GLOBAL PRODUCTION
OF A FEMININE IDEAL:
BEHIND THE SCENES
OF BEAUTY PAGEANTS

[amnd]

SIMPI SRIVASTAVA
Ambedkar University Delhi (India)
simpimiranda@gmail.com

Abstract: This paper explores the various ideals of beauty which globalization has created for women at the international, national and local level. It also highlights the various facets of beauty pageants which feed into these ideal types and notions. Furthermore, this paper looks at the claim that beauty pageants make, of being inclusive of diversity. Despite having women from different cultures, race and countries participate and even win the Miss World pageant, there are still a lot of categories which have been left out and the pageants are not completely inclusive. We have never seen a Fat Miss World or a Short Miss World. This paper calls attention to how these aesthetics are very usual but they have been completely excluded from the wider scope of the contest which idealizes unrealistic feminine standards of beauty.

Keywords: beauty pageants, feminine ideal, glocalization, cultural symbolism, commodification.

INTRODUCTION

Latham (1995) asserts that beauty pageants only began to happen in the last hundred years or so, and there is no way were they happening before than that. He argues that given the social conditions back then, parading young girls in front of a paying audience was out of question. The formative period of beauty pageants is believed to be dated from 1800 to 1920 (Banner 1983). Pageants can be defined as those events which "base the selection of winners on the decision of judges who must operate under formal rules and criteria as well as on the basis of informal traditions and standards" (Riverol 1992).

In 1854, the first beauty pageant was organized by P.T. Barnum. Because of the theatrical performances going at that time, the portrayal of physical beauty on stage became an acceptable practice in American society. However, evaluation of beauty contestants by the use of judges remained taboo until the early 20th century when modelling became a respectable career choice for women (Banner 1983; Latham 1995; O'Riain 2007).

The first Miss World pageant, which was originally intended to be a one-off event connected with the festival of Britain, was held at the Lyceum Ballroom in London, United Kingdom on 29 July, 1951. Officially titled as *Festival Bikini Contest*, the British press dubbed it as "Miss World" and it has been ongoing ever since (Cavendish 2001). According to the official website of Miss world, the pageant is held annually in 104 countries and televised worldwide.

Following the advent of globalization, beauty pageants started emerging all around the world. Globalization can be defined as "a complex, economic, political, cultural and geographical process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses and people have taken a global or transactional form" (Moghadam 1999). The intersection of globalization and liberalization also created multitude of opportunities and platforms for young women to represent their nation at the global scale. Since then, multiple beauty pageants at the international, national and local level have been held such as Miss Universe, Miss Asia Pacific, Miss India, Miss Nigeria etc. The pageant imagines itself as a great global leveler. A miss Zimbabwe has equal chances of winning a Miss U.S.A title despite the differences in economy, growth and wealth. It supports the claim of globalization that a free and fair competition will transcend national boundaries (Neville 2004).

The opening up of world economy and market has led to increasing awareness and interconnectedness between countries. Women have always been at the receiving end of the impact of globalization. Beauty Pageants have not just served as a platform for higher representation at the global level but also as an opportunity for educational and career upward mobility, and for monetary gains. It allowed women to turn into income

earners and also leverage their new position to change gender roles in their households by influencing the allocation of time and resources among household members, shifting relative power within the households, and exercising stronger agency. Behaviours traditionally associated with women's status also changed as women could now assert more autonomy, for example, being able to go outside without permission and to freely participate in decision making at home.

Women have been empowered to participate in international pageants and represent their national and cultural identity. The beauty queens are highly revered and given national importance and honour for representing their countries. These women are looked up by young women and teenagers as inspiration and role models. Their lifestyle, personality, appearance and consumption habits are to be emulated in order to achieve and become the ideal type of a woman.

BEAUTY PAGEANTS AS SYMBOL OF CULTURE

Globalization has opened up avenues all over the globe, in terms of employment opportunity, quality of human life, gender equality and so on. But this impact has not always been a positive one, especially in case of women (Kaur 2018).

International beauty pageants are comparable to traditional cultures as they are also ritualistic and can be seen as cultural performances of the modern world (Parameswaran 2001). Beauty pageants are not just sites of female, patriarchal, sexist objectification of women but have gone beyond and are a global multi-layered event, deeply entangled with discourses of nation, class, ethnicity etc. (Parameswaran 2001).

