terms of the campaigns' benefit to women. These studies shared similarities in that the advertisements shown to participants were video adverts. Benefits of these campaigns were found by Selensky and Carels (2021). They evaluated the influence of exposure to Aerie Real and Dove Real Beauty campaigns on; weight bias, internalised weight bias (IWB), self-esteem, body image, and affect. The Aerie Real campaign video invited "real" women to "ignite empowerment and share their positive vibes" (Aerie, 2016) and portrayed women in Aerie underwear appearing confident and happy in their bodies. The Dove campaign video (Dove U.S., 2016) discussed issues such as how beauty ideals of body size negatively impact women at work. Those who viewed these campaigns showed increased positive affect and self-esteem and viewed the campaigns as having empowering, uplifting and positive messages in comparison to exposure to a documentary on weight stigma and a campaign portraying the thin-ideal. However, measures of weight bias remained unchanged.

Mixed results in terms of helpfulness for women were found by Kraus and Myrick (2018). They aimed to capture the different discrete emotional responses experienced by participants when viewing 'body positive' adverts compared to traditional beauty adverts. The body positive condition here was 'Dove Beauty "Sketches" (Gray, 2013) (as described in section 1.6.1). Stronger emotional responses were elicited in women in the 'body positive' condition compared to the traditional advertising condition. Stronger positive discrete emotions, including

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elevation and hope as well as negative discrete emotions, such as guilt, were experienced, although negative emotions were experienced to less of a degree. The authors hypothesised that negative emotions may be elicited in body positive advertisements as the adverts are promoting a new unattainable standard which is body acceptance which viewers may feel they do not meet.

Similarly, mixed results have been found in LYB advertisements in terms of their benefits for women. In a series of two experiments, Couture Bue and Harrison (2019), measured the effects of ostensibly empowering messages in beauty adverts (where the message encourages women to embrace themselves as they are) on women's feelings of empowerment and self-objectification after exposure. In experiment one, participants were assigned to view ostensibly empowering beauty adverts, traditional adverts or control adverts. There was some evidence (in experiment two) that 'empowerment' adverts primed state objectification (self-objectification occurring on a context-dependent basis, (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997)). Although some evidence was found that exposure to supposedly empowering advertisements improved *judged* speech performance as measured by observers' judgments of empowerment in a public speaking exercise, women's *feelings* of empowerment remained unchanged (i.e. no change was found in self-efficacy in experiment one or felt empowerment in experiment two) which the authors state indicates that they held minimal psychological benefit to participants. The authors explained the findings to be due to the ostensibly empowering advertising communicating a narrative of empowerment by critiquing traditional beauty norms, however the visual images portraying women who adhere to conventional beauty standards and resembling traditional objectifying advertising campaigns which may interact with or undercut the empowerment message.

1.8.2.1.1 Summary of quantitative studies:

Quantitative studies showed mixed results. Two studies showed beneficial outcomes of LYB advertisements for women including; smaller decreases in body satisfaction in some participants (Convertino et al., 2019), and improved self-esteem and positive affect (Selensky & Carels, 2021) after exposure to adverts. However, more problematically, exposure to these campaign elicited negative

emotional responses (Kraus & Myrick, 2018) and primed state-objectification and did not increase women's feelings of empowerment (Couture Bue & Harrison, 2019). Furthermore, no such differences in body dissatisfaction were found by Anschutz et al. (2009) and Plummer and Forestell (2019). Problematic outcomes were found in terms of responses to food, with LYB advertising resulting in increased negative mood and less consumed food (Anschutz et al., 2009) and increased wanting of unhealthy foods (Plummer & Forestell, 2019). The contradictory findings suggest these campaigns are not straightforwardly beneficial for women. What is not known from these quantitative studies is a subjective accounts from women regarding their perceptions of the campaigns. This also raises questions about which specific aspects of the campaigns are leading to these contradictory outcomes in women.

1.8.2.1.2 Critical review

This section will outline methodological limitations of the quantitative studies addressed. All six studies were conducted in the US, therefore, the results cannot necessarily be generalised to women from other countries. Three of the studies used undergraduate women in their sample (Convertino et al., 2019; Kraus & Myrick, 2018; Selensky & Carels, 2021), meaning the results are not necessarily generalisable to other groups of women. With the exception of Couture Bue and Harrison (2019) and Plummer and Forestell (2019), all studies showed participants either a Dove or Aerie advert. Furthermore, all studies showed advertisements from the US which may contain differences to advertisements from different countries. Therefore the findings are specific to these brands and cannot necessarily be generalised to other LYB adverts, or LYB adverts from different countries. The adverts shown to participants in Convertino at al. (2019) and Plummer & Forestell (2019) were still images, therefore, women's responses to factors such as the story line or the messages from the audible narration within a video advertisement are not known from these studies. The use of still images rather than a video may mean that more explicit messages of LYB such as themes of empowerment may not be portrayed, therefore women's responses to the more explicit messages may not be known. The remaining studies (Anschzutz et al., 2009; Couture Bue & Harrison, 2019; Kraus & Myrick, 2018; Selensky & Carels, 2021) did use video messages which contained more explicit

empowerment messages, however as the studies were quantitative, what is not known from these studies is women's subjective views of the messages within the video adverts.

1.8.2.2 Qualitative Studies

Five qualitative studies were completed and explored women's subjective views of LYB advertisements. In accordance with the quantitative research, mixed results were elicited; the women discussed positive and negative perceptions of the advertisements, suggesting that the advertisements are not straightforwardly beneficial to women. One qualitative study explored how young women perceived the Aerie Real campaign, which used non-retouched images compared to traditional advertisements which portrayed the thin-ideal (Rodgers, et al., 2019). Most participants perceived the images to be beneficial in promoting positive body image and acceptance for women via appearance comparisons with the models, and the body confidence being modelled. Participants also stated that Aerie Real images had a positive effect on their body image, self-concept and mood and reported that the campaigns promoted body diversity. However, a minority of participants reported that the models in the campaign were a similar size to the thin-ideal and conventionally attractive, which underrepresents a proportion of the general population.

The remaining four studies explored women's perceptions of the Dove advertising campaigns. Beale et al. (2016) explored the views of young women about advertising images featuring 'plus-size' models in Dove's Real Beauty advertisement. Participants positively construed the 'plus-size' women portrayed in the adverts. However, participants highlighted a lack of representation of women from ethnic minorities and with disabilities. A discourse analysis of women's responses to the campaigns indicated that portrayals of women focusing on body size can, even when reclaiming "plus-size" or "fat" bodies as portrayed in the advertisements, mobilise derogatory and limiting as opposed to empowering constructions of femininity. The constructions of "plus sized" women were of a romanticised domestic femininity which were contrasted with a negative construction of a "skinny" woman. Thinness became demonised instead of

fatness. The reclaiming of "plus size" or "fat" bodies did not serve to reduce the regulatory impact of "beauty" or widen what constitutes "beauty", serving to maintain understandings of body size, weight and shape as central to a woman's worth.

Millard's (2009) research explored women's perceptions and the process of their interpretations of Dove's campaign which portrayed 'real' women. Similarly, a mix of positive and negative views about the campaign were discussed by participants. Participants reported that the advertisement helped to destigmatise participants' non-normative appearance and found the use of 'real' women in the images appealing. The campaign was discussed to be more positive compared with other campaigns. However, many participants who liked the advertisement also expressed scepticism about the sales agenda, referring to the campaign as a 'gimmick' to increase commerce, although was deemed a positive one which still adds something to the world of advertising and has value.

Scott and Cloud (2008) investigated women's responses to a Dove CFRB advert which used 'real' women. Similarly Dove's campaign was perceived as being semi-effective among participants. Participants identified more with the models but expressed that the advertisement took the majority of body types and ethnicities and 'typecast' them, 'like a checklist', thus described the advertisements as 'generic in diversity'. When women outside of hegemonic beauty ideals viewed the images, they expressed feelings of not physically resembling models in the campaign, rejecting these images as 'real' and were unsettled by this misrepresentation. Participants speculated about the use of digital manipulation or professional models being used in the advertisements. Participants recognised the manufactured nature of images but acknowledged that this was necessary in an advertising context of selling a product and an ideology of beauty and perceived the advertisements to be an improvement from 'typical' advertisements. The advertisement was understood as the corporate world's misguided attempt to appeal to 'feminist consumers'. Although they discussed Dove effectively positioning itself as a women-friendly company the advertisement was understood as being devised by men.

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Taylor et al. (2016) explored the responses of young women who identified as feminist to the messages of The Dove CFRB. The study specifically investigated if the campaign was seen as expressing a true feminist message. To some degree participants were reconciled to the idea that advertising's use of feminist messages is a paradox that is necessary to live with. Although most women perceived Dove's campaign as not truly feminist, they pragmatically perceived the campaign as "better than nothing," (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 140). Participants voiced mixed emotions towards the campaign, expressing that it was inspiring and at the same time, frustrating. Many women voiced a powerlessness in imagining alternatives to feminist messages being used in marketing.

1.8.2.2.1 Summary of qualitative studies

Qualitative studies exploring women's perceptions of the campaigns shared similarities in that participants expressed both positive and negative views about the campaigns, suggesting that the campaigns may not be perceived as straightforwardly positive by women. This raises questions about what messages in the campaigns give rise to women's mixed responses.

1.8.2.2.2 Critical review

The studies outlined interviewed predominantly white women (Beale et al., 2016; Rodgers et al., 2019), with this starkly being the case in Millard's (2008) study with only one non-white participant. Scott and Cloud (2008) and Taylor et al. (2016) did not specify the ethnicity of participants interviewed. With the exception of the study by Beale et al. (2016), all studies were conducted in North America (Millard, 2008; Scott & Cloud, 2009; Taylor et al., 2016). Therefore, the results may have been different for participants outside of these countries. All qualitative studies showed participants images of the advertisements, rather than videos, therefore what is not known is women's in depth and subjective responses to the messages or story line within a video advertisement which may carry a more explicit 'LYB' and empowerment message. Furthermore, all studies showed images from either Dove or Aerie and as this was conducted in the US or Canada, the versions of the advert may have been specific to these countries. The results cannot necessarily be generalised to other LYB advertising campaigns from other brands or LYB adverts outside of the US or Canada. Two

of the studies (Millard, 2008; Scott & Cloud, 2009) were conducted over ten years ago, as LYB adverts have likely changed since this time, what is not known is women's perceptions of more recent LYB campaigns. Beale et al., (2016) elicited responses from participants from a qualitative questionnaire and a focus group was employed by Scott and Cloud (2009) and Taylor et al., (2016). These methods could have limited disclosure and rich detail from participants and may not have allowed ease in discussing more personal perspectives. Focus groups specifically could encourage group dynamics which can elicit less detailed responses and a high group consensus (Willig, 2013). Various methodologies were employed by the qualitative studies including; Discourse Analysis (Beale et al., 2016) an analysis guided by dramaturgical and social semiotic concepts by Millard (2009) and Tourraine's (1982) method of 'sociological intervention' by Taylor et al. (2016), therefore little is known about the general themes throughout the advertisements.

1.9 Rationale for Research

LYB advertising has become more widespread in recent years since it's onset in 2004. There is an emerging literature encompassing feminist critiques of the adverts themselves and empirical studies of women's responses to them. The feminist study of the adverts has produced similar findings which suggest problematic implicit messages within the adverts that could be harmful for women, however has lacked the perspective of women consumers themselves.

Women's responses have been studied with quantitative methods. These have produced some contradictory and unclear findings suggesting the need for qualitative studies to understand their meaning. In addition, these quantitative studies have been limited by all being conducted in the US and half of these study's sample included only undergraduate women.

LYB advertisements have also been studied by qualitative methods which have showed mixed responses; with women expressing both positive and negative views of the campaigns, suggesting that they are not straightforwardly helpful for women. However, these studies did not analyse the adverts themselves.

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Additionally, these studies have been limited by interviewing predominately white women or the ethnicity of women was not specified in the studies. As outlined in the literature review (section 1.2.1 & 1.2.2), it is important to consider intersectionality when discussing body image. This research explained how body image difficulties disproportionately affect women and those from other marginalised groups and women with certain intersecting identities (e.g. women of colour or bigger women) are disproportionately affected by appearance related discrimination compared to men. Feminist literature in section 1.7.5 also considered issues of intersectionality, outlining how messages in LYB advertising can be problematic for women of certain marginalised groups, such as women of colour (Johnson & Taylor, 2008) and disabled women (Heiss, 2011). Therefore, there is a need to look at a more ethnically diverse sample in order to consider how women with intersecting identities perceive LYB campaigns. Additionally, the studies have largely taken place in North America, therefore there is also a need to look at a sample in the UK.

All qualitative studies showed participants advertising images rather than video advertisements and explored perceptions of only Aerie or Dove campaigns and North American versions of these adverts. What is needed is an analysis of women's responses to video advertisements to gain an understanding of responses to the story lines within LYB advertisements from the UK.

Two of the studies were of first wave LYB adverts in 2008 and 2009, (Millard, 2008; Scott & Cloud, 2009) but research is warranted to explore more recent campaigns, which may show differences to the older ones.

As the majority of the studies used focus groups or written qualitative responses, there is a rationale to conduct individual interviews which may allow for the elicitation of more detailed and personal responses from participants. The various methodologies employed means that little is known about the general themes throughout the advertisements which justifies an analysis which can explore this.

Typically, researchers have only focused on either the adverts (in feminist literature), missing out on the subjective experience of women, or empirical

studies have explored women's responses without engagement with the adverts themselves. An analysis of the adverts may or may not accord with what women think and an analysis of women's responses without engagement with the adverts makes it unclear how women's responses are related to the content of the adverts. It would be useful to combine the strengths of both and explore the range of responses of women and an analysis of the adverts to potentially elucidate which aspects of the adverts themselves might be linked with such responses.

1.9.1 Research Aims

The study therefore aims to examine young women's responses to LYB advertising campaigns and examine the messages within the adverts, identifying key themes in both data sets.

1.9.2 Research Questions

1) How do women perceive 'LYB' advertising campaigns?

2) What themes are present in 'LYB' advertising campaigns?

1.10 Clinical Relevance

The prevalence of body image difficulties in the population is high and is an issue that disproportionately affects women and other marginalised groups (Bucchianeri et al., 2013; Lacroix et al., 2020; Wang et al, 2019). Body dissatisfaction is a significant public health concern (Bucchianeri & Neumark-Sztainer, 2014), with serious negative outcomes including depression (e.g. Paxton et al., 2006 and eating disorders (Bornioli et al., 2019; Stice, 2002; Stice & Desjardins, 2018). An integral goal of the profession of clinical psychology is to "reduce psychological distress and enhance and promote psychological well-being." (DCP, 2010, p.2). Advertising has a powerful impact on the way women

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and other marginalised groups come to understand themselves and their bodies, as outlined in both feminist literature and mainstream psychology literature above. Clinical psychologists gaining an awareness of the messages present in society via advertising will allow for an understanding of the factors that may contribute to body distress in women.

Psychological formulation is considered to be the core skill of the profession of clinical psychology (British Psychological Society, 2011) and can be described as the process of co-developing a hypothesis about the causes of an individual's difficulties in the context of their social circumstances, relationships, life events, and the way the individual makes sense of their difficulties. Therefore, when formulating clients' distress, it is important to gain an awareness of the societal factors, including discourses present in the context in which clients live. The research will contribute to gaining a deeper understanding of the messages implicit in advertising campaigns that may be contributing to their difficulties. An awareness of these societal messages will help clinical psychologists make links with causal factors from societal messages when understanding the distress of a client rather than positioning the problem as within the individual.

Developing an awareness of possible contributors to body image difficulties could justify preventative work such as interventions to address these influences, for example, working with the advertising industry to alter these potentially problematic messages or encouraging policy change within the advertising industry. This could justify preventative work alongside the government to promote public health and reduce potentially harmful messages which may be contributing to women's poor body image.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Chapter Summary

This study used qualitative methods to explore how women perceived two LYB advertising campaigns using a semi-structured interview and explored these same two advertising campaigns themselves. This chapter outlines; the rationale for the methodology, ethical issues, data collection, procedure, stages of analysis and quality assurance.

2.2 Rationale for Methodology

2.2.1 Epistemological Stance: Critical Realism

The current study took an epistemological stance of critical realism (Bhaskar, 1978, 2010, 2016). Critical realism combines an ontological realism and an epistemological relativism. A position of ontological realism assumes that there is an external reality that exists independent of human minds; there is a potentially knowable world in which causal influences are at work. Epistemological relativism recognises the limits of research methods, that different methods produce different perspectives on reality, thus in an imperfect way they will help us find out about that world. This position does not assume that data directly mirrors reality in a straightforward manner (Willig, 2012).

The research aims to understand how women make meaning of their experience of LYB advertising and, through conducting an analysis of both women's responses and the adverts themselves, an implicit aim is to explore the relationship between women's responses and the content of the adverts. This accords with a critical realist position of ontological realism, it assumes some potential causal relationship between the content of the adverts and women's responses to them. In line with epistemological relativism, it is assumed that the

research can access these lived realities of women in some partial form, but not fully. Women's constructions of meaning made by the advertisements are 'real' in as far as they have material consequences for the social practices of women, however, the causal influences cannot be directly observed.

2.2.2 A Feminist and Intersectional Lens

Following the feminist literature outlined in the Introduction, the analysis will be informed by feminist scholarship such as Gill and Elias (2014) due to this literature providing persuasive arguments regarding the potential harm of LYB advertising for women. Feminist research can be conceptualised in terms of; "its purposes of knowledge about women's lives, advocacy for women, analysis of gender oppression, and transformation of society." (McHugh, 2014). As such, this research took a feminist informed position as it was interested in generating knowledge about women's experiences of LYB advertising and highlighting how LYB advertising could be problematic for women in society. The research also aimed to transform society through suggesting changes to policy and practice as discussed in section 4.5 in light of the findings.

A feminist lens was applied when critiquing the literature. Throughout the thesis, both feminist as well as non-feminist research was outlined. Although an explicit feminist lens was taken when outlining the feminist research (as the researcher outlined how LYB advertising can serve to oppress women in society), when outlining the non-feminist research, the researcher also critiqued the research through a feminist lens. The researcher looked out for certain feminist issues raised by the studies such as; the limited representation of women in LYB advertising, the objectification of women or when problematic outcomes were reported for women after viewing LYB adverts. A feminist lens was also considered in the development of the interview schedule and the analyses which will be discussed in the relevant sections below.

Issues of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991) were also acknowledged throughout the research project. As outlined in more detail in the introduction

(sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.7.5 & 1.9), issues of intersectionality come up within the literature and are important to consider when discussing body image. For example, the feminist literature outlines how LYB advertising can be problematic for women with intersecting identities, such as women of colour (Johnson & Taylor, 2008) and disabled women (Heiss, 2011). Thus multiple aspects of oppression were attended to in the research project rather than reducing oppression to simply gender-based oppression. Issues of intersectionality will also be considered in terms of recruitment strategy, the development of the interview transcript and in the analyses which will be discussed in the relevant sections below.

2.2.3 A Qualitative Approach

To analyse both the adverts and interviews, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate as the research aimed to investigate meaning. Qualitative methods provide ways of exploring women's responses and the adverts themselves. As outlined in the introduction, the quantitative findings produced mixed results regarding the outcomes of LYB advertising on women. Due to the nature of quantitative research, it is difficult to interpret what may underpin these outcomes. Qualitative studies provided more detail on what may account for these differences, therefore a qualitative approach was utilised in the current study. Through generating exploratory data of women's perceptions of the adverts and of the adverts themselves, qualitative methods can allow for a richer understanding of factors that may underpin the differences found in the quantitative literature.

2.2.4 Rationale for Thematic Analysis (TA)

A Critical Realist TA was conducted and applied to two different data sets, the interview and advert transcripts. TA was deemed an appropriate approach as the research aims were to identify themes within both data-sets. A TA method involves identifying, analysing, organising, describing and reporting on themes

elicited from within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) state that TA can be conducted from various epistemological positions, thus TA was deemed as compatible with the critical realist approach taken in the current research. TA was deemed an appropriate analytic approach as it allows for patterns to be identified across the entire dataset with fewer theoretical assumptions (Willig, 2001) and theories can be flexibly applied to this process (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013; Willig, 2013). An inductive TA was undertaken for both analyses meaning the analyses were data-driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006), working 'bottom up' from the data. Patterns within the data were captured and identified in order for themes to be generated from the actual data itself rather than from existing theories (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Patton, 2015). However, it cannot be claimed that a wholly inductive approach was undertaken as inevitably the analysis will be influenced by the literature and researcher's assumptions, beliefs and experiences (Taylor & Ussher, 2001), rather than themes straightforwardly 'emerging' from the data (Banister et al., 2011). Practically, TA is a useful approach for summarising the main features of a large set of data as the researcher is required to handle the data in a well-structured manner which helps to produce a coherent and organised report (King, 2004).

For the analysis of the interview data TA was chosen over alternative approaches. A Discourse Analysis was deemed an inappropriate method to use for the current study as the aims of the research were not to examine how language functions. A Phenomenological Analysis was also deemed inappropriate as even though the current study aimed to generate knowledge regarding human experience, it was not aiming to develop an in-depth description of the unique and subjective experience of individuals as this approach would. TA allowed for the identification of patterns of meaning across the entire data set rather than individual participants' experience.

TA was also applied to analyse two LYB advertisements. In line with the research question, an adapted approach was required to analyse both the visual and textual data in the advertisements thematically. Gleeson's (2011) adapted approach of TA, which she refers to as Polytextual Thematic Analysis (PTA) was utilised for this. Gleeson (2011) asserts that the processes involved in interpreting

visual text and verbal texts are essentially the same, that is, bringing one set of texts to bear on another in order to make meaning. Using this approach enabled the inclusion of visual images as another layer of data (Gleeson, 2011). The approach is termed 'polytextual', as it assumes that all texts, including visual texts, make sense in the context of other texts (Curt, 1994; Gleeson, 2011). The themes are recognised as the result of drawing on a range of other culturally available visual images and texts and are interpreted in relation to these images and texts. Words can provide information that images cannot and equally images can provide information that words cannot (Willig, 2013). This analysis is termed 'thematic' as it attempts to identify and categorise the repetitive patterns or themes within the data (Gleeson, 2011). TA was deemed to be an appropriate method to answer research question two which was interested in describing and organising the aspects of the images in a way that allowed for focus on the content of images rather than the rules or structural properties underlying the construction of the images (Gleeson, 2011). Like language, visual images do not simply reflect reality but reproduce power relations (Gleeson, 2011) and PTA allows the consideration of the 'cultural significances, social practices and power relations' (Gleeson, 2011, p. 315).

2.3 Ethical Issues

2.3.1 Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for the current study was granted from The University of East London (UEL) School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee *(*Appendix 2*)*. The study was carried out in accordance with guidelines from the British Psychological Society's (BPS), Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2014).

2.3.2 Informed Consent

Participants were provided with a Participant Information Sheet (PIS) (Appendix 3) which outlined the study details. The consent form (Appendix 4) was e-mailed to participants. If they agreed to take part in the study, participants signed the

consent form and e-mailed it back to the researcher. Throughout participation, the researcher ensured that consent was a continuing process (BPS, 2014). At the beginning of the interview verbal consent was obtained and consent was reassessed post interview. Participants were reminded of their freedom to withdraw their consent during the study or remove their data up to three weeks after interviewing.

