

An exploration on the role digital image manipulation plays in fashion magazines on the perceptions of physical attractiveness of black women in SA, according to the Social Constructionism theory.

By

Germaine Dunn

BA Honours in Strategic Brand management

Vega School of Brand leadership



(Student number 13018994)

Final report

Abstract

“Retouching model portraits has become a standard, usually with the intent of enhancing the subject’s best features and minimizing their worst in fashion and magazine photography” (Reaves et al, 1990: 24). With South African black women being identified as the largest readership race percentage within True Love Magazine namely 96 % (Media 24, n.d.). The researcher aims to unpack the term digital image manipulation (retouching) within fashion magazines in relation to an individual’s perceived physical attractiveness.

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a link between digital image manipulation and physical attractiveness amongst Black South African women between the ages of 25 and 34 in South Africa using True Love Magazine as a case study.

The research undertaken made use of qualitative research methods in the form of a field study including focus groups and unstructured in-depth interviews which were facilitated and guided by the researcher in order to answer the research questions.

This study explored the role digital image manipulation plays in fashion magazines on the perceptions of physical attractiveness of black women in SA, according to the Social Constructionism theory.

In conducting the study the researcher found that True Love has set an acceptable standard for women reading the magazine as the retouches are subtle and do not set unrealistic standards. Women can relate to the cover girls portrayed on the magazine as diverse women with various skin tones, hair styles such as natural hair, weaves, dread locks are used ensuring all African women are represented.

Although the influence the magazine exerts is one of reference to fashion and make-up tips, True Love is seen as the epitome of black excellence for women as the celebrities or stars chosen are women that participants in the study aspire to be like. Women in the study were all aware of the magazine cover retouches and would be influenced if the covers were untouched as there is a certain expectation for the covers to be perfect and flawless. True Love merely represents what society has already constructed and what women find attractive and aspiring.

<u>Contents page</u>	<u>Page number</u>
Abstract	2-3
Contents.....	4-6
Chapter 1	
1.1 Introduction and background to the study.....	8
1.1.1 Aim and purpose (Problem statement).....	8
1.1.2 Research questions.....	8
1.1.3 Research objectives.....	8
1.1.4 Delimitation/ demarcation of the field of study	8
1.1.5 Practical and ethical issues.....	9
Chapter 2	
2.1 Literature review.....	9-10
2.1.1 Understanding digital image manipulation.....	10
- <i>A brief history of manipulation</i>	
- <i>Techniques of manipulation</i>	10
- <i>Technical retouching</i>	10
- <i>Creative retouching/digital enhancement</i>	10
2.1.2 The role of digital image manipulation within fashion magazines.....	11
2.1.3 The Iconic South African fashion magazine- True love.....	12
- <i>Digital image manipulation within True Love</i>	13
- <i>The retouching process</i>	13
- <i>History of manipulation within True Love</i>	14
- <i>Standard of cover girls images</i>	14
2.1.4 Understanding the social constructionism theory.....	15
- Socially constructed things.....	15

-Constructed realities within fashion magazines.....	16
2.1.5 General perceptions of physical attractiveness.....	17
Chapter 3	
3.1 Research methodology.....	18
3.1.1 Research design.....	18
3.1.2 Data collection.....	18
-Structuring the focus groups.....	18
-The role of the researcher/moderator within the focus groups.....	19
- Structuring the personal interviews.....	20
- The role of the researcher within the interviews.....	20
3.1.3 Sampling.....	20
3.1.4 Trustworthiness.....	21
3.1.5 Data analysis methods.....	21
-The process of analysing personal interviews.....	22
- The process of analysing focus groups.....	22
3.1.6 Research Instrument ethics.....	22

Chapter 4

4.1	Findings.....	23
4.1.1	Introduction to personal interview findings.....	23
4.1.2	Personal interview participant's breakdown.....	23
4.1.3	Research Question 1.....	24-29
4.1.4	Research Question 2.....	29
4.1.5	Research Question 3.....	35
4.2	Introduction to focus group findings	

Chapter 5

5.1 Data analysis

5.1.1 Personal interviews

- Overall themes and trends
- Focus group 1 discussions
- Overall themes and trends
- Focus group 2 discussions
- Overall themes and trends

Chapter 6

6.1 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1.1	References.....	19-20
6.1.2	Bibliography.....	21
6.1.3	List of figures.....	21
	-Figure 1: True Love Magazine Covers A-E	

-Figure 2: Technical retouching

-Figure 3: Image Compositing

-Figure 4: Creative Retouching

-Figure 5: Creative Retouching

-Figure 6: Creative Retouching

-Figure 7: GQ Magazine cover

6.1.4 Appendices 1 A:

-True Love Magazine Case study: personal interview questions

Appendices 1B:

-True Love Magazine Case study: Focus group discussion questions

Appendices 1C:

True Love Magazine covers 2010-2015

-Covers C1-C12

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction and background

This study is founded in the field of social constructionism with its focus on digital image manipulation and the perceptions of physical attractiveness.

The researcher aims to unpack the term digital image manipulation within fashion magazines in relation to an individual's perceived physical attractiveness. The role digital plays in the lives of South African black women (identified as the largest readership race percentage within True Love Magazine namely 96 % according to Media 24, n.d) will be evaluated according to the level of perceived standards of attractiveness attributed towards various enhanced cover girls depicted on iconic fashion magazine, True Love.

With a focus on the relationship between self-esteem and self-perceived physical attractiveness according to the social constructionism theory, the researcher aims to examine if fashion magazines are setting the trend of physical attractiveness through the use of digital image manipulation of cover girls.

1.1.1 Problem statement

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a link between digital image manipulation and physical attractiveness amongst Black South African women between the ages of 25 and 34 in South Africa using True Love Magazine as a case study.

1.1.2 Research questions

In order for the study to answer the research problem, the study will focus on the following research questions:

- 1 To unpack the term digital image manipulation within fashion magazines.
- 2 To explore the history of digital image manipulation of cover girls within True Love magazine between 2010 and 2015 within the social constructionism theory.
- 3 To determine the link between effects of digital image manipulation within the fashion magazine industry and the perceptions of physical attractiveness.

1.1.3 Objectives of the study

To determine what the implications of digital image manipulation of cover girls are on the perceptions of physical attractiveness of black women between 25 and 34.

To unpack the history of digital image manipulation in relation to the social constructionism theory.

To determine if there is a link between the perceived physical attractiveness and self-esteem of black women aged between 25 and 34 as a result of digital image manipulation.

1.1.4 Delimitation/ demarcation of the field of study

Digital image manipulation focuses on technical retouching or enhancement to include various adjustments of skin and eye colour, contrast, white balance, tonality, sharpness, body weight, image restoration or removing elements or visible flaws on skin etc. The technical and creative retouching possibilities to create unrealistic images are endless. This study will only focus on the role of these enhancement techniques in the fashion magazine industry on perceptions of physical attractiveness amongst women and not the extent of technical or creative aspects.

The research will only look at black professional females as per the highest identified target market of True Love magazine for the case study to determine the role digital has on perceptions of physical attractiveness.

1.1.5 Practical and ethical issues

With the ethical issues facing digital image manipulation within magazines due to self-esteem issues and constructed ideals of attractiveness. This study may be faced with ethical and racial issues when attempting to find the link between digital image manipulation and physical attractiveness amongst black women in South Africa as the research is limited to a particular racial group that extends to various cultural belief systems.

The researcher will have to be cognisant of cultural sensitivity as well as it is a subjective study, there is a possibility of data generated or discovered in the represented focus groups that is not in support of the objectives or intended findings.

Chapter 2

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Understanding digital image manipulation

According to Van Riper (1994) Manipulation refers to the action of manipulating something in a skilful manner, to control or mangle it but it also sometimes creates a sense of deceitful control, of tampering or falsifying. In order to falsify or tamper with something, the thing must exist in some un-falsified, truthful state (Van Riper 1994).

Ritchin (1990) refers to manipulating a photograph as altering or tampering with it, to change it from its natural, truthful state. He argues that manipulation however in photography is very subjective as the un-falsified existence of the photograph is determined by the photographer from how he composes the scene and uses filters, other such tools to change the nature of the photograph to how he wishes to represent its natural state. The tampering can occur at any stage of the photography process (Ritchin 1990).

According to Mullen (1990) however in a case study on the truth in photography, the natural or truthful state of a photograph has become questionable as the photographer represents the aspect of reality and truth he chooses to represent both when taking the photograph or preparing it for publication.

Truth has become subjective to the photographer as “All art forms manipulate reality in order to reveal truths not apparent to the uncritical eye” (Mullen 1998: 45). The study argues that an understanding of photographic truth, like all other truths, depends on an understanding of culture, belief, history, and the universal aspects of human nature.

A brief history of manipulation

In its early conception over 150 years ago, photography was seen as the perfect medium to capture and document subject matter objectively or to represent reality, completely untouched by the photographer’s perspective because the mechanics and nature of the medium ensured untouched, exact imitations of the subject (Ritchin 1990).

According to Ritchin (1990) photography has since then however been touched by photographers' today in many ways, from choosing how to capture the shot to altering the resulting image through the advancement of camera and computer technology and the subsequent development of digital manipulation. Photographs can be effortlessly altered to reflect whatever the photographers or editors wish to showcase as realistic photos (Ritchin1990).

Techniques of digital manipulation

With the advancement and application of computer technology to photography, digital imaging has been created. These digital images can be altered and have forced everyone to acknowledge the fundamentally manipulative nature of photography and to understand that it never represented "truth" in the first place (Mullen 1998).

There are two manipulative processes or techniques of editing or altering a photograph namely technical and creative retouching (Van Rensburg 2015). Technical retouching usually performed by a digital creative often using image editing software such as photo shop enhances the photo by adjusting colour, contrast and white balance, tonality, sharpness or removing elements or visible flaws such as skin blemishes to correct an image for various reasons (Van Rensburg 2015). (Refer to Figure 2 page 68).

Creative retouching/ digital enhancement

This technique of image manipulation is more extreme than the subtle alterations of technical retouching and usually furthers the creative vision of the artist with the use of special effects (Van Rensburg 2015). Creative retouching may involve photo shopping various elements in to an image such as giving a pig wings to create the illusion that it is flying or giving a model's dress the texture of paint to create the impression of paint being splashed against her skin. It could be recreating an image by using two separate images to form one such as replacing the idea of peas in a pod with babies as the peas spilling out of a peapod (Refer to figure 6 page 68).