Beauty pageants are locations of construction and contestation of cultural meanings. The beauty queen is a person, almost always a woman, who serves as a symbolic representation of the collective identity of a national audience, and is chosen as a beauty queen by a group of people judging the pageant (O'Riain 2007). These beauty pageants or contests differ by social locations and judging format. A beauty queen is not only produced, selected and molded within the social locations

of the institution of the beauty pageant, but she is also supposed to make significant appearances at public functions wearing her tiara and sash (O'Riain 2007).

Dr. Rebecca O'Riain (2007) argues that beauty pageants are in many ways similar to popular cultural production sites such as talk shows, music and dance show etc. and these pageants follow a pattern with similar components, i.e., question and answer, interview, evening gown, traditional dress, and talent round. During the question answer round, the responses which are given by the contestants are also similar and scripted in a cultural and moral context, such as "I want to work for the welfare of the society", "Beauty comes from within" or "I represent my culture" (O'Riain 2007).

The beauty queen is thus more than just the actor performing a ritual of collective cultural identity, but also a "shared system of elective representations, observers/audiences, means of symbolic production and social power" (Alexander 2004).

For a very long-time people considered beauty pageants to be a one-way street where the imperialistic westernized culture of the first world nation was being forced upon the third world countries, however, it is not true. Such beauty pageants also help in bringing together people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and regions in the forefront. It provides exposure and opportunity to countries to change their narratives.

OPPOSITION AND CONTROVERSY

Marwick (1989) argues that people in Middle Ages associated beauty with virtue and believed that beautiful people are inherently of noble character whereas ugly people are evil. Interestingly, physical beauty even in the present time is more important than ever. It is a rare but a specific characteristic which is essentially and fundamentally sexual, in the sense that an ideal of female beauty is held by the heterosexual men of the time. Feminists argue that beauty is not only a socially constructed ideal but is historically relative rather than a collection of universal attributes of symmetrical face, thin figure

etc. But women in beauty pageants are disproportionately judged in accordance to the male defined idea of beauty which is extremely narrow (Wilson 1991).

Beauty pageants have been sites for contestation and controversy not only for feminists but also for religious groups, which deem the pageants to be degrading to women, vulgar, and outrageous. The innumerable protests by women's club focuses on the objectification and victimisation of contestants, overshadowing women's issues (Crawford, Kerwin, Gurung 2008).

Such honour and national importance were not always given to the beauty queens who participated in these pageants. There have been multiple protests fought all around the world against the use of bikini and skin exposure which was seen as inappropriate. In 1970, feminists started protesting and calling it "cattle show". 1990s saw Miss pageant as a site of struggle more than gender politics. In 1993, Miss Lebanon Ghada Turk was threatened with prosecution in her home country for "collaborating with the enemy" after photos of her were released standing next to Miss Israel Tamara Porat and smiling (Mejia 2015).

Also, Indian feminist and religious organizations, and groups organized widespread protests in 1996 when Bangalore was declared as the host country for Miss World. It led to closing of schools due to fear of public violence (Parameswaran 2001). The beauty pageants have been critiqued for laying emphasis only on the appearance of women and imposing the ideal standards of beauty, giving no importance to the diversity among them. The international standard of beauty based on face, figure, proportions and posture started to impact local contests and their decisions of choosing representatives. No matter how much the pageant rituals and forms may be indigenized, the racial, gender and class norms which the pageant inculcates and celebrates is of white middle class femininity (Appadurai 1996). It was only in 1966 that the first dark skinned winner of Miss India was chosen to be Miss World and subsequently in 1970, the first visible winner of African descent, Miss Grenada was chosen (Jones 2008). The organizers and producers of the beauty pageants came to a realization

that there were other aspects of an individual that needed to be taken into consideration before choosing them as representatives at the international level. Major changes were introduced where contestants were also judged on personality and intelligence, and not just looks.

CONSTRUCTION OF A FEMININE IDEAL TYPE

The kind of beauty standards the pageants promoted in India had a huge impact on Indian consumers. Beauty Pageants emphasized on an ideal body figure and this internalization and the social emphasis on the thin figure has created a lot of pressure on young women to succumb to this standard idea of beauty.

Beauty pageants, no matter if they are on an international, national, regional or local level, they put the ideal image of femininity on public display. They not only reflect social constructions of gender but also represents modernisation, globalisation, nationalism and morality (Banet-Weiser 1999: Cohen et al. 1996).