2.3.3 Confidentiality

Every participant was allocated a unique identification number (e.g. P1) when extracts from their interviews were referenced in the thesis. Any identifying features were anonymised in transcripts. The researcher, supervisor and examiners were the only individuals to have access to complete anonymised transcripts. In line with the Data Protection Act 2018, all participant information was treated confidentially. Electronic versions of consent forms were used and were stored on a computer that was password- protected within a location separate to the interview data. Video- recorded interviews and transcribed material were anonymised using an identification number (e.g. P1). They were transferred promptly to a password-protected computer file on a secure UEL network (OneDrive). Participants' personal information was deleted once the interviews were completed. Consent forms and video-recordings will be deleted after the study is completed. Anonymised interview transcripts will be stored for up to three years following the completion of the research and will be deleted after this point.

2.3.4 Possible Distress

It was deemed unlikely that the interviews would elicit distress as they did not explicitly focus on participants' personal experiences of their own body image and care was taken to conduct it sensitively. Once the interview ended, participants were debriefed using a debrief sheet (Appendix 5) in line with ethical guidelines (BPS, 2014). The debrief form contained information about outside sources of support including; websites and telephone support lines for the UEL counselling service and details of statutory or voluntary organisations such as BEAT. It also

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contained the researcher's and supervisor's contact details if participant's wished to convey concerns or discuss options for support.

2.4 Data Collection

2.4.1 LYB Advertisements

The data to be analysed were two LYB advertisements which were available on social media site, 'YouTube'. Advertisements were found by searching 'Google' and 'YouTube' using the search terms; 'body positive advertisements 2019' due to this being a more commonly used term than LYB. Advertisements selected for analysis were those aligned with the description of LYB advertising described in section 3.2. Advertisements were selected which were available on YouTube as opposed to print adverts as today, young women today are more commonly exposed to on screen rather than print media (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). This demographic of young women are high users of YouTube (Khoros, 2021) making it more likely they would have been exposed to these advertising campaigns before. Advertisements were selected from 2019 (the year the research commenced) in order to generate an understanding of current messages in LYB advertising campaigns. British advertisements were selected as these were deemed to be more familiar to participants. Upon searching for advertisements using the above criteria, nine LYB advertisements were identified (See Appendix 6). In discussion with the author's research supervisor, it was deemed appropriate to select two advertisements to show participants and to analyse as this amount was deemed reasonable to show and discuss with participants within the allocated interview time frame of 30 to 60 minutes. The two advertisements were selected due to them fitting with the above criteria most explicitly and shared most similarities with each other to enable participants to respond to the adverts both individually and together. The selected adverts shared similarities in that they were both brands selling beauty products. The adverts selected were Dove #ArmsUp campaign and Boots 'Let's Feel Good About Summer' campaign (See Appendix 7). A detailed description of each advert is described in the subsequent chapter, section 3.2.

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2.4.2 Development of the Interview Schedule

Initially when planning the research, focus groups were selected as the format in which to conduct interviews with participants. This was deemed to be advantageous as the research was conducted through an intersectional feminist lens and focus groups would have allowed women with various intersecting identities (due to the diverse sample recruited) to share potentially differing perspectives on the adverts allowing for a rich discussion on the topic. However, due to Covid-19 restrictions, interviews could not be carried out in person and had to be conducted virtually. In discussion with the researcher's supervisor, it was thought that in a virtual setting, sharing personal perspectives with other individuals that they have not met in person may be challenging for participants. In light of this, it was deemed more appropriate to conduct individual interviews rather than focus groups. Although individual interviews would not allow for a discussion or exchanging of perspectives of women with intersecting identities, the dyadic interaction in individual interviews would enable greater disclosure, rich detail from participants and allows for ease in discussing potentially sensitive topics such as body image (Willig, 2013). Furthermore, focus groups in contrast encourage group dynamics which can elicit high group consensus and less detailed responses from participants.

Semi-structured interviews were selected as this method allows participants to provide open- ended responses, speak freely and build on their responses (Smith, 1996). This method allowed for the same conceptual topics to be addressed across participants, allowed for the wording of the questions to be adapted and allowed for interaction or responses to be clarified.

This differs to unstructured interviews which do not use pre-defined questions or a pre-determined order of questions and structured interviews which encourage restricted responses (Berg, 2007). However, semi-structured interviews are

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difficult to replicate due them being more informal than structured interviews. LYB advertisements were shown to participants at the start of the interview. Willig (2013) suggests that using a stimulus in the interview stimulates and focuses the discussion and likely means that the responses do not stay at the abstract impersonal level but instead elicits responses that are rich in detail and varied as they include the interviewees' experiences, memories and feelings. A draft interview schedule (Appendix 8) was developed by taking into consideration the aims of the research and the range of themes to be covered (Spradley, 2016; Willig, 2013). Questions were generated for each theme.

Issues of intersectionality and feminism were attended to in the development of the interview schedule. In terms of feminism, questions were asked which elicited discussion about the potential ways that the adverts may be contributing to gender oppression by disadvantaging women, such as; "Do these adverts feel problematic in any way?". In terms of intersectionality, specific questions were asked related to the types of bodies displayed in the adverts in an attempt to elicit an understanding of participant's perceptions of how women with intersecting identities were represented in the adverts, such as; "Is there anything missing from the adverts?".

The interview schedule contained open-ended questions with additional prompts for each question. The sequencing of questions was also considered. Descriptive questions such as describing what is happening in the adverts were positioned at the start of the interview and evaluative questions such as exploring feelings provoked by the adverts, which were more personal, were positioned towards the end of the interview schedule to enable rapport to be established first (Spradley, 2016; Willig, 2013). For consistency, the same adverts that were chosen to be analysed were shown to participants. A pilot interview was conducted using the interview schedule with a peer who had a special interest in the topic area. The feedback was used to amend sequencing of questions in the interview schedule and more prompts were added to ensure the elicitation of in-depth answers (see Appendix 9 for final interview schedule).

2.5 Procedure

2.5.1 Recruitment

Convenience sampling and snowballing were used to recruit participants. Participants were recruited through posting a recruitment message (Appendix 10) on The UEL undergraduate psychology online forum. A link was attached to the message which directed participants to a webpage which contained the PIS.

2.5.1.1 Inclusion criteria

Women participants were selected as LYB advertisements are aimed at female consumers. Issues of intersectionality were also attended to in the recruitment of participants. As outlined in the critique of the literature on LYB advertising (section 1.8.2.2.2), studies on LYB advertising used predominately white women and as outlined in section 1.9, it was deemed important to recruit a more diverse sample to enable a consideration of how women with intersecting identities perceive LYB advertising. Participants from UEL were selected as it has an ethnically diverse student body (UEL, 2021) which would create a sample of women participants with intersecting identities. This age group was selected due their frequent social media use (Khoros, 2021) which may indicate that they are more likely to have seen LYB advertisements which are available on social-media sites such as YouTube.

The following inclusion criteria were applied:
- Participants were all students at UEL.
- Participants all identified as women.
- Participants were all between the age of 18 and 30.

2.5.2 Participants

The study recruited 14 participants (See Appendix 11 for participant demographics). Fusch and Ness (2015) suggest that a sample size should be used which enables data saturation. Guest et al. (2006) argue that data saturation is obtained when no new themes are emerging with further data and data saturation can be reached with 12 interviews.

2.5.3 Preliminary Contact

Participants that expressed interest in taking part in the study were sent the PIS and Consent Form via e-mail and the interview was arranged via e-mail at a convenient date and time.

2.5.4 Demographic Information

Prior to attending the interview, participants were e-mailed a brief demographic questionnaire and were asked to complete this and e-mail it back to the researcher. The questionnaire asked about; gender, ethnicity, religion, age and title of course studies at UEL (See Appendix 12).

2.5.5 Semi-Structured Interview

The interviews took place via Microsoft Teams due to Covid-19 restrictions. Prior to the interview commencing, space was provided for participants to ask any clarifying questions before taking part and their consent to participate and to video-record the interview was re-established. Before commencing with interview questions, participants were shown two LYB advertising campaigns consecutively. These were shown via the 'share screen' function on Microsoft Teams. The interview was then conducted using the final interview schedule described above (Appendix 9). Each interview lasted between 30 to 60 minutes. Post interview, participants were debriefed. Consent was re-established in regards to using the anonymised data. The interview was recorded via Microsoft Teams.

2.6 Stages of Analysis

2.6.1 Data Preparation

2.6.1.1 Transcription of interviews

As TA does not require a detailed transcription method (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the interviews were transcribed utilising a simple transcribing method. Line numbers were included in the final transcripts to allow for referencing during the analysis and the writing of the report (Banister et al., 2011). During the transcription process, familiarisation with the data took place (see Appendix 13 for excerpt of transcript).

2.6.1.2 Transcription of advertisements

Two LYB advertisements were transcribed. Screenshots were taken of each scene and each screenshot was numbered. A total of 82 screenshots was generated. A description was written of what was happening in each scene, with a detailed description of each image. The audible narration, on screen text and verbal data were also transcribed (see Appendix 14 for excerpt of transcript).

2.6.2 Data Analysis

2.6.2.1 Analysis of interviews and adverts : six phases of TA

To analyse the data from the interviews and adverts the TA followed the six phases detailed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The interviews were analysed prior to the advertisements, however for ease, both analyses will be presented together below. Although the six phases of the analytic process are presented below as distinct and linear, the analysis did not necessarily occur in consecutive

order; the analytic process is an iterative and recursive, the researcher repeatedly moves between the different phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Throughout the research process, notes were made in a reflective journal; this enabled the research to be a reflexive and self-conscious process (see Appendices 15 & 16 for reflective journals for the interview and advert analysis respectively).

Throughout the analyses of both women's responses and of the adverts themselves, the researcher considered feminist concepts and issues as well as issues of intersectionality and body image which were discussed in the introduction. In terms of issues of feminism, as explained above (section 2.2.2) the thesis was influenced by the work of Rosalind Gill and other feminist authors outlined in the literature review (section 1.5 &1.7.5). Key feminist concepts such as; the 'psychic regulation' of women (Gill & Elias, 2014), the objectification of women's bodies, self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) and messages of post-feminism (Gill, 2007; Gill & Elias, 2014; McRobbie, 2004) were picked up on in the analysis of the interviews when such issues were mentioned by participants and were picked up on during the analysis of the adverts themselves when such concepts were seen to be present by the researcher.

Issues of intersectionality were also considered in both analyses, the researcher kept in mind issues that were highlighted in the literature review such as; the limited representation of different bodies and beauty norms which privilege white able bodied individuals and how these impact on women with intersecting identities. The researcher picked up on these issues in the analyses when they were discussed by women in the interviews and when they were seen to be present in the adverts themselves.

Each stage of the TA will be outlined below.

1) *Data immersion:* The researcher familiarised themselves thoroughly with both data sets. For the interview analysis, every transcript was actively read repeatedly to identify patterns. For the advert analysis, the researcher repeatedly read and visually assessed the screenshots and transcripts. Images were viewed singly, in groups, serially and in different orders. For both data-sets, any initial

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analytic observations or reflections were noted prior to the formal coding process commencing.

2) Generating initial codes: Whilst actively considering the research questions, initial codes were produced at both the semantic and latent level (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the interview analysis, meaningful, pithy labels were attached to specific segments of the data set which captured the meaning of that segment of data (see Appendix 17 for excerpt of initial coding for interview analysis). After the entire interview data set had been coded thoroughly, a compiled list of codes (see Appendix 18) with their supporting quotes was elicited (Appendix 19).

For the analysis of the adverts, Gleeson (2011) states that generating codes and themes from visual data involves describing these visual features on a textual level. Therefore, the codes and themes that were elicited are written descriptions of the visual elements in the data. In an iterative process which involved moving back and forth between images and text, the visual and verbal data were examined for initial codes. Extracts of text, key scenes and images were highlighted and the themes within the image were described, these were labelled with a pithy phrase (see Appendix 19). A list of codes was developed with their related text and images (Appendix 20).

3) Searching for themes: A theme is a meaningful and coherent pattern in the data which is relevant to the research question. In an active process (Braun & Clarke, 2013), codes were sorted into possible themes. Codes with similar meanings were clustered into tentative themes. These were then refined and defined by additional scrutiny of the text or visual images that had informed the themes.

4) Reviewing themes: For both data sets, the themes were reviewed and refined; themes were checked for consistency and it was ensured that the themes reflected coded extracts and the data sets. Higher-order themes were developed, clustering sub-themes which shared similar meaning. Themes were reworked multiple times. For both data sets, a set of provisional themes were produced from the codes which are outlined in a thematic maps (see Appendix 21 & 22 for

thematic maps for the interview and advert analysis respectively). Once the final versions of the themes were established, they were reviewed to ensure that they were distinct from each other.

5) Defining and naming themes: For both data sets, the researcher characterised the nature of each theme and wrote a detailed description of each (See Appendix 23 & 24 for a description of themes from the interview and advert analysis respectively). For each data set, final thematic maps were produced which show links between higher order themes and subthemes (See Appendix 25 for thematic map of interviews and Appendix 26 for adverts).

6) Writing the report: For each data set, separate reports were produced which illustrated the researcher's stories of the data-sets and provided analytic narratives regarding the research questions. Themes were supported by excerpts (of verbal data for the interview analysis and both visual and textual data for the advert analysis) to capture the essence of the themes and their sub-themes.

2.7 Quality Of Research

2.7.1 Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

It is essential that qualitative research is conducted in a rigorous and methodical way to produce useful and meaningful results (Attride-Stirling, 2001). 'Trustworthiness' is one way researchers can confirm that their research findings are worthy of attention (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The concept of 'trustworthiness' was developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), using the criteria of; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability which paralleled the criteria for the assessment of validity and reliability in quantitative research. To ensure trustworthiness throughout every phase of TA, this research utilised a framework provided by Nowell et al. (2017*)* for following the aforementioned criteria. The criteria will be outlined in the current section, and will be returned to in the discussion chapter where the research will be assessed against these criteria.

Examples will be provided in the discussion chapter of how each criteria was addressed. The credibility of a study refers to whether the research findings are plausible (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) and depends on whether there is a 'fit' between participant's views and the researcher's representation of them (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Transferability refers to the generalisability of research findings. To attain dependability, the research process should be logical, traceable, and documented clearly (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Confirmability refers to verifying that the researcher's interpretations and findings are evidently derived from the data. The researcher is required to demonstrate how interpretations and conclusions were reached (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Confirmability is determined when credibility, transferability, and dependability are attained (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

2.7.2 Reflexivity

Qualitative analysis is highly subjective. The researcher's identity, experiences, assumptions and beliefs will inevitably influence the research process and outcome. As outlined in feminist methodologies, the notion of neutrality in research is misguided due to the inevitable intricate relationship existing between the researcher and what is being researched (Bowles & Klein, 1983; Roberts, 1981). To ensure that the analysis and the entire research process are credible, it is pertinent that the researcher is transparent and reflexive regarding their relationship with the topic of interest in the thesis (Willig, 2013). In order to remain reflexive throughout the research process, the author regularly wrote in a reflective journal (See Appendix 15 & Appendix 16). This diary enabled the research to be a self-conscious process. Below is an account of the researcher's identities, values and experiences that are pertinent to the subject matter in the thesis. I will reflect on how my social locations may have influenced the research topic and questions and will return to reflexivity in the Discussion to consider the difference that these social locations made to the study. I identify as a white, British, Jewish, middle-class, able-bodied woman in a straight-sized body. As a woman, body image difficulties have been a normative experience personally and amongst my female peers. My understanding of body image concerns in women and what contributes to these difficulties has been shaped by my experiences and my identity. As a trainee clinical psychologist, I have been taught to

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understand psychological distress from a social constructionist viewpoint. I identify as a feminist and have read the work of feminist scholars who discuss the body, such as; Susie Orbach, Naomi Wolf, Rosalind Gill which influenced my thinking. I have volunteered for a feminist activist organisation, 'Anybody', which challenges the limited representations of bodies in contemporary society. From these experiences, I view body image difficulties as an issue of gender inequality. I position the problem of how women come to understand their bodies in problematic ways as a societal issue rather than within individuals. These social locations have meant that I have a personal interest in reducing societal factors that contribute to the problematic ways that women come to understand their bodies and thus would have influenced the research topic and aims.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents descriptive summaries of two LYB advertising campaigns; Boots' 'Let's Feel Good About Summer' and Dove's '#Arms Up' campaign. Subsequently, the analysis of interviews with 14 women concerning how they perceived these advertising campaigns will be presented, followed by the author's analysis of the advertisements themselves. The analyses are supported by examples of the data. Thematic tables of the themes generated from the analyses of the interviews and LYB adverts are presented below in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

3.2 Descriptive Summaries of LYB Advertising Campaigns

Descriptive summaries and example images of the LYB advertisements shown to participants and analysed by the researcher are presented to provide the reader with an awareness of the advertisements before the analyses are presented.

3.2.1 Boot's Advertising Campaign: 'Let's Feel Good About Summer'

This advertisement commences with multiple scenes of a woman's hand grabbing various products associated with a holiday, including; sunglasses, sun cream, gradual tan and nail polish off a shop shelf. A billboard advert is shown in an airport, displaying a female model who meets conventional beauty standards, posing in a bikini. The caption on the billboard reads "Are you summer ready?".

This advert is reminiscent of 'traditional' advertising campaigns. Two female friends are at the airport about to go on holiday, they are aged around thirty, one woman is white, the other is mixed race, their bodies are average-sized. They look at the billboard unimpressed and proceed to laugh at it. The women arrive on holiday and are in their hotel preparing to go to the beach. Multiple scenes are shown of the women applying beauty products to themselves such as hair spray and nail varnish. The women arrive on the beach wearing bikinis covered by a sarong. Other people are present on the beach and they observe the two women as they approach. The women are about to walk into the sea but stop beforehand and look at each other as if self-conscious and anxious about exposing their body in front of observers. They proceed to dramatically and confidently rip off their sarong to reveal their bodies in bikinis. They confidently walk into the sea and proceed to dance in the sea whilst expressing positive emotions. The audio narration states; "Let's feel good this summer, at Boots".

Figure 2

Example Screenshots from Boots Advertising Campaign

3.2.2 Dove Advertising Campaign; '#Arms Up'

The advert commences with a statistic on the screen stating; "88% of women feel society promotes an "ideal" underarm". Highlighting the problem of the media perpetuating beauty standards, multiple clips of 'traditional adverts' of underarm products (e.g. deodorant or hair removal) are displayed in quick succession. They

portray women that meet conventional beauty standards, the models in the adverts reveal smooth underarms and are using these various products. An audible narration states phrases such as; "they must be smooth". The scene quickly changes to a woman who does not meet traditional beauty norms; she is a black woman, does not meet the thin-ideal and has relaxed hair. She is holding up her arms to reveal underarm hair and shouts confidently; "so what's wrong with these?". A number of women of varying ages and ethnicities are subsequently shown on screen. They talk to the camera as if being interviewed and are presented as 'real' women as opposed to actors as shown by their name and job title displayed on the screen. Each woman talks to the camera about her confidence in showing her underarms. For example, one woman says; "I don't cover up anymore, I *love* showing my underarms". Each woman shows her underarms to the camera, whilst talking about the various choices she has made regarding them, for example whether to remove hair, grow hair, put glitter on, tattoo or dye her underarm hair. Many women dance and smile whilst revealing their underarms. The visual text shows phrases such as; "Goodbye judgement", "Hello choice", "Hello hair", "Hello smooth" and ends with visual text stating "The only thing your underarms shouldn't be is a worry".

Figure 3

Example Screenshots from Dove's Advertising Campaign
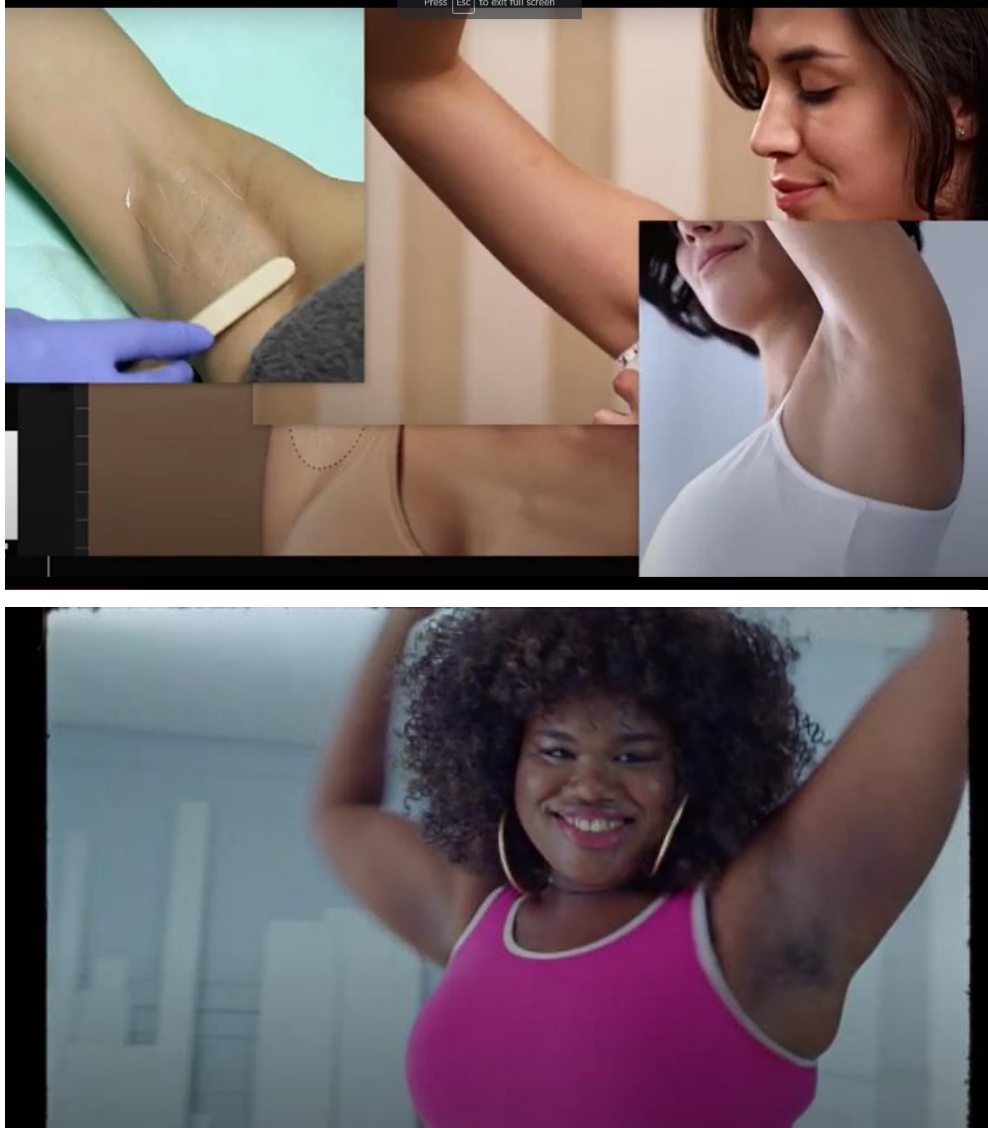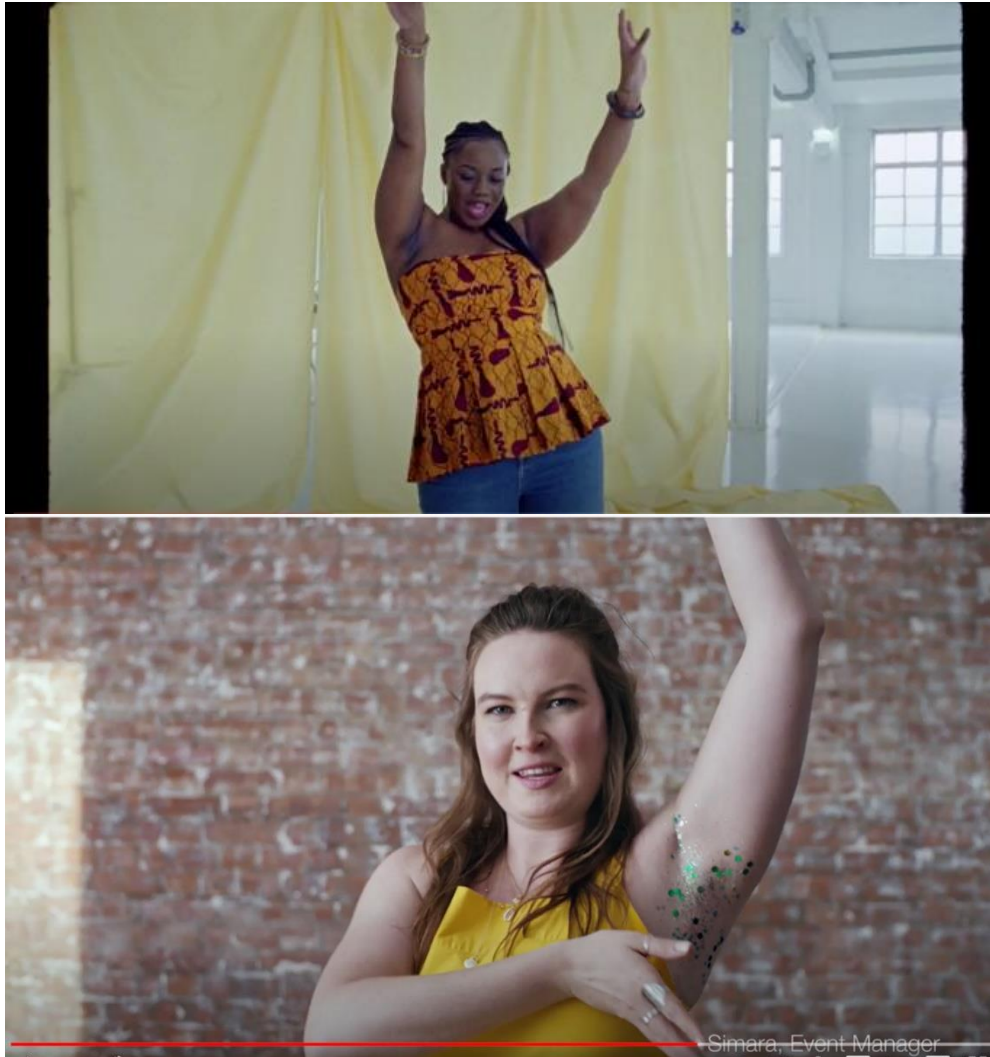
3.3 Ambivalence About 'Love Your Body' Advertising Campaigns: A Thematic Analysis

The over-arching theme amongst women was ambivalence about LYB advertising. The term ambivalence utilised refers to individual women perceiving the advertising campaigns in both positive and negative ways, within the same interviews as well as mixed views amongst the women in general. Participants expressed ambivalence regarding; LYB advertisements setting a social norm for women, the helpfulness of focusing on the woman's body, the level of diversity portrayed and the nature of advertising and it's links with capitalism and neoliberal ideology.