The effects are endless and form part of a creative strategic vision in order to cater for various brands and clients. Image editing software can be used to apply effects of overlaying a head on to a different body or warping an image until the desired

result is achieved (Van Rensburg 2015). The resulting image may have little or no resemblance to the photo from which it originated. This particular technique is used as an art form or for commercial use in beauty or advertising photography to create more sleek and interesting images. One of the most prominent disciplines in creative retouching in advertising specifically is image compositing, whereby the digital artist uses multiple photos to create a single image (Refer to figure 3 page 68).

2.1.2 The role of digital image manipulation within fashion magazines

According to Reaves, Park and Yun (2004) in a study on the effects of digital manipulation of fashion models' body size, leg length and skin colour. Beautiful models are often portrayed as "natural" however the natural look promoted is fake and the result of airbrushing and digital enhancements. This was further reiterated with particular mention to British GQ magazine digitally enhancing the cover shot of actress Kate Winslet, excessively slenderizing the cover to reveal an unrealistic version of the real-world appearance of the actress (Refer to figure 7 page 70). Magazine editors often enhance cover girls to improve the image and reveal versions of themselves that they sometimes don't even recognize or aspire to look like. This statement is substantiated through a statement from the actress in an article where she clearly states her disapproval of the digital alterations:

"The retouching is excessive. I do not look like that and more importantly I don't desire to look like that," she said. "I actually have a Polaroid that the photographer gave me on the day of the shoot... I can tell you they've reduced the size of my legs by about a third. For my money it looks pretty good the way it was taken." (Hellomagazine , n.d)

"Retouching model portraits has become a standard, usually with the intent of enhancing the subject's best features and minimizing their worst in fashion and magazine photography" (Reaves et al, 1990: 24). The models or celebrities' skin is smoothed out or airbrushed, eyes and teeth whitened, breasts enhanced, legs made thinner and in some cases much like that of Kate Winslet, entire bodies are routinely retouched, reshaped, smoothed, and polished. As a result of consumers being exposed to these manipulations so frequently, the study suggests consumers have

come to accept these alterations as normal or at least not unusual to the standard of attractiveness being portrayed in magazines (Reaves et al, 1990).

Digital alteration depends largely on the editorial profile of the magazine and editors interviewed in the study reported that feature and cover photographs are more justifiably manipulated than news photographs because magazines have longer deadlines and cover photographs are crucial to newsstand sales (Reaves et al, 1990). In enhancing images to make models look unbelievably attractive, more magazines are purchased as consumers have been exposed to this constructed reality and standard of beauty and attractiveness (Reaves et al 1990).

According to Glenn (2009) media such as fashion magazines serve as a very effective means or medium of delivering content or trends of popular culture in mass communication. The study of media effects is based on the idea that the content delivered in mass communication has clear effects on people, society and culture in general (Glenn 2009). This will be explored in more detail with the iconic South African fashion magazine, True Love as an example.

2.1.3 True Love: The iconic South African fashion magazine

True Love (& Family as it was formally known) was acquired by Media 24 in 1984 (Media 24, n.d). Today, 31 years later it is known as the iconic South African fashion beauty and lifestyle title for black women. “It challenges its readers with in-depth editorial by focusing on subjects that stimulate debate and discussion, investigative special reports and thought-leading columns, combined with stylish and sexy fashion and beauty pages that define South African style” (Media 24, n.d).

According to Media 24 True Love magazine reading amps (Media 24, n.d) the magazine profile includes readers from as young as 15 to an older age group of 50 with an average readership of 35. The readership race extends to 96 per cent of the black female population, 2 per cent of coloured women, 1 per cent Indian woman and 1 per cent white women, making it a culturally diverse magazine (Media 24, n.d)

Digital image manipulation within True Love

According to the Reproduction manager at True Love, digital image manipulation can be defined as the following:

“Digital manipulation refers to any images that are printed in the magazine and “touched” by a retoucher to enhance colour, remove blemishes and can include special effects such as deep etching the background out or adding special effects like blurring etc” (Ohlsen 2015).

The primary role of the retoucher is to follow instructions from the art department on what is needed from the client and to work closely with a layout artist and art director for these instructions to be interpreted correctly and approved ultimately by the editor (Ohlsen 2015).

The digital manipulation or retouching process

According to Ohlson (2015) the standards within Media 24 lifestyle magazines differ according to the editorial style of each magazine. True love is a high end glossy magazine and has a specific style that retouchers follow to create continuity through the magazine in order for it to be consistent and have a general feel. In order to maintain this glossy style, retouchers enhance models skin by removing unsightly blemishes or reducing uneven skin tones where necessary. All alterations to images such as skin retouches and colour fixes fall within the discretion of the reproduction team under the instruction from the Editor who is responsible for the content of the magazine. These retouches are based according to the client’s demands and specifications of the brand of which the shot was taken for (Ohlsen 2015).

The editor instructs the art director as to what is expected or needing to be portrayed to consumers and this is then passed down to the layout artist who puts all the elements together on a page. The retoucher in charge of True Love has to take instructions and be able to reproduce these instructions into a photoshop file (Ohlsen 2015). The art director would then approve the changes that are made to the photoshop file to allow it into the magazine (Refer to figure 1 page 66).

The printing processes take place in the repro department more commonly known as the reproduction department. The role of the Repro department is one of service,

skill in photoshop is provided but outputs are largely influenced by what the client or magazine editor needs. “Our input is a mere translation of what the Editor needs to portray” (Ohlson 2015). This constructed attractiveness the editor needs to portray in the magazine for consumers is what the researcher intends to uncover in the present research within the social constructionism theory and digital manipulation industry.

According to Ohlson (2015), “The type of manipulation that occurs during the picture-taking process of the photographer before the image is received by the editorial team is beyond our control”. Depending on the quality of the image, a few photographers do their own retouching and would not allow the magazines retouchers to enhance anything on the image. In addition to this, bought images from a stock company like Gallo images of who also do a lot of their own retouching, force the magazine to hardly make changes to the images and use them as is (Ohlson 2015).

When photo shoots are done by in-house photographers, a list of instructions accompanies the picture with regards to blemishes and hair removal as well as red in eyes and make-up problems that were not picked up at the photography stage (Ohlson 2015).

Standards of cover girls

The standards of cover girl images would largely be influenced by the editor in charge of the magazine at the time. A change in Editorship would normally mean a change in the type of images used for a cover. This could be how close to crop into a picture (head and shoulders or the whole body) or what the magazines focus should be. The photo-shopping or digital enhancements then would all depend on the message the editor would like to convey to its captive audience (Ohlsen 2015).

History of manipulation within True Love

According to Ohlson (2015) there has been a marked difference in the quality of photographs, especially of black models since several years ago when images needed to be scanned in the reproduction department. True Love has been using Photoshop for more than 17 years already and even in the earlier years of scanning had most of the tools they make use of today. The skills required however and

knowledge of the printing trade today has increased the quality and standard of digital manipulation to a great degree over the years.

A black models skin tone is different from a Caucasian model and would require different makeup and lighting. Retouching black skin tones requires advanced skill and knowledge of the colour breakdown (cmyk in printing terms) only obtained by experience in the printing trade. There were a few techniques being used to edit images on film and on printing presses with continuous tone but it is far easier to alter them with digital technology than several years ago when images needed to be scanned in (Holsen 2015).

This editing and enhancement process of which has significantly changed over the years taking place within the cover girl images of the magazine before being portrayed to consumers can be seen by the researcher then as a constructed reality. The described photo-shopping or digital enhancement techniques dependent on the requirements and messaging from editor needing to be conveyed to its captive audience creates an altered or manipulated truth or standard of attractiveness. In manipulating photographs or altering them to change from its natural, truthful state, a constructed standard of unrealistic cover girls is communicated or portrayed. as a result of the expectations from society, clients and ultimately the standards or style of the magazine.

2.1.4 Understanding the Social Construction theory

Socially constructed things

The social construction of reality or social constructionism can be defined according to Andrews (2012) as one of the key concepts in the theory of knowledge in sociology and communication theory that refers to the way in which meaning is created through social interaction with others. Social constructionists view knowledge as constructed as opposed to created and attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality (Andrews 2012).

According to Berger and Luckmann (1996) constructionism refers to a social phenomenon developed or constructed from the perceptions and actions of social

actors. Berger et al (1996) suggest that many aspects of the world around us are not real in and of themselves. Things like language, gender, race, books and even money exist because we give them reality through social agreement. These things do not exist in the absence of society or value being assigned to them. The things we experience in this world are just constructs. Money is just simply pieces of paper and metal that have no value other than what is assigned to them.

Berger et al (1996) explain that the concept of the self can be considered a social construct in that our identity is created through interactions with other people and our reactions to the expectations of society. In attempting to make sense of the social world, the social world could be altered, constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed.

Constructed realities in magazines

According to Brook and Herbert (2006) considering that the media is central to what is represented as social realities; it is an effective means of socialization and transmission of popular culture in our consumption-oriented, mediated society.

The content circulated by media institutions is argued to be what comes across as important to audiences according to Brook et al (2006). Much of what audiences know and care about is based on the images, symbols, and narratives in radio, television, film, music, and other media.

This research will look at True Love as part of media institutions that construct reality in the form of cover girl images enhanced to portray what is needed in order to comply with the style of the magazine and requirements from the brand. The physical facial traits of the models are constructed through digital manipulation to represent a trend communicated to audiences. True Love will be considered as a social construct as the trends created and possibly adopted by consumers from celebrities would not exist if not for the magazine that give them meaning and substance.

With today's technology it is possible to do or create almost anything with images. Image retouching, enhancement and alteration of images have long been considered a large part of creating the image of the ideal woman. Constructionists view knowledge and truth as created not discovered by the mind (Creswell 2014).

2.1.5 General perceptions and stereotypes of physical attractiveness

According to Dember and Warm (1979) perception can be defined as the way one thinks about or understands someone or something. Physical attractiveness refers to the degree to which a person's physical traits are regarded as aesthetically pleasing or beautiful (Dember et al 1979).

The physical attractiveness stereotype has been described according to Weiten (2002) as the tendency for people to ascribe socially desirable personality traits to those who are good looking, seeing them as more sociable, poised, and well-adjusted than those who are less attractive.

