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**Women Misrepresentation in the British  
Tabloid Press: The Daily Mail as a Case Study.**

**Presented by: Chabane Chaouche Malika**

**Louni Tassadit**

**Supervised by: Seddiki Sadia**

**Co-supervised by: Hadj Bachir Sabiha**

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*To my dear parents*  
*To my dear brother and sisters*  
*To all my family*  
*To my best friends*

*Malika*

*To my dear parents*  
*To my dear brothers especially Saïd*  
*To my dear sisters*  
*To all my best friends*

*Tassadit*

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation deals with the portrayal of women in the British tabloid newspaper *The Daily Mail*. Through the analysis of *The Daily Mail*'s portrayal of women, our work demonstrates how the media discourse as well as the ideal body image is used to disempower and marginalize women in the British society. This work relies on Norman Fairclough's *Critical Discourse Analysis* (1995) which investigates how discourse can be used to exercise power and dominance over people. In order to explain how women are sexually objectified in *The Daily Mail*, we have used Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth* (1991) as a supporting theory. This work constitutes of four main sections: the first one is about the evolution of *the Daily Mail* from its foundation to the present day. The second section deals with the underrepresentation and the misrepresentation of women in *The Daily Mail*. The third section is devoted to the coverage of violence against women in the British Tabloids and how *The Daily Mail* as a sample covers this type of issues. Finally, the fourth section deals with the effects of the promoted ideal body image on the physical and psychological side of women as well as young girls. As a conclusion, it is found that *The Daily Mail* which targets mostly women represents them and treats their issues according to stereotypes and myths that contribute in their oppression.

**Key words:** British Tabloids, *The Daily Mail*, Representation, Stereotypes, Ideal Body Image, Violence against Women.

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## **I. Introduction:**

Media can be defined as the main ways by which a large number of people receive information and entertainment and among them television, radio, newspapers and the internet.<sup>1</sup> Newspapers are among the means of communication that play a vital role in constructing people's knowledge about the world. Since its emergence, the press has given attention to political events and its primary audience was educated men. Before the Nineteenth Century, women were no longer considered as an audience or readers of newspapers. So, the emergence of the popular press and particularly the launch of the British tabloid *The Daily Mail* in 1896 created a space for women and gave them an opportunity to voice their concerns. However, this paper that has a great role in women's progress and their entrance in the field of journalism, nowadays, it serves against their development through their misrepresentation.

Up to the twentieth century, the British media especially newspapers, were male dominated characterized by the exclusion of female issues from their pages. Their primary focus was the coverage of political issues, parliament and all what is related to men's achievements. Most national newspapers targeted the most educated people without taking into consideration people of limited education. However, with the emergence of popular press, a new style of journalism was developed that led to an immense increase of people's interest in reading newspapers.

During the process of looking for mass circulation, the editors of some of these newspapers wanted to give importance to all the categories of society including women. Consequently, they began to provide a space for their issues. *The Daily Mail* was one of the first British tabloids that included women stories in its pages. Its first editor Alfred Harmsworth, who later became Lord Northcliffe, wanted to address a new audience by including women's issues in his paper and take into consideration their points of view. The

inclusion of the women's section in *The Daily Mail* helped them to move from the margin to the center of society and to know more about their domestic life through covering stories of their interests. However, in their reporting, journalists neglected women's achievements in other domains; instead they focused only on their domestic activities, beauty and fashion.

The content of the press in the early twenties was mainly based on domesticity where there was neither choice nor freedom for women to work in the public sphere. As Bingham states:

Two of the most widely known examples of press activity in these years—the *Daily Mail*'s vigorous opposition to the 'flapper vote' in 1927-8, and the rise of the same paper's Ideal Home Exhibition—both seem to suggest that the press simply championed domesticity and opposed single women trying to break out of their 'separate sphere'.<sup>2</sup>

The focus on domesticity and motherhood as well as marriage was for the purpose of reinforcing the traditional gender roles.<sup>3</sup> This illustrated how women were marginalized in this type of press by reducing their roles into housewives and mothers. In dealing with such themes, *The Daily Mail* neglected other issues concerning women in the inter war period that was characterized by a high development that influenced women and pushed them to leave the conservatism of their patriarchal society as argued by Bingham:

Similarly, some works have exaggerated the conservatism of the inter-war period by concentrating solely on the articulation of domesticity and consumerism in the media, without exploring other contemporary perceptions about modernity that significantly influenced attitudes to women.<sup>4</sup>

In this respect, journalists gave importance to the domestic sphere and tried to attract more women readers through providing all what was new concerning their domestic lives. By doing so, *The Daily Mail* and other popular newspapers promoted the traditional stereotypes about women. Because it was male dominated and the number of female journalists was very little comparing to male journalists, the way women issues were reported in *The Daily Mail* was different from the reporting of men's. The stories that could be found on women were

based on their traditional image excluding their careers, contrary to men's stories that focused on their achievements in different fields.

In reality, the inclusion of women section with the emergence of *The Daily Mail* was not only for the purpose of making women visible in the British media, but also for commercial reasons to achieve mass circulation as it was the time of competition between many newspaper editors. Because of the growing interest in business profits, advertising has become the main tool used by *The Daily Mail* to attract more readers.

Violence against women is one of the issues that were not given so much attention by the press during the period of its emergence. This was because some forms of violence against women and especially rape and sexual assault were viewed by the British society and many other Western societies as taboos. However, after the emergence of the popular press, violence became newsworthy and this made it possible for this type of issues to be covered. Journalists discovered that all what is strange, sex and violence related stories sell more papers than any other type of news. *The Daily Mail* focuses on the reporting of this type of stories but covers them in a sensationalist, sexist and inaccurate way that contradict its primary goal which was to cover all what is related to women taking into consideration their views and interests.

Nowadays, women are portrayed in the media as sex objects and their images are used in advertisings as a selling tool to gain more consumers for new products. These images of women shown in advertisements are so influential that the majority of ordinary women begin to imitate the models. The obsessed women consider the ideal body image promoted in *The Daily Mail* as a norm of beauty. Indeed, this is among the reasons why a large number of women search for solutions such as plastic surgery and diet to help them become beautiful, slim and attractive just like celebrities and the models presented in most of the media. So, this phenomenon has led to many healthy and psychological problems, social violence as well as self-hatred among women.

Therefore, *The Daily Mail* which was the first newspaper to be directed for women in order to voice their concerns has become nowadays among those that support the objectification of women. Its concentration on body image puts women in an inferior position and limits their value to mere sexual objects. On the one hand, this depiction affects the psychological side of women themselves and at the same time influences their health by leading them to some dangerous illnesses such as Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia. On the other hand, *The Daily Mail's* portrayal of females during crimes of violence against women shows that there is a total contradiction between what it advises women to do in their relation with men and how they are always depicted as responsible for any violence committed against them. Thus, *The Daily Mail's* treatment of women issues reveals its tendency to serve male interests rather than female ones.

## **Review of the Literature**

Various studies have been done on the theme of gender representation in media focusing especially on stereotypical representation of women. In an article entitled *Gendered Media: The Influence of Media on views of Gender* (1994), Julie T. Wood discusses the representation of both sexes in media stressing the fact that both of them are portrayed in a stereotypical way:

In general, media continue to present both women and men in stereotyped ways that limit our perceptions of human possibilities. Typically men are portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive and largely uninvolved in human relationships. Just as' consistent with cultural views of gender are depictions of women as sex objects who are usually young, thin beautiful, passive, dependent, and often incompetent and dumb.<sup>5</sup>

She also highlights the idea that despite the existence of stereotypes about men in media, they are not as negative and harmful as those related to the image of women, and she classifies the representation of male/female into dichotomies such as “men’s authority/women’s incompetence”<sup>6</sup>, “women dependence/ men independence”<sup>7</sup> and “women as victims and sex objects/ men as aggressors”.<sup>8</sup>