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A thematic table is provided below in Table 1. A thematic map is provided in Appendix 25.

Table 1

Themes and Sub-themes of Interview Analysis

Overarching Theme	Theme	Subtheme
Ambivalence about LYB Advertising	Ambivalence about setting a social norm for women	Subtheme 1: Advertising as setting a new positive social norm for women
		Subtheme 2: Advertising as setting a new problematic social norm for women
	Ambivalence about included and excluded bodies	Subtheme 1: Adverts are changing for the better in terms of diversity
		Subtheme 2: Exclusion of bodies
	Ambivalence about maintaining a focus on the body	Subtheme 1: A focus on the body is helpful for women
		Subtheme 2: It is problematic to maintain a focus on the body
	Ambivalence about the nature of advertising and neoliberal ideology	Subtheme 1: Perceived motivation of brands and links to Capitalism
		Subtheme 2: Advertising and neoliberal ideology

3.3.1 Theme 1: Ambivalence about 'LYB' Advertising Creating a Social Norm

LYB advertisements were understood by participants as making a change to social norms in society. Ambivalence was expressed about whether the changing of norms were; helpful, in that they were liberating for women and are part of a direction that society should be heading towards, or problematic for women and imposing further norms for women to adhere to.

3.3.1.1: Subtheme 1 "it made me feel like you're fine, you don't need to change": Advertising as setting a new positive social norm.
Eleven participants expressed that LYB advertising campaigns were setting a new social norm that is positive for women. The adverts were understood as making a change in society in the interest of women. Some women perceived LYB advertisements as catering more to women's needs:

> When you get an advert that's actually made for you. It's not made to please anybody else. It's made to speak directly to you as a woman. And I just feel like, that's the difference. (P4: 319-381)

> They're more catering for women, empowered women, rather than trying to please the male audience. (P12: 78-80)

A new norm of advertisements being aimed at women rather than the usual male audience was deemed positive.

The campaigns were understood to be sending a positive message of liberation from oppressive beauty norms. Some women felt that through the advertisements' portrayal of women who refute beauty standards, they were helping to break the stigma for other women to also not have to conform to these norms:

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So I do think that's quite wonderful. And, you know, I think it's cool to see people putting glitter underneath their armpits and dyeing their hair because why not, there's nothing, there isn't anything wrong with that. And a lot of people do it so it's nice to kind of, you know, because I know a little while ago that was really deemed weird, but now it's on TV so people will feel more comfortable doing it cause people kind of follow the media and what that kind of showcases. (P6: 46-51)

This participant acknowledged the media's power to shape norms and influence women's attitudes and behaviour.

Some women expressed that LYB advertisements were promoting the idea of beauty being different for everybody and widening what is deemed acceptable for women to look like:

It made me feel like you're fine, you don't need to change. This is perfect. That's what it does. It doesn't make you feel like you need to do anything more than you are already doing. You're just perfect as you are. That's what the advert tells me, both of them. (P7: 245-247)

It made me feel very positive in a way that we're becoming the society that basically lets us be whoever we want to be and however we feel good. That doesn't tell us that we have to do this or we have to be that in order to be either feminine or just you know be able to exist in public. (P11: 8-11)

The message received by the adverts of not needing to change the self was viewed as a welcome shift from norms of promoting women to engage in behaviours to alter their appearance.

LYB adverts were perceived as portraying a message of choice and freedom to women:

But I feel like they do make me feel like I have more choice, rather than, this is the way that women do things, this is the way that you should do

it. So it sort of makes me feel like I've got more freedom to do what makes me feel better and what makes me feel more confident, rather than just sticking to the path that other women have sort of set out. (P10: 398-403)

The messages of 'freedom' and 'choice', portrayed in the advertisements, to not have to follow a set way regarding expressing self-care or confidence was deemed liberating.

The message of 'choice' in the advertising campaigns was deemed particularly positive by participants in relation to relieving pressures they experience in society to have to reject adhering to beauty standards if choosing to identify as a feminist. The Dove advertisement was perceived to relieve this pressure by setting a norm of being able to identify as a feminist and adhere to beauty norms simultaneously.

It feels like, you won't be judged, I guess that's what it is. It feels like, because right now we're in a time where there's a lot more feminism. So I feel like, even though its for our benefit, it can also make us feel like we're still under a bit of pressure cause I have seen some people try to make it a norm where we don't shave and kind of shaming people for shaving their arms because it's a whole stigma of the past influence. And this video made it feel like, no if you want to, that's also perfectly fine, If you want to do anything to yourself, dye it red if you want, that's fine, don't let anybody tell you what you should or shouldn't do, so that's what the video said, it's like don't let anyone make you feel like you shouldn't do what you want to do. (P7: 193-201)

By the advert portraying women shaving their underarms whilst identifying as a feminist, this relieved a sense of shame and judgement for participants around choosing to adhere to beauty norms themselves. A notion of choice presented regarding engaging or not engaging with beauty practices was deemed liberating.

Participants reported that LYB advertisements, although not perfect, represented the direction that society should be moving towards:

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I just think that these adverts are better than not having any, I think it's a step in the right direction. Like because it's better to sort of at least, even it if they're doing it wrong, or how people might see wrong, it's better to at least kind of get it out there. (P4: 584-87)

I think they're good, they kind of just, I think that they're going in the right direction. They're quite, they're obviously making steps to try and make women more body positive and things like that. But I think there's still things that they could improve on. But it's a good step compared to what used to be on the telly. (P10: 214-217)

Participants acknowledged that improvements could be made to the advertisements but also perceived them as sending a beneficial message to women and a better alternative to traditional advertisements.

LYB adverts becoming a norm in society was felt to be particularly helpful for younger generations:

I think they're definitely a lot better and especially for young people growing up, seeing these adverts and compared to maybe what people grew up with, I think will have huge impacts on collectively a whole bunch of stuff, but these adverts included will have a big impact on how people see themselves and see others. (P13: 131-134)

LYB advertisements were perceived as having the power to positively influence how younger women will view themselves and others.

3.3.1.2 Sub-theme 2: "I need to be perfect, but I also need to look like I don't care": Advertising as setting a new problematic norm

Eight participants expressed that LYB adverts set a new social norm in a problematic way for women. Rather than freedom from conventional beauty standards, they were understood as creating a new and unhelpful social norm for women to adhere to, in terms of body size and subjectivity.

Participants spoke of LYB advertising promoting a new norm of a 'curvier' body type, shifting from a previous norm of a 'thin' body size.

> The beauty standards are always changing, like let's say like, five or six to ten years ago the in thing was you had to be stick thin. These days it's kind of just like oh no, you don't, we don't want stick thin women we want the voluptuous women, we want women with backside we want women with a small waist; so the beauty standard is always changing. (P9: 69-73)

A frustration was expressed by this participant of advertising flippantly changing beauty norms for women to adhere to, with an acknowledgement that the trend of a 'curvier' body promoted in LYB advertising will be a temporary norm, just as 'stick-thin' was a norm previously.

Participants discussed that LYB advertisements are creating a problematic norm for women to be confident about their appearance:

> I need to be perfect, but I also need to look like I don't care, I need to look like I'm a feminist and a free woman. (P14: 273-274).

The unfair pressures and expectations placed on women are discussed here; of simultaneously needing to have the 'perfect' physical appearance and work on the inner self and display a sense of confidence, positivity and appear liberated from beauty norms.

Participants discussed that representing women in bigger bodies could promote unhealthy lifestyles and the promotion of 'obesity'.

> I know, this could be portrayed as me being what's called, like fat phobic or something, but I'm not at all. But the thing that I do find is when you see these women who are overweight, you know, they feel great about their body, good for them, love that. And think they look awesome. But in terms

of the health connotations, I'm kind of thinking, you know, we need to be doing that, absolutely telling all women to love their body, but also we need to be talking about health, and looking after your body as much as you can, and you know, put in that as well in the forefront, as well as you know, any shape or size or any ethnicity, but we have to talk about our health as well. (P12: 353-361)

Portraying 'overweight' women feeling confident in their bodies was viewed to be promoting a problematic norm of poor health; the assumption being that having a bigger body is equated with a lack of care for the body.

3.3.2 Theme 2: Ambivalence about Included or Excluded Bodies

Participants expressed ambivalence about whether the inclusivity and diversity of bodies portrayed in the LYB advertising campaigns was sufficient.

3.3.2.1 Subtheme 1: "it made me feel included, and made me feel like I was part of the gang.": Adverts are changing for the better in terms of diversity

Ten participants perceived advertising campaigns as changing for the better in terms of diversity; they appreciated the greater range of diverse individuals portrayed in LYB advertisements. The Dove advertisement was particularly felt to be embracing diversity:

> I was like every woman who was in that video, looks completely different. They came in all shapes, sizes, skin colour. So it's just like an appreciation of the difference. It was nice. (P9: 221-223)

The women in the adverts were perceived as being entirely different from each other in terms of race and size. This sent a positive message of an appreciation of the differences between people.

Some women expressed relief at finally being included and represented in the advertisements:

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It just makes me feel more included, so being left out is just the worst feeling in the world, certain make up products, I know I can't use because of my skin tone so when I see a make up product or a make up brand that has a range for everybody to use, I'm more inclined to open my eye to it and say oh, I can actually look like this as well rather than looking away thinking no I can't. (P7: 150-154)

It made me feel included, and made me feel like I was a part of the gang. You know that normally you see adverts and the woman is stick thin and she's like five foot eleven, and you're just like, and then she's in this fancy car with this fancy guy and you're just like, I'm not really a part of your gang right now. (P9: 227-230)

Participants compared LYB advertisements with traditional adverts portraying white, thin, models which resulted in feelings of exclusion as this did not accord with how they view themselves. LYB advertisements were deemed different, seeing bodies similar to their own, led them to feeling represented and included.

3.3.2.1 Subtheme 2: "you still have to look a certain way before we can say that your body is acceptable": The exclusion of bodies

Thirteen participants were aware of the bodies that were absent in the LYB advertisements. They noted a lack of representation of particular groups, including people with; certain disabilities or visible differences, women who do not conform to conventional gender norms, trans men and women and women of different races or religion:

There's kind of like a lack of people in wheelchairs, for example, maybe bodies with, you know, kind of like disfigurements I think that would be quite helpful. (P6: 335-337)

And I think its just working on including like even more diversity, and like maybe not portraying them all as feminine and sort of that I don't know

how to word it but like, not possibly like showing the more masculine side. (P10: 220-222)

There's definitely a lot of room that will, I think is going to slowly happen. But portraying trans women and trans men. (P12: 227-228)

But yeah, to their credit, I do think that they had a good level of diversity, although I don't think they actually had any women that I would truly say were of colour with richer skin tones. And natural hair. I think the woman in the second advert did have natural hair, but again, she was fairly light skinned. (P14: 90-94)

There was acknowledgement of there being opportunity for more diverse portrayals of women in the adverts, particularly for marginalised groups.

Participants noted the exclusion of women in the LYB advertisements based on their body size. Some expressed that there was a lack of women in bigger bodies in the advertising campaigns:

I think, to be honest, even with kind of like showing bigger bodies or different bodies, there still is a little bit of a kind of like cut off point to what we're allowed to see. And I find a lot with like plus size models for example, they've got quite flat stomachs but they've got quite thick thighs. And, you know, like, a thick bum and things like that so I still think there is a little bit of, even though these adverts are better and they're still body positivity, there's still kind of like a cut off point. After these it's not really body positivity we're not going to showcase that. (P6: 177-184)

 I think, the average size for women is like 14 to 16, I think. And that's never, you know that's kind of shown but there's no really above that and even if you are a size 14 to 16, you still have to look a certain way before we can say that your body is acceptable. (P6: 227-230)

The use of 'plus size' models was perceived as still meeting conventional beauty standards. Frustration was expressed by this participant of the advertisements only portraying bodies up to a certain size and thus excluding women with bigger bodies; the implicit message being perceived that bigger bodies are unacceptable.

Participants expressed that through brands becoming more 'body positive' and showcasing women with bigger bodies, this leads to the exclusion of women in smaller bodies:

> The people who are naturally skinny kind of get forgotten because brands are trying to include the larger women more they're sort of forgetting the people that are naturally skinnier. (P10: 22-24)

This message was found to be particularly present in the Boots advert:

> As they're walking into the sea it's almost like they're looking down at like the girls laying on the sun loungers and I'm just like okay it's, not really body positive for someone who's skinny in my opinion. (P2: 14-17)

LYB adverts were perceived as reinforcing negative judgement of women with smaller bodies and therefore not accepting of all body sizes. A shift was noted of only smaller bodies being previously being valued, to now only bigger bodies being valued.

Participants highlighted the negative impact the exclusion of certain bodies could have on individuals.

> I just think I yeah, just unincluded not worthy, not pretty, you know, just not even in that same bracket. That's how I'd feel. Yeah, why can't I see myself reflected on there? You know, others see themselves reflected on there, so why can't I see myself? And especially with things like disabilities where you're going to have dealt with some nasty people and people who

don't understand you, you know, and I just think that you don't need that on top of that. We should all be worthy. (P4: 519-526)

The exclusion of marginalised individuals such as those with a disability was perceived as unjust; individuals not seeing themselves represented in the adverts reinforced a message of being unworthy.

3.3.3 Theme 3: Ambivalence about 'LYB' Advertising Maintaining a Focus on the Body

Ambivalence was expressed amongst women about whether the body being a focal point in the LYB advertisements was helpful or problematic for women. It was seen to be helpful in that by portraying varied bodies, this helps to elicit positive body image. However, more problematically, it was also understood as maintaining a preoccupation with the body.

3.3.3.1 Subtheme 1 "it really helps me, and many other women to stop worrying about the way we look.": The focus on the body is helpful for women
Thirteen participants expressed that the specific focus on the body within LYB advertisements was deemed as helpful for women; being exposed to diverse body types and bodies not meeting beauty norms was seen to promote positive body image for women.

The focus of women's bodies in the advertisements that are not adhering to beauty norms elicited positive emotions in relation to their own body.

> I'd say that, showing these kinds of bodies and the fact that woman do not have to be perfect like they can look however they want to, it really helps me and many other women to stop worrying about the way we look. (P11: 136-138)

Observing diverse bodies relieved negative feelings about their own body. It helped instil confidence in the body in it's natural state, for example feeling

comfortable to not shave their underarms and reduced appearance related anxieties.

3.3.3.2 Subtheme 2: "if they're a problem, then I'm what? Like, unfixable?": Problematic to maintain a focus on the body

Seven participants expressed that LYB adverts are problematic in that they are keeping women preoccupied with their bodies. The adverts were discussed as reinforcing the idea that a woman's attention should be centred on her body.

The Boots advertisement was perceived as promoting the idea that confidence is demonstrated through the baring of the body in the presence of observers:

> You know, is that act of being completely exposed the only way that I can be confident? (P8: 280-281)

> Specifically that Boots one. And they had sort of the like blue nail polish and dressed up quite nice and fancy and it made me question it because it still had things of like when they were feeling good in themselves, walking down that like little walkway bit towards the sea, it was still everyone looking at them like oh wow ,that's how I perceived it, and then questioning is it still reinforcing the whole like need to buy other things so that people look at you approvingly. (P13: 47-53)

Here, women discussed that the body is presented as a site to be observed by others, with womens' confidence equated with exposing their bodies to an audience. The promotion of buying a product to change your appearance in order to be judged positively by others was discussed; thus problematically maintaining the focus on the visual appearance of the woman's body.

The focus on the body in the adverts invited the women to compare their own bodies with those on the advert:

Oh, she doesn't have cellulite on her bum or she's curvy. But her curvy it looks nice. But my curvy doesn't look nice, kind of like that. So its almost like I was comparing myself as much as I was appreciating, and sharing, I guess, love and adoration for that woman, I couldn't help but in the back of my mind, or at the forefront of my mind to compare myself to them. (P9: 142-147)

This participant discussed that the display of the body in the adverts felt unhelpful as it encouraged negative comparisons to be made with herself and the models, noticing what 'flaws' (e.g. cellulite) she has compared to the women in the adverts.

Participants discussed that by LYB advertisements drawing their attention to an area of the body and highlighting the beauty norms that exist around it, this implicitly reinforced the same beauty standards. The Dove advertisements highlighted norms around women's underarms; participants discussed that this resulted in their attention focusing on their own underarms:

I'm not interested in armpit hair, like, that's the least of my worries. And I know that that's what they were trying to enforce that you shouldn't be worried about it. But it was like, well, should I be worried about it? Because it seems like a big deal to these women. (P14: 250-253)

I feel like I didn't pay enough attention to my armpits! (P1: 133)

Making reference to beauty standards around underarms appeared to reinforce a message to participants that the underarms are an area to be worried about, increasing their attention on this area of the body.

Participants discussed that the Boots advertisement portrayed women (who were deemed to meet conventional beauty standards) negatively evaluating their bodies, which could create discontent towards viewers own bodies.

I think that it can actually work the other way round as well like, oh should I feel bad cause I look like that even though I wasn't feeling bad. (P1: 69-71)

If they're a problem, then I'm what? Like, unfixable? (P4: 207)

Participants deemed the models' bodies as 'better' than their own bodies; observing them expressing discontent with their bodies sent a message that participants should be unhappy in their own bodies.

3.3.4 Theme 4: Ambivalence about the Nature of Advertising

Participants can be described as 'critically informed consumers'; when perceiving the LYB advertisements they expressed an awareness of the nature of advertising and it's links with capitalism and neoliberal ideology.

3.3.4.1 Subtheme 1: "It's like, oh yeah love yourself but also like get a lot of stuff.": perceived motivation of brands and links to capitalism

Nine participants showed an awareness of advertising's links to capitalism. They perceived the brand's ultimate objective as the generation of profit and promoting the engagement of women in consumerism. Participants doubted the brand's genuine care for tackling issues of oppressive beauty standards for women but maintained a pragmatic attitude, that although their motivations may not be genuine, LYB advertising was an improvement to previous advertising.

Participants perceived the brands' primary motivation as profit generation rather than caring about women:

It's not because you think it's time to take a moral or an ethical stance on something. It's because the producers and the people that are invested in it want to make money. (P14: 374-377)

I think they I think they just want people to keep buying products. I think people need to stop thinking that businesses care about you. They just care about your money like that's just the truth. (P14: 359-361)

Participants perceived LYB adverts as tapping into a current trend and co-opting the body positivity movement in order to generate sales:

Honestly I think in general it is just kind of just a financial game. I think you know they're kind of tapping into the body positivity movement, because it helps sales. (P6: 304-305)

Advertising as a capitalist institution was viewed as incompatible with taking an ethical stance and tackling issues of social justice for women.

Participants perceived LYB advertising to be a result of brands having to find a novel way to appeal to feminist consumers which they achieve by positioning confidence as something which can be acquired via the use of a product:

Well, the purpose of adverts is to try and make you buy their products isn't it, so ultimately the effect is to try and get women to think that they need something that's what an advert is doing. But it recognises that that old formula is outdated of you know making people feel bad about themselves to buy products so they're trying to use a new technique. And, and so it's trying to make women feel confident in expressing themselves and you can do that with our product. (P8: 316-321)

But it came back to the whole, like, yeah, it's telling you to just sort of love yourself and love your body but it's telling you to buy our products. It's like, oh yeah love yourself but also like get a lot of stuff. (P13: 41-44)

What is noted is that in order to keep women consuming products, rather than advertisers focusing on women changing their appearance through products, they instead create a new need of becoming confident, which they associate with purchasing a product.

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Participants expressed a pragmatic attitude; they acknowledged the nature of advertising may mean that LYB advertising's motivations to reduce body distress in women may not be genuine but viewed it as a better alternative to traditional advertisements:

> You know companies need to sell their products and they use adverts to do it, you know, so, yeah, in my opinion it's better than, you know, portraying that hate your body, cover it up with makeup or whatever. But, yeah, it's, it's kind of destined to be imperfect because of the history of what, you know, adverts, capitalism is. (P8: 70-71)

There is an acknowledgement here of advertising as central to a capitalist society which we live in, and as a result it cannot perfectly tackle issues of oppressive beauty norms. However it's messages were understood as a better alternative to traditional advertisements which perpetuate body dissatisfaction in women.

3.3.4.2 Subtheme 2: "it makes women seem like, they have to be positive and they have to be smiling and happy all the time": advertising and neoliberal ideology.