Research undertaken by Berschied and Walster (1972) revealed that physical attractiveness stereotypes do exist and attractive individuals are judged to be more socially desirable than unattractive individuals. Individuals who possess attractive facial characteristics are found to be more favourable than those with less attractiveness (Berschied et al, 1972).

According to Thomson and Keith (2000) women with more Caucasoid (Caucasian race) features are perceived as more attractive to the opposite sex and are more successful in relationships than women with more Negroid features.

According to Hunter (2002) within the black community, skin-tone is important in defining beauty. Lighter-coloured skin for a long time has been and still is typically seen as more beautiful than darker-coloured skin.

Breland (1998) revealed that skin colour plays an important role in how we perceive an individual's physical attractiveness as well as the role of skin colour (ie darkness to lightness or lightness to darkness) as it pertains to racial identity development theory and self-esteem among individuals of various skin colours is crucial to understanding.

This research will contribute to the studies conducted on physical attractiveness and stereotypes and perceptions thereof by examining the role of digital on perceptions of physical attractiveness and self-esteem. There has been very little research conducted as to the impact digital image manipulation plays on the perceptions

consumers have on the degree to which cover girls physical traits are regarded as aesthetically pleasing or beautiful.

Chapter 3

3.1 Research methodology

3.1.1 Research design

Qualitative research is an inquiry approach of which the inquirer explores a central phenomenon or key concept (Creswell 2013). A qualitative research design will be undertaken for this research with case study research. According to Creswell (2013) this research design is a systemic, subjective approach used to describe life experiences and meaning. The researcher will be able to gain insight, explore the depth and extent of the meaning of digital image manipulation within the participant's lives in relation to a magazine case study in the social constructionism field.

3.1.2 Data collection

There are several methods to collect qualitative data (Creswell 2013). The research undertaken will make use of qualitative research methods in the form of a field study to include focus groups and unstructured in-depth interviews which will be facilitated and guided by the researcher in order to answer the outlined research questions.

Structuring the focus groups

The two research instruments that were used for this research consisted of focus groups and personal interviews.

A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, and idea (Creswell 2013).

The researcher conducted two medium-sized focus groups both made up of five participants all of who were divided according to the availability of the volunteers as well as age categories to ensure a consistent representative sample as the research is aimed at black women between the ages of 25 and 34.

Each focus group had copies of True Love magazine covers present in the research which allowed the researcher to witness the participant's interaction with the case and served as an overall discussion point to examine the difference in perception of attractiveness towards various True Love magazine cover girls depicted.

This research method provided the researcher with an overall view and understanding on the subject matter. In order to gain an understanding of their relationships to the magazine, questions that lead to discussion within the groups were posed to assist the researcher in answering the research questions of the study namely 1) To unpack the term digital image manipulation within fashion magazines 2) To explore the history of digital image manipulation of cover girls within True Love magazine between 2010 and 2015 within the social constructionism theory and lastly 3) To determine the link between effects of digital image manipulation within the fashion magazine industry and the perceptions of physical attractiveness.

The role of the researcher/moderator within the focus groups

The researcher of who played an emic role which can be described according to Morgan (1988) as an insider, who is a full participant in activity or discussion introduced the topics or questions for discussion and played a significant role in helping the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst them.

The researcher organised the group discussions and acted as a 'moderator' not an interviewer. The purpose and advantage of this interview technique was to get all participants talking and interacting amongst themselves. The role of the researcher was thus to moderate the discussion, encouraging participants to talk, prompting the discussion in appropriate directions to ensure all topics were covered, and changing the direction of the discussion when a point felt to have been sufficiently covered. The researcher also "controlled" the group interaction to ensure that the viewpoints of all participants were allowed to be expressed.

According to Morgan (1988) the strength of focus group discussions relies on allowing the participants to agree or disagree with each other so that it provides an insight into how a group thinks about an issue, about the range of opinion and ideas, and the inconsistencies and variation that exists in a particular community in terms of beliefs and their experiences and practices.

The researcher ensured even participation as there were participants who were not as vocal as others and tended to be spoken over and unheard. This provided a clear understanding of key questions and maintained a neutral attitude and appearance within the focus group discussions.

Structuring the personal interviews

Unstructured personal qualitative interviews with the 6 participants that were not involved in the focus groups allowed volunteers to express their views openly and talk freely with the researcher without the influence of other participants or dominants present as per the focus group discussions. The researcher gained personal one on one responses and opinions of the participants through a set of crafted questions relating to True Love Magazine covers being directed to answer the research questions and identify central themes or key concepts by leeway of the interviewee provided.

The participants were more open about their thoughts, perceptions, views and feelings without other women present making them feel uncomfortable or insecure with regards to discussions of physical attractiveness.

The role of the researcher within the interviews

The role of the researcher in the personal interviews was an emic role as well in order to encourage the participants to reveal everything they thought about the topics. The interviewer recorded all remarks and pursued them until satisfied that there was no more to be gained by further probing.

3.1.3 Sampling

According to True Love AMPS, 33% of women between the ages of 25 and 34 read True Love. The total readership is 2 265 000 with 96% being black women majority living within the metro areas, working full time (AMPS 2014).

The target sample population with the magazine statistics would have ideally been 456 624 as the research is aimed at black women between 25 and 34.

As this target sample was not within reach or access, the researcher made use of a non-probability sampling approach with a volunteer method requesting True Love magazine readers to participate in the study. This gave the researcher a less saturated and more representative sample.

The researcher hosted a call to action feature via their personal social media platforms namely Twitter and Facebook requesting all black females between the

ages of 25 and 34 reading True Love to participate in a case study of the magazine. After conducting the call to action feature the volunteers that came forth to be a part of the study consisted of 17 black women aged between 25 and 34. This formed part of the representative, accessible sample to be divided into two focus groups comprising of equal participants and individual interviews.

3.1.4 Trustworthiness

It is hard to show that qualitative research is accurate or correct therefore the researcher will take the aspect of credibility into consideration when conducting their research.

Credibility is increased when the researcher spends long periods of time with the participants in order to understand them better and gain insight into their lives. The researcher takes credibility into consideration with this present research by making use of in-depth interviews combined with focus groups as a means to collect the data from participants ensuring the richness of the information gathered (Creswell 2013).

Using multiple research tools and methods to execute the research objectives of the study will ensure that the study is in no way invalid or unreliable.

To ensure trustworthiness and dependability, the researcher recorded all sessions with permission from the representative sample, listening out for similar responses from the focus groups and in-depth personal interviews in order to identify central trends and themes or categories within the research.

Once these trends have been identified, the researcher can measure responses within the category identified to establish perceptions and influences thereof.

3.1.5 Data analysis methods

The process of analysing personal interviews

In order to analyse the responses with a thematic approach from both research instruments namely the focus groups and personal interviews. Each research question was listed with the questions that spoke to the research question in the case study conducted per individual interview and placed under the research

question. This allowed the researcher to identify themes and similar trends in responses listed.

The process of analysing focus groups

Each focus group facilitated by the researcher and recorded was analysed by placing the questions speaking to each research question in order of research questions as well as general responses that were more strongly announced and in agreement of majority of the participants.

The researcher was able to identify trends or themes from the general responses, relating it back to the Social Constructionism Theory.

Research instrument ethics

With both focus groups and interviews being recorded, the role the researcher played in ensuring ethical practices was requesting permission to record and make use of responses for the sake of the research and received consent from all volunteers before using the data collected as it is very personal and subjective views.

Chapter 4

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Introduction to the personal interview and focus group findings.

The objective of this chapter is to unpack the following research questions: 1) *To unpack the term digital image manipulation within fashion magazines* 2) *To explore the history of digital image manipulation of cover girls within True Love magazine between 2010 and 2015 within the social constructionism theory* and 3) *To determine the link between effects of digital image manipulation within the fashion magazine industry and the perceptions of physical attractiveness* addressed in a case study with various questions speaking to each research question (refer to Appendices 1A page 72).

In listing the responses from each question addressed in the personal interview and focus group conducted that spoke to the research questions; the researcher was able to identify themes and trends from the data. There were several questions that spoke to one research question hence the responses will be listed according to the question within the research question per interview.

4.1.2 Personal interview participant's breakdown:

Personal interview 1	Amanda Unamaca (25)
Personal interview 2	Ayanda Maholi (27)
Personal interview 3	Tumelo Popela(25)
Personal interview 4	Vanessa Unamaca (28)
Personal interview 5	Vumile Sibanda(27)
Personal interview 6	Nontobeko Sibiya (25)

4.1.3 Research question 1

Personal interview 1:

Question 5 response

Discussions with this respondent revealed that her understanding of digital image manipulation is the blurring out of flaws on celebrities or the icon that True Love has

placed on the cover's to make them more appealing to women. If cover girls had unwanted wrinkles, the magazine would make them disappear as in the instance of cellulite so anything that would not attract women to the cover or the reality of what life is for each woman would be blurred out. Participant one strongly felt that: "I think they blur things out to make them seem greater or better than what we are so that it's something to aspire to even though they could just be like us".

Question 6 response

Participant 6 believes True Love tries to set an image or a better picture of the cover girl to make her appeal to women because as stated: "what's the point of buying someone that looks exactly like you. What's the point of shopping for something that doesn't make you better?". She went on to mention that if her idea of hot is slimming down, or getting natural hair or having jewellery, there is something there that she can relate to so the manipulation of making the cover girl's legs look flawless or without any cellulite appeals to someone that is overweight and wants to slim down. The fact that her smile is bright appeals to someone who has a crooked or bad smile so there is something for everyone. Participant 1: "I don't think it's unrealistic but it's something to help you "be better".

Question 7 response

Participant 1 would not buy the magazine if the cover girls weren't touched up. She personally touches up her own pictures on her phone so that she looks presentable and feels that there is a step that one has to go up in order to be presentable and acceptable and be regarded as something that someone aspires to and looks up to. She feels untouched is common and what makes you better is to fix your appearance because she feels all women are judged by what people see. If the cover girl is untouched she feels like there is nothing there that would make her want to be more "presentable". She goes on to say: "We are humans that are judged by what we see so if you look at something that is untouched and unperfected we always strive to be better why would I want something that is average?".

Personal interview 2:

Question 5 response

Participant 2 links her understanding of digital image manipulation to Photoshop but more specifically bigger boobs, smaller boobs and all body alterations. Although she doesn't only read True Love, she does feel like the cover image does influence her if she sees someone that is too thin, unnaturally thin. If she knew how the cover person looks like in real life, she would be upset as according to participant 2: If deception already starts with the cover image then there is really no point in me going further than that".