Besides stereotypical representation of both men and women in media, we find that female beauty is always linked to the concept of thin ideal body which is considered as a norm of beauty. As a result, several studies have been done in this respect as a response to the huge amount of advertisements of the thin body image promoted in the different types of media. Among these studies, Mary Sheehan's thesis *The Effects of Advertising and the Media's Portrayal of the "Thin Ideal" on College Women's Self- Image* (2013). She focuses on the effects of this new constructed body image on women as well teen girls. Her research is based on analyzing college women's self- image and the relationship between their self-esteem and the thin ideal body promoted by the advertisers. She argues that this unrealistic body image plays a great role in increasing women's lower self-esteem as well as body dissatisfaction, and led them to make confusion between the real beauty and the constructed one. As she states:

Advertising and media images play an important role in everyday life, and sometimes the messages being relayed to young women about beauty are harmful and skewed. Young women are exposed to these potentially harmful messages at a young age, and are, therefore, continuously present in their lives. In reality, no one actually knows what true beauty really is, so advertisers have created an unrealistic depiction of a truly beautiful woman over the years.<sup>9</sup>

Media critics have also focused on the lexical analysis of the language used in newspapers. Katrina Viskova's *Language in the Press: Gender Bias on Lexical Level in Broadsheets and Tabloids* (2006) is an analysis of how the media producers present women in the press and promote gender bias through language. The author has focused on the difference between the British Broadsheets and Tabloids and how they use language to exercise gender bias against women. By analyzing different articles taken from the British newspapers *The Times*, *The Daily Mail Online* and *The Guardian Online*, the author has noticed that sexist language appears mostly in the Tabloids rather than Broadsheets.

Other studies have explored and analyzed the way violence against women is reported in the media. Among them Helen Benedict's *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes* (1992). In this book, Benedict discusses how the press reports sex crimes such as rape

and sexual assault. She argues that the press covers sex crimes in a sensationalist, biased and sexist way and treats each crime according to a set of myths about the victim and the perpetrator. In this respect, she states, “The press has a long tradition of slighting women, which, compounded by the anti-female bias in our language and myths about rape determine more than any other factors how sex crime victims are portrayed by the press.”<sup>10</sup>

From the previous reviews, we notice that the representation of women in media has been the concern of many studies in which it has been treated from different perspectives. Although these studies have focused on the representation of women in different types of media, little emphasis is put on the analysis of *The Daily Mail* despite being the first British tabloid to include a women’s section on its papers. Thus, our study will focus on *The Daily Mail* as an interesting area of investigation, through which we will try to show how this tabloid changed its initial status and turned its position from being the leader of the representation of women issues to the most stereotyped paper that sides against them.

Thus, this dissertation will shed light on *The Daily Mail* and its representation of different issues related to women. Throughout our work, the focus will be put also on the relationship between *The Daily Mail*’s stereotypical representation of women and their perception of themselves as well as its impact on the way the British society views women. Therefore, our aim is to show how *The Mail* tends to portray women in its articles and what are the characteristics of its coverage of women issues.

### **Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>5</sup> Julia T. Wood, 'Gendered Media: The Influence of Media on Views of Gender', in *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture* ( University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,1994), 32.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 35

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.,33.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>9</sup> Mary Sheehan, *The Effects of Advertising and the Media's Portrayal of the "Thin Ideal" on College Self-Image* (Providence College, 2013), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Helen Benedict, *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 9.

## **II. Methods and Materials:**

### **1. Theoretical consideration:**

In order to accomplish this work we will use two theories, Norman Fairclough's theory of *Critical Discourse Analysis* (1995) and Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth* (1991). Fairclough's theory, deals with the way language is used by different social institutions to exercise dominance, power and impose given ideologies on people. According to Fairclough, language is a social practice that functions in shaping and transmitting knowledge and reinforces societal power relations. *Critical Discourse Analysis* (CDA) makes an analysis of written and spoken texts in order to reveal their hidden meanings and different ideologies that these texts transmit.

Fairclough's theory is composed of four main points that are language, ideology and power, discourse and socio-cultural change, textual analysis in social research and critical language awareness. Our work will rely on the first point of the CDA, which is language, ideology and power. According to Norman Fairclough, a text analysis involves the combination of three dimensions in order to show how media discourse uses language as a form of social practice to exercise power in society. The first one is the dimension of textual analysis or Micro level that is related to the process of text production and it deals with the choice of language in describing events and people as well as creating social identities. The second one is discourse practice or the Meso level which is related to the interpretation of a text according to its production, consumption and distribution. The third one is the socio-cultural practice which is also known as Macro level and it explains texts according to the social and cultural background of text production. These three levels are interrelated and interdependent. Thus, newspapers as a discourse can be understood as a power that makes use of language to transform different ideologies and reinforce the dominance of one group over the other.

Therefore, we find it important to use this theory in dealing with the way women are represented in British newspapers. Because newspapers can be considered as a power that

uses written texts to transmit messages, they can also dominate, reflect and create stereotyped identities to serve their ideologies. *The Daily Mail* can be seen in this respect, as an ideology that dominates the way people view women in the British society through the language used to represent them.

In fact, Fairclough outlines some theoretical propositions that structure the Critical Discourse Analysis approach in relation to discourse and society. For him, discourse shapes and is shaped by society as the case of advertisements used in media, they influence the behavior and attitudes of people and they help them to follow certain ways provided by the media producers. Discourse, thus, helps to constitute knowledge, social relationships and social identity; this means that the way language is used affects how the world is represented. Discourse is also shaped by relations of power and invested with ideologies. As language is a powerful mechanism for social control, critical discourse analysis aims to reveal the way society and discourse shape and influence each others.

*Critical Discourse Analysis* focuses more on social problems and on the categories of people that suffer from power abuse and dominance. Fairclough's CDA aims at understanding the relationship between text producers and its consumers. For him, the way journalists describe people and events is the result of their choice since it is their task to choose the language to use in their description especially as language is considered to be the media weapon. In addition to textual dimension, that is the analysis of language used in the text being analyzed including different ideologies and the social understanding of that text, there is what Fairclough calls discursive practice that represents the decoding of the text by the reader as a consumer in what we call the dimension of text production and consumption. Social practice is another level in analyzing any newspaper text; it is the inclusion of social and cultural background of the period where the event happens:

I see discourse as a complex of three elements: social practice, discursive practice (text production, distribution and consumption), and text, and the analysis of a specific discourse calls for analysis in each of these three dimensions and their interrelations. The hypothesis is that significant connections exist between features of texts, ways in which texts are put together and interpreted, and the nature of the social practice.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, the analysis of any newspaper text in the light of the *Critical Discourse Analysis* requires the combination of the three elements cited above in order to fully understand the real meaning of the text. According to the first level, the text analysis is the process of production of the text and it is descriptive, the second is concerned with the interpretation of the text and at the third level is a kind of explanation of the produced text by its consumers.

To reach our purpose of analyzing *The Daily Mail* representation of women, we will also use Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth*, as a second theory to support Fairclough's *Critical Discourse Analysis*. *The Beauty Myth* is a Feminist theory developed by the American feminist scholar Naomi Wolf in her book *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* (1991). It deals with the images of beauty that are highly promoted by the mass media and how they are used to disempower women and destroy their identities. This theory focuses on the idea that women have got rid of the traditional images of households, wives and mothers but these stereotypes are replaced in the modern time by the "beauty myth"<sup>11</sup> which puts women again under a set of unattainable criteria that they should acquire in order to gain a space in society.<sup>12</sup> According to Naomi Wolf, the "beauty myth" is used by men's institutions as a means of control to prevent women's advance and, therefore, this myth "is not about women at all. It is about men's institutions and institutional power."<sup>13</sup> Although women nowadays have access to education and work as well as political power, they are still not powerful because they are governed by the myth of the female beauty as Wolf states:

As economy, law, religion, sexual mores, education and culture were forcibly opened up to include women more fairly, a private reality colonized female consciousness. By using ideas about "beauty" it reconstructed an alternative female with its own laws, economy, religion, sexuality, education and culture, each element as repressive as any that had gone before.<sup>14</sup>

Another idea that is highlighted in the theory of the *Beauty Myth* is that women are physically and psychologically harmed by the images of beauty that they seek to achieve and the main effects of these images are diseases like Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia.