Eight participants perceived the nature of advertising as; creating a need, making women feel like they're lacking and promoting the idea of self-improvement. This can be understood as 'neoliberal discourses' within LYB advertising. Neoliberal ideas have shifted beyond the sphere of economic discourse and are understood as an everyday ideology that characterises all individuals as self-optimising subjects who will work hard, remain positive and who will take full responsibility for all aspects of their lives and well-being (Gill & Kanai, 2019).

Participants discussed the manipulative and powerful nature of the advertising industry, working to constantly shape ideals for women to aspire to. LYB advertising was perceived as working in this same way.

> Yeah they're still setting the standard, they're still shaping it, they're still making women feel like you, you can't have a norm that we don't think is

acceptable. It's only, you're only comfortable to have it because we think it's acceptable. (P14: 43-45)

It's, it's kind of making this situation a bit worse. And it's almost like, you're just, you're keeping women dependent on what on for you to tell them what the beauty norm should be by advertising. You're now just saying it's okay for you to do that, rather than it just being like, Oh, she's got underarm hair. (P14: 38-42)

What is highlighted is the advertising industry's power over women, keeping women dependant on them to tell them what is acceptable; maintaining women in a position of striving to be different and working on themselves to meet an everchanging norm.

Participants perceived implicit messages within LYB advertising as encouraging women to be self-optimising; pushing women to be the best versions of themselves:

Um, I think, on one hand, I think I do appreciate when people love themselves. I think we as a society kind of push ourselves to be the best versions of themselves we can be and sometimes that's not necessarily accurate and it's not doable. Erm, but I think sometimes, it puts pressure on you, to have to love your body at a certain time, and it's just, it doesn't really work like that. You know, it's great to see other people celebrate it but then if you kind of don't feel that celebration then where do you stand? (P6: 260-265)

Once again it's into this theme of it's strive towards but I don't always achieve. And I was just reflecting on that last answer and how much in each situation I was comparing myself to them. And my own, worth of my body and I think that's definitely something which I do even though I'm desperate to get to the loving your body part and I've had good times bad times. It's definitely a hard thing to do. (P13: 227-231).

A felt pressure to strive towards achieving a state of loving the body was experienced by participants, with the acknowledgement of the difficulty in achieving this idealised state.

Neoliberal discourses of 'remaining positive' were perceived to be present in LYB advertising. Participants discussed the adverts as portraying women who are feeling happy and confident in their bodies; creating an expectation for women to show this same confidence in their bodies:

> I think it makes women seem like, they have to be positive. And they have to be smiling and happy all the time. Which is not how we are you know we have like, you know, bad days, and we have, you know, some of us get really angry. And some of us just, you know, don't know, it's just they should promote women being more real in general. (P12: 296-300)

The adverts were perceived as exhorting women to adopt new forms of subjectivity, ways of being in the world and thinking about the self, because they are – like most adverts – idealisations, but they also failed to accord with women's lived experience.

In line with neoliberal discourses which promote individual responsibility, where women's lives are understood to be unconstrained by social structures or power imbalances (Gill, 2007; Lazar, 2014), participants discussed the conflict of the social context which discriminates against women based on their appearance which makes the individual 'choice' of 'loving your body' a difficult task:

> I thought it was very hypocritical in that way just pretty much just telling you, you should feel alright but from the beginning almost telling you that your body is not okay or accepted by society. (P1: 88-90)

A contradiction of the advert promoting a message of an individual choice to "feel alright" whilst simultaneously drawing the viewer's attention to the societal messages which promote damaging beauty ideals for women was noted.

Participants discussed a conflict in the adverts of promoting confidence in bigger women and the reality of weight-based discrimination prevalent in society which makes loving the body difficult.

> I think it's hard because if you start feeling better about those adverts or feeling that way but then in reality people are treating you the other way, then you have a lot of conflict. So let's say for example that people are more accepting of I don't know that, that curvier girls but then if you go on tinder and you don't get any match then I guess there might be a conflict. (P1: 552-555)

> When a doctor turns around and tells you, you need to lose weight, but then they're putting out adverts like this, saying it's okay to be chubby, hmm, you've been given two mixed messages. (P2: 246-249)

A contrast is discussed here of idealisations in the advertisements portraying a message of acceptance of bigger bodies and the reality of the lived experience of weight-based discrimination, for example on dating sites or in the healthcare system, which persist regardless of whether an individual can change their inner state and feel confident.

3.4 Visual Thematic Analysis of LYB Advertising Campaigns

The themes from the interviews are presented in a thematic table below (Table 2). A Thematic Map is provided in Appendix 26.

Table 2

Themes and Sub-themes of LYB Adverts Analysis

Theme 1: Bringing it Back To The Body	Subtheme1: Close up camera shots of the woman's body
	Subtheme 2: Women closely observing own and other's body parts
	Subtheme 3: Baring the body as a demonstration of confidence
	Subtheme 4: An exaggerated loving your body or confidence in the body
Theme 2: A Transformative Journey to Empowerment and Self Love	Subtheme 1: An effortless transformation
	Subtheme 2: An effortful journey to self-improvement
Theme 3: Paradoxical Messages	Subtheme 1: The paradox of challenging societal norms via

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	individual effort
	Subtheme 2: the paradox of referring to problems of traditional standards but implicitly reproducing the same traditional ideas.
	Subtheme 3: Paradoxical messages of: "you're great as you are, but buy this product to change yourself"

3.4.1 Theme 1: Bringing It Back To The Body

LYB advertising campaigns maintained a focus on the woman's body, sending an implicit message that the woman's body is her primary value. Reminiscent of traditional advertising campaigns, the woman's body was portrayed as a site or object for observation. However, in contrast to traditional adverts, the body was positioned as a site for observation for the women themselves, or for other observing women, rather than the typical 'male gaze' (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

3.4.1.1 Subtheme 1: Close up camera shots of the woman's body
Images of women in traditional media frequently separate a woman's body or body parts, from the individual they represent (Kilbourne, 1994). Paralleling this, LYB advertisements frequently showed close up camera shots of parts of the woman's body, without her face in view. An example of this was in the Dove

advert; a close up camera shot was shown of a woman's underarm as she held up her arm while the majority of her face was hidden from view.

3.4.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Women closely observing their own or each other's body parts.

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) discuss how individuals internalise an objectified perspective through a process known as self-objectification. Those who self-objectify view their own body from a third-person perspective, understanding their bodies as an object to be evaluated and critiqued based on appearance rather than a subject with agency. Similarly, Gill (2007) discusses the idea of 'self-surveillance' which encourages women to monitor, discipline, and survey themselves. In line with these ideas, the LYB advertisements portray women closely observing their own or other women's body parts. This was observed in the Dove advert where there was an image of a woman lifting up her underarm; she was looking down, looking closely at her own underarm.

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The implicit message is that the body is an object to be closely observed and monitored.

3.4.1.3 Subtheme 3: Baring the body as a demonstration of confidence.

In the advertisements, the body was exposed as a was a way of representing confidence in the women. In the Boots advert, the two women were walking onto the beach whilst wearing bikinis and sarongs. The women's bodies were being observed by a critical audience as demonstrated by other women watching them with a judgemental expression.

The women proceeded to remove their sarong and dance confidently together in the sea in front of others. Both women were wearing bikinis, their naked thighs, stomach, chest and arms were exposed.

The implicit message presented is that exposing the body in front of a critical audience is an expression of confidence. This message was similarly portrayed in the Dove advert, the audible narration stated:

"Come on and watch me now".

This narration invites others to 'watch' them as they bare their body with confidence.

3.4.1.4 Subtheme 4: An exaggerated loving your body or confidence in the body.

The women expressed an exaggerated positive emotion or confidence whilst focusing on an area of the body. This was implicitly contrasted with traditional advertisements where the focus is typically on women expressing dislike towards an aspect of their bodies. This exaggerated positivity was observed by women smiling and dancing with self-assured, confident poses whilst revealing a part of their body. A sense of positivity throughout the adverts was observed through the use of bright colours and high energy music. For example, in the Dove advert, women revealed their underarm hair and positivity about this was shown through the women displaying a wide smile or dancing. Bright colours such as the turquoise or yellow background also contributed to a feeling of positivity.

The Dove advert also associated a body part with a strong positive emotion through the verbal and audible narration stating:

> "You can have hair and you can be happy" and "I don't cover up anymore, I love showing my underarms" .

Having hair under the arms was shown to elicit strong positive emotions of love and happiness.

3.4.2 Theme 2: A Transformative Journey To Empowerment and Self-Love

The advertisements portrayed the women to be on a journey of self-improvement, a personal and transformative journey to reach an end goal of

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empowerment, self-love and freedom from conventional beauty standards,. This transformation was presented as simultaneously effortless and effortful.

3.4.2.1 Subtheme 1: An effortless transformation

A transformative journey depicted in the advertisements appeared effortless, easy and almost 'magical'. Both advertisements portrayed an effortless transformation of the way women are portrayed in the media; from oppressed by beauty standards to empowered and liberated. This was exemplified by both adverts commencing with presenting examples of 'traditional' advertising campaigns, depicting women who met the 'thin-ideal' or who posed seductively at the camera as if for the 'male gaze'. The serious poses evoked a negative and sober mood in the advert symbolising oppression from beauty standards.
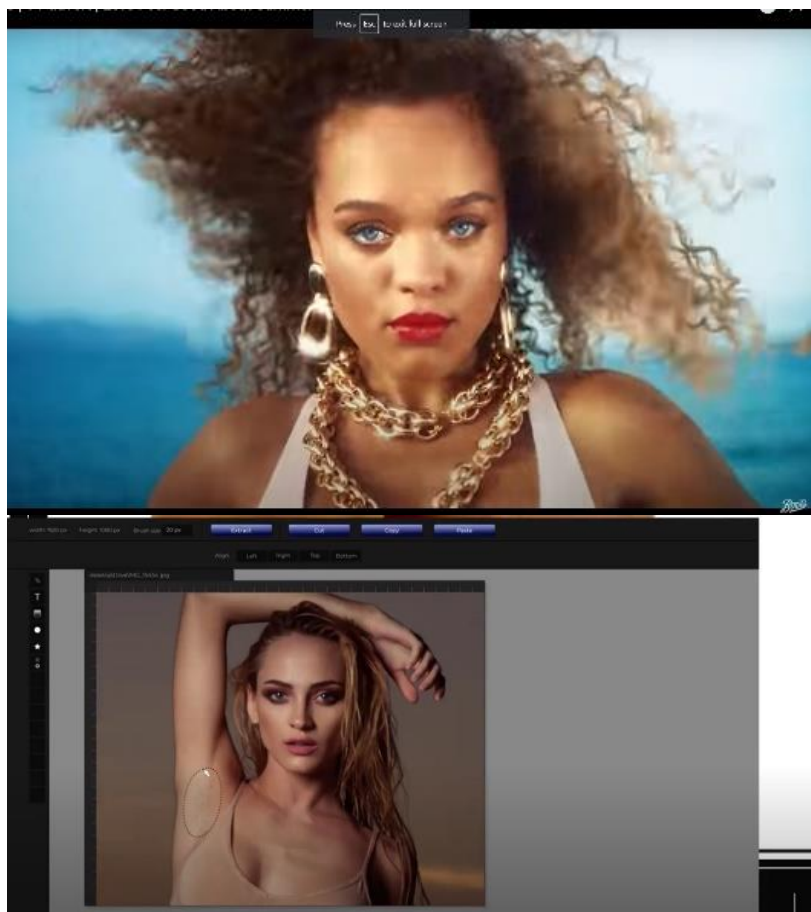
A swift transition took place, to the current advert which portrayed 'empowered' women who are now 'liberated' from beauty norms. This transition was portrayed

through a shift to a positive, energetic and fun mood. Women were shown to be happy through smiling and dancing, and adopted confident, care-free and self-assured poses to demonstrate their new sense of empowerment.

In both advertisements, the women themselves were represented as empowered and liberated from beauty ideals, again this transition was portrayed as effortless. This was demonstrated in the Boots advert where two women laughed at the billboard of a traditional advertising campaign displaying a conventionally attractive model. The women proceeded to make fun of this model posing; as if suggesting that they were unaffected by and liberated from these ideals, so much so that they are able to laugh at it.

Similarly, in the Dove advert a woman stated:

"I don't cover up anymore, I love showing my underarms".

This suggested an easy transition had occurred, from hiding her underarms to exposing them with no context of how this transition had occurred.

3.4.2.2 Subtheme 2: An effortful journey of self- improvement: the self and the body as a project to be worked on.

This transformative journey towards the goal of empowerment and self-love was simultaneously portrayed as effortful, requiring the overcoming of certain challenges. The implicit message portrayed was that the body and the self are projects to be worked on. This is in line with ideas from Scharff (2016) and Gill (2017) who discussed the "affective life" and "psychic life" of neoliberalism where neoliberalism is understood to be increasingly operating through psychological modes in which women are called on via the media to not just work on their bodies, but to work on their subjectivity (Gill & Kanai, 2019). This was exemplified in the Boots advert where the lyrics stated:

"we're going to look supreme, like fierce beauty queens."

This introduced a new norm of looking 'supreme', and like a 'beauty queen', reinforcing the importance of working on the physical self, as well as the use of the word 'fierce', reinforcing a message of feeling confident in the self.

This effortful transformation was demonstrated again in the Boots adverts. The women moved from feelings of self-consciousness about exposing their bodies in front of others, as shown by the women's facial expressions of anxiety, to feelings of 'loving their body' as shown by them ripping off their shawls with confidence. Here, an idea was presented of women overcoming a psychological challenge, having built up the courage to expose their bodies as well as overcoming social challenges by transitioning to not caring what others think of them.

3.4.3 Theme 3: Paradoxical Messages

Paradoxical messages were shown to be portrayed in the LYB advertising campaigns.

3.4.3.1 Subtheme 1: the paradox of challenging societal norms via individual effort

Paradoxical messages were portrayed as the adverts drew the viewer's attention to the societal messages which promote damaging beauty ideals for women but located the solution within individual women. An example of the adverts positioning the problem in the social context was in the Dove advert which highlighted a statistic of:

> "88% of women feel society promotes an "ideal" underarm".

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88% of women feel society promotes an "ideal" underarm

Paradoxically, the solution was placed within the individual to change, that is, to 'chose' to 'love yourself as you are'. This individual choice was portrayed through women exposing their bodies and looking confident whilst doing so (as discussed in section 3.4.1). The audible and visual text also reflected this individual responsibility. The Boots advert's audio narration stated:

"Let's feel good about summer",

"The time has come for us to show the way we feel"

"It's time to shout, I am going out!".

These statements exhort women themselves to do something differently such as choosing to "feel good" as opposed to the social context changing.

Furthermore, an implicit message presented was that if a woman decides to not adhere to beauty standards then she will not be held back or judged in society. This was exemplified in the Dove advert where the audible narration stated:

"My dark marks don't hold me back"

"My hairy underarms do not define my womanhood".

Here, the adverts portrayed a lack of acknowledgement of the fact that if women make individual decisions to not adhere to beauty norms, these oppressive beauty norms do not cease to exist for women, that they may continue to be held back in society if they do not adhere to beauty norms.

3.4.3.2 Subtheme 2: the paradox of referring to problems of traditional advertising but implicitly reproducing the same traditional ideas

Both advertisements referred to traditional advertising campaigns in order to highlight their damage to women. Paradoxically, through doing this, they repeated and reproduced the same traditional ideas which they claimed to oppose.

For example, in order to promote a message of challenging traditional beauty standards, both adverts showed examples of traditional advertisements, implicitly reminding viewers of the norms of; thinness, whiteness, being able-bodied, hairlessness and female objectification.
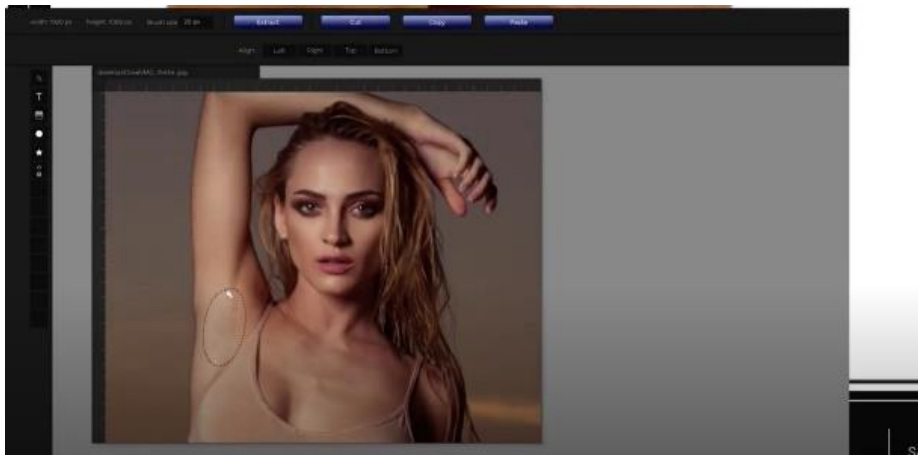
The audible narration in Dove further reproduced the beauty norm of underarm hairlessness by stating:

"they must be smooth".

This brings the viewer's attention to the idea of hairlessness as a pressure to adhere to. The traditional advert shown in the Boots advert read:

"Are you summer ready?".

This reproduced norms of having to change the body before exposing it on the beach.

The adverts brought the viewer's attention to problematic traditional advertising campaigns in order to highlight how 'new' and ostensibly different their advertisements are. Paradoxically, in their 'new' adverts, the same traditional

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visual tropes continued to be used. In the Boots advert, the women featured were not dissimilar from the women in the traditional adverts, they were also slim or average sized, able bodied, white or mixed race, hairless and posing in bikinis.
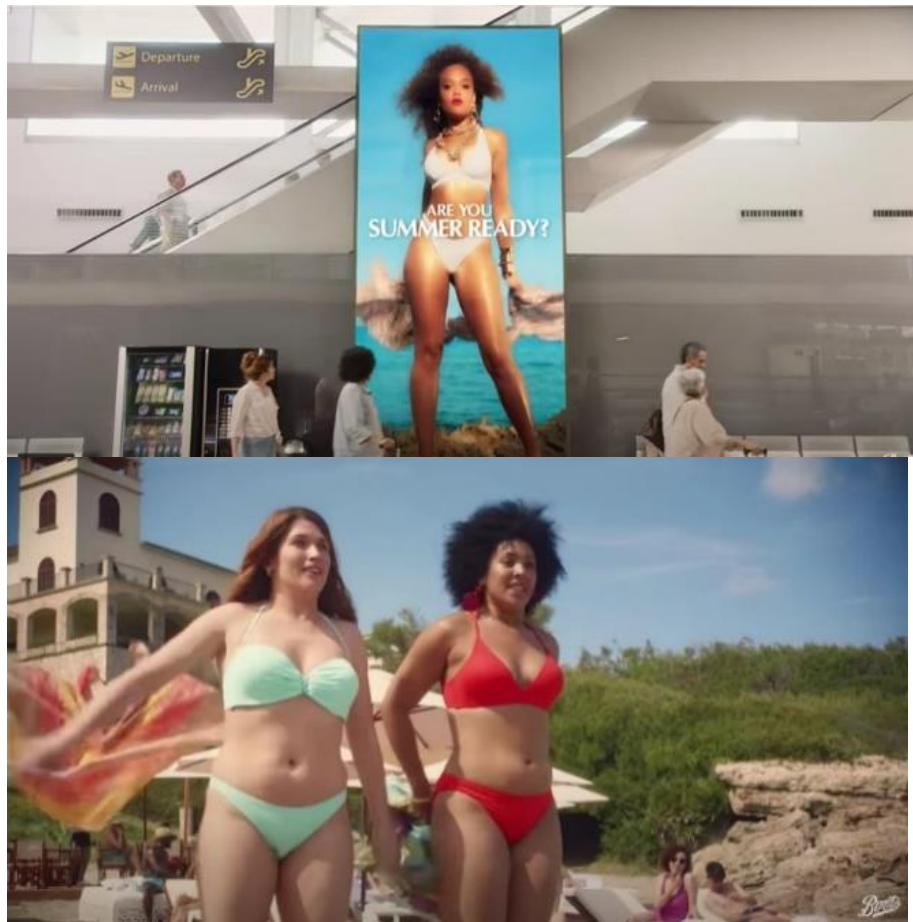
Furthermore, similar visual tropes of objectifying the woman's body (as discussed in section 3.4.1) were portrayed in both the traditional and 'new' adverts, as exemplified in the Boots advert, where close up shots were shown of the models' bodies.
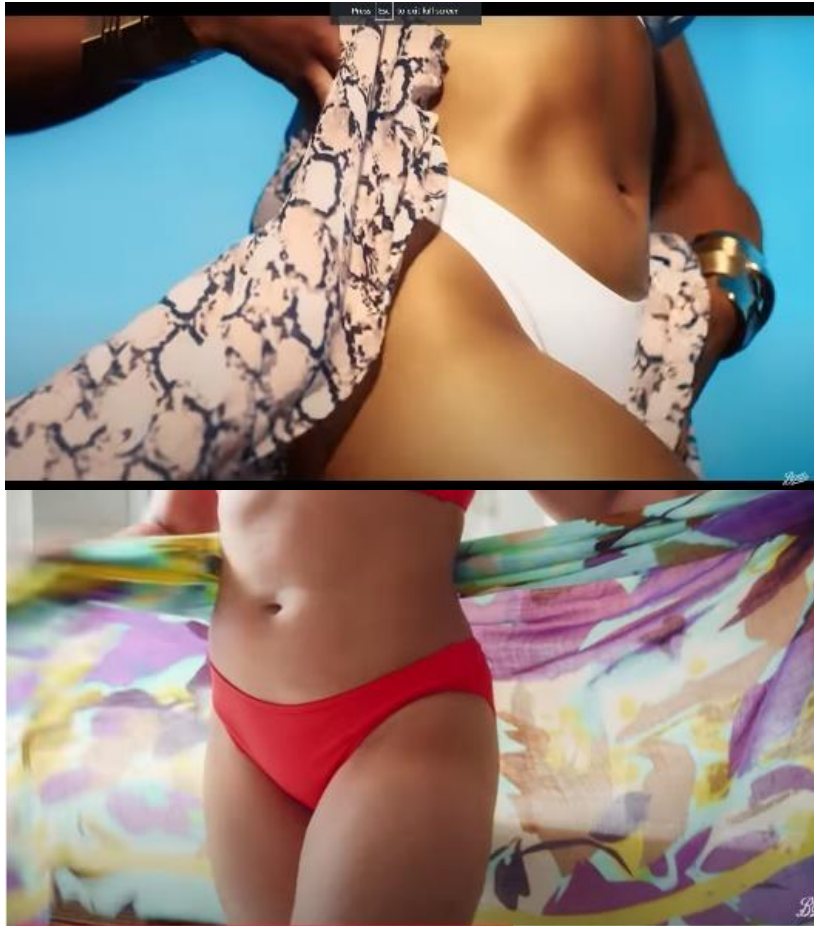
Another traditional idea that was maintained was the norm of traditional femininity. For example, although the Dove advert was not advocating for the conventional norm of hair removal, traditional femininity was implicitly reinforced through many women wearing colourful lipstick and jewellery. This was further exemplified in the Boots advert where the women applied nail varnish and the purchasing of gradual tan was promoted.

The audible narration in the Boots advert stated:

"I've got no doubt, we're going to look supreme, like fierce beauty queens."

The use of the term 'beauty queen' serves to reinforce beauty norms of traditional femininity.