Question 6 response

Discussions revealed that the participant is aware that cover girls are being manipulated to look flawless and it puts pressure on her when unnatural manipulations are implemented as the cover girls are beautiful people in their natural state and fails to understand why can't the person be shown in that state.

The participant understands that editors are trying to sell magazines and to do so have to show someone beautiful on the cover as this is what people want to see. The moment things aren't the way they were in real life, she feels that's not flawless but a misconception. Natural is flawless.

Question 7 response

Participant 1 does expect the magazine to put make up on cover girls but the moment they drastically manipulate it that's when it's a cut-off selling point to her. Whether cover girls are natural or have a bit of -make up that's great but once body shape gets distorted and all of that, she feels that is when it is off putting.

Personal interview 3:

Question 5 response

This participant describes the term as airbrushing; what one usually would see the person to be usually isn't. She feels that they touch it and tweek it to the highest level of perfection

Question 6 response

Participant 3 feels that some cover girls have been manipulated more than others to look flawless as she has been exposed to some of the cover girls in real life. She is aware of makeup being put on when celebrities are on TV but feels like some celebrities look completely different in real life to what they look like natural even with makeup.

Question 7 response

This participant would purchase the magazine either way as she would be ok with how the cover girls look without photo shop.

Personal interview 4

Question 5 response

The participant associates digital image manipulation to body enhancements. Discussions extended to short woman with pimples and cellulite being made to look flawless from a skin perspective.

Question 6 response

Participant 4 feels cover girls are being manipulated to look acceptably flawless and feels with True Love, fat women or rather heavier women that are on the cover and their beauty or the fact that they aren't skinny is applauded but does think the magazine fixes it up. She feels she could have three rolls in her stomach and that could be considered as heavy but for the sake of beauty or to pleasant in the eye the magazine would smooth it out to one roll for example so as to still look heavy weight but be more pleasing to the eye.

Looking at the True Love case study cover from 2010 with Lira the participant feels the touch ups goes from weight to skin to hair. She feels Lira's real hair could probably not be as is portrayed on the cover and the "crooseness" of her hair could be stronger than that but to make it more pleasing to the eye the magazine could put a stronger contrast so that one doesn't see the texture of her hair but a black shade on top of the hair (Refer to Appendices 1C cover C3). In her opinion, the touch ups aren't necessarily limited to the body or hair but for things that aren't perfect. Personal interview 4: "I guess that's socially constructed".

Question 7 response

The respondent feels that if she wants to be inspired, she gravitates towards someone that inspires her on the cover. If she feels good about herself and wants to relate to a natural woman or a woman that has the same struggle as her or same everyday life then she wouldn't want to gravitate towards a magazine that doesn't have the same natural looking person. She wouldn't buy someone that's too perfect because in essence she doesn't think that they look like that in real.

Personal interview 5

Question 5 response

Discussions with the participant revealed that her understanding of digital image manipulation is when images are altered to remove and improve what photographers and editors feel to be imperfections to create what they believe to be a flawless image.

Question 6 response

Participant 5 feels like cover girls are definitely being manipulated to look flawless which sometimes gives them too much credit than what's due in terms of their natural looks.

Question 7 response

The participant wouldn't be affected by whether or not the cover looked flawless or not as she is drawn to the content of the magazine rather than the cover girls.

Personal interview 6

Question 5 response

Participant 5 feels digital image manipulation is when magazines make girls skinny and pretty. It's unreal, fake, it's not them and there's stuff that has been changed. Bone structure has been adjusted, thighs are thinner, and stomachs are tighter. It's not real.

Question 6 response

Discussions from this interview revealed that the participant feels that cover girls are being manipulated because someone thinks that's what people want to see whilst she is actually waiting for a cover where they show real women with all their flaws so women can also be ok with the way they look. The participant mentioned just having a baby so her stomach isn't flat but it would be nice to know she can still look good in something on the cover. She made it clear of her lack of appreciation for cover girl edits.

Question 7 response

The participant stated she would definitely still buy the magazine but as much as she was saying she would like to see more real people, she feels that real wouldn't sell because we have been programmed to think that if it's flawed and to stay away from it. She would buy the magazine to see what the actual shoot looked like.

4.1.4 Research question 2

Personal interview 1

Question 8 response

Participant 1 feels that the covers have moved from being elegant to a lot more casual and appealing to a younger crowd. Looking at 2010 covers of January and June and the dress both models have on (Refer to Appendices 1C: covers C1 and C2) she feels she can relate more to covers from 2011 and 2013 (Refer to Appendices 1C covers C7 and C8) because as soon as the covers move from 2013-2015 it's a lot more casual and a lot less elegant. Lira's cover even though it's 2011 (Refer to Appendices 1C cover C3) is classy in shorts. She feels the magazine is

trying to make the shorts classy, trying to bring summer with a touch of classiness. Participant 1 mentioned: “The 2015 cover is more risqué, a younger show your legs, bit of midriff, trying to be in with the style while 2010-2013 tries to be elegant”. She feels 2015 covers are for the women that knows what she wants and knows who she is not goes with the crowd or the season.

Question 9:

As discussed, this participant feels there is a lot more skin showing in the 2015 covers, more risqué than casual style trends but the layout is very much the same.

She mentioned how the cover girls are smiling most of the time, showing a happy successful woman. The colours are uplifting, yellows, whites and don't over cast the person on the cover which she felt makes the reader look at the icon and who she is. Participant 1 felt that the cover girls stances are very confident, forward, very coming towards you, elegant, very “I know what I want in my life, I am happy in my life”. She feels it's a very positive image for black women and to accept who you are and to come forward not die down.

Before 2015 she felt that none of the women looked young but mature and assertive. The cover girls look young in 2015 but she looks like she knows what she wants and excites confidence.

Question 10 response

Participant 1 feels True Love cover girls have set a different standard, not an unrealistic standard. “If you were to go out and they asked you to go to a photo shoot you would look your best so if you take everyone at their best and you compare it to the cover minus all the editing that has happened they would look the same.”. It's just that when you pick up a cover you aren't looking your best so I don't think it's unrealistic but a different standard. It's a woman at her best.

If you are looking at women naturally it's an unrealistic expectation or portrayal because she looks too good for her natural state however if we judge it according to the best hair make up, styling which is what the magazine aims for you to do. If we look at you having everything the magazine is giving you tips on to look like the person they have used on the cover then it isn't an unrealistic expectation.

As an African woman, participant 1 feels a red lipstick or purple lipstick is not just for white skin now and she can also get an orange lipstick or blush or can get a foundation her skin colour. She feels African women have broken out their shell.

True Love has given tips to be what they have put out on the cover and participant 1 feels it's an invitation. We know that we are naturally beautiful but we are judged by our appearance so make use of the beauty tips given.

Personal interview 2

Question 8 response

Participant 2 feels the actual colour of the magazine stands out before the person. She feels the fonts and various shades of red are assertive.

Question 9 response

She feels the covers haven't changed but are just different. Covers from 2010 (refer to Appendices 1C Cover C1 and C2) are more cluttered but layout has remained the same over the years. The colours go with the outfits.

Question 10 response

Participant 2 feels that as the cover girls vary in sizes there isn't an unrealistic standard especially with South African women. International magazines only use slender women but South African women vary so True Love is definitely a representation of SA women and she appreciates that True Love is for black women.

Participant 2 feels that from the cover she isn't going to be able to tell if the woman is intelligent or not all you're getting is the image, her face, her makeup, whether she is rocking the look or not, her weight, her dress whether it suits her body size and so it makes you judge a cover first before anything else before you actually get to the content. With celebs you already have a sense of who they are so you want to know more about them and that they aren't going to be enhanced unrealistically.

Personal interview 3

Question 8 response

Participant 3 feels it's the person and also the story that is being told that stands out first for her. She views the fashion according to the person. She feels bigger cover girls more than most cover girls are girls she can relate to. Lira's cover stood out secondly for participant 3 because Lira was taking over the world at that moment according to the participant (Refer to Appendices 1C cover C9) is cover the participant liked because of her natural hair.

Question 9 response

Participant 3 feels the covers haven't changed and have been consistent from 2010-2015, same format.

Question 10 response

Participant 3 doesn't feel like the standard is unrealistic at all as there are different types of women on the cover and different types of styles, looks, skin tones and also different types of hair. Covers include natural, dread locks, weaves, bald hair and short natural. It's different types of styles that South Africans explore and have. She loves that True Love hasn't represented all black women.

Personal interview 4

Question 8 response

Participant 4 was attracted to the Pearl Thusi cover (refer to Appendices 1 C cover C9: page 87) because she appreciated the cover girl's natural hair. She felt there was a lot of leg or skin being shown on the cover and because her hair has a wow factor, the cover stood out. That participant looked at the Thembe Seate cover (refer to Appendices 1C cover C7) because she felt that cover girl looked classy in the way she was styled.

Question 9 response

This interview revealed that participant 4 felt the feel and layout of the magazine was the same but noticed that bigger women were covered more in the past (refer

Appendices 1 C cover C8) What society finds beautiful is shown in her opinion but the little bit of a boob there is covered, legs are covered while cover girl referred to in Appendices typically is seen as small with the thin legs and isn't covered. Participant 4 feels Lira or skinnier cover girls are more applauded. She went on to say that maybe now thicker women are being embraced in 2015. Fuller women are applauded now to show more skin than what was almost covered all the time

Question 10 response

This participant felt that media has set an unrealistic view for women in general never mind African women. She went on to say that there is an unrealistic expectation for women with blonde hair to have fuller hair or when you're black you are expected to be curvier. The media in general has made women aspire to unrealistic expectations not necessarily just black women. Looking at True Love participant felt there was diversity in portraying natural hair, braids, wigs, weaves, short hair and long hair, curvy women. She felt that all women are applauded but in every realm there is a certain unrealistic expectation or every natural person there is an expectation from media for perfect skin, thinner legs, clearer skin etc

By media she referred to everything including TV, twitter, Instagram that women relate to and are forced to aspire to. Participant 4 went on to say: "It's not a True Love thing, it's a media thing. Actually it's a society thing'.

Personal interview 5

Question 8 response

Participant 5 was drawn to the cover with Pearl Thusi (Refer to Appendices 1C cover C9) as she felt it looked like the model's own natural hair which she appreciates.