Therefore, this theory is relevant to our topic because *The Daily Mail* reflects, embodies and even promotes clearly the Beauty Myth in its coverage of women issues. *The Daily Mail* is just like the other types of media portrays women in terms of traditional stereotypes and it even campaigned against the flapper vote in 1920's. However, in the modern times, it has changed its portrayal of women from the "Angel in the House"<sup>15</sup> to the attractive, thin sexy women. Its representation of women workers, educators and politicians is always centered on their physical appearance and these are the characteristics of the "beauty myth".

## **2. Materials:**

In order to achieve our aim, we will analyze how women are portrayed in the British tabloids through relying on a set of articles published recently in *The Daily Mail Online* as our primary sources to give more evidence to our analysis. In addition to this, we will make use of some secondary sources including Maggie Wykes and Barrie Gunter's *The Media and Body Image: If Looks Could Kill* (2005), Adrian Bingham's *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter- War Britain* (2004) and Helen Benedict's *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes* (1992). The first provides an overview about the influence of media promotion of the "ideal body image" and its physical and psychological impacts on women. The second one is an exploration of how popular press emerged and how it developed during the inter-war Britain. As for the last one, it discusses how the press reports sex crimes especially sexual assault and rape and it provides an overview about the myths surrounding these types of crimes.

## **Methodological Outline:**

Our dissertation is divided into four main sections. The first section is devoted to the historical background about *The Daily Mail* and its evolution covering its inclusion of women's section from its foundation to the present day. The second one is about *The Daily Mail's* representation of women in the different fields including education, work, and advertising. The third section focuses on how the British tabloids and especially *The Daily Mail* cover violence against women. This section provides an analysis of a set of *Daily Mail's* articles about domestic violence, rape as well as sexual assault in order to show the techniques and the style used to treat these kinds of issues. The last one highlights the effects of the ideal body image promoted in the media particularly in *The Daily Mail* and its influence on women's perception of their bodies. It also reveals how the distorted image of women destroys their health and how it shapes people's perception of the role of women in society.

## **Endnotes:**

<sup>10</sup>Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London and New York: Longman, 1995), 74.

<sup>11</sup> Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* (New York: Harper Collins e-books, 1991), 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>14</sup> Wolf, *Beauty Myth*, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and The Popular Press in Inter-War*, 164.

### III. Results

In dealing with the way women are represented by the British Tabloid newspapers, it is noticeable that they are negatively portrayed. *The Daily Mail* as a case study shows how the British media in general reduces the image of women into a mere object that needs to follow a set of conditions in order to please the others. This stereotypical representation serves male's need either for sexual intentions or for business ones. The sexual objectification of women indeed, serves *The Daily Mail* by attracting more readers as it serves also the advertisers' interests who sell easily their products and achieve their business goals by enhancing the focus on pictures and photographs of all what is related to female beauty. In the process of reporting news when women's rights are violated by men like in domestic violence and sexual assault, *The Daily Mail* is more likely to blame women and sympathize with men.

*The Daily Mail* is an interesting case of study since it changed its attitude towards women from being in their favor by publishing stories of their concerns to become sexist and a supporter of their abuse. Now, it is no longer the newspaper aiming at helping women leave the marginalization that their patriarchal society imposes on them. It has rather become progressively stereotyped by providing only the image of a beautiful and attractive woman who is generally weak and seeking a man besides her for protection. The lack of seriousness is obvious in discussing women stories ignoring all what needs to be highlighted such as achievements in politics, studies and all what is related to their intellectual contributions.

With the examination of different articles it has become obvious that *The Daily Mail* is influenced by the image given to women by the other types of media as well as their status in the British society. It is true that *The Daily Mail* is a newspaper that targets mostly women, but it is still influenced by the patriarchal ideologies. Giving women an unrealistic image is among the mechanisms used by this paper which intends to weaken them and limit their abilities.

After analyzing a set of articles published in *The DailyMail Online*, it is clear that the focus is one-sided in the sense that there is only one side of coverage of women. Beauty, fashion and sexiness are its repeated issues contrary to male's stories that are various. The unusual stories that can be found on women workers and powerful ones often center on appearances, again, neglecting their achievements and what is worthy to be covered. How does she appear? What does she wear? How is her make- up? Is she sexy and attractive? These are the common questions asked by *The Daily Mail* to discuss women issues. So, *The Daily Mail* is revealed as one of the institutions that disempower women instead of helping them.

Throughout our analysis, we have noticed that the stereotypical depiction of *The Daily Mail* had many negative impacts on the British society. The effects of the image constructed by the media producers on its consumers is influential on both the psychological level of women and social one , as it has also created many problems related to the healthy state of women especially young girls.

## IV. Discussion:

### Section one: *The Daily Mail* History and Evolution:

*The Daily Mail* is one of the British national daily middle-market tabloids, which was founded in 1896 by Alfred Harmsworth, who in 1905 became Lord Northcliffe. He introduced a new style of journalism with short articles, large images and big headlines. Northcliffe, being the founder of the two most selling newspapers in Britain *The Daily Mail* and *The Daily Mirror*, was well known for his remarkable work in journalism during the inter war period, focusing on people and how to attract them by publishing stories that interest them. Thus *The Daily Mail* was the first to include women stories such as cookery, and home matters. With this new style, Northcliffe wanted to bring something new as “modern journalism”, the notion that was borrowed from Mathew Arnold nine years before as “new journalism”.<sup>17</sup>

The underrepresentation of women in the media influenced *The Daily Mail*'s point of view about women and this is why it began to provide a space for them on its pages. In this respect Paul Harris states that “Not least among its innovations was that it began its first issue with a woman's page, arousing derision from other journals which regarded female readers as beneath consideration.”<sup>18</sup>

With his creation of *The Daily Mail*, Lord Northcliffe was seeking to achieve mass circulation and large audience putting much of his attention on human interest stories especially women's, as stated in the following extract:

Northcliffe as many other owners and editors of newspapers, was seeking power and dominance. The press barons were forced by economic pressures to seek increasingly large circulations. Intense competition resulted in rising levels of paging, bigger editorial staffs, and, above all, massive promotion. Northcliffe and Rothermere led the way by spending, up to 1928, approximately £1 million on *The Daily Mail*'s readers' insurance scheme in order to attract more readers.<sup>19</sup>

Indeed, from its foundation, *The Daily Mail*'s primary goal was to attract female readers, especially middle class women by enhancing the focus on their interests. Just like the other types of press, this tabloid puts emphasis only on domesticity and motherhood. As Bingham puts it, "The married women were seen as reaching their goals whereas the single ones were viewed as useless members of society."<sup>20</sup> This is why, during the First World War Mrs. Peel, the editor of women's page, expressed a kind of disappointment toward *The Mail*'s focus only on domestic matters in reporting women stories:

Mrs Peel, who became editor of the women's page during the First World War, recalled with frustration how Mail journalists 'expected women to be interested solely in knitting jumpers, in caring for their complexions, looking after babies, in cooking, in a "good murder" and in silly stories about weddings'.<sup>21</sup>

Northcliffe insisted that women stories should be given more attention and should be checked by experts before being published; he added that he had fifty women of all classes in the department to check those stories' accuracy. This means that he wanted that the department of women should be given more attention and be treated more seriously. So he ordered his staff to include one women story at least in every news page. Ignoring his editorial partner Kennedy Jones's advice, Northcliffe announced that ladies' stories will occupy two columns as Bingham states:

Movements in a woman's world – that is to say, changes in dress, toilet matters, cookery, and home matters generally – are as much entitled to receive attention as nine out of ten of the matters which are treated of in the ordinary daily paper. Therefore, two columns are set aside exclusively for ladies.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, the leadership of the women's department was transformed to a lady, Mary Howarth, and by the end of 1930's female audience transformed from the margin to the centre of the news stories. As Bingham argues:

The paper announced that the 'department will be under the direction of a lady who till recently occupied the editorial chair of a leading fashion weekly' (Mary Howarth) and underlined that the various subjects under consideration 'will all be treated by experts'.<sup>23</sup>

Dealing with advertising, Harmsworth, being the only editor who was interested in attracting female readers not only to achieve more circulation, but also because they were the targets of advertising that was much important in media. As Wykes and Gunter claim:

In the UK, Northcliffe added women's pages to *The Daily Mail* knowing a female audience would attract advertisers; in the United States trade journals 'regularly attributed between 80 and 85 per cent of all consumption to women' and women's magazines frequently devoted half their space to advertising.<sup>24</sup>

At the very beginning *The Daily Mail* did not emphasize on advertisement but rather on the news. This helped in the process of looking for mass circulation of the paper since it served not only women but also busy men's time. It did not contain so much advertisements. When *The Daily Mail* reached large audience, its advertising department under the leadership of Wareham Smith changed its opinion about advertising. They began to enlarge the space reserved for it to occupy most of the paper's space with the process of industrialization of the press. Martin Conboy suggests, "It was an immediate commercial success, backed by the fortune Harmsworth had amassed and the appreciation of the importance of the link between advertising, capital investment and circulation."<sup>25</sup>

Consequently, between 1918 and 1939 *The Mail* reached one million copies sold a day with the public that was considered both as a consumer and a reader. This was the result of the ideas of Northcliffe by reducing its price from a penny to a halfpenny and his use of simple style that served busy men's time and targeted the lower-middle class. All these aspects were neglected by *The Daily Express*, so *The Mail* reached a high number of readers by publishing stories of their everyday life far from political matters.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, *The Daily Mail* was considered as the newspaper most sold in Britain with more than a half of its readership being women not only because it served women's needs but also, because it costed halfpenny.