Additionally, traditional ideas of maintaining the body were repeated in LYB advertisements although were presented in different way to traditional adverts. The message shifted from a focus on beauty per se to 'self-care' and looking after the body. The implicit message was that although women may not want to follow traditional beauty standards and use traditional beauty products, they are still encouraged to 'care' for their body, with products such as lotions, lip balm and hairspray rather than traditional beauty items such as make up or hair removal. An example of the use of 'self care' products being promoted was seen in the Boots advert, where a scene is shown of a woman applying a lip balm, in contrast to traditional adverts which may show the application of lipstick.

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3.3.3.3. Subtheme 3: Paradoxical message of; "You're great as you are, but buy this product to change yourself"

Paradoxical messages of freedom from beauty standards together with an implicit message of encouraging the purchasing of a product to change the self were portrayed. Products were positioned as the tools for self improvement or confidence. This was portrayed through women looking confident in their bodies with an association made with the brand or purchasing a product. In the Boots advert, women were dancing confidently in the sea, while the audible narration referred to the brand name Boots. It stated:

"Let's feel good about summer, at Boots"

In the Dove advert, the visual text stated:

"the only thing your underarms shouldn't be is a worry".

This was positioned next to the Dove logo.

Sending an implicit message that confidence and freedom from beauty norms can be attained through the brand.

This paradoxical message was further exemplified in the Boots advert where two women laughed at the billboard which states:

"Are you beach body ready?"

This signalled being unaffected and now liberated by beauty standards (as outlined in section 3.4.2.1), with a previous scene of a woman's hand grabbing a Dove gradual tan.

Thus reinforcing the same traditional standards of purchasing a product to alter the body's skin tone before going on holiday, together with a message of liberation from beauty norms.

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 Chapter Overview

Since 2004, a new type of advertising known as 'LYB advertising' began to increase in popularity. Although it may appear helpful for women, both feminist and empirical literature suggest that it may be more damaging than is known. The objective of this thesis was to explore both women's perceptions of the campaigns and the implicit messages in LYB advertising campaigns themselves. Overall it was hoped that this would make transparent the messages available for women in the public. Body image is a significant public health issue and advertising has a powerful impact on the way women come to understand themselves and their bodies. Therefore, messages which may impact on this in a potentially damaging way are important to explore.

In the subsequent sections, the main findings of the analysis of the interviews and adverts will be discussed in the context of the broader literature outlined in the literature review (sections 1.7 & 1.8). As there are a number of common elements in the themes of both analyses, they will be presented together within broader themes. By exploring both women's responses and the advertisements themselves, it was hoped that a greater understanding of how advertising achieves it's effects on women could be understood. Although this cannot be known for sure, speculations are made about the impact of specific content in the adverts on the participant's responses. Said another way, the women may be responding to aspects of the advertisements seen at a detailed analytic level.

Recommendations for practice, policy and suggestions are made for future research. A critical review is provided, with a discussion of the study's strengths and limitations. Reflexivity is discussed further and a concluding paragraph is presented.

4.2 Summary of Findings

The first research question was: 'How do women perceive LYB advertising campaigns?'. The second research question was: 'What themes are present in LYB advertising campaigns?'.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

4.3.1 Ambivalence

Participants expressed an overall ambivalence towards LYB advertising; they discussed both positive and negative perceptions which mirrored women's responses in previous qualitative research of LYB advertising (Beale, 2016; Millard, 2009; Scott & Cloud, 2008; Taylor et al., 2016). Although the ambivalence is not a novel finding in itself, through the analysis of the adverts themselves speculations have been made about the way the adverts are constructed which may have elicited such responses in women, which is a novel contribution to the literature.

The overall ambivalent responses could be explained by the adverts drawing on contradictory ideas which both signal a shift from problematic traditional advertising, eliciting potentially more positive responses, coupled with visual and verbal aspects that are reminiscent of traditional advertising, which may elicit more criticism from participants. Specific examples from the analysis will be discussed within the relevant sections below. It could be argued that maintaining ambivalence in female consumers is an intentional tactic by advertisers in order to generate less critical reflection or opposition towards the campaigns in order to maintain sales.

4.3.2 Social Norms

LYB advertisements were understood by participants as making a change to social norms, with ambivalence expressed about whether this change was helpful, in that they were making a change in society in the interest of women, or

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problematic, imposing further norms for women to adhere to. This accords with the literature which highlights advertising's ability to shape social norms and influence perceptions of; social reality, gender identity, 'ideal femininity' and beauty through representations in the adverts (Gerbner, 1998; Schroeder & Borgerson, 2015; Schroeder & Zwick 2004; Stephens et al., 1994; Thompson & Hirschman, 1995).

Ambivalent responses could be explained by contradictory messages in the adverts portraying a simultaneous effortless and effortful journey of transformation to self- love and empowerment. The effortless journey signalled freedom from beauty norms, which may account for some women's positive responses, coupled with more problematic messages of an effortful transformation, sending an implicit message that the body and the self are projects to be worked which may elicit more criticism as it is reminiscent of traditional advertising messages.

Participants' perceptions that LYB advertisements set a positive social norm for women accords with the empirical literature (Convertino et al., 2019; Rodgers etal., 2019, Selensky & Carels, 2021). A novel finding for empirical research on LYB advertising was that women perceived the adverts as portraying a message of 'choice' and 'freedom' regarding engagement in beauty practices. This was deemed particularly positive by participants in relation to relieving judgement if choosing to adhere to beauty norms whilst identifying as a feminist. This idea aligns with feminist literature which discussed that post- feminist messages in recent media aim to reclaim femininity for women by indicating that women have the power to engage in beauty practices, and still be a feminist (Hains, 2009). The pursuit of beauty is portrayed as a source of pleasure, agency and empowerment (Davis, 1995; Frost, 2001). This message perceived by women may be in the advertiser's interest to promote in order to maintain the consumption of beauty products by women who identify as feminists. The problematic norm perceived by women will be discussed within section 4.3.6.1.

4.3.3 Diversity

Participants expressed ambivalence about whether the diversity of bodies portrayed in the LYB advertising campaigns was sufficient. Some participants noted the exclusion of some marginalised groups such as individuals with a physical disability, women of different races, religions, transgender individuals and bigger women. This accords with research on traditional advertising, that the beauty norm is discriminatory; privileging white, thin and able-bodies (Goffman, 1979; Kilbourne, 1994; Nemeth, 2000; Taylor et al., 2005). It also aligns with participant responses in empirical research (Beale et al., 2016; Scott & Cloud, 2008) and with feminist literature which discussed LYB advertising as reinforcing normative bodies (Gill & Elias, 2014; Heiss, 2011; Johnson & Taylor, 2008).

The exclusion of individuals who identify as transgender in LYB adverts was a novel finding in LYB advertising literature. The exclusion of women with bigger bodies was also a novel finding for the empirical literature on LYB advertising, however accords with criticisms of the body positive movement generally (rather than specifically LYB advertising), that it is now representing conventionally attractive, thin white women expressing positivity about their bodies, (Cwynar-Horta, 2016; Sastre, 2014) overriding the traditional aims of the movement of challenging issues of discrimination against 'fat' bodies (Afful & Ricciardelli, 2015). The exclusion of women with a visible disability aligned with findings by Heiss (2011) who highlighted that Dove's depictions of beauty excludes bodies with visible disabilities.

In contrast, some participants expressed relief at finally being included and represented in the advertisements. This aligned with participants in Scott and Cloud's (2008) study who reported identifying more with the models than those in typical advertisements. A novel finding in the current research was that participants did not just feel more included compared to traditional advertising but expressed feeling truly included and represented. This may be due to LYB advertisements in the current study being more recent than those in Scott and Cloud's (2008) which was over a decade ago. Gill and Kanai (2019) noted the level of diversity increasing in recent LYB advertisements, thus participants may

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have felt that they were seeing women in the adverts that they identified with. Participants in the current study did not identify with some marginalised groups which were noted to be excluded in the adverts by participants, for example those with physical disabilities or transgender individuals. Thus, although the adverts may be increasing in diversity which may have allowed the current participants to feel included and represented, the level of diversity shown appears to still be limited as it is still excluding those from some marginalised groups such as disabled women, transgender individuals and larger women.

The exclusion of some marginalised groups from the beauty norm in the adverts has important implications. This may further disadvantage them, contributing to these bodies being deemed inferior to the ideal and reinforcing societal attitudes that marginalise those with bodies that do not fit the 'ideal' (Heiss, 2011). Particularly in campaigns which are about 'love for the body' and supposedly view all bodies as beautiful, this exclusion may send an even more harmful message than exclusion from traditional adverts, that these bodies are not within the lovable boundary.

Their exclusion may perpetuate the already disproportionate levels of body dissatisfaction in these groups (as outlined in the introduction) which is a significant public health concern. When taking an intersectional approach, some marginalised groups, such as bigger individuals, experience more weight stigma if female than if male (Diedrichs & Puhl, 2016). As LYB adverts are aimed at women, excluding women who belong to marginalised groups may further perpetuate this problem.

4.3.4 Objectification

Ambivalence was expressed amongst women about whether the body being a focal point in the LYB advertisements was helpful (in that portraying diverse bodies helps to elicit positive body image) or problematic for women (in that it maintains a preoccupation on the appearance of women's bodies) in line with objectification theory outlined in the introduction (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

This is a novel finding for the research on objectification; the feminist literature is critical about the objectification of the woman's body more generally (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) and specifically within LYB advertising (Heiss, 2011; Luck, 2016) as outlined in the introduction, however women's responses suggest that the focus on the body's appearance is not wholly problematic for them. Participants' ambivalent responses could be explained by contradictory messages in the adverts. Reminiscent of traditional advertising campaigns, the women's bodies were portrayed as an object for observation; their bodies were observed by a critical audience, frequent close up camera shots of parts of the woman's body were shown without her face in view, women were portrayed to be closely observing their own or other women's body parts. This may have elicited more critical views from participants. Simultaneously, the body was exposed to a female audience and the women in the adverts expressed confidence whilst focusing on an area of the body. This contrasted with messages in traditional advertisements where the body is usually exposed for the 'male gaze' (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) and women are portrayed as expressing dislike towards their bodies which may have been viewed as a welcome shift from traditional advertising and thus viewed more positively.

Additional paradoxical messages were highlighted in the advert analysis potentially accounting for ambivalent responses; the adverts reproduced the same traditional ideas and visual tropes, such as, maintaining the body, which may have elicited criticism. However, in contrast, a message of maintaining 'self care' of the body rather than conventional beauty practices was promoted. Messages of 'self-care' for the body may align more with some feminist consumers views who may oppose oppressive beauty norms and 'self care' may be viewed as a helpful rather than problematic message which may reduce opposition from women. Therefore, although objectification appears to be present, in it's more subtle form it may elicit less criticism from women.
The focus on the body being perceived as helpful by participants (in that portraying diverse bodies helps to elicit positive body image) aligns with empirical literature (Convertino et al., 2019; Rodgers et al., 2019). The problematic focus on the body for women also accords with the empirical literature (Anschutz et al., 2009; Couture Bue & Harrison, 2019) and with the feminist literature (Gill & Elias,

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2014) which discussed that LYB adverts rely upon reproducing the same hateful discourse on the female body which they claim to oppose, reinforcing and repeatedly making visible the notion that the woman's body is inherently difficult to love (Lynch, 2011; Murphy, 2013).

Although the objectification of the body may be more subtle in the adverts and elicit less opposition from women, what remains unchallenged by LYB adverts is the association of successful femininity with image (Elphick, 2010) and the body as the defining feature of femininity (Gill, 2017). The body is still understood to be an object (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) to be closely observed and monitored (Gill, 2007). This has important implications as self- objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) is understood to be a harmful process for women as outlined in the introduction.

4.3.5 'Feminist Consumerism'

Participants expressed awareness of and ambivalence towards LYB advertising's links with capitalism. This aligned with participant responses in empirical literature (Millard, 2009, Scott & Cloud's, 2008; Taylor et al., 2016) and with the feminist literature which critiqued the campaigns' use of 'feminist consumerism' (Johnston & Taylor, 2008), a corporate strategy that draws upon feminism but changes the meaning of feminist messages by positioning consuming products as the means to achieving empowerment (Gill, 2008; Johnston & Taylor, 2008).

Participants' responses could be partly explained through messages highlighted in the advert analysis; a paradoxical message of products positioned as the tools for self improvement or confidence was noted. Ambivalent responses may have been elicited due to the adverts focusing on the purchasing of a product as being tied to self-improvement which was reminiscent of traditional advertising thus eliciting more criticism. However the association made between 'confidence' and a product, rather than the achievement of beauty via a product represented a distinction from traditional advertising, which may have elicited less opposition.

<u>4.3.6 Neoliberal Ideology</u>

<u>4.3.6.1 New subjectivity: confidence in the body</u>

Participants perceived 'neoliberal discourses' within LYB advertising including; encouraging women to adopt new forms of subjectivity (to be self-optimising and remain positive) in regards to the body and setting a new social norm of being confident in the body. Previous quantitative research (Kraus & Myrick, 2018) speculated that increases in negative discrete emotions elicited from body-positive advertisements was due to the adverts promoting a new unachievable standard of body acceptance which women may feel they do not reach. However as this was a quantitative study, women did not express this themselves, therefore it is unknown if this was the case, thus this finding was a novel for qualitative research.

Participants' perceptions corresponded with and could be explained by findings from the analysis of advertisements where an 'effortful personal journey' of self-improvement towards the goal of empowerment and self-love was portrayed, sending an implicit message to viewers of the body and the self as projects to be worked on.

Participants' perceptions align with the feminist literature which discussed how LYB adverts are implicated in an insidious regulation of women, moving from bodily to "psychic regulation" where women are tasked with not just working on their bodies but now they must also work on their subjectivity too and embrace a confident disposition (Gill & Elias, 2014; Gill & Orgad, 2015).

<u>4.3.6.2 Individual responsibility</u>

Participants discussed the problematic nature of LYB advertising promoting individual responsibility; the onus placed on women to change the way they feel about their body without acknowledgement of the social context which contributes to this problem, such as oppressive beauty norms and appearance related discrimination.

Similarly, the advert analysis observed a paradox of an implicit message of challenging societal norms via individual effort which could explain participants' perceptions. The adverts drew the viewer's attention to the societal messages which promote damaging beauty ideals but located the solution within individual women, to 'choose' to 'love yourself as you are', sending an implicit message that if a woman decides to not adhere to beauty standards then she will not be held back or judged in society.

Participants' perceptions also aligned with the feminist literature where LYB advertising was critiqued for promoting discourses of individual responsibility which communicate that women's lives are not constrained by power imbalances (Gill, 2007; Lazar, 2014) and it is the individual's fault if her gender holds her back (Gill, 2007).

Messages promoting working on subjectivity and individual responsibility are likely to be damaging to women. Pressurising women to adopt a confident disposition in regard to their body and placing the responsibility on women to love their bodies could elicit shame and self- blame if they are unable to achieve this idealised state. This message also takes the focus away from reducing gendered beauty norms or appearance related discrimination that marginalised groups face disproportionately.

4.4 Critical Review

4.4.1 Research Quality Assessment

The quality of the research will be evaluated and assessed in the subsequent sections. The current research utilised steps by Nowell et al. (2017) to confirm that the analysis was trustworthy as described in the Methodology (section 2.7).

4.4.1.1 Credibility
To address credibility, the study employed several techniques as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The researcher ensured prolonged engagement

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with the data; the analysis was performed over a number of weeks to ensure immersion in the data. The researcher engaged in peer-briefing with the researcher's supervisor which provided an external check on the research process. Referential adequacy was examined by checking initial findings against the raw data.

4.4.1.2 Transferability

The researcher ensured transferability by providing 'thick' descriptions of themes (Appendices 23 and 24) to enable those who seek to transfer the findings to judge transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher reviewed the findings in comparison with prior literature, and they were found to be consistent.

4.4.1.3 Dependability

The research achieved dependability by documenting a clear audit trail (Appendices 27 & 28). Records were kept of the raw data, field notes and transcripts (Halpren, 1983). The author noted the development of codes (Appendices 18 & 20) and diagrammatically noted the connections between themes (Final Thematic maps are presented in Appendices 25 & 26 and provisional Thematic maps are provided in Appendix 11 & Appendix 12 to illustrate the process of the development of themes).

Detailed notes regarding the development of themes were written by the researcher (Appendix 27 & 28). Reflective journaling also established an audit trail (Halpren, 1983) and the notes in the reflective journal kept by the researcher (Appendices 15 & 16) provide auditable evidence to ensure that the study is trustworthy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The reflective journal documented decisions and rationales regarding theoretical and methodological issues as well as personal reflections (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Within qualitative research, true validity is related to the degree to which the research communicates something of importance to the reader and is useful (Yardley, 2007). The researcher considers the current study to be of importance and to have implications which are useful.

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4.4.2 Reflexivity Revisited

Personal reflections in regards to the research process were kept in the researcher's reflective journal in an attempt to reduce research bias. A critical realist stance was taken to the current research; as such the conclusions do not provide a 'truth' about women's perceptions of LYB advertising or the messages within LYB advertising, but are one perspective shaped by the researcher's personal and professional identities. I discuss these identities and reflect on research process in light of these experiences.

4.4.2.1 Identity as a trainee clinical psychologist

In my identity as a trainee clinical psychologist, I am familiar with adopting a therapist role. Facilitating an interview around body image in the context of a researcher rather than therapist felt challenging at times. During the interviews I noticed an urge to intervene, but instead ensured that I showed empathy and sensitivity at a level appropriate for a research context.

As a trainee clinical psychologist, I am educated in social constructionist perspectives and this informed my views of body image being a societal issue of inequality rather than an individual issue. Although most participants aligned with my views, a minority did not. I reflected that these interviews flowed less naturally. After reflecting on this I ensured I maintained effort to generate further responses from participants where our views did not align to make sure that I did not encourage only responses that aligned with my views.

4.4.2.2 Personal reflections

As a woman, where body distress can be considered a normative experience within myself and amongst my female peers, I feel a strong commitment to help minimise this problem. I felt a personal connection to women in the study who also experienced the same body image struggles and anger about the injustices of disproportionate pressure on women to meet beauty ideals. Connecting with

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the research specifically around appearance related discrimination disproportionately affecting groups with intersecting identities, such as; disabled women, women of colour, transgender individuals and larger women elicited feelings of anger related to the injustices experienced. I was aware that I had not had personal experience of this due to my privileged identify as a cis-gendered, able- bodied, white, straight sized woman and I became starkly aware of the different experiences I had compared to women of colour and bigger women participating in the research. Prior to the interviews and the analyses, I carefully reflected on my viewpoint to increase my awareness of biases that I may hold (in Methodology section 2.7.2). Writing in the research journal helped me to disentangle personal feelings from those from the interviewee whilst interpreting the data. I was aware of my potential to align with participants who shared identities with me. This prompted me to try and elicit more detailed responses from women whom I did not share as many identities with to ensure that the interview equally reflected their experiences of LYB advertising. Whilst conducting the analysis I ensured that I referred to responses from all participants without privileging any particular identities or viewpoints. Whilst analysing the advertisements, using a reflective journal helped me separate personal feminist views and influences from reading feminist literature from what I was actually seeing within the advertisements. Discussion with my thesis supervisor of the themes aided this reflective process.

4.4.3 Methodological Strengths

The present study's methodological strengths are the use of a relatively diverse sample. In contrast to studies that used predominantly white undergraduate women, this study included both undergraduate and postgraduate students from a range of ethnicities and religious backgrounds. This meant that issues of intersectionality could be considered throughout the research, eliciting an understanding of how women with various intersecting identities experienced the campaigns. From a quantitative perspective the diverse identities of participants could be negatively perceived due to the sample not being homogenous which may limit the generalisations that can be made from the research. Taking a qualitative and critical realist position, the diversity enables the elicitation of rich

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data. Furthermore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the only study to conduct both an analysis of the adverts as well as interviewing women to understand their responses to the same adverts, this helped gain an understanding of how the advertisements achieve their effects.

4.4.4 Methodological Considerations and Limitations

4.4.4.1 Thematic Analysis (TA)

TA was conducted to elicit an understanding of themes across interviews as opposed to the perspectives of individuals which felt most appropriate to answer research question one. However, this resulted in important aspects of individual women's experience of the advertisements potentially being missed which could have provided a richer and more nuanced understanding of women's perceptions of LYB advertisements. Specifically, the subjective and nuanced differences of how women with different intersecting identities experienced the advertisements was not able to elicited within a Thematic Analysis. The TA of the advertisements were conducted after the analysis of the interviews from participants which is likely to have influenced the themes generated from the advertisements. Analysis of the advertisements prior to the interview may have elicited different themes. However, even if conducted in the reverse order, one analysis would have inevitably influenced the other.

4.4.4.2 Participants

When recruiting for the study, it may have been known to participants that a feminist stance was being taken to towards the research. Participants may have provided socially desirable response in line with this assumption. As the participants were all university educated, this may have resulted in them being skilled in critical analysis which was observed in their responses, and many presented as critically informed consumers. Responses may have been different from women who had not be university educated. Although efforts were made to ensure the sample was diverse in terms of ethnicity and religion, the sample included women who were all; cis-gendered, able-bodied, and predominately straight- sized women, thus the experience of women from identities outside of this are not known. A topic that came up in the analysis of women's perceptions

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of the adverts was the lack of representation in the adverts of women with disabilities. It would have been important to have women with physical disabilities partake in the research so that their views on this could have been understood. In the demographic information sheet developed by the researcher for participants to complete, the researcher did not ask about whether the participant had a physical disability, therefore it was not known whether the research included experiences from those with disabilities. Ideas for future research including women with disabilities are outlined below.

4.4.4.3 Selection bias

4.5 Recommendations

The subsequent section discusses recommendations based on the findings of the current study.

4.5.1 Mental Health Services

4.5.1.1 Training to Health Care Professionals (HCP)

It is important for clinical psychologists and other HCPs working in the field of body image or eating disorders to be aware of the potentially harmful messages that may be contributing to their client's distress. Educating and training HCP'S could raise awareness of the messages that may be contributing to their client's body distress, allowing for the problem to be positioned within society rather than individuals when formulating their difficulties.

4.5.1.2 Policy change

Interventions for body image and eating disorders in the UK are often at the individual level (Holmes, 2018). Changing policies in the NHS to ensure that sociocultural factors such as the role of the advertising are incorporated into interventions for women with body distress would allow for these messages to be taken into account in treatment.

4.5.2 The Advertising Industry

4.5.2.1 Training and education to the advertising industry

LYB advertisements can be understood as a product of living in a neoliberal, consumer capitalist culture which advertising is a part of. A pragmatic approach whilst living in this society may be to seek out ways to actively engage with the advertising industry to reduce potentially harmful messages. Advertisers may assume that the adverts are beneficial for women due to them being an interruption to the thin-ideal and sending messages of 'empowerment'. Providing education and training about the potential harmful effects of LYB advertising could increase their awareness and understanding, ensuring that advertisers remain diligent about the social effects of advertising. Training could promote the examination of LYB adverts holistically in order to understand the interplay of both helpful and unhelpful messages that may be present simultaneously as discussed above. It could be considered naïve to assume that advertisers would change their adverts which may be causing harm to women due to the reality of living in a capitalist society meaning that the advertising industry's priority is centred on profit generation. However, it could be argued that if a brand were perceived by consumers to be actively engaging with advisors or psychologists around the potential harm of their adverts and working towards changing the problematic aspects of their adverts, this may improve their brand image which would in turn increase profit, thus may be a change that serves advertiser's profit agenda.

4.5.2.2 Regulatory changes in advertising

As the messages in LYB advertising could potentially carry harmful messages for women, changes to the advertisements themselves through regulatory changes could be helpful. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is an independent advertising regulator in the UK and recent rules by ASA have prohibited adverts from featuring harmful gender stereotypes (ASA, 2020). Body image researchers have advocated for the ASA to develop their policies to explicitly include body image and prejudice related to appearance (Women's Equality Committee, 2021). This recommendation could be developed further by ensuring that ASA policy includes an awareness of the more insidious and potentially harmful type of advertising (LYB advertising) in their policy.

