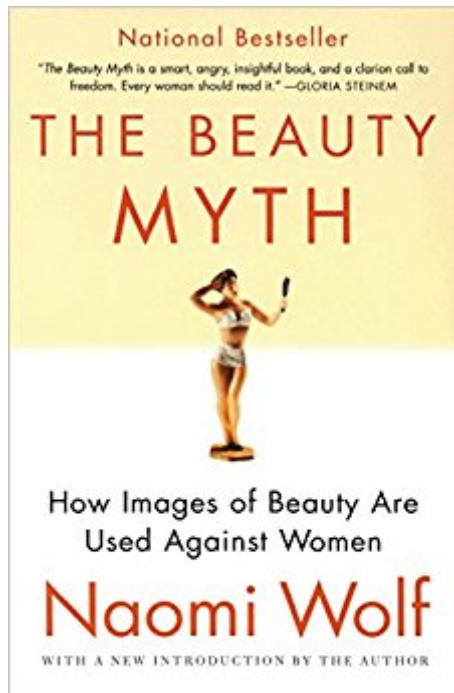




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The Beauty Myth: How Images Of Beauty Are Used Against Women



Synopsis

The bestselling classic that redefined our view of the relationship between beauty and female identity. In today's world, women have more power, legal recognition, and professional success than ever before. Alongside the evident progress of the women's movement, however, writer and journalist Naomi Wolf is troubled by a different kind of social control, which, she argues, may prove just as restrictive as the traditional image of homemaker and wife. It's the beauty myth, an obsession with physical perfection that traps the modern woman in an endless spiral of hope, self-consciousness, and self-hatred as she tries to fulfill society's impossible definition of "the flawless beauty."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In *The Beauty Myth*, Naomi Wolf argues that our culture's images of beauty -- found on television and in advertisements, women's magazines, and pornography -- are detrimental to women, as well as to the men who love them. She demonstrates that the concept of "beauty" is a weapon used to make women feel badly about themselves; after all, no one can live up to the ideal. Wolf DOES agree that beauty plays a legitimate role in our lives and in our attractions to one another. The problem, she says, is when beauty is defined as thinness, pertness, and youthfulness taken to extremes -- extremes that are literally unattainable for healthy women. And I agree. Wolf's book explores 6 areas of life in which problems result from the beauty myth. Each has its own chapter that can be read on its own and still make perfect sense. I suggest starting with whichever interests

you the most. They are as follows:* WORK. Here, the author details the way the concept of "beauty" can be used to discriminate against women in the workforce. If women are too pretty, we're not taken seriously; if women aren't pretty enough, we can legally be fired for their perceived "homeliness." Then again, if we're too pretty, it's our own fault when they're sexually harassed; if we're not pretty enough, people doubt men would have actually harassed them. The author offers a dizzying list of legal cases lost by women which demonstrate the extent of this catch-22 -- compelling stuff.* CULTURE. This focuses on the role of women's magazines (the sole arbiter of women's culture) in shaping our lives, by selling us on the need for beauty products by making us feel bad about themselves.

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