From this, Northcliffe reduced the status of masculine domination in the press with his emphasis on publishing women's concerns in his pages. And he also transformed the sexual difference that existed in the popular journalism from being implicitly gendered by excluding

all women issues from the newspaper pages, to become explicitly gendered by specifying these columns to women. This was a kind of discrimination against women since many readers ignored these columns while they read the other stories in the other pages. This means that there were two opposed views about the topic, on the one hand, this women's space was considered as having negative impacts on women position in the public sphere by specifying to them a single space, and this was like racism. On the other hand, this was viewed as a kind of new opportunities for women to voice their concerns in the press that would provide them with visibility in both press and society.

During the inter-war period, Jones Kennedy, the journalist who was in charge of style and content in managing *The Daily Mail*, was no longer opposing the idea of including women in the paper and thought that they and advertisement constituted an important part in enhancing the mass circulation of *The Mail* besides to reducing its cost to a halfpenny as Bingham argues:

Kennedy Jones, who had initially doubted the wisdom of including a women's section, came to recognize the commercial imperative behind the appeal to women: 'We realized that women are by nature more loyal and conservative than men, and that if we had them with us and got a firm footing in their homes, the value of our papers from the advertisers' point of view would be greatly enhanced.'<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, large space was reserved to pictures of women, fashion, cookery and home matters. *The Daily Mail*'s advertisements of women were about the latest fashion emphasizing women bodies and their under-wear to attract male readers to attain large audience, women for fashion and men for the attraction of the ideal body offered by those articles. The augmentation of the advertisements' focus on women provided their visibility in *The Daily Mail* that helped them moving from the margins to the centre of the news.

Nowadays, the focus on appearance when dealing with women's stories in *The Daily Mail* is very remarkable in the sense that, the reporters portray women as sex-objects and objects of TV business and selling tool that is used in advertisements. In addition, powerful

women are often absent from the press and whenever they are presented, they are depicted as too fat/ thin, old/ young, beautiful or attractive. The vast majority of women's roles that are emphasized include teachers, nurses, wives, mothers, sister among others. In general, they are portrayed as weak and need men for protection. The underrepresentation of women in the media is due also to the fact that they are misrepresented in this domain with a very little number of women reporters and editors in UK national daily newspapers.

In order to achieve its primary target that is mass circulation, *The Mail* relies on advertising as a tool to attract more readers especially women. So advertisements were first related to domestic matters but later advertisers put emphasis on all what is fashion, makeup, hair, style and beauty in general. As its readership is growing, *The Mail* has become a commercial newspaper through selling both a great number of copies as well as giving the advertisers the opportunity to sell their products.

### **Endnotes:**

<sup>17</sup> Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and The Popular Press in Inter-War Britain*, 31.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Harris, *The Story of The Daily Mail* (Associated Press, 2013), 2.

<sup>19</sup> James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain* (London and New York: Taylor and Francis e-Library, 2001), 48.

<sup>20</sup> Adrian Bingham, *The Woman's Realm: The Daily Mail and Female Readers* (The University of Sheffield: Cengage Learning, 2013), 6.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Maggie Wykes and Barrie Gunter, *The Media and Body Image: If Looks could kill* (London: Sage Publication, 2005), 42.

<sup>25</sup> Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 101.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and The Popular Press*, 31.

## **Section two: The Representation of Women in *The Daily Mail*:**

### **a) *The Daily Mail's* Lack of Representation of Serious Issues**

From its foundation *The Daily Mail* posited itself as the newspaper directed for women, covering all the categories of women and all the issues that concern them. However, from the very beginning there was a remarkable focus on one side in the nature of covering the events related to women. This one sided emphasis was put on all what summarizes women's appearance including beauty and body shape. Accordingly, it is noticeable that *The Daily Mail* neglected and still neglects many interesting women issues. In this sense there is a remarkable lack of serious stories like education, careers and achievements, and empowering, and all what make women appear powerful and strong is often absent in *The Daily Mail* stories, and even when a story is found it is often stereotyped.

Even though *The Daily Mail* is a newspaper that focuses on women issues, it covers mostly beauty and fashion and it does not include all the sides about women's lives. In fact, the theme of education is one of the important topics that need to be emphasized, yet it is absent in this paper. The absence of the theme of education in *The Daily Mail* comes back to the emergence of the "Angel in the House" discourse in the 1850's that considered that women's place was home.<sup>28</sup> In Fact, the emergence of such a discourse helped in reinforcing the traditional stereotypes and set as a kind of an ideology that prevents women's attempt to end their discrimination and the idea of separate spheres. As a matter of fact, discrimination against women goes back to the story of the creation where it is argued that such discrimination against women is the result of Eve's original sin as it is stated by Ellen Jordan:

Though the doctrine of separate spheres was usually legitimated by reference to the biblical story of the creation, the interpretations of this story which had obtained in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not ones that brought much joy to women. It was argued in many a misogynistic sermon that, because Eve had tempted Adam, women were infinitely inferior to men and deserving scorn and castigation.<sup>29</sup>

Though, in many cases boys are not more intelligent than girls but sex discrimination is very clear in educational choices as stated by Marta Favara, “Empirical evidence shows that frequently girls outperform boys in male-dominant subjects.”<sup>30</sup> This evidence did not change the fact that girls are not equally treated and that some career choices are still closed for them. *The Daily Mail* as a newspaper does not make any attempt to cover this kind of discrimination even if it is worthy to deal with. This underrepresentation of women in *The Daily Mail* has many negative effects on women’s status in society as it affects their future since they are forbidden from entering many interesting working fields.

As a result, women workers, even when they work both at home and office are still discriminated. *The Daily Mail* is among the British media that mirror the way the British society limits women’s independence by reducing their roles into merely housewives. Those who want to improve themselves by trying to prove their capacities outside home are generally seen in a negative way. Instead of being rewarded of their doubled efforts by working in both home and office, they are judged of being careless towards their marriages. Their work is not considered serious as it is discussed in “*Why working and being a domestic goddess don’t mix: it can harm marriage, says agony aunt*”, article published on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 by Liz Thomas for *The Daily Mail*.<sup>31</sup>

The article is about an interview with Miss Denise Robertson, the Agony Aunt, about career women and the way they manage their time to succeed in both their domestic work and office. In this article, the reporter Liz Thomas speaks about career women through relying on Miss Denise Robertson’s views on this subject. So, for the Agony Aunt, although careers have made women financially independent, their world is stressful. She speaks about how difficult it is for women to manage between working outside and at home at the same time. In her comparison between modern and earlier couples, she puts the failure of the modern couples on women being workers outside home because for her, women now do not work hard to keep their marriages working. From here, we can understand how *The Daily Mail* focuses only on the things that this category of women cannot do. For them the real place of

women is at home and if they leave this stereotyped place it means that they break the values of their conservative society. All the blame is put on women if a marriage does not succeed accusing them of carelessness toward their families. Through this article, *The Daily Mail* strives to convince women that working outside home can harm their marriage and if they want to succeed in their marital life, they should stop working outside their homes. This is indeed one of the mechanisms used by this tabloid in order to disempower women and prevent them from reaching financial independence. Because women success in working outside home would make them more powerful than men, male dominated institutions such as *The Daily Mail* try always to prevent women from progression and impose control over them. As Naomi Wolf states: “As Western women entered the modern work force, the value system of the marriage market was taken over intact by the labor economy, to be used against their claims to access.”<sup>32</sup>