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Body image researchers have also advocated for an increase in diversity in adverts including ethnicities, abilities, sexualities, gender, body shapes and sizes (Women's Equality Committee, 2021) which would be key.

Guidelines for advertisers could include the avoidance of messages where confidence is equated with the appearance of the female body, and instead could be related to factors unrelated to image such as achievement in work or sport. However, it is important to consider the limits of this and not underestimate the power of profit incentives as brands in the beauty industry use adverts to promote a product for the body which may mean the focus on the body may not be able to be completely eradicated.

4.5.3 Government and Public Health

Body image is a significant public health problem. LYB advertising could be contributing to problematic understandings of the body, for example by focusing on the woman's body and equating image with successful femininity. The exclusion of bodies may increase body dissatisfaction in these groups. The government should be aware of LYB advertising's potential for harm and should work with the advertising industry to reduce this.

The individualistic message in the adverts for women to challenge and resist the overwhelming dominance of the beauty ideal takes the focus away from real appearance related discrimination that some groups disproportionately face. Government should focus efforts on reducing the discriminatory nature of the beauty ideal which can lead to marginalisation, rather then promoting individual messages to love the body.

Government could design a national campaign to promote positive body image in women in order to counteract the potentially harmful messages in LYB advertising. These could include the focus on appreciation of what the body can

do, referred to as body functionality *(Alleva, et al., 2017)* rather than the focus on the image of the body.

4.6 Future Research

Current research on LYB advertising is limited. Feminist literature has analysed the advertisements themselves, however qualitative research specifically exploring women's perceptions of explicit messages of LYB in advertisements is limited.

As discussed in section 2.4.2, the original idea for this research project was to conduct focus groups with participants rather than individual interviews to allow women with various intersectional identities to discuss their potentially different perceptions of LYB advertising. As this was unable to be conducted due to Covid-19 restrictions, once Covid-19 restrictions lift, future research could be conducted with this format, ensuring that the focus group includes women of various; social classes, ethnicities, religions and disabilities etc.. Building on the intersectionality consideration, focus groups could be conducted for specific intersecting identities such as a focus group of women of colour, women with disabilities and transgender individuals, to gain a nuanced perceptions of how they perceive LYB adverts.

Future research could seek to understand advertising professionals' perceptions of LYB advertising to elicit an understanding of their motives behind LYB advertising; for example if advertising professionals are aware of the potentially harmful nature of the messages or whether they knowingly draw on conflicting messages in the interest of selling products. Future research could seek to explore LYB advertising on platforms other than YouTube such as on the photo-based, social media site Instagram as this is a social media site used largely by women and the 'body positivity' movement has become popular on this platform in recent years (Cwynar-Horta, 2016; Streeter et al., 2019).

4.7 Conclusion

Overall, participants expressed ambivalence in response to two LYB advertising campaigns; Boot's advertising campaign: 'Let's Feel Good About Summer' and Dove's #ArmsUp. Positive responses from participants included; the adverts setting a positive social norm for women including liberation and choice regarding beauty norms, participants felt included and represented and the adverts were deemed to contribute to positive body image.

However, the analysis of the adverts as well as participants responses suggested a number of potentially harmful messages that may impact on how a woman may understand herself or her body, including; setting problematic norms for women to adhere to, excluding marginalised bodies, maintaining a preoccupation with the appearance of the body, pressuring women to be self- optimising and adopt a confident disposition related to the body and positioning the problem of body dissatisfaction on individuals rather than society. A number of opposing messages were found in the analysis of the adverts, some which are reminiscent of traditional advertising with simultaneous messages that represent a shift from traditional advertising, which could explain women's ambivalent responses. As body image is a significant public health concern, factors that may contribute to unhelpful understandings of the body must be addressed. Implications, recommendations, ideas for future research and a critical review of the research have been outlined.

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6.0 APPENDICES

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Appendix 1: Summary of Literature For Systematic Literature Review

<u>Quantitative Studies</u>

Author	Country	Aim of the study	Description of 'LYB' Advert	Participants and demographics	Study design	Findings of research
Anschutz et al. (2009)	US	Evaluated exposure of TV advertisements using average or plus size models on mood, body image and food consumption	Moving/ television advert Dove	N=110 Mean age= 20.05 years Students Ethnicity not specified	Experimental study	P in "real women"/ Dove condition felt sadder, ate less post commercial compared to than counterparts
Convertino at al. (2019)	US	Evaluated the impact of Aerie Real campaign on body satisfaction in comparison to images from traditional Aerie campaign	Aerie Real, (non-digitally altered) Print images	200 undergraduate female students Mean age =19.57 63 % Caucasian 18.5 % Asian 4.5 % African American or Hispanic, 7.5 %multiple	Experimental	no condition differences in total sample P with high appearance comparison showed smaller decrease in body satisfaction post exposure to Aerie Real images in comparison to counterparts viewing previous images.

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				ethnicities, 1.5 % other		
Couture Bue & Harrison (2019)	US	Evaluating effects of ostensibly empowering messages on women's feelings of empowerment and self-objectification.	US adverts Under Armour's Pantene Covergirl Video/ Moving images	Experiment 1 n=1,135 74% (100) were non-Hispanic White, *13%* Experiment 2 n=326. More diverse sample 65% non-Hispanic White, 13% Age 18-22. College women	Experimental	Post exposure to traditional ads and control.- higher state objectification 'empowering' ads primed state objectification. self efficacy (exp 1) and felt empowerment (exp2) did not differ by condition. Speech performance judged to be more empowered for those in 'empowerment' condition
Kraus & Myrick (2018)	US	Examined emotional responses to 'body positive' adsvs. traditional beauty ads	Dove 'Sketches' Video/ moving images	N= 132 female undergraduate students 86% were White average age of 21	Experimental	Body positive advertisement condition- stronger positive and negative emotions compared to traditional ads. Negative emotions to less of a degree than positive emotions.
(Plummer & Forestell, 2019)	US	Evaluated exposure to ads featuring thin or plus-size models on women's	Elle underwear ad ft.plus-size model Image	N=116 University students mean age = 19.2 years	Experimental	Watching appearance-related advertisements (with thin or plus-size models) versus a neutral

| | | implicit cognitive responses to food. | | 69.8% White, , 13.8% Asian,

4.3% other races.
13.8% Hispanic or Latina.

12.1% Black | | advertisement no affect on women's liking of foods.

plus-size models condition- may increase wanting of foods that are unhealthy

No group differences in measures of body dissatisfaction. |
| (Selensky & Carels, 2021) | US | Evaluated 'body positive' campaigns from weight stigma perspective | Video ads

Adverts shown in the US

Aerie Real "The Share Your Spark Experience"

Dove "Beauty standards of weight are a form of bias" | N= 475

2/3 white

Mostly average weight

Psychology undergraduate students. | Experimental | P in Dove and Aerie condition- increased self-esteem and positive affect.

weight bias and IWB unchanged. |

Qualitative Studies

Beale et al. (2016)	UK	Exploring perceptions of advertising images of "plus-size" models.	Dove's The Real Beauty Images of plus size models UK advert Implicit 'LYB' message. three ''Real Beauty'' advertising images	N =35 Psychology undergraduates N=25 White Age 18 to 26 years	Data collection: qualitative questionnaire Analysis: Discourse Analysis	P positively construed "plus size" images. derogatory / constricting as opposed to empowering constructions of femininity
Millard (2009)	Canada	examines processes of interpretation	Dove "Campaign for Real Beauty"- "real" print	N=16 Canadian women Age= 15 – 59 N=14 white N=1 African Canadian	Data collection: Interviews and focus groups Analysis:Guided by dramaturgical and social semiotic concepts	destigmatise participants non-normative appearance real' women in the images appealing more positive compared with other campaigns. skepticism about the hidden sales agenda gimmick' to increase commerce adds something to the world of

						advertising.
Rodgers et al.(2019)	US	Examined perceptions of the images in Aerie Real	Aerie Real, (not- digitally modified) Print images US campaign Implicit 'LYB' message.	N= 35 college women Age = 18-23 years) Female research assistants Age range= 21 to 29 Ethnicity unknown	Data Collection: Individual Interviews Analysis: Thematic Analysis	Positive reaction to images promote positive body image & acceptance, p called for increased portrayals of diverse bodies in media
Scott & Cloud (2008)	US	Women's responses to advertisements from feminist perspective	Dove Campaign for Real Beauty for firming lotion. Use of "real" women Images which features women who deviated from the thin-ideal.	N=12 Ages= 23 and 34 Ethnicities unknown.	Data Collection: Focus Group Type of analysis not specified.	advertisement understood as 'generic in diversity'. women outside of hegemonic beauty ideals rejected these images as 'real' use of digital manipulation or professional models discussed. manufactured nature of images but necessary in an advertising context of selling a product and an ideology of beauty and perceived the an improvement from 'typical' advertisements. corporate world's

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						misguided attempt to appeal to 'feminist consumers'. "women- friendly" company" but advertisements was understood as being devised by men.
Taylor et al. (2016)	Canada	Investigating young feminist women. How they understand the Dove campaign for 'real beauty'. From feminist perspective i.e. if campaign is compatible with their understanding feminism	The Dove CFRB Images	N=40 Age 20-30	Qualitative Focus Group Analysis Tourraine's (1982) 'sociological intervention' Critical sociology Unknown	Participants responses; disentangled opposite concepts like feminism and corporate profiteering. 'better than nothing' Pragmatic response- supported some idea of ethical consumption Hard to image alternatives to consumer capitalism.

School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION
For research involving human participants BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

REVIEWER: Cynthia Fu

SUPERVISOR: David Harper

STUDENT: Lily Edlin

Course: Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

Title of proposed study: "An Exploration of 'Love Your Body' Advertising and how this is Perceived by Women

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. **APPROVED:** Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.

2. **APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES** (see Minor Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is <u>not</u> required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <u>before</u> the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.

3. **NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED** (see Major Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

DECISION ON THE ABOVE-NAMED PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY
(Please indicate the decision according to one of the 3 options above)

1

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

Major amendments required *(for reviewer):*

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students)*:

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.

Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature):*
Student number:

Date:

(Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed, if minor amendments to your ethics application are required)

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?

YES

Please request resubmission with an adequate risk assessment

If the proposed research could expose the <u>researcher</u> to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

☐   HIGH

Please do not approve a high risk application and refer to the Chair of Ethics. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not approved on this basis. If unsure please refer to the Chair of Ethics.

☐   MEDIUM (Please approve but with appropriate recommendations)

☐   LOW x

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any).
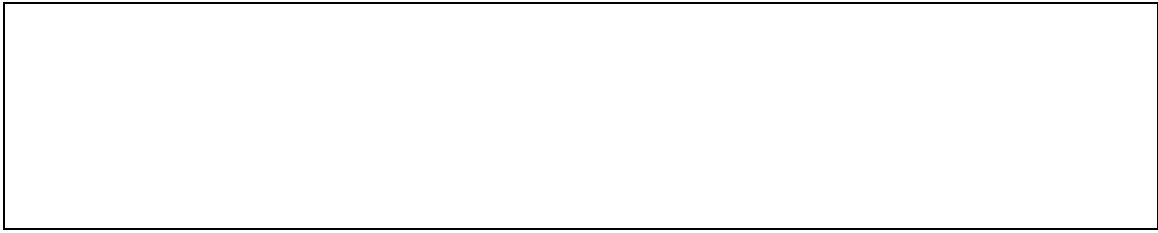
Reviewer *(Typed name to act as signature)*: Cynthia Fu

Date: 20 May 2020

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE:

For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UELs Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON
School of Psychology

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

FOR BSc, MSc/MA & TAUGHT PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STUDENTS

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for proposed amendment(s) to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology.

Note that approval must be given for significant change to research procedure that impacts on ethical protocol. If you are not sure about whether your proposed amendment warrants approval consult your supervisor or contact Dr Trishna Patel (Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee. t.patel@uel.ac.uk).

HOW TO COMPLETE & SUBMIT THE REQUEST

1. Complete the request form electronically and accurately.

2. Type your name in the 'student's signature' section (page 2).

3. When submitting this request form, ensure that all necessary documents are attached (see below).

4. Using your UEL email address, email the completed request form along with associated documents to: Dr Trishna Patel (t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

5. Your request form will be returned to you via your UEL email address with reviewer's response box completed. This will normally be within five days. Keep a copy of the approval to submit with your project/dissertation/thesis.

6. Recruitment and data collection are **not** to commence until your proposed amendment has been approved.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. A copy of your previously approved ethics application with proposed amendments(s) added as tracked changes.

2. Copies of updated documents that may relate to your proposed amendment(s). For example an updated recruitment notice, updated participant information letter, updated consent form etc.

3. A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.

Name of applicant: Lily Edlin

Programme of study: Professional Doctorate of Clinical Psychology

Title of research: An Exploration of 'Love Your Body' Advertising and how this is Perceived by Women.

Name of supervisor: Dr Dave Harper

Briefly outline the nature of your proposed amendment(s) and associated rationale(s) in the boxes below

Proposed amendment	Rationale
To change the participants from undergraduate to all students (including post- graduate students). In a previous ethics amendment, I increased the age range to be from age 18-25 years old to 18-30 years old but wanted to clarify that this was also to change from undergraduate students to all students at UEL.	To widen the participant pool.
To change the analysis of the advertisements from discourse analysis to Thematic Analysis and Polytextual Thematic Analysis	Discussed with supervisor and deemed to be more appropriate.

Please tick	**YES**	**NO**
Is your supervisor aware of your proposed amendment(s) and agree to them?	x	

Student's signature (please type your name):   Lily Edlin

Date: 01/10/20

TO BE COMPLETED BY REVIEWER		
Amendment(s) approved	YES	
Comments		

Reviewer: Dr Trishna Patel

Date: 24/03/2021

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UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

School of Psychology

Stratford Campus Water Lane London E15 4LZ

How are 'Love your body' adverts perceived by young women?

You are being invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this letter is to give you information that you need to consider in deciding whether to take. Before you agree it is important that you understand what your participation would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Who am I?   I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. As part of my studies I am conducting the research you are being invited to participate in.

What is the research about?   I am conducting research into 'Love your Body Advertising' and how it is perceived by women. My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that my research follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why have you been asked to participate? You have been invited to participate in my research as someone who fits the kind of people I am looking for to help me explore my research topic. I am looking to involve young adult women,

between the ages of 18 to 30. I emphasise that I am not looking for 'experts' on the topic I am studying. You will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and you will be treated with respect. You are quite free to decide whether or not to participate and should not feel coerced.

What is required of you if you decide to take part? If you agree to take part, you will be asked to attend a focus group with around five other female students from the University of East London. This will take place on UEL campus at a time that is convenient for all participants. If there is a 'lockdown' in place this may take place via Microsoft Teams or I may interview you on your own (e.g. via Teams or telephone). The focus group will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes in total. The individual interviews will take approximately 30 to 60 minutes. In this time, you will be asked to view around five recent advertising campaigns that portray the message of 'Love Your Body'. I will then facilitate a discussion about what you think of these advertisements. This will be like having an informal chat with participants. Questions will include what messages you received from the adverts and any benefits or potential harmful impacts that you could foresee these having on yourself or other women. The interview will be audio-recorded. However , you are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time if you later change your mind, even in the middle of the assessment (and the information you have provided will be destroyed and not used). Participants do not have to answer all questions asked of them and can stop their participation at any time.

Will what I say remain confidential? Yes. When I type up (i.e. transcribe) the interview/focus group I will change any details which might identify you (e.g. people and place names) and give you a pseudonym. I may use quotes in the write-up of the study (e.g. thesis or journal articles) but these will not identify you or other participants. A copy of the audio-file of the interview/focus group and the transcript of it will be kept on the researcher's computer in a password-protected folder but I will delete the audio-file from the rercorder as soon as it is stored on the laptop. Any personal contact details that I have for you will also be kept on the researcher's computer in a password-protected folder. In the unlikely event that you tell me that you or someone else is at serious risk of harm I may need to

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let someone else (e.g. my supervisor) know but, if possible, I would try to discuss this with you first. The data gathered for this study will be retained in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy

Who will see your anonymised data? My supervisor and examiners may request to see the anonymised transcripts. Readers of my thesis and of any publications may see anonymised quotes.

What will happen to the results of the research study? The results obtained from this research will be incorporated into a doctoral thesis that will be submitted to the University of East London. The thesis may be published in an academic journal in the future, however any identifiable data about you will not be included in any report or publication.

How long will data be retained for? Audio recording files and contact details will be deleted after examination. Transcripts will be kept for three years after the study and then deleted.

Will I get anything for taking part? You will not be paid for taking part in this study. However, people often find it interesting to discuss their views with others.

Do I have to take part? You do not have to take part in this study and should not feel under any pressure to do so. You are free to change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study.

What if you want to withdraw? If you choose to withdraw from the study you may do so without disadvantage to yourself and you do not need to give a reason. If you contact me within three weeks of the interview/focus group you can request that you withdraw from the study. After this time I will have begun to analyse the data and so I retain the right to analyse your anonymised data three weeks after it has been gathered.

What happens afterwards? I will be available to discuss any concerns or questions you have throughout and after the study.

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Who can I contact if I have any questions now? If you have any further questions, you can contact me on u1826612@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the study has been carried out, please contact: The study's supervisor: Prof. Dave Harper, Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ. (Email: D.harper@uel.ac.uk)

Thank you for considering taking part in this project.
Yours sincerely,
Lily Edlin,
Trainee Clinical Psychologist
November 2019

Appendix 4: Participant Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to participate in a research study

An exploration of 'Love Your Body' Advertising and how this advertising is perceived by women.

I have read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher involved in the study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without

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being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use my anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

……………………………………………………………………………….

Participant's Signature

………………………………………………………………………………..

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………………………………………………………………………………..

Researcher's Signature

…………………………………………………………………………………

 Date: …………………..……

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF LETTER

Thank you for participating in my research study on 'An exploration of 'Love Your Body' Advertising and how this advertising is perceived by women.' This letter offers information that may be relevant in light of you having now taken part.

What will happen to the information that you have provided? When I type up (i.e. transcribe) the interview/focus group I will change any details which might identify you (e.g. people and place names) and give you a pseudonym. I may use quotes in the write-up of the study (e.g. thesis or journal articles) but these will not identify you or other participants. A copy of the audio-file of the interview/focus group and the transcript of it will be kept on the researcher's computer in a password-protected folder but I will delete the audio-file from the rercorder as soon as it is stored on the laptop. Any personal contact details that I have for you will also be kept on the researcher's computer in a password-protected folder. In the unlikely event that you tell me that you or someone else is at serious risk of harm I may need to let someone else (e.g. my supervisor) know but, if possible, I would try to discuss this with you first. The data gathered for this study will be retained in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy

Who will see your anonymised data? My supervisor and examiners may request to see the anonymised transcripts. Readers of my thesis and of any publications may see anonymised quotes.

What will happen to the results of the research study?   The results obtained from this research will be incorporated into a doctoral thesis that will be submitted to the University of East London. The thesis may be published in an academic journal in the future, however any identifiable data about you will not be included in any report or publication.

What will happen to the data after the study has been completed? Audio recording files and contact details will be deleted after examination. Transcripts will be kept for three years after the study and then deleted.

How long do I have if I want to withdraw the data I have provided? Note: participants are usually given 3 weeks after data collection to request to withdraw their data (after which they cannot withdraw it, as data analysis will likely begin at this point).

What if I have been adversely affected by taking part? It is not anticipated that you will have been adversely affected by taking part in the research, and all reasonable steps have been taken to minimise potential harm. Nevertheless, it is still possible that your participation – or its after-effects – may have been challenging, distressing or uncomfortable in some way. If you have been affected in any of those ways you may find the following resources/services helpful in relation to obtaining information and support:

UEL Student Wellbeing Team

To access counselling and psychological therapies through The University of East London, please contact Student Support hubs on +44 (0)20 8223 4444 or email thehub@uel.ac.uk.

BEAT

If you require support for eating difficulties, you can access further support through BEAT. Their website is www.b-eat.co.uk. They have a free & confidential helpline services provide support and information 365 days a year onl 0808 801

0677. The helpline number for under 25's is 0808 801 0711 (Daily 3pm-10pm) or you can email: fyp@b-eat.co.uk.

You are also very welcome to contact me or my supervisor if you have specific questions or concerns.

 [Lily Edlin u1826612@uel.ac.uk]

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact the research supervisor [Prof. Dave Harper]. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,

Email: [d.harper@uel.ac.uk]

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Tim Lomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)

Appendix 6: Selection of Love Your Body Advertisements

Gillette Venus
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxbZsZ5mOQM

Gillette Venus
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNU2QHhvaB4

Boots
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOuSRUl-Pco

Veet
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suWSX6qE_v8

Weight Watchers
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQVtf3SJLpI

Diet coke
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7f8pA5qZGzo

Tu clothing
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_9cHxLCOoc

Boots: Let's Feel Good About Summer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9-BP94DA3w

Dove #ArmsUp
 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHRruWKKiDU

Appendix 7 : Links for Selected LYB Advertisements

Dove #ArmsUp

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHRruWKKiDU

Boots Let's Feel Good About Summer

 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9-BP94DA3w.

Appendix 8: Draft Interview Schedule

Messages they are getting from the advert
- What do you think is going on in these advertisements?

Initial Thoughts/ reflections
- What are your initial thoughts and feelings when you see these adverts?

Feelings provoked by ads
- How does it make you feel?
- How do they make you feel about yourself?

Comparison to other ads
- How is this different to previous/ more traditional advertising?

How others they know may perceive the adverts
- Have you talked about these types of ads with others?

Ideas of impact on women?
- What effects is it trying to have on women?
- What ideas do you have of how this can impact on yourself?

Diversity
- Is anything missing from the ads?

Consumption/ awareness of ads?
- What is your consumption of adverts?

Appendix 9: Final Interview Schedule

Initial thoughts/ reflections
- What are your initial thoughts and feelings when you see these adverts?
- What are your initial feelings when you see these adverts?

Messages they are getting from the advert
- What do you think is going on in these advertisements?
- What are the messages in these advertisements?
- What assumptions is it making about women?

Comparison to other ads
- How is this different to previous/ more traditional advertising?
- Are there any links between how traditional advertisements made them feel compared to the new LYB advertisements
- Is it better than ads that we're used to? - why/ why not?

Comparison to other adverts
- Have you encountered these type of ads before?

- E.g.- have you talked about this with your friends?

- What would your friends/ sisters say about this?

- Have you talked about these types of ads with others?

Feelings provoked by ads
- How does it make you feel?
- How do they make you feel about yourself?
- How do they make you feel about your body?
- Does it fit with how you see your body?
- How does it feel seeing this message?

Ideas of impact on women?
- What effects is it trying to have on women?
- What ideas do you have of how this can impact on yourself?
- What ideas do you have of how this can impact on other women?
- Do you think these new adverts may change how women feel about their bodies/ themselves?
- Does it feel problematic in any way?
- Does it feel unhelpful in any way?

Diversity
- Is anything missing from the ads?
- What bodies are we not seeing/ not seeing?

Consumption/ awareness of ads?
- What is your consumption of adverts?
- Do they notice adverts day to day?