The constant comparisons and idolization of beauty pageants participants as the perfect woman, constantly reinforced through advertisements, directly impacted the self-esteem and confidence of young girls (Delfinado 2015). Such perceptions of the ideal type of beauty has led to an increase in the cases of mental health concerns and depression among young females (Wonderlich 2015).

The findings of the research study done by Crawford et al. (2008) gave an insight on how Nepali citizens think that beauty contests instil in women a sense of self-objectification, and the girls and women internalise, through commercial mass media, a new conception of feminine and thin to be the new ideal image of women, hence becoming a part of their self-goal. This further had repercussions on young girls' mental health and their overall well-being because of the negative body image issues and eating disorder (Crawford et al. 2008). Westernised media portrays a rigid idea of female beauty

which is highly unrealistic and only focused on being thin (Garfinkel, Garner 1982).

LABELS AND SITE OF OPPRESSION

Year 2000 was crucial for India as it won Miss Universe, Miss World and Miss Asia Pacific. It proved arrival of India on a global stage showing that India was a modern and progressive nation. Increasing capitalism and consumerism was setting standards for girls of desirability and womanhood. Various religious organizations and feminist groups in India label women who participate in beauty pageants as "characterless" or "westernized" who have forgotten their culture and lost touch with their traditions and roots. They are seen as "too modernized" or "globalized". But there are also instances when these women are accepted and applauded for adorning their traditional outfits or talking about their nation at a global platform. This paradox is also present in the way the women are represented.

On one hand, beauty pageant contestants are showcased as modern women who represent India at the global stage. On the other hand, there are serials and shows made for local consumption which propagate the image of a conservative wife or mother, who has traditional family values. The woman then finds herself in a liminal state where on one hand she is trying to modernize and develop, and on the other hand preserving the traditional, moral values of Indian culture. It becomes the aim of the patriarchal value-laden society to protect the woman from the vulnerability of the West which is always invading and polluting Indian middle class with movies, TV shows and now pageants. Western values are seen as decadent, hedonistic and individualistic which can pollute the minds of traditional and cultural women.

SITES OF COMMODIFICATION

Pageants are structured on a pyramid at the national, regional and local level, each with their own promise of upward mobility. On one hand, the beauty pageants provide participating women a platform for global representation, but it also feeds into this new form of globalization at the level of gendered fantasy of consumer driven lifestyle in the figure of women as an ideal citizen. It imposes norms of feminine beauty, guide consuming habits, invoke national pride, fantasy of princesses in a post monarchical world (Neville 2004). The beauty pageants act as social institutions which produce the perfect or ideal woman whose lifestyle, habits, consumption pattern must be emulated.

The emergence of multiple grooming academies and institutions encash on the demand of "manufacturing" the perfect groomed woman who is worthy of not just participating but also winning in a beauty pageant. The woman then becomes a commodity who is produced to be exchanged in a global market trade. A pageant eventually loses its essence of being a social relationship between people and acts like an economic relationship involved in production of a "commodity" which is fit for global market to consume (Marx, Engels 1967).

These grooming institutions claim to transform an "ordinary" woman to an "extraordinary" woman who has the perfect etiquettes, personality, manners and values which are required to be a beauty queen. This dream and the claims attract lots of young women, and today in India, there are multiplicity of such institutes which run successfully. Women, then, turn into an object who can be converted and transformed to suit the demand of the market.

A high tide of commercialization has always followed the beauty pageants, be it at the global or local level. Brands and cosmetic companies collaborate with the pageants organizations as well as with the participants to promote their products. Often, beauty pageants are driven by transnational corporations across the globe trying to capture emerging markets in places like India and China, with increasing western notions of beauty driving their cosmetic campaigns. These campaigns

and cosmetic brands also impose a certain sense of superiority with being white and fair skin tone, giving a boost to the whiteness creams. Skin whitening cosmetics have been among the highest selling in the country and, over the years, the numbers have only increased. Globalization not only gave birth to popular culture such as the beauty pageants but also determined new consumption patterns.