According to Norman Fairclough’s *Critical Discourse Analysis*, this article can be analyzed from three different dimensions that are the textual, discursive practice and the social one. When analyzing this article from the textual dimension of Fairclough’s analysis of discourse, we notice that from its title, the position of the author toward the subject is clear where it is understood that Liz Thomas condemns those women workers. By saying “don’t mix”, she makes a kind of warning of not working in order to save their marriages and she blames work as being the only cause of marriage’s failure neglecting all other factors. She also uses a set of words to judge the category of working women such as “compulsion” to say that they have so much pressure to manage their time in trying to balance between the two works, and “strain” to refer to the difficulties that she may face. She also tries to convince women that work is the first factor of the failure of their marital live. In doing so, the reporter refers to Miss Denise Robertson who considers her parent’s marriage as an example of a successful marital life in the sense that despite the difficulties they encountered in their life including business failure and the death of a child, they have lived a happy life. This appears when the reporter says, “she describes how she grew up with very happily married parents

and says that although they encountered many problems including business failure and the death of a child, her parents' love for one another sustained them". Liz Thomas associates this happiness to the fact that a woman did not work outside home, from this point of view we understand all the problems can have solutions if women work only as housewives. She then accuses working women of being the source of their marriage's failure, using the term "escape" as if marriage and saving their families was uninteresting for them.

In the discursive practice level it is necessary to deal with the decoding of the text by the reader, including text production by the newspaper owners and its consumption by the public. From the article above, we understand that the position of the author is against the work of women since she believes that they must stay at home not only because it's hard for them to manage the two occupations at the same time but also this damages their marital status. Besides, she articulated the success of marriage to women meaning that it is only their task to do so. This shows how *The Daily Mail* puts women at an inferior position where they are blamed for many things.

From the social level, it is clear that *The Daily Mail* still believes in the traditional roles that existed many decades ago. Even if the present article is a recent one but it is still influenced by the author's ideology that is against this category of women. Yet, the article illustrates the traditional beliefs on women whom roles were limited to a mere housewives and mothers.

There are many categories of women workers and among them women MPs (Members of Parliament). Even though this kind of powerful women work hard to obtain the same statuses as men, it is still not yet possible for them to achieve the position of men since they are still discriminated and above all they are considered as no more than women neglecting their homes. The marginalization of women appears in *The Daily Mail*, since it does not make any effort to break this sexist idea by trying to report the sufferance of such category of women. Therefore, although *The Daily Mail* reports and covers some issues about

women workers, this is always done in a stereotypical way. The women MPs are seen as weak and cannot hold such powerful positions because they are reserved only for men.

Ellen Friend's *Hunting Witches: Media Representations of "Non-Compliant" Women MPs* (2014) discusses the way women are seen in society as well as the way they are represented by the media. She confers the way women politicians are discriminated and considered as the "other" in their domain. She focuses on the category of women who do not follow their dominant gender discourse that puts male politicians hierarchically at the top and female ones at the bottom. For her, women MPs are compared to "witches"<sup>33</sup> who need to be "hunted"<sup>34</sup> or moved away from their positions to protect the social order they believe in. She argues that this category of women is represented by the media as "unnatural"<sup>35</sup>, "dangerous"<sup>36</sup> and "unreal"<sup>37</sup> women, and they threaten the norms of the dominant gender discourse. In this respect she states "the representation of non-compliant women MPs as "witches" works to give power to the dominant gender discourse that structures political power as primarily masculine."<sup>38</sup>

Ellen Friend's chapter deals with the place of women at work emphasizing the way they are seen by the media. As a result, women are not free to participate in the public sphere so as they are considered as non appropriate to hold a position in power and dominance. This view illustrates the whole social vision of what is thought to be the real place of women. For *The Daily Mail*, the place of a woman is at home and they cannot work outside since they are not strong enough as men, because of the fact that women are too emotional thus cannot be fully responsible.

The focus on unworthy things when dealing with powerful women is illustrated in the article entitled "*The world's most beautiful female politicians revealed (and surprise, surprise, there's not a British woman among them)*", published on March, 25<sup>th</sup>2009 by Tom Worden for *The Mail Online*. It is an examination of thirty countries to find the world's most beautiful women politicians. According to the article, it is surprising that no one of these

beautiful women politicians is British. As the author says that the British politicians do not have a good reputation concerning beauty.

The above article exemplifies the obvious neglect of worthy news since no importance is given to the achievements of these politicians. They are seen as models that need to be beautiful and attractive regardless of their capacities and their status as powerful women. Throughout this article, we notice an emphasis on the women politician's body, age and beauty while nothing is said about their political career. This means that they are mentioned and given a value only because they are beautiful and attractive. Thus, this article illustrates how the beauty myth is used to discriminate women politicians. Naomi Wolf argues that in modern times, the beauty myth is used even at work through imposing on women a set of "beauty qualification" that they should attain in order to be promoted or reach positions of power.<sup>39</sup> In this respect, she states:

The fixation on "beauty" of the 1980's was a direct consequence of, and a one-to-one check and balance upon, the entry of women into powerful positions. The triumphs of "beauty" ideologies in the eighties came about as a result of real fear, on the part of the central institutions of our society, about what might happen if free women made free progress in free bodies through a system that calls itself a meritocracy.<sup>40</sup>

Therefore, the above article sticks to the women politicians' appearance instead of their achievements in politics and this is in order to weaken their position of power and reduce them into mere models.

According to Fairclough's Analysis it is necessary to deal with language used by the author of the article in describing these politicians. We notice the use of words like "attractive", "the face of an angel", "the eighth wonder of the world", this shows the importance given to their physical appearance neglecting the powerful positions they hold. Following Norman Fairclough's levels of analysis, we should include the discursive and socio-cultural practices of the article. Indeed, the attention put on appearance can be seen as a type of discrimination where *The Daily Mail* reduces the value of these women by dealing with

such a comparison between their beauties. This reflects what happens in the world in general the thing that is mirrored by the media since it reflects what happens in society; both of them are interrelated. We notice that there is no mention of the achievements of women cited in the article as if they are unimportant.

Women celebrities are another category that are more frequent in *The Daily Mail* and they are misrepresented too. This is the case of the article published on 20 July 2015 under the headline “*Elle Fanning cuts a stylish figure in a cute baby doll dress and espadrille wedges as she heads out with friend*”.<sup>41</sup> It speaks about a famous American actress named Elle Fanning who was captured in her friend’s house in West Hollywood. It gives a thorough description of Elle Fanning’s dressing style when she was going for a stroll with her friend in the Californian sunshine. At the end, the article shifts to give news about Fanning’s career and her future projects as well as the roles she is going to play in the future films.

When analyzing the article, we notice from the beginning that there is an emphasis on the actress’s appearance rather than her career. This can be seen clearly through the headline, which gives information about her style but nothing about her career. Actually, in newspapers the important information are always put at the beginning while the unimportant ones are put at the end. The present article begins with details about Fanning’s dressing style and her private life while the very little information about her career are mentioned at the end of the article. This means that Fanning’s achievements, projects and her personality as an actress is just trivial information since they are placed at the end. Therefore, who Elle Fanning and what she does is unimportant and all what matters is her appearance, style and body shape.

In the media, there is a tendency to show women as objects and even those who have a career are mentioned in terms of their bodies and not in relation to their achievements. Moreover, women are valued under a set of criteria such as fat, thin, old or young. This media tendency appears clearly in this article that is taken from *The Daily Mail* and this can be seen in the way Elle Fanning is represented. Despite being an actress who played many major roles

in different films, *The Daily Mail* looks at her from the stereotypical point of view. Throughout the article we notice the use of words and expressions such as “baby doll dress” that serve as an irony about the actress. So, we can say that Elle Fanning is depicted as a body shape rather than a star and by this stereotypical representation, *The Daily Mail* reveals its tendency to reduce women into mere objects and bodies that need to be seen under a set of criteria.