She thought darker skin tones stood out for her in 2012 with specific mention to brighter make up for darker skin women in 2015 and more risqué outfits

Question 9 response

This interview revealed the participant hadn't noticed much change in terms of the layout and felt the magazine had been consistent over the past 5 years. The trends have changed accordingly.

Question 10 response

Participant 5 feels that if anything it celebrates the diversity of African women by showcasing women of different shades and sizes as well as women of different ages in different stages of their lives. This not only attracts a wider audience as there is no set standard to African beauty.

Personal interview 6

Question 8 response

Responses from participant 6 revealed that the bright colours were striking and stood out for her. As she loves the cover girl represented on the January 2014 cover, Pearl Thusi (refer to Appendices 1C cover C9) she was not necessarily concerned with what anything else is on the cover. Although she isn't a fan of disco pants, she felt Lira's cover stood out (refer to Appendices 1C cover C3)

Question 9 response

Participant 6 felt that the covers are starting to look a lot more real. When looking over the covers she mentioned Pearl Thusi (refer to Appendices 1C cover C9) and Zenande Mfenyana (refer to Appendices 1C cover C11) both having dreads and natural hair mentioning how the magazine seemed to be moving away from the weaves. The covers in her opinion didn't look as fake even though cover girl represented in appendices had a lot of make-up. She felt that Pearl thusi's cover looked like her natural self like as though she was chilling at home where as the January 2010 cover with (refer to) she looked like she actually dressed up for a photo shoot. The 2015 covers look simpler.

Question 10 response

Participant 5 felt that True love is broad and their beauty represented is broad and even though they have enhanced the girls, it appeals to a larger market and not necessarily a specific market.

She feels the retouches aren't obvious and she wouldn't be able to tell whose tummy is real and whose isn't.

4.1.5 Research question 3

Personal interview 1

Question 1 response

Participant 1 ranked what stood out for her in order from what was the most important to the least important. The actual cover person or celebrity/ influencer being the most important to see if that person is of any interest to her then the makeup tips and lastly fashion trends portrayed. She mentioned wanting to see what's going on in the cover girl's life, what that person wants to tell the world or what the magazine wants her to portray.

Question 2 response

This participant felt the person on the cover is definitely what attracts her first to the cover. She looks at the cover and if its icons she likes such as Bonang Mathebe or Pear Thusi for example showcased then she is attracted to the cover. If it isn't icons she cares for then she might look at the second thing like contouring tips or beauty tips. Participant 1 went on to say that it's not about the editorial and what they are saying about the person it's just the fact that she likes the people on the cover.

Question 3 response

Participant 1 would definitely be deterred from buying the magazine if the person on the cover is not speaking to her. If the beauty tips don't stand out or aren't on the cover and if there is nothing about beauty on the cover that they have mentioned, she probably wouldn't buy it. The person is very important.

Question 4 response

Participant 1 isn't one to follow trends in general so in terms of makeup and hairstyles, she would mostly look at True Love to look at what would suit her specific skin tone, facial structure, style in general not minding whether it's the current trend or not. She would look at old magazines of True Love to see if there is someone of that similar body type and skin tone that has a style that she is interested in and kind of aspires to, seeing it as a form or reference for how she would get ready for a night

out or in general. The trend needs to suit her style as an individual rather than the trend being portrayed on True Love in general for that month.

Personal interview 2

Question 1 response

Participant 2 reads True Love more for the front page and the stars that are on the cover of whom she finds inspiring or admires. These are the covers she would be attracted to and read. She is not really reading the cover for make up or fashion tips even though the fashion pages are really relevant to black women in her opinion. She ultimately doesn't really go in to True Love for any other reason than what she sees on the cover.

Question 2 response

Cover girls are generally what this participant is first attracted to on the cover and from cover girls she starts reading what exactly the headlines are talking about and anything else she could possibly enjoy.

Question 3 response

Participant 2's decision to purchase the magazine is dependent on her mood. If she is at an Exclusive books going through the magazines and sees what every mag is talking about the True Love's cover would prompt her to buy because suddenly there's an article she's interested in. If she's just at Pick n Pay at the till however because Exclusive Books is more where she sits down then definitely the cover would influence her purchase.

Question 4 response

Participant 2 agrees with the cover influencing her style. She feels it's also the personality of that person or rather if she sees a cover of someone she knows or sort of knows and would get to know more. Even from a fashion perspective, participant 2 found the cover of Thembi Seete (refer to Appendices 1C cover C7) to being elegant and really amazing! she would want to know more about that cover or look and would look at the trend or outfit and try and get something similar.

Personal interview 3

Question 1 response

Participant 3 felt that True Love for her was a magazine to inspire women. In her opinion they have different sections in terms of careers as well as becoming a mother, how to handle mother hood, styling etc. It's mainly more appealing to a higher LSM but even lower LSM people can afford it, it fits in with everybody and it's inspiring and makes women feel they can be great like the ladies on the covers.

In terms of content participant 1 felt that the magazine has interesting, real life stories that can inspire individuals and the cool fashion and beauty products showcased even her as a normal citizen could buy.

Question 2 response

The cover girl or cover person is the first thing that participant 3 sees when looking at the magazine. Once she has looked at the person on the cover, then the different topics that are highlighted and she feels she could relate to starts appealing to her. If it's a person who doesn't really have an interesting story to tell or she is not really interested in finding out what's going on about, they aren't appealing to her.

Question 3 response

Participant 3 used Lira (refer to Appendices 1C cover C3) as an example of an inspiring magazine cover girl to buy. As participant 3 is familiar with Lira's story and her musical struggle to becoming a woman who is not even the ideal beauty or you know the ideal person that everybody thinks should be a star. I mean she's always rocking natural hair and it's just a very appealing story to me because I'm always rocking natural. We don't look exactly like the "it" girl but she managed to make it so you would like to be more inspired about her story and people like that. People you can relate to. What's the point of buying something you can't relate to.

Question 4 response

Participant 3 feels the covers influence her style as she isn't a size 32 but the magazine also has sections for larger ladies and tips for how to rock that and also for the slimmer ladies. She mentioned how one of the main reasons you would buy the

magazine is because of the cover person so if you don't really relate to that person you won't be inspired to buy the magazine and see what exactly the fashion and beauty is they are talking about. For her it always links back to whose on the cover.

Based on the person she can relate to she would buy makeup or look at their shades of makeup and what she their wearing and buy the magazine.

Personal interview 4

Question 1 response

Participant 4 stated that the editorial and the writing is what grips her first before the fashion or anything.

Question 2 response

Participant 4 is attracted to the fact that there are always black women on the cover and then the editorial or content. She is more for the headlines than the people on the cover. As participant 4 isn't a star struck person but more attracted to colour, ethnicity and editorial or free things that are given. She feels those items can probably attract her to want to buy the mag especially if its beauty orientated like skin care and make up I would buy it.

Question 3 response

She wouldn't buy the magazine if content didn't stand out she would rather Google it instead of a hard copy.

Question 4 response

The cover doesn't influence or define her style at all

Participant 4 wouldn't say True Love influences her but rather someone with her sort of body type. She isn't really a trend person so if someone has her body type or facial structure that would suit her, influence might be there.

Personal interview 5

Question 1 response

The participant found True Love to be a source of fashion, beauty tips and content.

Question 2 response

Participant 5 is most attracted to the cover girl and what they are wearing as well as the way they are styled in terms of hair and accessories.

Question 3 response

Participant 4 would be affected by the cover as she is attracted to who the cover girl is before anything else.

Question 4 response

She does find that if she can relate to the cover girl and finds her look or style appealing she is more inclined to purchase a similar outfit.

Personal interview 6

Question 1 response

Participant 6 feels that True Love is a lifestyle magazine and covers the fashion aspect but also covers stories that are relevant to her, someone who is curious to find out about what's happening in other people's lives. The mag also cover do's don't do's, quite a few trends which she feels is relevant to her.

Question 2 response

Participant 6 felt that the red and yellow colours are always bold and bright which are very catchy and not something you can walk past wherever you are buying a magazine.

Question 3 response

She feels that if she doesn't know who the cover girl is she won't buy the magazine. If it's someone that she don't know as much as the headlines might be something she would be interested in reading, she wouldn't be interested in an unknown cover girl.

Question 4 response

She might find something similar or be inspired for that month but has never actually gone out and bought the exact outfit.

4.1.6 Focus group 1 discussion findings

Focus group 1 participant break down

Julia Ntogae (25)
Paballo (28)
Sibongile (28)
Lungile (28)
Laura (30)
Thembeke (26)

Research question 1

Question 5 response

Participants in the discussion agreed on the term digital image manipulation translating to Photo shop, the process of altering body shape and anything needed to make people look flawless.

It was discussed that the concept somehow creates insecurity for people that aren't familiar with the process as they see celebrities looking flawless, under the impression that they look that way in reality. Magazines sell aspirations in that sense.

Confidence and self-esteem issues were discussed and the mention of how younger girls are becoming anorexic as a result of aspiring to look like magazine cover icons such as Bonang Mathebe of who is probably not as thin in real life.

Discussions around looking at one's own body and feeling uncomfortable as a result of comparing it to cover girls emerged.

Question 6 response

All participants were in agreement that to a certain extent regardless of what touch ups were made that all cover girls undergo some form of digital enhancement.

Question 7 response

The participants felt it would feel more relatable having the cover girls untouched on the cover and of interest to them in reading the cover girls story without make up as they would be curious to see what celebs look like without make up

Bigger boned women look slimmer on the cover than in person and one can relate to a person when seeing them at their actual size.

A question asked within the group from one of the participants was: Why do you think they do it if we don't relate to it.

Answers included: "People like being perfect" and "aspiration is what they are selling us".

The participants concluded that women have bought on to aspiring to look like cover girls represented that women in Africa are now doing skin bleaching and lipo-suction. When white girls started wanting to be fuller figured in terms of their behinds, African women were comfortable again with having big behinds.

Participants felt it was messed up if True Love is telling them to be proud to be black women but at the same time strip black women of what makes them black, their rich dark skin tone.

Research question 2

Question 8 response

The group felt that covers in 2010 were more real, natural, realistic, and appear as natural as possible face wise even though the outfit doesn't seem to be casual.

The Pear Thusi cover (Refer to Appendices 1C Cover C9) is natural and has no focus on her body so for anyone that is insecure about their body, there is focus on big natural hair.