Even though the UK and the US model of beauty pageants have been exported to other parts of the world, especially third world countries, in the form of popular culture and a source of commercial revenues but it has also led to an increase in violence and resistance. The various critical arguments cited by developing and non-western countries reflect on the struggle of developing countries for global visibility as well as construction of ideal femininity, resulting in exploitation and commodification of women for the purpose of profit-making (Crawford et al. 2008). One of the most important critiques of beauty contests is that the participants are used for advertising questionable consumer goods like cigarettes and alcohol, and hence become instruments for commercial gain (Crawford et al. 2008).

GLOCALIZATION

Glocalization means that trends of heterogenization and homogenization coexist thorough the modern age. It is the local culture which gives meaning to global influences, and these two are interdependent and enable each other (Featherstone, Lash, Robertson 1995). Beauty Pageants created a lot of opportunities for local and global cultures to come together and give birth to a hybrid culture which redefined and reformulated the relation of power, gender, modernity and tradition. It gave an opportunity for local customs, traditions and cultures to be represented on a global platform and gain recognition. For example, Indrani Rahman popularly known as the woman who donned head flowers (*gajra*) in her swim suit round later went on to win the Miss India beauty pageant. She is also

known to have popularized the Indian classical dance form of Odissi on her tours all around the globe.

The cultural round is specifically designed for the participants to represent their unique and diverse cultures and traditions. These beauty queens then become the symbolic representatives of collective culture, and beauty pageants become sites of active cultural production (Oster-Beal 2013). Beauty Pageants have also contributed to the growth of economy, tourism, entertainment, and advertising industries of nations all around the world. Such international exposure also opens up more avenues for multiple multinational cosmetic industries (Parameswaran 2001).

GENDER AND NATIONALISM ON DISPLAY

Women's bodies are used as a site of contestation to express nationalism. Nationalism appropriates modernization, capitalism, and feminist ideology to further a traditionalist agenda by using women as national symbols. Women themselves also accept these manipulations and representations in this age where equality, democracy and values are being talked about (Ghosh 2003).

During the World War II, Japanese Americans were made to live in exile in internment camps, in fear that they might be loyal to Japan. Japanese American youths in exile camps started dressing up as Americans and changed their physical appearance and demeanour, and asserted an All-American identity so that they cannot be easily distinguished from the mainstream white society (McAndrew 2014). Camp wide beauty pageants were held to reiterate the American identity and only those girls were chosen to participate who not only were beautiful and had a slim figure, but were ideally American looking. It is interesting to note how female bodies were displayed in association with patriotism.

The definition of beauty for Japanese Americans was closely associated with white standards and the camp wide beauty pageants can, hence, be understood as an attempt by

them to modify their bodies to suit the public culture (McAndrew 2014).

A conflicting relationship between globalization and national identity exists and is played out through the female body. There is a scarcity of research studies done on beauty pageants and whatever research have been done are limited to either critiquing or supporting the beauty pageants. One such research study was conducted on urban Nepali women to find out how do they understand and feel about the introduction of beauty pageants in Nepal (Crawford et al. 2008). Some Nepali citizens felt that hosting beauty pageants meant that Nepal was getting modernised, and there was an opportunity for Nepali women to showcase their talents and develop their potential. According to some citizens, beauty pageants also gave recognition to Nepal on a global platform. While some had reservations about the contest being the reason for uprooting of Nepal's traditional roots. It is very interesting to note how the burden of preserving traditional culture falls on women.

There are attempts made to ensure purity of women through various agendas (Enloe 1989; Kumari 1986). Women are seen as the most valued possession of any nation and also the main transmitters of culture, ideology and values to the next generation, along with being the reproducers for the community. The responsibility to uphold the honour, traditions and culture of a community or nation is laid on the shoulders of women. Any action which is against the customs or norms of the nation or community is seen as an opportunity to label the particular women as "undesirable" or "deviant". She is only acceptable and respected when she "Indianizes" her global presence.

Indian critics from the political right are rather concerned about the loss of traditional culture and argue that beauty pageants bring harm to Indian culture. While there are some opposing views that beauty pageant contestants and supporters struggle to define nationality with women's bodies and sexuality, hence becoming the gendered constructions of national identity.

ROLE OF MEDIA

The world is increasingly becoming integrated and connected. The transformation of trade openness into growing global economic integration and interdependence has made information even more accessible. The transnational movements of people, capital and technological developments are rapidly changing the way people learn, work, and communicate (Kaur 2018).