### **b) The Focus of *The Daily Mail* in Representing Women Issues**

By analyzing *The Daily Mail*'s articles, we notice a great emphasis on women's physical appearances, thus we cannot say that they are depicted fairly since this tabloid does not cover all their issues. Instead it treats issues in a stereotypical way as it deals with only specific matters and not a general coverage.

Before dealing with the stereotypical representation of women in *The Daily Mail*, it is necessary to say what does the word stereotype refers to. Stereotyping is a kind of representation of something or somebody in a negative way. In other words, stereotypes are ideas or ideologies that can be constructed about someone and they are generally false. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a stereotype is a fixed idea of what somebody or something is like.<sup>42</sup> In fact, women are habitually depicted as “weak”,<sup>43</sup> “passive”<sup>44</sup> with no role in society, full of emotion and irresponsible contrary to men who are always seen as “active”<sup>45</sup>, courageous, intelligent and “adventurous”<sup>46</sup>. This stereotypical representation of women in *The Daily Mail* influences heavily the way the British society looks at women as it affects directly or indirectly the psychological side of the people.

Actually, the image given to women by *The Daily Mail* is narrowed into how she appears and the whole attention is paid to her beauty, and fashion the thing that deconstructs their identities. Weight, diet and ageing are often mentioned in every woman's story by drawing much of the attention to these aspects to attract the readers. These three elements will be discussed below to show how *The Daily Mail* puts emphasis on the unnecessary points in

order to skip the consumer or the reader's attention from the most important aspects to the less important ones.

Speaking about weight according to *The Daily Mail*, a woman needs to be thin with an attractive sexy body shape in order to be integrated into society, succeeds in careers and enters into the public sphere. Miriam Lowe argues, "*The Daily Mail* has created thousands more anorexics than *Vogue*, because *Vogue* simply shows thin women while *The Daily Mail* keeps up a non-stop commentary on the weight gain of famous women and links it to their sexual orientation and career success".<sup>47</sup> This illustrates the extreme focus on women's weight as an important condition for them to succeed in any field as well as to be accepted in society. For *The Mail* a woman who does not conform to the ideal model created or the "thin ideal"<sup>48</sup> is not a sexy one thus she cannot succeed in her career nor be accepted as a woman.

To achieve the required body shape, *The Mail* continues to publish stories about this matter emphasizing on how to achieve it. Diet is the main technique used by a number of people especially celebrities, for this reason *The Mail* uses these celebrities who are loved by people, so many of them would imitate. The following is an example of how *The Mail* celebrates the "thin ideal" by encouraging women for diet.

On February 2014, *The Daily Mail* published an article entitled "*I lost 6st on Victoria Beckham's alkaline diet after my boyfriend dumped me at my fattest: 17st waitress inspired by heartbreak*". This article covered a story of a woman from London named Mimi Cizmara who lost six stone from seventeen. After being left by her boyfriend who rejected her because of her weight, this woman decided to follow the alkaline diet which is the favorite diet followed by many celebrities such as Victoria Beckham. Thanks to this diet, Mimi Cizmara went from seventeen stone to eleven and slimmed from size eighteen to size eight and this was satisfactory to her at the end.

When analyzing the article above, we notice that the focus is put on the alkaline diet and its effects on women's body image. It advocates the idea that alkaline diet is a good solution for women suffering from an extra weight. So, the article is making a kind of

advertising to the alkaline diet through the story of Mimi Cizmaza who succeeded to get rid of her weight in just a few months. There is also a reference to celebrities such as Victoria Beckham, Jennifer Aniston and Kirsten Dunst. This is done in order to attract the attention of women who tend to follow the celebrities' news and consider them as their models. Moreover, the whole article puts attention on Mimi Cizmara's body and its metamorphosing. This illustrates the fact that the media treat women's issues only in terms of their bodies. Another idea that can be deduced from the article is that women are defined only in relation to men who give them a value according to their appearance. This can be seen in the way Mimi Cizmara was left by her boyfriend because of her weight. This means that women are given a value only if they are beautiful with a thin body and their personality, morals and achievement do not matter.

Besides the aspects cited above, it is essential to have a look on how *The Daily Mail* deals with advertising articles about items and face beauty products. Women have become obsessed of being beautiful just like the images and models provided by the media producers. Consequently, as consumers, they search for new ways to take care of their faces just like they do with their bodies. *The Daily Mail* as one of the commercial newspapers that stresses on advertising sheds light on cosmetic products to attract more women readers. In fact, *The Daily Mail* female readers are more attracted by the models promoted in its pages and they all want to become beautiful and appear like those models. So, they blindly consume the advertisers' products.

In this respect, the article "*As Holland and Barrett come under fire for selling a controversial skin lightening cream ... The women who 'll do anything to have whiter skin*" published on December, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 by Rebecca Ley for *The Daily Mail* is the best illustration of this aspect. It focuses on Irene Major and Angela Agor who use the skin lightening cream to get a fair skin. Irene Major who is a former wealthy model from Cameroon, has a black complexion so she uses all the expensive creams to enlighten her skin because, like other

Africans, she believes that the lighter ladies are the prettier ones. Angela Agor, a black TV presenter uses different creams to lighten a piece of her dark skin, a blistering under her eyes.

By analyzing this article, the focus on women's appearance is evident. This can be either seen through Irene Major who attempts to discuss her own situation as being an African woman from Cameroon with "black" complexion. She reveals her will to get a lighter skin in order to please the Africans who believe in the hierarchies of the skin color. She asserts that in her society, people believe that the fairer is more beautiful, that's why many of the most successful African men marry either a white or lighter skinned girl. In this respect, we may understand the tension put on women about their appearance; they are ignored by men because they are "black" and even the "black" men of the same complexion prefer white women. For this, women are ready to do whatever they could to obtain a lighter skin to satisfy men. On the other hand, Angela Agor discusses this topic through another perspective, stating her own need to change the area of dark skin she has under her eyes<sup>49</sup>. As a TV presenter, she needs to tackle discoloration in her face. For her, it is disturbing to hear the comments from people about her appearance, so she uses different creams even illegal ones to solve this problem. The article refers to Bollywood film industry and pop stars as being one of the major factors that push women to put so much attention on their appearance imitating celebrities.

Therefore, the above articles can be seen as a sample of *The Daily Mail's* representation of women. They show how this newspaper promotes the female ideal image and how it treats women only in terms of beauty and appearance. Through the previous stories, *The Daily Mail* intends to convince women of the importance of being thin and beautiful in order to be psychologically satisfied about themselves and to attract men as well.

The notion of age is as important as any other aspect discussed above when dealing with women's matters. Women's face, hair, body shape and weight are considered to be the norms required for female beauty, however, the attention is also put on their age since both media and society celebrate youth. In the women's stories and all advertisements' pictures there are only the images of young women who conform to the norms of the ideal body that

they created. Fairclough Kirsty in her *Nothing Less than Perfect: Female Celebrity, Ageing and Hyper-scrutiny in the Gossip Industry* (2012),<sup>50</sup> discusses female celebrities in gossip industry seeking to change their appearances because of their age through cosmetic surgery. These celebrities feel a kind of self-hatred because of being unacceptable in their fields, most of older women try cosmetic surgeries to modify their faces and bodies. Moreover, the notion of age is highly problematic for aged women since the media tends to focus only on young women while the aged ones are neglected. It also deconstructs the value of an aged woman since for *The Daily Mail*; they are no longer sexy nor attractive. As stated in Wykes and Gunter:

Women are being sold youth but alongside that beauty constituent is the opposite sales pitch that ageing is unacceptable femininity. So two different meanings are enabled by the beauty is youth myth – the represented one and the connoted difference – ‘age is ugly’.<sup>51</sup>

According to Wykes and Gunter, older women are no longer considered as attractive but ugly and without any sense of femininity.

## **Endnotes:**

<sup>28</sup> Ellen Jordan, *The Women's Movement and Women's Employment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London and New York: Rutledge, 1999), 48.

<sup>29</sup> Felicity Nussbaum, *The Brink of All We Hate: English Satire on Women* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1984), 204-6.