2015 can come across as a little more sexual in the sense that both models are showing flesh in risqué outfits.

Question 9 response

The general group feeling was that the quality of the covers has changed.

2010 had more of a business magazine feel whilst 2015 was more high fashion similar to woollies, clean cover not as cluttered as 2011 (Refer to Appendices 1C Covers C3 and C4).

Cover and layout of June 2013 cover is bright with busy colours (Refer to Appendices 1C-cover C8).

Question 10 response

General feeling was yes because even though Pear Thusi's cover (Refer to Appendices 1C: C9 pg 80) is very natural in comparison to other magazine covers. The volume of her hair and perfection of her skin is unrealistic. The average black girl is also not as tiny as the girls being used on 2015 covers (Refer to Appendices 1C covers C11 and C12).

Research question 3

Question 1 response

Participants either felt editorial content rather than beauty or fashion tips as some of the beauty products aren't realistic in the sense that they are hard to find in stores or fashion and beauty tips simply because magazines have shifted into a tabloid space almost in terms of editorial content.

Discussion was influenced by the mention of fashion wardrobe of the magazine where a couple of items are given and you mix and match gives ideas.

The fact that the editor of True Love is a black female editor drove discussion around True Love as a sign of black excellence. The former Cosmo magazine was editor and moved to True love and had she according to the group had done an amazingly good job on Cosmo as did Lerato Shabala, former editor.

Question 2 response

The group felt the cover person was the most important element as the cover person indicates what the magazine are going to cover about that person and their story.

If the headlines are regarding content that isn't relative to them or the cover girl is on an annoying show, they wouldn't want to buy the magazine.

If the cover girl's cover exposure is minimal they would be interested to know what's going on with that person.

Question 3 response

Yes if it was a person we didn't know we wouldn't be buying it. If it was a person we didn't like or someone that was overly exposed. No, wouldn't buy it.

Question 4 response

General answer was no because half the time they don't look as good as they actually would in real life as they would on the cover, it's photo shopped. The cover clothes aren't realistic or your everyday clothes. It's not something you would wear on the regular. Where would you wear it to. It depends on where you are at in that current moment. If you're going to a wedding and see the cover girl wearing something you could wear to a wedding, they would buy the look. The group found it was more the state of mind you're in and what you are looking for clothing wise that determines your style being influenced.

The group weren't big on make up.

4.1.7 Focus group 2 discussion findings

Lilian Osagie (32)
Jessica (25)
Sihle (25)
Tela (27)
Tumi (27)

Research question 1

Question 5 response

The general consensus and understanding of Digital image manipulation was the changing of flaws on an image through Photo shop and airbrushing to recreate the original image of the person to look 'perfect' and in the act making them unreal.

The group agreed that it was ok to airbrush images to perfect flaws, but the moment a person is cleaned up to the point where they are unrecognizable then they discredit the magazine as they are not painting a true image of a person.

Magazines are also creating the thoughts in young women's mind that they are not as perfect as 'celebrities' which brings down their self-esteem or makes them start considering different methods to perfect themselves and most of these methods have more damage than good as the cost of enhancing an image is at the cost of the reality of the image.

Question 6 response

The group felt that alterations to perfect flaws are definitely made on cover girls. Touch ups to fix minor flaws like pimples, scars are o but when a woman is completely changed from a chubby dark woman to a light skinned slim lady and such dramatic changes, then manipulation comes in to play.

They felt True Love doesn't change the sizes of the cover stars bodies but their skin tones are made lighter or brighter, and their skin textures are made smoother. When looking at the covers with Khabonina, Pabi Moloi and Dineo Moeketsi (Refer to Figure 1 Cover C; page 68) their bodies appear as they are in reality however their faces are pore less and they resemble porcelain dolls where their skin textures are concerned.

A magazine is essentially an escape from reality so they don't expect to see women with pimples and flaws on the cover.

Question 7 response

Majority of the group felt it is normal to have flaws and in not buying the magazine it would be a sign of being judgmental. As the story for some was the main attraction, the state of the image on the cover wasn't a concern.

Overall the participants wanted to be intrigued and see "True" beauty of a woman with all her flaws portrayed whereas a minority would be inclined to not buy the magazine as they feel they've been socialised to choose the more appealing cover.

Research question 2

Question 8 response

The group felt that there is an overall consistency in skin colour and digital enhancement. Make up and clothing has evolved just as many things in life have. True Love has also gone through an upgrade over the years in terms of magazine layout as the covers in 2010-2013 were very busy and cluttered and have become more visual content focused in terms of bright, well fitted clothing being the overall draw card on the 2015 cover.

Question 9 response

The 2010 cover and 2014 covers differ significantly for the group. 2010 appeared to be focused on getting the celeb to be as well poised and perfect as possible. Her attire is not one that the average woman would wear to work or varsity. 2014 appears to focus on the cover star being herself, in a casual outfit that is not too far

from normal day wear. 2015 is all about showing more skin confidently in a risqué outfit.

The cover titles however are different in the language they use to speak to the reader. In 2010, the cover titles focus on the element that will help the reader. "Get a health head start" and "12 beauty and decor pages" in 2010 become "Yes you can do it all" and "10 reasons why sex can be good for you... No really". The language has evolved from stating what the reader will expect, to now conversing with the reader and engaging their mind differently.

Together this contrast indicates that between 2010 and 2014, the magazine is attempting to engage with the everyday woman at her level without sounding like an expert or appearing too farfetched in fashion. The new magazine speak is geared at looking like a brighter of the everyday woman, while speaking to her like the best friend she never had.

Covers have moved from saturated content with buys headlines to less wording on the covers, almost as if editors are trying to get people to pay more attention to the cover girl.

Question 10

Participants either strongly felt that True Love portrays women as strong, powerful, fearless and stylish and African women are naturally gorgeous which the covers show "real" looking gorgeous women showing the true beauty of all African Women whether dark skin, light skin, skinny, curvy or fully figured

On the hand participants felt that the representation of cover girls is to an extent unrealistic because of all the digital enhancements. Sure enough, the enhancements make the images look fantastic but they are not real. Bonang on a cover is not Bonang early in the morning before the mask of make-up is put on her face. At the same time, the representation of cover girls featured in the True Love magazine has not set an unrealistic standard of beauty for African women in the sense that we all strive to be the best version of ourselves, we all have imperfections that we'd like to get as close to perfect as possible. Seeing a dark skinned girl like Lupita Nyong'o on

a cover, for example, catches my attention and I know that she too has flaws, but if she can look that beautiful, so can I...and as far as that goes, I suppose the representation isn't so unrealistic. It just helps us see that we can all have a different version of ourselves – a made up, “enhanced” version, which is not a bad thing at all.

Also the magazine is selling a woman who can do everything, be everything and still look good doing it. None of the cover stars are ordinary women. All of them are media personalities who are coached for the camera and the microphone. They are the centre piece on a canvas surrounded by what appears to be all the answers a woman needs the questions about life that she has constructing the woman every woman wants to be, in order to persuade buyers eye. Perfection and beauty always sell, and that is what is what magazines do best.

Research question 3

Question 1 response

True Love is an all-rounder magazine that is a symbol of an African woman who is caught between her desire to fit into a westernized society, and her identity as an African woman.

The magazine focuses on or tries to focus on every part of a woman's life (All A Woman Needs). The editorial content are women orientated or focused on aspects of lifestyle, careers etc. and the beauty & fashion pages stays true to its role of enlightening and entertaining young and aspiring women.

Question 2 response

The headlines and cover stories spoke to the participants in this group. The cover they would be attracted to speaks to their desire to succeed in their career, or a female figure that they can relate or identify with. What is the cover star wearing, does the cover celeb rock the look or not and is it a true interpretation of her personality and story.

In terms of the aesthetics of the magazine, participants loved the glossy look and feel of the magazine, the way they edit or texturize the front covers. Very attractive

bright colours are used as well as the appearance of the cover girl is always impeccable.

Question 3 response

General feeling was yes it would influence purchase decision. Based on the cover person and the cover articles, participants are attracted to a story they won't be able to find elsewhere.

If the headlines are catchy or of personal interest, then it's a must buy but if it's just the visual that's interesting and the headlines are boring then more often than not. The image on the cover only makes up a small percentage of the magazine...what's more interesting is the actual content and that's why the headlines on the cover matter the most, even though you only pay attention to them after you've paid attention to the cover girl.

The cover is the determining factor of the sales of the magazine, so the better the cover, the more sales they make and vice versa.

Question 4 response

It might be interesting to see what's trending and who wore what best and how but doesn't directly influence or define personal style in the group.

The cover of true love is a construction of beauty relative to the editor at the time of publication. It is also a constructed version of what looked best on the cover star. It is more of a point of form than a point of influence. I can be interested in what Bonang, Pearl and Zenande are wearing on the cover and be intrigued by it, but it won't influence my personal fashion decisions.

Chapter 5

5.1 Data Analysis

This chapter will analyse the findings within the social constructionism framework for trends and themes collected from the personal interviews and focus groups by providing insights from the findings.

5.1.2 Personal interviews:

Research question 1

Question 5 overall trends and themes

Constructions of perfection

Discussions with participants revealed an overall understanding of digital image manipulation being a process of magazines blurring out flaws, altering and adjusting images to the highest level of perfection by removing skin imperfections in order to attract women to the cover, making it something they can aspire to.

Body alterations

Creating or constructing flawless images extends to body enhancements.

Discussions extended to short woman with pimples and cellulite being made to look flawless from a skin perspective and women's boobs being made bigger or smaller, thighs being adjusted or stomach being flattened or tightened.

Question 6 overall trends and themes

Aspiring women to be better

All participants agreed that cover girls are being manipulated to look flawless or the image being set to look natural. The idea of natural being flawless was questioned when the natural state of the cover girl was not the way she looked in real life. Flawless then became a misconception. Participants in general agreed to being aware of magazines needing to present a flawless cover girl in order to sell

magazine and appeal to their market. Women appreciate seeing someone better than them but to an extent.

Question 7 overall findings and themes

Seeking touch ups and approval

The interest to purchase magazines was generally low when magazine covers were not touched up. Participants that admitted to not buying the magazine were as a result of expecting touch ups to be made and expecting to see flawless, perfected covers. Participants that mentioned they would still buy the magazine would buy it for the purpose of seeing what the cover girls would look like untouched and natural.