Greater technological innovations and expansions along with the new forces associated with globalization (economic integration, technological diffusion, and greater access to information) have operated through markets, formal institutions, and informal institutions to lift some of the constraints to greater gender equality (Kaur 2018). It has been detrimental in defining and impacting the role of women, possibly also affecting attitudes and behaviours. A shift towards more egalitarian gender roles and norms has also been facilitated and, in some cases, reinforced by women's economic empowerment. Although, there is a flip side too where the same technology and communication mediums have been imposing hegemonic standards of beauty which are typical of a "superior race and class".

A recent example has been a collage published in a leading print media brand in India which also belongs to the group that organizes the annual national beauty pageant. The collage depicted 30 headshots of beautiful women with their tame, glossy, shoulder-length hair and a skin tone that is virtually identical (Pandey 2019). Critics pointed out how they all looked the same. The lack of diversity in skin colour in the poster highlights India's obsession with being fair and lovely.

Media promotes weight concern by pushing young girls into believing that size-zero is the ideal body size. More than 69 per cent of teenage girls are influenced to have a perfect body type at any cost, just by reading fashion magazines (Milkie 1999; Tiggermann, Gardiner, Slater 2000; Field, Cheung, Wolf, Herzog, Gortmaker, Colditz 1999). Bollywood films also play a huge part by propagating the idea that only the fair skinned thin gets the hero at the end of the movie.

Romance, greater favouritism, and happy outcomes are corre-lated with physical attractiveness (Smith, McIntosh, Bazzini 1999; Thompson, Hammond 2003).

CONCLUSION

The impact of globalization on popular cultures such as the beauty pageants can thus be seen as a double-edged sword. On one hand, it has provided multitude of opportuni-ties to women for attaining independence, freedom of choice and power of decision making. While on the other hand, it has led to increasing commodification and standardization of ideal standards of beauty, rejecting the diversity and heterogeneity which exists among women around the world.

Usually, beauty pageants resonate with the audience by making them believe that any ordinary woman can become the winner of the beauty pageant. It also depicts national commu-nity and claims to be inclusive, giving equal opportunities to everyone (Banet-Weiser, Portwood-Stacer 2006). Beauty con-tests are sites of liberal ideology where they both draw from and resist a mainstream feminist agenda, and where the con-testants perform liberal narratives in order to connect with the audience (Banet-Weiser et al. 2006). These liberal narratives involve women's rights, self-determination, person's success, and voluntarism. However, beauty pageants have been exclu-sionary in their approach with emphasising and idealising a certain standard of beauty.

"Beauty pageants allow us to examine meaning-making within fields of institutions or networks by seeing culture as a socially constructed product by revealing the processes that go into their making" (O'Riain 2007). In recent times, despite the fact that beauty pageant contests try to appeal to the media savvy post-feminist audience, they remain connected to a par-ticular kind of sexuality which is objectified. One of the most important feminist critiques of beauty pageants is that Miss America or Miss India events only claim to present the true representatives of the population, and in turn marginalize the types of bodies that are not displayed as contestants (Banet-

Weiser 1999). Thus, beauty pageants interplayed with the various facets of globalization have created a space which is not just an opportunity for upward mobility and empowerment of women but also as a site of oppression, cultural agency and gender, cultural, and sexual identity production.

REFERENCES

J.C. Alexander (2004), *Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy*, in "Sociological Theory", 22, 4, pp. 527-573.

A. Appadurai (1996), *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimension of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press).

L.W. Banner (1983), *American Beauty* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf).

H. Becker (1984), *Artworlds* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press).

R. Cavendish (2001), *The First Miss World Contest*, in "History Today", 51, 4.

M. Crawford, G. Kerwin, A. Gurung (2008), *Globalizing Beauty: Attitudes toward Beauty Pageants among Nepali Women*, in "Feminism and Psychology",18, 1, pp. 61-86.

V.G. Delfinado (2015), *Beyond the sash and crown: A cultural examination of the possible impacts of beauty pageants in the Filipino Society* (Manila, Philippines: University of Philippines, Manila).

C. Enloe (1989), *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making feminist sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

M. Featherstone, S. Lash, R. Robertson (1995), *Global modernities* (London: Sage Publications).

A.E. Field, L.W. Cheung, A.M. Wolf, D.B. Herzog, S.L. Gortmaker, G.A. Colditz (1999), *Exposure to the mass media and weight concerns among* girls, in "Journal of Pediatrics", 103, 3, pp. 1-5.