<sup>30</sup> Marta Favara, *The Cost of Acting "Girly": Gender Stereotypes and Educational Choices* (Germany: Iser, University of Esser and Iza, 2012), 2.

<sup>31</sup> Liz Thomas, 'Why Working and Being a Domestic Goddess Don't Mix: It Can Harm Marriage, Says Agony Aunt', *The Daily Mail Online*, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Wolf, *Beauty Myth*, 21.

<sup>33</sup> Ellen Friend, *Hunting witches: Media Representations of "Non-Compliant" Women MPs*, 1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>38</sup> Friend, *Hunting Witches*, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Wolf, *Beauty Myth*, 27.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 28-29.

<sup>41</sup> Giles Kayleigh, “*Elle Fanning Cuts a Stylish Figure in a Cute Baby doll Dress and Espadrille Wedges as she Heads out With Friend*”, *The Daily Mail Online*, 20 July 2015.

<sup>42</sup> *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*.

<sup>43</sup> Viskova, ‘Language in the Press: Gender Bias on Lexical Level in Broadsheets and Tabloids’, 23.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Wood, *Gendered Media*, 32.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Miriam Rachel Lowe, ‘Research Into the Representation of Gender and Body Image in the Press: A Visual and Textual Analysis Examining the Presentation, Portrayal and Treatment of Gender and Body Image in British National Daily Newspapers’ (Master Dissertation: The University of Leeds, 2007), 7.

<sup>48</sup> Wykes and Gunter, *Media And Body Image*, 132.

<sup>49</sup> Bianca London, “*I’ Lost 6st on Victoria Beckham’s Alkaline Diet After My Boyfriend Dumped me at my Fattest’: 17st Waitress Inspired by Heartbreak*”, *The Daily Mail Online*, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> Kirsty Fairclough, *Nothing Less Than Perfect: Female Celebrity, Ageing and Hyper-scrutiny in the Gossip Industry* ( Salford UK: School of Media-University of Salford, 2012).

<sup>51</sup> Wykes and Gunter, *Media and Body Image*, 53.

### **Section three:The Representation of Violence against Women in the British Newspapers: *The Daily Mail* as a Sample.**

Violence against women in the British media and particularly in the newspapers just like other women issues is covered and portrayed in a stereotypical way. In the British newspapers, women are often portrayed according to their traditional roles usually shown in topics related to housewifery, cooking, fashion and other domestic matters. This stereotyped portrayal of women extends even to other issues such as sex crimes, rape and domestic violence. Therefore, these types of violence against women are given less importance by the British press in the sense that they are either ignored or reported in a way that reinforces the existing stereotypes and sends misleading messages to the public regarding women issues.

Several studies have revealed that violence against women resulted from the social values that govern patriarchal societies. As it is stated in an article edited by Aimée Vega Montiel, “Violence against women has its origins in the patriarchal structure that suppresses women.”<sup>52</sup> Media as a social institution that carries the values of society has a great role in reinforcing patriarchy as well as shaping people’s views about sex roles. This is proved in the fact that there is gender inequality in the media, where a recent study by the Commission on the Status of Women has revealed that “men’s voices narrate the world”<sup>53</sup>. This dominance of men’s opinions in the media resulted in the continuation of sex role stereotypes and the suppression of women views as well as their rights to protect themselves from the violence committed against them.

In fact, violence against women has been the subject matter that was given much attention by newspapers more than any other type of media. This is because news reporters found this kind of issues newsworthy since it involves violence. In addition, the press tends to focus on the reporting of unusual, strange and new events in order to attract the attention of

the reader. As Helen Benedict states in her book *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes*(1992):

By this, I mean the traditional criteria that define events as worthy of reporting in newspapers, as identified by Katz, Ericson, Graber and others: Stories must tie in to a current event or preoccupation in the news; crime stories must point to some kind of moral; and news must be about something that is new or unusual.<sup>54</sup>

Stories about sex violence, domestic violence and sex crimes are more likely to be covered by newspapers in a specific way.

The British newspapers and especially tabloids tend to report violence against women through using a set of techniques and styles that result in the misleading of the public and the reinforcing of the myths surrounding crimes of violence against women. In 2012, four women organizations including *End Violence against Women Coalition, Eaves, Equality Now and OBJECT* have made an evaluation of eleven British newspapers' portrayal of women during a two-week period and they have published a joint report under the title *Just the Women: An evaluation of eleven British national newspapers' portrayal of women over a two week period in September 2012, including recommendations on press regulation reform in order to reduce harm to, and discrimination against, women*(2012). This report suggests that the British press not only portrays women as sex objects and passive individuals who rely on men's help but also reports violence against women in a "selective, decontextualized reporting that can perpetuate stereotypes and myths about victims and perpetrators of violence, having the potential to negatively impact on our justice system."<sup>55</sup>

Other aspects of reporting crimes against women include "victim blaming"<sup>56</sup> and "perpetrator empathy"<sup>57</sup>. These two aspects of reporting gender violence are highly revealed in the British tabloids especially in cases of rape. Generally, the crime of rape is reported according to a set of myths about the victim as well as the perpetrator. Women are blamed for being raped because there is a belief in myths such as "women provoke rape"<sup>58</sup>, "women ask for it",<sup>59</sup> and "only loose or immoral women are victimized"<sup>60</sup>. On the other hand, the

perpetrator is sympathized with under the belief that he is “perverted”, “ugly”, and “seedy”<sup>61</sup>. In this respect, Helen Benedict argues that the public and the press narrate sex crimes according to two versions. The “vamp” version in which “The women, by her looks, behavior or generally loose morality, drove the man to such extremes of lust that he was compelled to commit the crime”<sup>62</sup>. The second version is the “virgin” one in which “The man, a depraved and perverted monster, sullied the innocent victim, who is now a martyr to the flaws of society.”<sup>63</sup>. These two versions of reporting rape in the press contributed in the extension of the oppression of women in the sense that they are not allowed to ask for their rights when they are victimized because they are always blamed and if they are not blamed their perpetrator will not be punished because he is treated with sympathy. Thus, the way this crime is treated in the British tabloids led to its normalization in society and the spread of rape culture.

In addition to this, many studies on the language of the British press suggest that there is a tendency to report women issues in a sexist way. It makes use of a certain language that shows rape, domestic violence or any other types of gender based violence as something wanted rather than being a form of violence. Examples of sexism appear clearly in the way the victim of a crime is identified according to age, physical characteristics and relations to others.

In conclusion, violence against women is proved to be reported in the UK press in inaccurate and misleading way. This is through the language, style and techniques used to convey false messages to the public about women issues. The sensationalized reporting, victim blaming and the perpetrator sympathy are among the most important aspects of the newspapers’ coverage of violence against women in Britain. Therefore, this harmful coverage contributes in the reinforcement of gender stereotypes as well as the myths under which the British society views sex crimes. This shows that instead of helping women get their freedom and full rights, the UK press serves to oppress them and reduce them into a mere objects.

## **Violence against Women in *The Daily Mail*:**

*The Daily Mail* can be considered as the best example of how the British tabloids report violence against women. This female tabloid which is supposed to give more support to women and help them get their rights, serves to silence them and promote their marginalization through reporting their abuse as a normal practice. In an interesting study, *Just the Women* (2012), several articles taken from *the Daily Mail* have been analyzed in terms of their portrayal of women. This analysis shows that this paper has a tendency to report all the forms of gender based violence under a set of rules including perpetrator empathy, victim blaming and reducing the harm of a crime.<sup>64</sup>

In this respect, Cynthia Carter and C. Kay Weaver argue that victim blaming in the media is used as a mechanism by which violence is covered in order to serve the dominant people in society as they state in their book *Violence and the Media* (2003):

While most journalists may strive to be fair and balanced in their reporting, media research has clearly shown for many decades now that there are patterned ways violence is covered, in ways that often legitimize the views and actions of those in position of power in society.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, *the Daily Mail* is among the British tabloids that have been proved to be sexist in its reporting of women issues. This is revealed in several studies such as Katrina Viskova's *Language in the Press: Gender Bias on Lexical Level in Broadsheets and Tabloids* (2006) that has made a comparison between this tabloid and other newspapers such as *The Guardian*. This study has shown that *The Daily Mail* versus *The Guardian* in the sense that gender-marked expressions are more remarkable in *The Daily Mail* than in *The Guardian*.<sup>66</sup>

The sexist language used in *The Daily Mail* has led to defining women only in their relation to men and linking their identity to that of men.