The opinion of humans judging from what they see was expressed when a participant mentioning looking at something that is untouched and unperfected hinders striving to be better. The idea of having an average copy is unappealing.

Research question 2

Question 8 overall findings and themes

Pearl Thusi influence

Majority of respondents felt the 2014 cover with Pearl Thusi (Refer to Appendices 1C Cover C9) stood out as the cover represented everything natural namely natural hair, minimal make up, bare skin and a focus on the cover girl's face and not her body.

Bright colours

The actual colour of the cover stood out predominantly. Women were intrigued by the bright reds and yellows present on the covers throughout the years. Colours and fonts stood out.

Darker skin tones stood out in 2012 with specific mention to brighter make up for darker skin women in 2015 with more risqué outfits.

Question 9 overall findings and themes

Natural Hairstyles

Covers are starting to look a lot more real. When looking over the covers she mentioned Pearl Thusi (refer to Appendices 1C cover C9) and Zenande Mfenyana (Refer to Appendices 1C cover c11) both cover girls have dreads and natural hair, moving away from the weaves. The covers seem to look less fake.

Risqué cover advancements

Covers shifted from conservative in terms of fashion or style in 2010 to more bare skin being shown and risqué outfits in 2015.07.08

Less cluttered backgrounds and more focus on the cover person.

Question 10

A true representation of South African women

Different types of women are celebrated on the cover through different types of styles, looks, skin tones and also different types of hair portrayed. Covers include natural, dread locks, weaves, bald hair and short natural. It's different types of styles that South Africans explore and have. True Love has represented all black women.

A media constructed standard of beauty

Media has set an unrealistic view for women in general to have perfect skin, thinner legs, good hair, never mind African women. There are unrealistic expectations for women with blonde hair to have fuller hair or black women to be curvier. The media in general has made women aspire to unrealistic expectations and not necessarily just black women or True Love. "It's not a True Love thing, it's a media thing. Actually it's a society thing'.

Research question 3

Question 1 overall findings and themes

An all rounder

True Love is an all-rounder magazine that is a symbol of an African woman who is caught between her desire to fit into a westernized society, and her identity as an African woman.

The magazine focuses on or tries to focus on every part of a woman's life (All A Woman Needs). The editorial content is women orientated or focused on aspects of lifestyle, careers etc. and the beauty & fashion pages stays true to its role of enlightening and entertaining young and aspiring women.

Question 2 overall findings and themes

Cover person influence

The actual person on the cover is what's most important as women need to be able to relate to the cover person in order for their story and style to be appealing.

Gripping content

Editorial content and headlines are ranked second in terms of where True Love stands in their lives

Question 3 overall findings and themes

Vain purchase behavior

Women are affected by the actual person on the cover as well as headlines or editorial. If content isn't relevant to them or do they know who the cover is they wouldn't buy it. They need to be inspired and appealed to in order to be attracted to the contract.

Question 4 overall findings and themes

A point of reference. Subtle influence

Women might tend to be inspired by the cover and be inclined to find something similar to the trend highlighted that month but have never actually gone out and bought the exact outfit.

5.1.3 Focus Group 1 discussions

Research question 1

Question 5 overall findings and themes

Photoshop

The term digital image manipulation is understood as Photo shop, the process of altering body shape and anything needed to make people look flawless.

It was discussed that the concept somehow creates insecurity for people that aren't familiar with the process as they see celebrities looking flawless, under the impression that they look that way in reality. Magazines sell aspirations in that sense.

Confidence and self-esteem issues were discussed and the mention of how younger girls are becoming anorexic as a result of aspiring to look like magazine cover icons such as Bonang Mathebe of who is probably not as thin in real life.

Discussions around looking at one's own body and feeling uncomfortable as a result of comparing it to cover girls emerged.

Question 6 overall findings and themes

All participants were in agreement that to a certain extent regardless of what touch ups were made that all cover girls undergo some form of digital enhancement.

Question 7 overall findings and themes

The participants felt it would feel more relatable having the cover girls untouched on the cover and of interest to them in reading the cover girls story without make up as they would be curious to see what celebs look like without make up

Bigger boned women look slimmer on the cover than in person and one can relate to a person when seeing them at their actual size.

A question asked within the group from one of the participants was: Why do you think they do it if we don't relate to it.

Answers included: "People like being perfect" and "aspiration is what they are selling us".

The participants concluded that women have bought on to aspiring to look like cover girls represented that women in Africa are now doing skin bleaching and lipo-suction. When white girls started wanting to be fuller figured in terms of their behinds, African women were comfortable again with having big behinds.

Participants felt it was messed up if True Love is telling them to be proud to be black women but at the same time strip black women of what makes them black, their rich dark skin tone.

Research question 2

Question 8 overall findings and themes

The group felt that covers in 2010 were more real, natural, realistic, and appear as natural as possible face wise even though the outfit doesn't seem to be casual.

The Pear Thusi cover (Refer to Appendices 1C cover C9)) is natural and has no focus on her body so for anyone that is insecure about their body, there is focus on big natural hair.

2015 can come across as a little more sexual in the sense that both models are showing flesh in risqué outfits.

Question 9 overall findings and themes

The general group feeling was that the quality of the covers has changed.

2010 had more of a business magazine feel whilst 2015 was more high fashion similar to woollies, clean cover not as cluttered as 2011 (Refer to Appendices 1C pg 79, 82).

Cover and layout of June 2013 cover is bright with busy colours (Refer to Appendices 1C- C9 pg 81).

Question 10 overall findings and themes

General feeling was yes because even though Pear Thusi's cover (Refer to Appendices 1C: C9 pg 80) is very natural in comparison to other magazine covers. The volume of her hair and perfection of her skin is unrealistic. The average black girl is also not as tiny as the girls being used on 2015 covers (Refer to Appendices 1C:

Research question 3

Question 1 overall findings and themes

A sign of black excellence

Focus on editorial content due to the fact that the editor of True Love is a black female editor as well as beauty or fashion tips although as some of the beauty products aren't realistic in the sense that they are hard to find in stores, fashion wardrobe is a specialty.

Question 2 overall findings and themes

Cover icons tell a story

The cover person was the most important element as the cover person indicates what the magazine is going to cover about that person and their story.

If the headlines are regarding content that isn't relative to them or the cover girl is on an annoying show, they wouldn't want to buy the magazine.

If the cover girl's cover exposure is minimal they would be interested to know what's going on with that person.

Question 3 overall findings and themes

Vain purchase intent

Yes if it was a person we didn't know we wouldn't be buying it. If it was a person we didn't like or someone that was overly exposed. No, wouldn't buy it.

Question 4 overall findings and themes

Unrealistic trends

The cover clothes aren't realistic or your everyday clothes. It's not something you would wear on the regular. Where would you wear it to? It depends on where you are at in that current moment. If you're going to a wedding and see the cover girl wearing something you could wear to a wedding, they would buy the look. The group found it was more the state of mind you're in and what you are looking for clothing wise that determines your style being influenced.

5.1.4 Focus group 2 discussion

Research question 1

Question 5 overall findings and themes

Recreating images

The general consensus and understanding of Digital image manipulation was the changing of flaws or airbrushing of flaws on an image through Photo shop and airbrushing to recreate the original image of the person to look 'perfect' and in the act making them unreal.

Question 6 overall findings and themes

An escape from a flawed reality

Alterations to perfect flaws are definitely made on cover girls. Touch ups to fix minor flaws like pimples, scars are considered as part of the enhancements yet True Love doesn't change the sizes of the cover stars bodies but their skin tones are made lighter or brighter, and their skin textures are made smoother..

Question 7 overall findings and themes

True beauty

Majority of the group felt it is normal to have flaws and in not buying the magazine it would be a sign of being judgmental. As the story for some was the main attraction, the state of the image on the cover wasn't a concern.

Overall the participants wanted to be intrigued and see "True" beauty of a woman with all her flaws portrayed whereas a minority would be inclined to not buy the magazine as they feel they've been socialised to choose the more appealing cover.

Research question 2

Question 8 overall findings and themes

Skin consistency and digital enhancement

There is an overall consistency in skin colour and digital enhancement over the past 5 years. True Love has also gone through an upgrade over the years in terms of magazine layout as the covers in 2010-2013 were very busy and cluttered and have become more visual content focused in terms of bright, well fitted clothing being the overall draw card on the 2015 cover.

Question 9 overall findings and themes

Confidently risqué

2010 appeared to be focused on getting the celeb to be as well poised and perfect as possible. Her attire is not one that the average woman would wear to work or varsity. 2014 appears to focus on the cover star being herself, in a casual outfit that is not too far from normal day wear. 2015 is all about showing more skin confidently in a risqué outfit.

Covers have moved from saturated content with buys headlines to less wording on the covers, almost as if editors are trying to get people to pay more attention to the cover girl.

Question 10 overall findings and themes

Participants either strongly felt that True Love portrays African women whether dark skin, light skin, skinny, curvy or fully figured as strong, powerful, fearless and stylish African women.

On the hand participants felt that the representation of cover girls is to an extent unrealistic because of all the digital enhancements. Sure enough, the enhancements make the images look fantastic but they are not real. Bonang on a cover is not Bonang early in the morning before the mask of make-up is put on her face.

At the same time, the representation of cover girls featured in the True Love magazine has not set an unrealistic standard of beauty for African women in the sense that we all strive to be the best version of ourselves, we all have imperfections that we'd like to get as close to perfect as possible. Seeing a dark skinned girl like Lupita Nyong'o on a cover, for example, catches my attention and I know that she too has flaws, but if she can look that beautiful.

Also the magazine is selling a woman who can do everything, be everything and still look good doing it. None of the cover stars are ordinary women. All of them are media personalities who are coached for the camera and the microphone. They are the centre piece on a canvas surrounded by what appears to be all the answers a woman needs the questions about life that she has constructing the woman every woman wants to be, in order to persuade buyers eye. Perfection and beauty always sell, and that is what is what magazines do best.

Chapter 6 Conclusions and recommendations

The purpose of the study was to establish how representations and constructs of attractiveness have manifested in South African magazines amongst black women. The research undertaken explored if there was a link between social constructs created through digital image manipulation within fashion magazines and the perceptions of physical attractiveness by conducting unstructured personal interviews and participatory facilitated focus groups to ensure

Two focus groups were conducted revealing women accept subtle cover enhancements that don't set unrealistic standards. Women can relate to the cover girls portrayed on the magazine as diverse women with various skin tones, hair styles such as natural hair, weaves, dread locks are used ensuring all African women are represented.