J. Gamson (1998), *Freaks Talk Back: Tabloid Talk Shows and Sexual Nonconformity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press).

P.E. Garfinkel, D.M. Garner (1982), *Anorexia Nervosa: A Multidimensional Perspective* (New York: Brunner-Mazel).

A.H. Ghosh (2003), *Writing the Nation on the Beauty Queen's Body: Implications for a "Hindu" Nation*, in "Meridians", 4, 1, pp. 205-227.

G. Jones (2008), *Blonde and Blue-Eyed? Globalizing Beauty, c.1945-c.1980*, in "The Economic History Review", 61, 1, pp. 125-154.

P. Kaur (2018), *Impact of Globalization on Women*, in "Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective", 7, 2, pp. 41-44.

J. Kumari (1986), *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books).

A.J. Latham (1995), *Packaging Woman: The Concurrent Rise of Beauty Pageants, Public Bathing, and Other Performances of Female "Nudity"*, in "Journal of Popular Culture", 29, 3, pp. 149-167.

A. Marwick (1989), *Beauty in History: Society, Politics, and Personal Appearance: C. 1500 to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson).

K. Marx, F. Engels (1967), *Capital: A critique of political economy* (New York: International Publishers).

M. McAndrew (2014), *Japanese American Beauty Pageants and Minstrel Shows: The Performance of Gender and Race by Nisei Youth during World War II*, in "The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth", 7, 1, pp. 42-64.

B. Mejia, Brittny (2015), *Miss Israel's photo with Miss Lebanon sparks controversy* (Los Angeles Times).

M.A. Milkie (1999), *Social Comparisons, Reflected Appraisals, and Mass Media: The Impact of Pervasive Beauty Images on Black and White Girls' Self-Concepts*, in "Social Psychology Quarterly", 62, 2, pp. 190-210.

V.M. Moghadam (1999), *Gender and Globalization: Female Labor and Women's Mobilization*, in "Journal of World Systems Research", 2, pp. 367-388.

H. Neville, Hoad (2004), *World Piece: What the Miss World Pageant Can Teach about Globalization*, in "Cultural Critique", 58, pp. 56-81.

R. O'Riain (2007), *Making the Perfect Queen: The Cultural Production of Identities in Beauty Pageants*, in "Sociology Compass", 2, pp. 74-83.

M. OsterBeal (2013), *Preserving Tradition: Analyzing the Commoditization of Cultural Identity Through Beauty Pageants Among Ethnic Minority Groups in Kathmandu* (Independent Study Project Collection).

G. Pandey (2019), *Miss India contest: Why do all the finalists "look the same"?* (BBC News).

R. Parameswaran (2001), *Global Media Events in India: Contests Over Beauty, Gender and Nation*, in "Journalism and Communication Monographs", 3, 2, pp. 51-105.

A.R. Riverol (1992), *Live from Atlantic City: The History of the Miss America Pageant Before, After, and in Spite of Television* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular press).

S.M. Smith, W.D. McIntosh, D.G, Bazzini (1999), *Are the beautiful good in Hollywood? An investigation of the beauty-and-goodness stereotype on film*, in "Basic and Applied Social Psychology", 21, 1, pp. 69-80.

S.H. Thompson, K. Hammond (2003), *Beauty is as beauty does: Body image and self-esteem of pageant contestants*, in "Eating and Weight Disorders", 8, 3, pp. 231-237.

M. Tiggermann, A. Slater, M. Gardiner (2000), *I would rather be size 10 than have straight A's: A focus group study of adolescent girls' wish to be thinner*, in "Journal of Adolescence", 23, 2, pp. 645-659.

S.B. Weiser (1999), *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World: Beauty Pageants and National Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

S.B. Weiser, L.P. Stacer (2006), *I just want to be me again – Beauty pageants, reality television and post-feminism*, in "Feminist Theory", 7, 2, pp. 255-272.

E. Wilson (1991), *Review of "Beauty in History: Society, Politics, and Personal Appearance: C. 1500 to the Present"*, in "Journal of Design History", 4, 2, pp. 127-128.

A. Wonderlich (2005), *Childhood Beauty Pageant Contestants: Associations with Adult Disordered Eating and Mental Health*, in "The Journal of Treatment & Prevention", 13, 3, pp. 291-301.