Appendix 10: Recruitment Message

Appendix I: Recruitment Message posted on UEL Psychology Student Forum

Hi all, I'm looking to recruit UEL undergrad women aged 18-30 to participate in a research project for Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. The research is looking at 'Love your Body' advertising and how it is perceived by women. Please see link for more info and e-mail me u1826612@uel.ac.uk if you would like to take part. Many thanks, Lily Edlin, Trainee Clinical Psychologist. https://uelthesisbodyimage.wordpress.com

Appendix 11: Participant Demographic Information

Particip ant no.	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Course Studying
1	24	Latin/ Mixed	No religion	BSc Psychology
2	21	White British	No religion	BSc Psychology
3	21	Chinese	No religion	BSc Psychology
4	30	White British	n/a	BSc Psychology
5	25		No religion	Psychology
6	24	White British	No religion	Psychology
7	22	Black British	Christian beliefs	Psychology
8	25	White other	agnostic	Msc Psychology
9	24	Black (African) British	Agnostic	MSc Psychology (conversion)
10	18	White British	n/a	Bsc psychology
11	23	Other white	n/a	Bsc psychology
12	28	White British	Buddhist / Christian	BSc Psychology
13	20	White British	Spiritual	Bsc Counselling
14	27	White	Spiritual	Psychology

Appendix 12: Demographic Questionnaire

<u>Demographic Information</u>

- How would you describe your gender?
- How would you describe your ethnicity?
- If applicable, how would you describe your religion?
- What is your age?
- What course do you study at UEL?

Appendix 13: Excerpt of Interview Transcript

19. dove one of this kind of mixed message almost kind of don't be self conscious , but
20. do be self conscious, you want to tell me a bit more about how that made you feel.
21. I just was like, this is just ridiculous. Like, it's just armpits. It's almost like making a
22. huge campaign about it's okay for you to have armpit hair. It's almost like it's not like
23. reverse feminism, but they're trying to be Uber feminist. But it's like, You're, you're
24. kind of telling women who feel like they can have under underarm hair that it's okay,
25. society will accept that. Whereas like it shouldn't be. Their whole thing of the
26. campaign was like, you shouldn't worry about what's on your underarms, then why
27. are you making such a huge campaign about it? Why are you making it a thing, like,
28. just let the advert speak for itself. Like, it's almost like, they're trying to set the tone f
29. or a conversation that could be had by women from the advert by being like, Oh, she
30. had, um, she had lots of underarm hair that Oh, this one didn't, Oh, she had tattoos.
31. Oh, she had glitter That's quite cool. Like, and had it a bit more organic. But it's, it's
32. kind of like this Uber woke mentality where it's like, you're trying to act like this is an
33. organic thing, but you're just changing what the beauty norm should be. And saying
34. it's okay, women, we agree with what you think the beauty norm should be. So now
35. it's okay for you to think that that's a beauty norm that you can have. That's kind of
36. how it comes across, I think. And it's a shame because I feel like they are trying to do
37. a good thing. But it's it's almost like white hero thing. You know, when people can
38. have, yeah, you're trying to do a nice thing. But you know, it's, it's kind of making this
39. situation a bit worse. And it's almost like, you're just, you're keeping women
40. dependent on what on for you to tell them what the beauty norm should be by
41. advertising. You're now just saying it's okay for you to do that, rather than it just
42. being like, Oh, she's got underarm hair. So they're still in some way setting the standard. And
43. Yeah they're still setting the standard, they're still shaping it, they're still making
44. women feel like you, you can't have a norm that we don't think is acceptable. It's only
45. you're only comfortable to have it because we think it's acceptable.
46. Okay, I see. Yeah, I see what you mean, so that it's almost like they're dictating what
47. we,
48. that's exactly what it is. It's like, just just trying to dictate it with the way that it's been
49. advertised. Whereas if they hadn't even mentioned it, it's almost like mentioning it. Like, it's like
50. when you're like, Oh, no, no, I've got a friend who's black do you want me to
51. introduce them to you. I'm not racist. It's like, Well, okay, why are you making such a
52. big deal out of it? Why aren't they just your friend or just your family member? Or?
53. No, it's almost like making such a huge thing of it is like, it's still a bit of a problem.
54. Yeah. So by making a thing of it makes it still this problem, like you said, and then
55. how do you think that would impact on women generally?
56. I think that to a degree, I think it would still keep women from not truly like,
57. accepting themselves and kind of still focused on like, Well, I have to be acceptable to

Appendix 14: Excerpt of Advert Transcript

Boots Advert

Mixed race young, able bodied, thin woman in a bikini, posing for the camera, gazing directly into camera. Glamourous looking, gold jewellery, make up, red lipstick, body looks airbrushed, bronzed. Woman is not smiling.

Boots: Screenshot no 10

Shot of woman's midriff and thighs in a bikini. Slim and toned woman. Camera shot is of just the body and no head.

Boots: Screenshot no 11

Camera shot zooms out to show this model is part of a billboard of a video advert in an airport. showing a "traditional advert".

Mixed race young, able bodied, thin woman in bikini in a bikini, posing for the camera. Glamorous looking, jewellery, make up, body looks airbrushed, bronzed.

Woman takes off sarong to reveal body in bikini.

Woman's face is serious, posing. Standing confidently, looking directly at the camera.

Caption stating "Are you summer ready?"

Music without lyrics of song "I'm coming out".

Excerpt of Transcript from Dove Advert

Dove: Screenshot 8

Black, curvy woman wearing bright pink sports, revealing midriff, leggings, relaxed hair, hoop earrings.

Audible: American accent "so what's wrong with these?" In confident, loud voice.

Lifts arms up to reveal hair under her arms.

Dove: Screenshot 9

(upbeat, high energy music playing)

Woman dances around revealing armpits which have hair, confident stance.
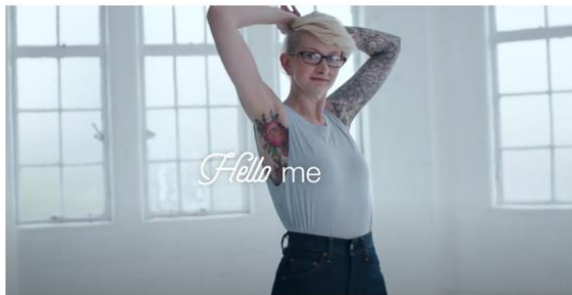
Background simple and minimalist.

Visual text "Hello style"

Woman lifting arms up to reveal armpits with no hair

Behind her is a white, minimal background. Windows in the background with white walls and natural light coming through.

Dove: Screenshot 48

Woman lifting arms up to reveal armpits with no hair but tattooed armpits and arms with flowers on.

Woman is white, slim. Able bodied. More masculine looking with short hair and tattoos.

Behind her is a white, minimal background. Windows in the background with white walls and natural light coming through.

Visual text "Hello me"

Appendix 15: Appendix M: Excerpt from Reflective Journal: Facilitation and Analysis of Interviews

<u>Journal Entry after first interview</u>

I felt anxious during this interview, perhaps because it was my first one and I was unaware of what to expect. This participant was a similar age to me and a student at the same university, I noticed that a good rapport developed quickly with her and wondered if this was due to the similarities between us. This participant expressed critical views of the advertising industry and anger towards it and expressed not thinking that the advertising industry had any good intentions to help women. I noticed myself agreeing with her views.

I noticed I was often reflecting back what she had said. I was aware that by reflecting her answers back I may have also unconsciously given the participants a sense of my views on the matter. My learning for the next interview would be to provide less reflections after each question.

This participant expressed worry about showing women in bigger bodies as this may promote 'obesity' or 'being unhealthy'. I am aware of weight stigma and fatphobia in society and from reading books such as "Health at Every Size" I was aware of the assumptions of bigger bodies with being unhealthy with the evidence showing that this is not the case. I noticed difficult emotions of anger showing up as I am aware how these discourses contribute to weight stigma in society. This felt personal due to those close to me having experienced weight stigma. I wonder if it was apparent that I did not agree.

<u>Methodological Thoughts</u>

This interview was longer than planned. Perhaps because this was my first interview I was less familiar with the questions. I noticed that I found it difficult to interject and steer the conversation if it was going off track. I wonder if being online made the interjection more difficult. It is apparent that in the next interview I need to interject with a relevant question to keep the interview on topic. Perhaps explaining at the start of the interview that at times I may interrupt and explain the reason may help with this.

On reflection, I wondered if my non-verbal language expressed to the participant my own perceptions of the advertising campaign. For example, I noticed that I smiled and nodded enthusiastically when this participant spoke about how the

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Dove advertisement made her focus more on her underarms more than she had done previously. For the next interview I need to ensure that my non-verbal language remains more neutral to ensure that this does not elicit socially desired responses from participants.

I noticed that my emotional response to the participant expressing that showing bigger bodies may promote 'obesity' I wondered if my emotional response was evident through my voice, although not consciously, this may have led to the participant limiting speaking about this issue. On reflection, I noticed that I did not probe further about this topic which may have been due to my emotional response.

Trustworthiness/Audit of ideas

 Ideas that came from the interview

- Strong opinions expressed about the advertising industry, not seen as having any good intentions with 'love your body' messages, i.e. just capitalising off current trends of body positivity-
- Lack of diversity particularly in the Boots advert
- The Dove advert was preferred to the Boots advert due it feeling more like "real" women as not actors
- Discussion around not being represented in the adverts but this not bothering her.
- Noted the difference of how this advert would be perceived differently from how she viewed the advert, for example by those from her country of origin in South America and her boyfriend and her mother.
- Expressed whether showing bigger bodies is promoting 'obesity'.
- The Dove adverts make you feel more self- conscious as they make you aware of your armpits.

Journal Entry prior to second interview

Went into the interview keeping in mind to be more reserved with my non-verbal expressions to ensure this did not create socially desired responses. Plan to discuss at the beginning of the interview that I may interject at times to if the interview is going off track and continuing with interview schedule. Reminder to ask follow up questions even when responses are not in line with my views.

Journal Entry post second interview

P2 was very open about her personal experiences of body image difficulties. I noticed relating to these personal experiences. I noticed shifting into my clinical mode rather than research mode and noticed reflecting back her experiences. I wondered if this changed the dynamic of the interview to feel more therapeutic. Next time I should be aware of how easy it is to slip into 'therapeutic' or 'clinical' mode. This participant spoke about her experiences of being in a bigger body and the confusion she felt with the messages of embracing this body in the advert versus her doctor telling her to lose weight. This was not something that I had not considered before and was curious about what this was like for her. This interview was different to the first, she was less critical of the advertising industry and generally found the message to be helpful in promoting positive body image although did notice the lack of diversity in the Boots advert.

Methodological Notes

This participant spent more time talking about her personal experiences of body image and was very open about this whereas the first participant seemed to feel more comfortable with the questions of the start which were less personal and focused around the messages that she was getting from the adverts.

Trustworthiness/ Audit of ideas

Personal experiences of body image and the growth she has made to being in a better place, with messages of 'body positivity' in society helping with this growth.

An awareness shown, similar to the first participant that other people she knows may not experience it in the same way as her. She expressed that she has developed more of critical and analytical mindset from higher education and peers who have not received this level of education would not critique the advert.

Confusion expressed about the advert saying to feel good in your body if it is bigger but the reality of being told by your Dr of all the health risks. She felt inclined to trust her doctor more as a professional but found it confusing.

Wondered if the adverts was not truly 'body positive' as it excluded slimmer people.

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<u>Excerpt of entry following analysis</u>

The coding process feels overwhelming; I feel the anxiety of wanting to capture every participants perceptions of the adverts which have been varied without only paying attention to the views that I have aligned with. I feel saddened by a participant's experience of not seeing bodies of her size represented in the advertisements and the impact this has on her, I'm aware that my own identity of white, straight-sized woman means that I have not had this same experience, I wondered whether this personal emotional reaction was leading me to privilege this code over others. I'm aware of the importance of being aware of my personal experiences and how these may shape my interpretations and is my duty as a researcher to ensure all participant's voices are represented.

Appendix 16: Excerpt of Reflective Journal: Analysis of Adverts

<u>Journal Entry after day one of analysing advertisements</u>
The adverts already feel very familiar after viewing them multiple times during the interview with participants. I am aware of having all the participants different views of the adverts in my mind. I wonder what my thoughts would be if I had analysed these pre interview. As participants expressed both positive and negative opinions of the adverts, I am aware of the positive aspects more than I think I would have been if these interviews hadn't been conducted. Prior to conducting the interviews I had a very pessimistic view of them but hearing some positive reflections on them such as relief of finally being represented in the adverts has made me feel differently.   Having read a lot of critical feminist literature about body positive advertising, my thinking towards the advert is still critical. I wonder what I would have noticed without doing this reading before analysis. What comes to mind is ultra positive and happy women which makes me think of the women's responses of how this does not fit with the reality of how women feel and the pressure this puts on women to be confident and happy. Feelings of frustration are elicited, particularly with the insidious nature of this, under the guise of doing 'good' for women. However, I also feel conflicted as I am aware that participants found this adverts helpful to promote positive body image as a stigma is being broken by showing women with bodies that are not fitting the norm. I also feel relief at finally seeing a change in the representation of women in the media and it feels refreshing to see bodies that look like mine. However there is frustration felt that the focus of the body is still maintained and whether anything has really changed in advertising. I am noticing a difference to normal adverts as women as the main character of the advert, there are only women in them, with women not bring sexualised or subordinate in the same way as traditional adverts, but my eye is looking out for ways these same themes may show up in a more pernicious, sneaky way.

<u>Methodological and Theoretical Notes</u>
Observing the women being happy and positive in the adverts is bringing to mind ideas from Rosalind Gill's work about neoliberalism taking a 'psychic' turn and far from liberating women is putting additional pressure on women to work on their

bodies and their subjectivity. This is also bringing to mind previous reading of Noami Wolf's and 'the beauty myth' and whether these adverts are keeping women subordinate by having them adhere to a new standard of being confident. Perhaps this is a theme that is emerging.

Trustworthiness/Audit of ideas

- Maintaining a focus on the body through showing women dancing around with exposed bodies
- Ideas of a confidence being equated with buying a product
- Women are portrayed as much more diverse than traditional adverts, main characters, dominant.
- A very happy and positive feeling to the adverts. Bright colours, women smiling and dancing.

Journal Entry after day two of analysis of the adverts

By looking at each screen shot I'm noticing much more than I noticed when watching the advert as a whole video. What I'm particularly aware of is the zooming in on the woman's underarms in the Boots adverts, this feels very similar to more traditional adverts where an aspect of the woman's body is shown without her head where she is being objectified. I also noticed a lot of zooming in and close up shots of women's underarms, is this reproducing, reinforcing the idea that women should be micro-analysing their bodies. It's making me think about my armpits in more detail than I have ever considered them before. Through my reading on disability and feminism and lectures at university thinking about the lack of representation of disability in the media. I became acutely aware of disabled women being absent from the advertisements. I felt sad at how this would reinforce the idea of being invisible and not valued in society. Perhaps to even more of a degree as if the message now is about representation, inclusion, body positivity and they're still not included, this is a harmful message.

I am aware of being more attuned now to the similarities between traditional advertising and body positive advertising I am noticing these more quickly than previously.

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Methodological and Theoretical Notes

The micro-analysing of the body brings to mind ideas from Rosalind Gill about women and self-surveillance. With smart phones and filters, can micro-analyse every aspect of your self. Is this advert reinforcing that idea?
It's bringing to mind ideas from my reading on post- feminism of women now feeling empowered by wearing make up. The idea of it being the choice to do it or not do it is empowering and that it is oppressive to set a standard of not adhering to any beauty standards.

Trustworthiness/Audit of ideas

- Lack of disability representation
- Reproducing the same traditional ideas of zooming in on the woman's body, questioning if they are even that different to traditional adverts?
- Adverts trying to create a need, make you feel like you are lacking.
- Individualistic focus- pressure on the individual to change her attitude and not society to change.
- The adverts feel 'relatable' like, more 'real' and 'authentic'

Appendix 17: Excerpt of Initial Coding of Interview Transcripts

so, I guess just after seeing those two, what are your initial thoughts or feelings from seeing those?

So the first one I actually really liked I've not seen that before, but I just really liked it. I think it had a really good like diverse kind of cast of women. And just generally the kind of confidence that I got from them It didn't feel it didn't feel like it was trying too hard. It didn't feel fake like it felt quite genuine. And yeah, they had the different ages in there. They had like curvy women with women with dyed like I yeah, that that was I thought that was cool. That's that's the kind of vibe I got from that one. The second one I found a little bit more fake not suggesting I don't feel like such a genuine vibe from that I kind of I get what they're going for with the the woman on the on the sign and the whole summer ready I get I get exactly what they're trying to say. I just feel like the women used could have been more diverse. And I don't know if that's what you're looking for. I'm not sure

there's no there's no there's no right or wrong answer all this is brilliant. So yeah, okay. So sounds with a few different thoughts weren't there kind of, maybe the first one feeling a bit more genuine, more kind of diversity and kind of sounds like it you said something around kind of confidence threre. seeing the first one particularly how did it make you? What kind of feelings or thoughts came up from seeing that one? Do you mean you feel a particular way? The first one?

Yeah, do that. Yeah, it made me feel like don't want to be careful with the kind of words I use

Comments:

> **Lily** ...
> Dove- showing diversity- feeling positive to this one.
> [Reply]

> **Lily** ...
> Confidence
> [Reply]

> **Lily** ...
> Genuine, relatable
> [Reply]

> **Lily** ...
> More critical of Boots one- not much diversity
> [Reply]

The first one?

Yeah, do that. Yeah, it made me feel like don't want to be careful with the kind of words I use because I was gonna say it made me feel better about myself. But I don't mean I don't mean that as in I don't mean that in like a nasty way. I mean it genuinely, like, genuinely made me think wo…, like us as women get so much thrown us what we've got to be like, like, within the beginning of the advert, you know, talking about armpits and, and stuff, but I feel like that just made me think like yeah cool, it kind of made me like, relax. I don't know, I felt quite relaxed with it. And like, yeah, you know, we, it's always nice to hear women who are going against like standards and going against them, like, cause I know, a lot of a lot of stuff, with women is sexualised, and it's kind of like taking that back and being like, wow, these are my armpits, this is my body hair. If I want it, I'm going to have it if I want to have tattoos, I'm gonna have it like, it's my body. It's my choice. Like,that's, that's how that made me feel that

and did it so it sounds like that one actually really sparked a lot of kind of really positive emotions of kind of, you know, you know, it really being really positive that, you know, women are challenging these standards in this there's more diversity. And it sounds like it brought up kind of positive feelings for you.

Yeah,that kind of advert could change or does change or could change the way you you feel about yourself or your body.

Yeah, I definitely definitely because personally, I I mean, I'm 30 Now, as you know, but you know, being younger, going through school, going through teenage years and even and even through all through my 20s I myself had a very strong kind of idea, almost like, you know, like a bit of inbuilt misogyny that you've been taught to do certain things, you should be

Comments:

> **Lily** ...
> Dove ad- sense of empowerment, choice, freedom from beauty standards.
> [Reply]

> **Lily** ...
> Changing the social norm- talking about body hair.
> [Reply]

> **Lily** ...
> Slightly shocking to see these ads- not used to seeing armpit hair.
> [Reply]

Appendix 18 : List of Codes and example of Codes with Associated Extracts for
Interview Analysis

Codes

1. Confidence and loving your body achieved through women purchasing products
2. Reinforcing that appearance is important
3. Confidence is positioned as being only related to the body/ appearance
4. Adverts breaking a stigma, fighting against beauty standards
5. Adverts creating the idea of beauty being different for everyone, you don't need to change.
6. Pragmatism about advertising- awareness of limits of advertising
7. Cynical/ realistic about advertising industry. Destined to be imperfect because it's advertising.
8. Reality of advertising is to create a need/ make you feel like you're lacking
9. Advertising industry catering more to women's needs
10. Shifting from the male gaze to now being made by women, for women.
11. What women want to see in ads is the focus now- focus used to be on what men wanted.
12. Drawing attention to area of your body and reiterating idea that should be self-conscious of it.
13. Dove advert primarily with attention drawn to armpits
14. Boots advert portraying women's bodies as problematic
15. Telling you that you should love your body but also saying your body is not acceptable Idea of don't be self-conscious of it but also do be self- conscious.
16. There should be more of these adverts (positive for women)
17. Adverts will be perceived differently by different individuals depending on where they are at with their body image
18. Perceived differently if your norm is not body positivity/ awareness of social justice issues/ education/ different generations
19. Adverts are reflecting how women are in society now- i.e. showing that women are more empowered.
20. Reflecting a norm of women caring about their appearance
21. Awareness of advertising always shifting/ moving standards for women
22. Advertising deeming what is acceptable for women. They keep changing the standard.
23. Adverts setting a new beauty standard for bodies. A new norm is being set of curvy is better.
24. Creating a new standard/ pressure for women to feel confident/ not care about their appearance/ love their body
25. Excluding bigger bodies in new beauty standard.
26. Women still fitting conventional beauty standards
27. Creating/ perpetuating body image problems with the new standard
28. Leading to women hating bodies if not meeting new standard
29. Creating a feeling of not being 'normal'/ not worthy if not represented
30. Society now shifted to be focused feminism; this can make women feel guilty for shaving/ caring

about appearance. Dove ad makes you not feel ashamed for this.

31. Confidence of women shown in adverts is aspirational/ something to be striving towards

32. Comparing own levels of confidence to women in advert.

33. Tendency for women to compare bodies with women in adverts in an unhelpful way

34. Hard to watch people feeling so confident in bodies when not matching how you feel

35. Brands are co-opting body positivity movement. Financial motives of adverts- tapping into body positive movement.

36. Lack of Disability or visible difference representation

37. Lack of masculine women shown

38. Lack of Career Focused women

39. Lack of LGBTQ representation

40. Lack of racial or religious diversity

41. Men missing from BOPO campaigns

42. Cynical about adverts caring about you

43. Promotion of obesity. It's not healthy promoting bigger bodies.

44. Helpful for younger generations to be exposed to these adverts

45. Adverts portray a positive message of choice, freedom, empowerment

46. Idea that these adverts portray a positive message for women and are helpful for women in terms of body image

47. Positive emotions/ confidence elicited in women from the adverts from seeing varying body sizes

48. Conflicting feelings evoked from the adverts (both positive and negative).

49. Conflicting feelings about sexualisation/ objectification of women in ads (both positive and negative)

50. Comparison to women's bodies in the adverts

51. Better than not having them, better than previous adverts/ generally seen as positive but further to go

52. Step in right direction with diversity but further to go

53. Women in ads feeling really happy/ confident with bodies, not matching how most women feel

54. Adverts were embracing diversity

55. Shaming and excluding thinner women

56. Ignoring context/ reasons why women may not feel positive in their bodies

57. Diversity feels tokenistic.

58. Doesn't show the steps of how they got to that place of being more confident

59. Not an adequate solution to tackle body image problems

60. Neoliberal ideas of pushing ourselves to be best version of ourselves.

61. Felt included/ represented in the adverts

62. There is a focus on exposing the body. Questioning why this needs to be the case.

63. The adverts are reflecting a norm/ current societal trend in the women's lives of a shift to female empowerment and body positivity.

64. These adverts are not the norm.

65. Awareness of conditioning meaning they are used to seeing thin models.

66. Awareness that body positivity is not a norm society.

67. Awareness that advertisers have to find a new way to appeal to feminist women (get feminist women to buy something)

68. Comparison to other ads, shows up differences with traditional adverts-Informing function

69. Positive intentions of advertising-they want to make women feel better about themselves.

70. An awareness of the power of advertising to shape your thoughts

Appendix 18 : Example of Codes With Associated Extracts: Interview

Five codes provided as an example

| Adverts breaking a stigma, fighting against beauty standards | *P9 I guess what came to mind was these particular beauty perceptions or beauty standards and kind of how society is now fighting against them. Like you see a lot of things in the media that's kind of just like, kind of like refutes all these standards.*

P9 Um, I guess it makes me think that I shouldn't care care so much about beauty standards. You know it's not really that important.