Although the influence the magazine exerts is one of reference to fashion and make-up tips, True Love is seen as the epitome of black excellence for women as the celebrities or stars chosen are women that participants in the study aspire to be like. Women in the study were all aware of the magazine cover retouches and would be influenced if the covers were untouched as there is a certain expectation for the covers to be perfect and flawless. True Love merely represents what society has already constructed and what women find attractive and aspiring.

When covers are enhanced to the point of the cover person not being recognized, societal expectations and issues arise thereof such as young women aspiring to be as thin as their role models portrayed unrealistically on covers.

True Love magazine is setting the trend of diversity within physical attractiveness amongst black women in South Africa through the use of showcasing various cover girls. Although the magazine does digitally enhance the cover girls, these alterations are subtle and can be considered acceptable as Black South African women reading True Love are celebrated regardless of the touch ups.

Reference list

American heritage dictionary, (1985). Boston: Houghton Mifflin publishers: Boston

Andrews, T. What is social constructionism- June 1 2012 Grounded theory review:

An international journal accessed from:

<https://www.andrews.edu/leaderpart/RoundTable/2004/workshops/2b/AU-Qual-071504-jwc-vpc.pdf>

Berscheid, D. Walster, E. (1972). What is beautiful is good. Journal of personality and Social Psychology, 25, 285-290

Berger., P, Luckmann. P 1996 The Social Construction of Reality Penguin Books

LTD: London Viewed 10 May 2015, from <http://perflensburg.se/Berger%20social-construction-of-reality.pdf>

Hello Magazine n.d., Kate Winslet in GQ magazine, viewed 15 May 2015 from:

<http://www.hellomagazine.com/film/2003/01/10/katewinslet/>

Brooks., D, Herbert , P Gender, Race and media representation , 2006 viewed 12

May from: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/11715_Chapter16.pdf

Creswell, J., 2013, Principles of Qualitative Research: Designing a Qualitative Study, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Dember, W, N. Warm, J Psychology of Perception, 2nd ed. New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1979.

Glenn, E. Shades of Difference: Why Skin colour Matters. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009, 65

Martin, E. (1987). Against photographic deception. Journal of Mass Media Ethics, 2 (2), 49-59

Media 24 n.d., True Love AMPS 2014, viewed 10 May 2015 from:

<http://m24m.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/True-Love-Amps.pdf>

Morgan, D.L. (1988) Focus Group as qualitative research. Sage, UK.

Mullen, L. 1998 Truth in photography: Perception, myth and reality in the Post Modern world, Viewed 11May from: <http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/amd0040/Leslie.pdf>

Ohlson, K. 2015. Telephone interview re. Digital image manipulation within True Love magazine covers with Germaine Dunn, 11 May 2015

Reaves, S. (1990). Digital alteration of photographs in consumer magazines. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 6: 175-81.

Ritchin, F. *In your own image*. New York: Aperture, inc., 1990

Van Rensburg, C. 2015. Personal interview (Digital image manipulation techniques), at NATIVE VML, creative department, with Germaine Dunn, 12 May 2015

Van Riper, Frank. "A Cautionary Tale: Digital Manipulation Can Not Only Improve Photos But Also Raise the Question of Credibility." *Nieman Reports* 48 (1994): 19-21.

Weiten, W., 2002, *A multimedia introduction to psychology*, NY Wadsworth, New York

Bibliography

Adams, Robert. *Beauty in Photography*. New York: Aperature, Inc., 1981

Adam Clayton III Powell, "Technology and the Death of Ethics (and the Possible Rise of the New Ethics)," *Media Ethics* 8 (1996): 1.

Betts, K., 2003, The man who makes the pictures perfect, *New York Times*, Section 9, pp. 1, 8

Blonsky, M. (1991, September). The retouching epidemic. *Allure*, 1,28–31

Greer, J., Gosen, J. (2002). How much is too much? Assessing levels of digital alteration as factors in public perception of news media credibility. *Visual Communication Quarterly*, pp. 4 -13

Hesterman, V. (1987). Consumer magazines and ethical guidelines, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2, 93–101

Hobson, N., 2013 Real Beauty isn't retouched says Dove viewed 9 March 2015, from: <http://www.nevillehobson.com/2013/03/17/real-beauty-isnt-retouched-says-dove/>

Huang, E. S. (2001). Readers' perception of digital alteration in photojournalism. *Journalism Communication Monographs*, 3 (3), 149 –182

Keenan, K. (1996). Skin tones and physical features of blacks in magazine advertisements. *Journal of Mass Communication Quarterly*,73(4)

Martin, E. 1991). On photographic manipulation. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 6(3), 156-163

Reaves, S. (1987). Digital retouching: Is there a place for it in newspaper photography? *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 2(2), 40-48

Reaves, S. Hitchon,B., Park, J., Yun, S-Y (2004). You can never be too thin – or can you? A pilot study on the effects of digital manipulation of fashion models' body size, leg length and skin color. *Race, Gender & Class*, vol. 11, no. 2: pp. 140-155.

Reaves, S. (1995a). Magazines vs. newspapers: Editors have different ethical standards on the digital manipulation of photographs.*Visual Communication Quarterly*, 2,5–9.

Reuters, T 2014 *The Journal of Black Psychology*

Thompson, Jerry L., 'Truth and Photography', *Yale Review*, 90 (Jan 2002):25-53

Warburton, Nigel, 'Authentic Photographs', *The British Journal of Aesthetics* v37, n2, (April 1997): 129-138.

List of figures

1. Media 24 n.d, Magazines, True Love Magazine viewed 10 May 2015, from
<http://www.media24.com/magazines/truelove/>

2. Google images, n.d., Technical retouching on magazines viewed 10 May 2015, from
<https://www.google.co.za/search?q=Technical+retouching+on+magazine+covers&espv=2&biw=1242&bih=621&source=Inms&tbm>

3. Google images, n.d., Image compositing viewed 10 May 2015
https://www.google.co.za/search?q=image+compositing&es_sm=93&biw=1242&bih=545&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=ts9ZVZbMPITn7qbD4oGYBQ&sqi=2&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAQ#imgsrc=ptfgACmvpKLK2M%253A%3BPKpFmyABWX0BTM%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Fcdn2.digitalartsonline.co.uk%252Fcmsdata%252Fslideshow%252F3527733%252Fstep8_NEW.jpg%3Bhttp%253A%252F%252Fwww.digitalartsonline.co.uk%252Ftutorials%252Fphotoshop%252Fhigh-end-photo-compositing-techniques%252F%3B2363%3B2342

4. Google images, n.d., Creative retouching in magazines viewed 10 May 2015, from:
https://www.google.co.za/search?q=creative+retouching+on+magazine+covers&espv=2&biw=1242&bih=621&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=AshTVaf9EMTW7QbQ4IH4Aw&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAQ

 Google images, n.d., Creative retouching in magazines viewed 10 May 2015, from:
https://www.google.co.za/search?q=creative+retouching+on+magazine+covers&espv=2&biw=1242&bih=621&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=AshTVaf9EMTW7QbQ4IH4Aw&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAQ

5. Google images, n.d., Kate Winslet GQ Magazine cover viewed 11 May 2015, from:
https://www.google.co.za/search?q=GQ+kate+winslet&espv=2&biw=1242&bih=585&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=W2FaVcndOKGf7gbZ3YPICw&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAQ

Figure 1 Media 24 n.d., True Love magazine covers

Cover A



Cover B



Year: 2010

Year: 2011

Cover C



Year: 2012

Cover D



Year: 2013

Cover E



Year: 2014

Cover F



Year: 2015

Figure 2 Google images n.d., Technical retouching



Figure 3 Google images n.d., Image compositing



Figure 4 Google images n.d., Creative retouching



Figure 5 Google images n.d., Creative retouching



Figure 6 Google images n.d., Creative retouching



Figure 7

Google images n.d., Kate Winslet GQ Magazine cover



Year:

2003 Date: 10 February

Appendices 1A

True Love Magazine Case study:

Personal interview questions

Research question 1

Question 5

What is your understanding of digital image manipulation?

Question 6

Do you think the cover girls are being manipulated to look flawless?

Question 7

Would it have affected your purchase if the covers were all natural and untouched?

Research question 2

Question 8

Looking at the 5 True Love magazine covers from 2010-2015, what stands out first?
(Covers included in Appendices 1C)

Question 9

Do you think the covers have changed over the last 5 years? Please elaborate

Question 10

Do you feel the representation of cover girls featured in the True Love magazine has set an unrealistic standard of beauty for African women?

What are your personal views?

Research question 3

Question 1

Discuss what True Love means for you as an African woman living in South Africa?
(Is it a source of fashion and beauty tips, editorial content or...?)

Question 2

What is the first thing that attracts you to the cover of True Love?

Question 3

Would the True Love cover influence your decision to buy the magazine? Why?

Question 4

Would the cover of True Love influence or define your style in terms of fashion and beauty?

Appendices 1B**True Love Magazine Case study:**

Focus group discussions

Research question 1**Question 5**

What is your understanding of digital image manipulation? Discuss

Question 6

Do you think the cover girls are being manipulated to look flawless?

Question 7

Would it have affected your purchase if the covers were all natural and untouched?

Research question 2**Question 8**

Looking at the 5 True Love magazine covers from 2010-2015, what stands out first?

Hair styles

Cover girl

Skin tone

Digital enhancements

Clothing

(Covers included in Appendices 1C)

Question 9

Do you think the covers have changed over the last 5 years? Please elaborate

Question 10

Do you feel the representation of cover girls featured in the True Love magazine has set an unrealistic standard of beauty for African women?

What are your personal views?

Research question 3

Question 1

Discuss what True Love means for you as an African woman living in South Africa? (Is it a source of fashion and beauty tips, editorial content or...?)

Question 2

What is the first thing that attracts you to the cover of True Love?

Question 3

Would the True Love cover influence your decision to buy the magazine? Why?

Question 4

Would the cover of True Love influence or define your style in terms of fashion and beauty?

Appendices 1C True Love Magazine covers 2010-2015

C1



Year: January 2010

C 2



Year: June 2010

C3



Year: January 2011

C4



Year: June 2011

C5



January 2012

C6



June 2012

C7



Year: January 2013

C8



Year: June 2013

C9

c10



January 2014



June 2015

C11

C12



January 2015



June: 2015