P9 I guess it's just, you know, that there's no just one beauty standards, you know, and you don't have to do, I felt like, they can like challenge, challenge beauty standards,

P10 Er I think, they're quite positive about like body image like trying to show that people are. They're not all like size six models, but like 10 years ago that was like, all you saw in adverts but, and I liked that there was a variety of like races and sizes and all that and like with the first one some of them didn't shave and things like that so it's sort of stretching, what's acceptable.

P10 It's like they were trying to break the stigma of like shaving and things like that so that's quite that's really positive compared to like society thinks, even now like I don't think the stigma around shavings changed that much.

P10 so I feel like that it makes me feel more comfortable, and more like it sort of makes me think like other people are watching this so it's going to get rid of the stigma so I can be more confident in day to day life.

P10 I think they are very positive in the way that they're affecting other people's views so like general society's views |

	P7It's like they were trying to break the stigma of like shaving and things like that so that's quite that's really positive
Adverts portray a positive message of choice, freedom, empowerment	*P9 I guess it made me feel better. It was kind of just okay, she didn't shave her armpits. I guess next time, I won't shave my armpits. Or you know what, I don't know if I'm even bothered to go and find that youtube clip about how to get rid of my dark armpits. Like, this is not really a big deal.* *P9And if don't want to shave that I have to shave it like it's okay* *P4, it's always nice to hear women who are going against like standards and going against them, like, cause I know, a lot of a lot of stuff, with women is sexualised, and it's kind of like taking that back and being like, wow, these are my armpits, this is my body hair. If I want it, I'm going to have it if I want to have tattoos, I'm gonna have it like, it's my body. It's my choice. Like, that's, that's how that made me feel that* *P4 and then seeing that now has just reminded me that if I want to have hairy armpits, I can have hairy armpits if I don't want to, I don't have to, if I like feeling smooth, and I can do that as well.* *P2 To be fair, I thought like.. I've sort of got like the perspective of you live how you want, you don 't let anyone judge you.* *P8With the first one I'd say the message was sort of, well, however you like to have your armpits use our product. Yeah, it's the kind of overall message is trying to be, you know, you have a choice as a woman, it's, you don't have to have it a certain way like you've always been told you know you can dye it you can shave it it's completely up to you. Which is why I like that better.* *P8 the first one yes, in the sense for me it's about choice. So you know if you want to dye your underarm hair if you want to shave it off if you want to ax if*

	you want to tattoo whatever you want to do, that's fine *P12 I think it's just going to make women generally more empowered more content with their own lives and what they're doing for themselves and how they see themselves and how they see others.* *P13 It was, it felt very like relieving and liberating.* *P5 I like that message because it's sort of, you know, there's no right way, you just do you.* *P4, it's I'd almost like forgotten, I don't know, it's a bit strange, it's almost like, you kind of forget, and then seeing that now has just reminded me that if I want to have hairy armpits, I can have hairy armpits if I don't want to, I don't have to, if I like feeling smooth, and I can do that as well.*
Cynical/ realistic about advertising industry	*P14 It's not because you think it's time to take a moral or an ethical stance on something. It's because the producers and the people that invested in it want to make money. And same with anything else. And I feel like sometimes you get adverts that feed into insecurities just to make women buy.* *P8 I mean, at the end of the day they're both adverts and they're both trying to promote cosmetic products* *P8 bit like you know maybe these companies are trying to jump on that band wagon and sell their products to people who might not typically, you know, care about make up anymore because they're trying to love themselves and it's like well you can love yourself, and still buy these products,* *P8 Yeah, and it doesn't have to do it in a way where it makes people feel awful, as we saw with the first advert you know I think that was quite good and, you know, I say the message of positivity, but it definitely does still imply,*

	you know, we all have underarms put deodorant on it, you need deodorant for them, which is not necessarily a bad thing but it is still an advert so its purpose is always going to be buy something to make, as you say, yourself better like to add something that you're missing right now. *P12 So I think now these companies are realizing that they have to promote their products by using a whole new a whole new way of approaching women in general* *P8 it's kind of destined to be imperfect because of the history of what, you know, adverts, capitalism is* *P8 It's not perfect, it's never going to be perfect if they're advertising products. But I'd still rather see that then you know know that little girls around the country are just seeing one type of woman and one type of way to be beautiful and confident.*
Drawing attention to area of your body reiterates the idea that should be self-conscious of it.	*P9 And then also what popped in my mind was kind of when I also had hairy armpits and people's (laughs) how people reacted to that. And then how I felt the need to shave my armpits based on their reaction not based on what I want to see but based on their feelings.* *P14 I'm not interested in armpit hair, like, that's the least of my worries. And I know that that's what they were trying to enforce that you shouldn't be worried about it. But it was like, well , should I be worried about it? Because it seems like a big deal to these women. And I can't relate.* *P14 that's what was really bad about the first advert is that is that you're trying to say we shouldn't be aware of it. But the whole awareness of the advert is about your underarm hair* *P1 I feel like I didn't pay enough attention to my armpits (laughs)*

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	P1 yeah it does make me feel a bit more conscious that would be the word yeah, because before it's just, like I didn't (laughs) I don't know I didn't care.
	P14 I think drawing the attention to their underarm hair and almost like treating them like they're a maverick, for not conforming to it, like you are exceptional for not conforming to it, it's still it's still kind of keeping it as something that they really should be conforming to
	P1 And with the dove one, I've never really cared about underarms I'm alright, it's just the like the, it just doesn't make sense how they are saying that they have this issue but many people don't have an issue with it
	P12 The Dove one, it gave me a great feeling but with my own body I always feel like I'm a bit boring for not having, like jazzy armpits. And that's not something I would have anticipated. Or even really thought about but it definitely made me feeling a bit like vanilla
	P14 That well like, again, with the with the underarm hair one? I didn't know anyone that thinks that much about what they do with their
Excluding bigger bodies in new beauty standard. #	*P4 And it kind of shows that women can be confident within certain restraints.*
	P9 So it's like yeah, they were different, but their different was still perfect. Like, I didn't see I didn't see enough roles.
	P6 it kind of makes me feel alienated, you know that it's okay to be a bit bigger, or it's okay to look like this it's okay to have a scar or some acne marks, but it kind of gets to a point it's like neh no was, we're still not comfortable, showing that these bodies exist.
	P6Okay, so I think what would kind of be like so if I slimmed down a bit maybe but I looked curvy enough to fit into that ideal, then I should be fine. I

	think is probably what I would take from that. Okay, you know, like, it is all fine and wonderful as long as you fit into this kind of smaller curvy or fat kind of woman, and then you're fine but after that. Not really.

Appendix 19: Excerpt of Initial Coding of Advertisement Transcripts

Mixed race young, able bodied, thin woman in a bikini, posing for the camera, gazing directly into camera. Glamourous looking, gold jewellery, make up, red lipstick, body looks airbrushed, bronzed. Woman is not smiling.

Boots: Screenshot no 10

Comments (Lily Edlin):

old and new adverts- this appears to be for the male gaze, woman looking seductively at the camera

Lily Edlin
A focus on the woman's body that meets conventional standards. Is this drawing attention to and merely reprroducing these standards by drawing attention to it

Lily Edlin
woman meets beauty standards- bronzed, slim, able bodies, hairless, toned. Bringing awareness to this.

Lily Edlin
Showing woman's body without her head- objectification of women as seen in more traditional advertising.

Lily Edlin
This same image is repeated later with a differnt woman. The purpose is to show the differences in body shaped but images appear more similar

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Two women in bikinis walking onto beach. Women are looking quite confident, bit uneasy. Being watched by other women. Other women not smiling whilst watching them.

Lyrics "I'm going out, I want the world to know I've got it all on show."

Walk past a woman sunbathing in a bikini, thin white woman applying suncream and looking at them with serious expression (look of judgment)

Boots: Screenshot no 27

Lily Edlin
Women being observed by other women as walk onto beach- reinforcing idea of the importance of appearance, the focus on the body

Lily Edlin
Idea of making a statement about confidence through taking your clothes off

Lily Edlin
All women hyper-feminine

Lily Edlin
Reproducing idea of your body being judged when in a bikini on holiday

Lily Edlin
All other female charachters are slim, white fit conventional beuaty standards. Reinforcing that this is the norm, and these women are different in

Lily Edlin

Appendix 20: Excerpt of List of Codes with associated Images and Text.
Two codes provided as an example

An exaggerated loving your body or confidence in the body.

Two women dancing in the sea together. Both women are dancing very confidently as demonstrated by woman on left's arms behind her pushing breasts and body out, her head up, showing a confident pose.

Two women walking confidently into the sea wearing bikinis. Confident walk, arms wide and swinging, taking up space, body is moving whilst walking.

Dove

*Verbal text Woman says; "I don't cover up anymore, I **love** showing my underarms"*

Woman wearing yellow top, smiling, lifts armpits to reveal glitter under her armpit.
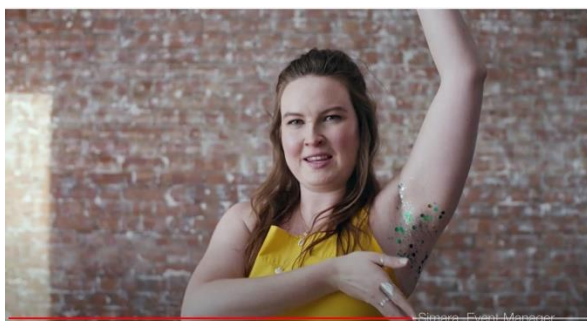
Audible: American accent "so what's wrong with these?" In confident, loud voice. Lifts arms up to reveal hair under her arms.

"It's time to **shout,** I am going out!"

Audible "Thighs coming out throw off the big sarong, this feeling can't be wrong."

Audible "You can have hair and you can be happy."

Women inspecting/ closely observing own body parts.

Two women, sat next to each on other on a sofa. One woman is lifting up her arm to reveal underarm hair, which the woman next to her is looking at. The woman showing her underarm hair is eliciting positive emotion which can be seen by her smiling.

Close up image of a woman lifting up her underarm, revealing a hairless underam. Woman is looking at her own underarm.

Woman is in a bathroom, greenery in the background through the window. White background and natural light. **Woman is looking at herself closely in the mirror, holding a piece of her hair and spraying it with product.**

Appendix 21: Thematic Map of Provisional Themes from Analysis of Interviews

Maintaining a Focus on the Body

Creating a Feeling of lacking and Needing To Improve

Unhelpful Messages for Women

Excluded Bodies

Paradoxical Ideas/ messages

Advertising setting new standard (in both a positive and negative way)

Juxtaposing Ideas

Should be Striving Towards More of These In Future .

Positive Messages for Women

Cynical of nature of advertising doing good- conflicting ideas advertising and doing good/ social justice

Mismatch between reality and advertising

positive and negative at the same time, ambivalence

Inclusive

Make Women Feel Good

Appendix 22: Thematic Map of Provisional Themes from Analysis of Adverts

women, liberated from beauty standards

journey/ transformation of the ways women are portrayed in the media, from oppressed to empowered

A new standard created for women to both look good and to feel confident

Lack of acknowledgement of even if a woman does make an individual decision to not adhere to beauty standards, the standards/ judgement still exists in society.

Viewer's attention is brought to the social context/ structural problems of damaging beauty ideals - solution is in the individual to change

Women are liberated-Post-feminism Ideas

Individual Responsibility

Advert is showing traditional adverts to draw attention to differences, but a number of similarities are evident.

fine the way you are, women empowered you don't need to be "summer ready" but implicit message is 'buy these products to change your appearance

Self-improvement/ transformation

Confidence can be purchased

Ironic/ paradoxical messages

Women are show to be going on a journey/ transformation to self-love

Women inspecting/ closely observing own and other's body parts

An exaggerated loving your body or confidence in the body.

Women exposed in adverts; the focus is on the naked body

Advertisements have an informing function. But, through the informing and referring to standards, it is reproducing standards. Reminding women of beauty standards

Women are hyper-feminine, although advert about fighting beauty pressures

Bringing it back to the body

Confidence equated with exposing the body

Close up camera shorts, zooming in on parts of the woman's body, without her face

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Appendix 23: Thick Description of Themes from Interview Analysis

Theme 1: Ambivalence about advertising creating/ changing/ setting a social/cultural norm for women

This theme describes how 'LYB' advertisements were understood by participants as making a change to norms in society. Ambivalence was expressed about whether the changing of social norms was helpful or problematic for women. Ambivalence was expressed about whether 'LYB' adverts are liberating for women and is a direction that society should be heading towards or whether the adverts are merely setting a social norm for women which is imposing further standards to adhere to rather as opposed to being liberating.

Theme 2: Ambivalence about included and excluded bodies.

This theme encompasses the ambivalence expressed amongst women about whether the inclusivity and diversity of bodies portrayed in the 'LYB' advertising campaigns was sufficient.

Theme 3: Ambivalence about the maintaining a focus on the body:

This theme describes ambivalence amongst women about the whether the body being a focal point in the 'LYB' advertisements is helpful or problematic for women. It was seen to be helpful in that by portraying varied bodies, this helps women with their body image, however it was also understood as maintaining a preoccupation of the body within women.

Theme 4: Ambivalence about the nature of advertising and neoliberal individuals

This theme encapsulates participants' awareness of nature of advertising when perceiving the LYB advertising campaigns; the participants could be described as critically informed consumers. They showed an awareness of advertising's links with capitalism and neoliberal ideology.

Appendix 24: Thick Description of Themes from Advert Analysis

Theme 1: Bringing It Back To The Body

This overarching theme is about the advertising campaigns maintaining a focus on the woman's body. The implicit message being that the woman's body is her primary value. In the advertisements, the woman's body is portrayed as a site or an object for observation by the woman herself or by others.

A woman's body being objectified is reminiscent of traditional advertising campaigns where the woman's body is object of focus for the 'male gaze', however in these advertisements, this differs, the body is positioned a site for observation for the women themselves, or for other women.

Theme 2: A Transformative Journey To Empowerment and Self-Love

This theme encapsulates how the advertisements portray the women to be on a journey of self- improvement. Women are shown to be on a personal and transformative journey to reach an end goal of freedom from conventional beauty standards, empowerment and self-love. The implicit message being promoted is one of women striving to be different in some way. This transformative journey was portrayed in two distinct ways in the advertisements which are outlined below.
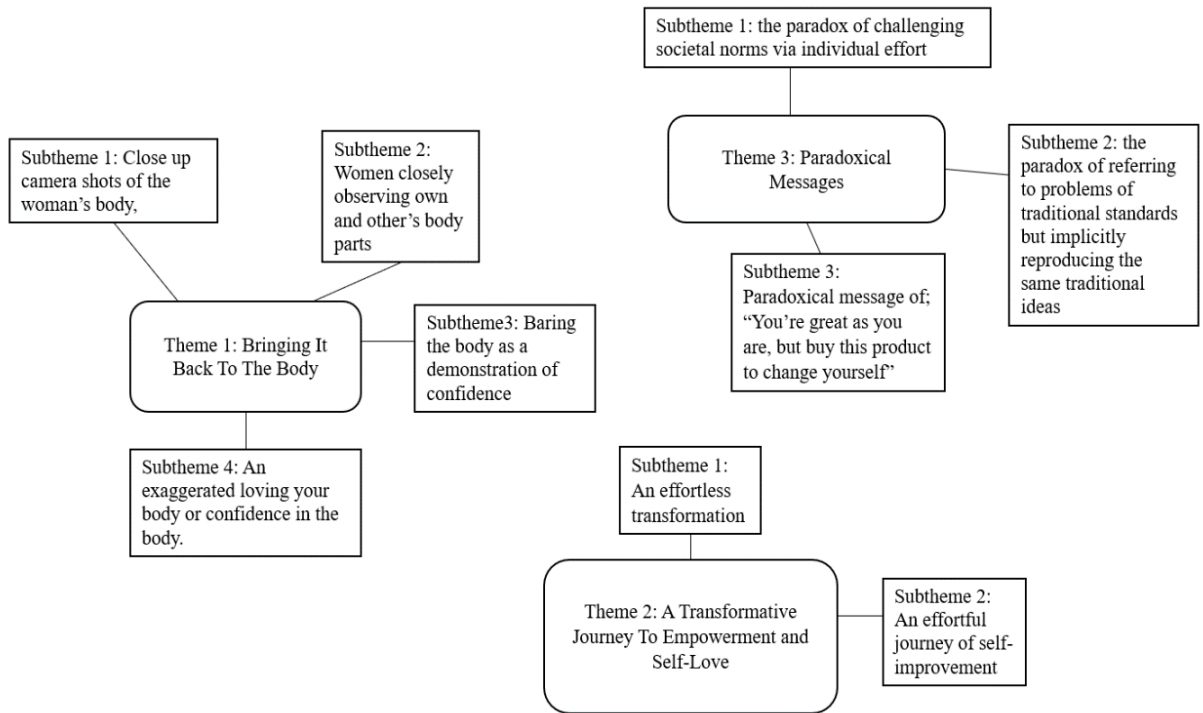
Theme 3: Paradoxical Messages

This theme encompasses the paradoxical messages that are portrayed in both advertising campaigns.

Appendix 25: Thematic Map from Analysis of Interviews
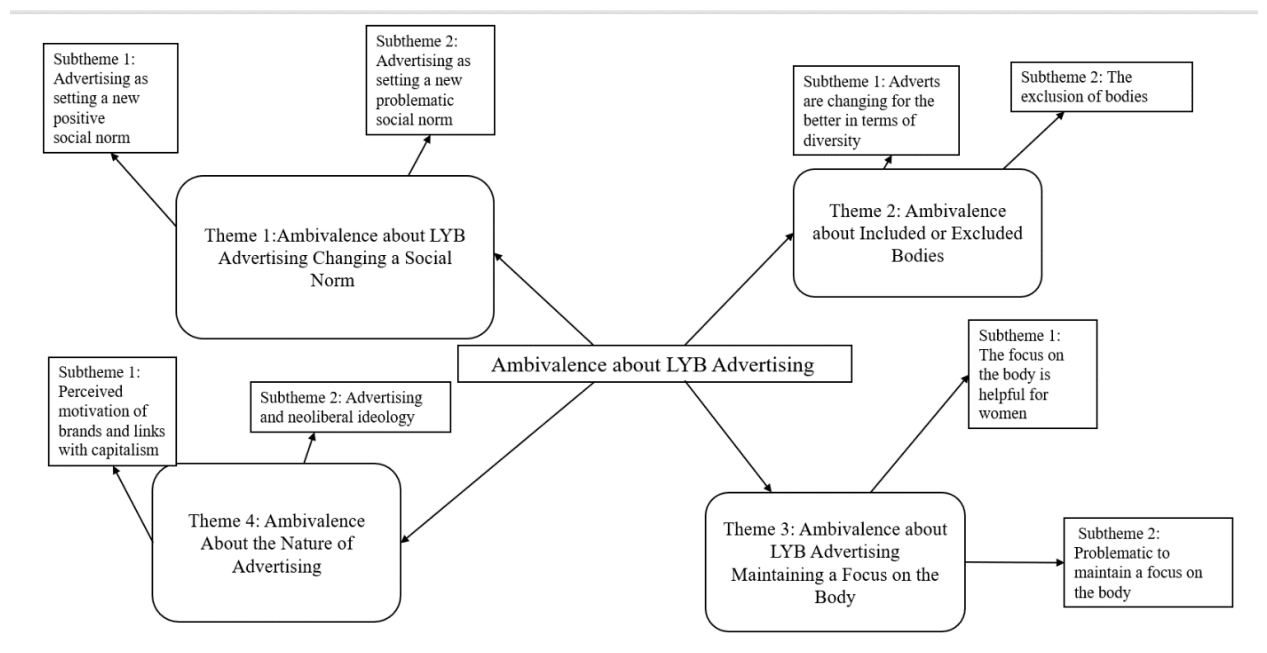
Appendix 26 Thematic Map from Analysis of Adverts

Appendix 27: Research Journal Excerpt: Audit Trail – Rationale for Theme Restructure from Provisional to Final Themes for Interview Analysis

Research journal excerpts providing an audit trail for the restructuring of themes from provisional to final themes.

Restructuring from provisional themes to final themes

In discussion with thesis supervisor, the themes of 'unhelpful messages for women', 'positive messages for women' and 'juxtaposing ideas' were restructured as these separate themes did not accurately reflect the ambivalence expressed by participants. A higher order theme was generated of 'ambivalence. Ambivalence was felt to be a theme throughout the majority of the interviews. I wanted to capture the ambivalence expressed in the interviews, with participants expressing positive perceptions of LYB advertising during one part of their interview, but then saying the opposite at a later point as well as positive and negatives of the same issue within different interviews. Therefore, when looking again at the themes, they were grouped according to the ambivalence. Four higher order themes were generated of; 'Ambivalence about advertising creating a social norm for women', 'Ambivalence about included and excluded bodies' 'Ambivalence about the nature of advertising and neoliberal individuals' and ' Ambivalence about the maintaining a focus on the body'.

Appendix 28: Research Journal Excerpt: Audit Trail – Rationale for Theme Restructure from Provisional to Final Themes for Advert Analysis

Research journal excerpts, providing an audit trail of the restructuring of themes

Initially had five themes: 'Bringing It Back To The Body', 'Women are now liberated Ideas of post-feminism' , ' Self- improvement/ transformation/ needing to change in some way/ Self and body as a project to be worked on', 'Individualism/ Individual responsibility' 'Ironic/ paradoxical'

These were discussed with thesis supervisor and restructured.

Rationales for the restructuring are outlined below.

Theme: Bringing It Back To The Body
Within the theme of 'Bringing it back to the body', the sub-themes within the theme (outlined below) were re-worked.

> Subtheme 1- Women exposed in adverts; the focus is on the bare/ exposed body
> Subtheme 2- Confidence equated with exposing the body (objectification)/ Woman performing, being watched/ observed

Subtheme 1 was removed as the key message of 'baring body' is encapsulated in the higher order theme. This was distinguished from sub-theme 2 which was focused on the baring of the body with an audience as a representation of confidence.

Theme: 'Paradoxical ideas' and 'Individual Responsibility'
The two themes of 'paradoxical ideas' and 'individual responsibility' were combined to make one theme as shared similar meaning as both shared the idea of paradoxes. The theme was re-named as 'paradoxical messages'.
The sub-themes within this new over-arching theme of 'paradoxical messages' were reworked to incorporate three separate paradoxical messages which became their own subthemes.

These were; subtheme 1= 'the paradox of challenging societal norms via individual effort', ' the subtheme 2= ' the problem of referring to traditional standards but implicitly reproducing the same ideas' and subtheme 3= 'the paradoxical message of you're great as you are but buy this product to change yourself'.

<u>Theme ' Women are now liberated Ideas of post-feminism' was combined with theme 'Self- improvement/ transformation/ needing to change in some way/ Self and body as a project to be worked on'</u>

These themes were combined as they shared a common theme of an empowering and transformative journey or transformative journey to reach the goal of empowerment.

This new theme was re-named 'A transformative journey to empowerment and self-love'.

The sub-themes within the two original themes were re-worked to include two distinct sub-themes outlined below

 subtheme 1, which was about a this journey being effortless and 'magical' (sub-theme 1: A effortless journey') and Subtheme 2 which describes an effortful journey to self-improvement. This sub-theme draws on ideas from Rosalind Gill regarding neoliberal ideas of working on the self, a psychological and social challenge to overcome.