According to the *Just the Women* (2012), the British tabloid's coverage of violence against women is "misleading to the reader, as it reinforces false stereotypes about who is a victim and who is a perpetrator."<sup>67</sup> This appears clearly in *The Daily Mail* articles such

as “California man, 41, to stand trial on charges of raping and kidnapping his girlfriend's daughter who he later married and lived with for 10 years”, published by *The Daily Mail* on April 2015. This article is about a man named Isidro Garcia who committed a crime of rape and kidnapping of a 15 years old girl. Throughout the article, it is noticeable that the perpetrator is treated sympathically by putting the emphasis on the fact that Isidro Garcia is a helpful man according to the people who know him and that he does not deserve punishment. While ignoring Garcia's crime of kidnapping and raping a girl, the article depicts the victim as responsible and as if was pleased by what happened to her. This appears at the end of the article when the reporter states: “Last year, a number of Garcia's friends and neighbors painted a very different picture, saying the woman was so happy with her husband that she was desperate to add to their family and have another baby”<sup>68</sup> Through using such expressions, the article conveys the idea that though the 15 years old girl was raped and kidnapped, she is happy with her husband who is never portrayed as a guilty man but rather as a good, lovely person.

In addition, in *The Daily Mail*, there is a tendency to cover crimes of rape or sexual assault as sex and minimize their harmful effects. This is done through using a language that prevents the reader from making a difference between the two elements. Helen Benedict argues that there is among people a myth that rape is similar to sex and as she puts it: “This most powerful myth about rape lies at the root of all the others. It ignores the fact that rape is a physical attack, and leads to the mistaken belief that rape does not hurt the victim any more than does sex.”<sup>69</sup> This is illustrated in an article which was published on 16 June 2015 under the title “Wall Street financier, 43, is sued for \$850m for sexually harassing model, 25, who he hired, ‘pressured into bed’ and then branded a prostitute on his blog.” Though this title refers first to the perpetrator's actions, the body of the article is full of expressions that show the crime as a sexual relationship. For example, the reporter uses expressions such as “The pair had sex ‘several’ more times, but in order to avoid Wey, Bouveng began spending time with another man [...]”<sup>70</sup>. This way of reporting makes the reader understand that the woman who

in reality has been exploited by the Wall Street financier and sexually harassed has accepted to have sex with this man, and by this the harm of the crime is nominalized and minimized. Indeed, this type of coverage is intended to support a hidden ideology since a newspaper article is a form of discourse practice. Therefore, this article carries a hidden ideology that serves men's power and disempowers women.

Finally, *The Daily Mail* which is supposed to report women issues in an accurate and realistic way that will serve their interests is nowadays covering women's matters in a sensationalist, biased and sexist way. From the analysis of the above mentioned articles, we deduce that this tabloid treats violence against women in a stereotypical way with the use of the existing myths about any form of violence against women. This inappropriate reporting reinforces the stereotypes as well as the myths about gender violence and contributes in the violation of women's rights.

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<sup>53</sup> Elisa Salinas, *Challenging Media and Film Stereotypes on Gender Sexuality and Women's Rights* (Commission on the Status of Women, 2015), 2.

<sup>54</sup> Helen Benedict, *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 8.

<sup>55</sup> Peter Rippon, ed, *Just the Women: An evaluation of eleven British national newspapers' portrayal of women over a two week period in September 2012, including recommendations on press regulation reform in order to reduce harm to, and discrimination against, women* (Eaves, End Violence Against Women Coalition, Equality Now, and OBJECT, 2012), 7.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Benedict, *Virgin or Vamp*, 15.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.,16

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.,15

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 23

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Rippon, *Just the Women*,13.

<sup>65</sup> Cynthia Carter, *Violence and the Media* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003), 41.

<sup>66</sup>Katrin Viskova, "Language in the Press: Gender Bias on Lexical Level in Broadsheets and Tabloids"(University of Pardubice, 2006), 33.

<sup>67</sup>Rippon, *Just the Women*, 9.

<sup>68</sup>"California man, 41, to stand trial on charges of raping and kidnapping his girlfriend's daughter who he later married and lived with for 10 years". *The Daily Mail Online*, 25 April 2015.

<sup>69</sup>Benedict, *Virgin or Vamp*, 14.

<sup>70</sup>Kelly McLaughlin, 'Wall Street financier, 43, issued for \$850m for sexually harrassing model, 25, who he hired, "pressured into bed" and then branded a prostitute on his blog', *The Daily Mail Online*, 16 June 2015.

## **Section Four: Effects of the Promoted Ideal Body Image on Society, Women and Young Girls:**

### **a. The Effects of the Ideal Body Image on Society and Women :**

Body image is a concept used to refer to how an individual looks to himself and this can be either in a positive or a negative way. As it is defined by Jillian Croll in a chapter entitled *Body Image and Adolescents*: “Body image is a dynamic perception of one’s body how it looks, feels, and moves. It is shaped by perception, emotions, physical sensations, and is not static, but can change in relation to mood, physical experience, and environment.”<sup>71</sup> The media play a great role in shaping people’s perception of their body image and this is through promoting a certain ideal body image and trying to convince people to follow it in order to have a value in society.

It is apparent that the image of women given by the media has many negative effects on the different levels. With its exaggerated emphasis on the beautiful body image, it does not only affect women themselves but also society as a whole. Many women express a kind of desire to follow the image promoted in the advertisements by trying to imitate them. In fact, plastic surgery and diet are the most frequent ways used by women to change their looks. So, the media’s image of women serves as a model that needs to be followed and imitated and this creates a sort of dissatisfaction and dislike among women who do not conform to this model.

At the social level, this resulted in many negative impacts on women who could not attain the desired ideal body image created by the media. Violence may be the best example of media’s negative consequences in society with advertisers’ attempt to modernize and sexualize all women by endorsing sexy fashion and body attractiveness. As a result, women follow this new style of clothing as a modern way of living but in return, they provide an easy way for marginalizing women who are not able to follow the models in their style. This has contributed in classifying women in society into two groups, the good women who refer to

those who acquire the ideal body image and bad ones stand to women who do not conform to the criteria of beauty that are imposed by the media.

In order to be integrated in society, women find themselves in the obligation of imitating the image of beautiful and thin woman. This is not only to satisfy their personal needs but also to be accepted by the others in society. As the whole attention is put on this unrealistic image, women who do not conform to this image are often neglected and seen as not real women. This rejection extends even to work and education as well as the whole women' status in society in the sense that many women cannot enter to the public sphere. This issue is really apparent in *The Daily Mail* with its ignorance of some categories of women in their coverage. Without beauty, women could not keep their place in education or at work as Naomi Wolf states, "With youth and beauty, then, the working woman is visible, but insecure, made to feel her qualities are not unique. But, without them, she is invisible. She falls, literally 'out of the picture'."<sup>72</sup>

The negative portrayal of women in *The Daily Mail* serves men dominated ideologies especially with their use of women's images to serve their business interests. In fact, advertisers seek to achieve mass consumption for their products by influencing their target negatively. They push them to be pleased by what is emphasized in media in order to consume those products, the thing that results in the negative consumerism which is an ideology that encourages high consumption of goods. Women are ready to consume all cosmetic and diet products including the illegal ones to take care of their skins or to be thin as the models.

### **b. The Influence on Women:**

The stereotypical representation of women in the media and *The Daily Mail* can be the main source of many problems. As a matter of fact, the media produce an unrealistic image of women. Thin, young, beautiful, free from any unwanted hair is the ideal image of femininity provided by the media producers.<sup>73</sup> As fatness is related to unhealthiness, so to have the

required body image, women began to try many ways such as to “deprive themselves of nutrition to the extent that they risk serious illness and even death.”<sup>74</sup> They are ready to do everything just to attain the demanded body size even by sacrificing their health to an amount that they risk death.

In fact, this attempt to reach thinness has resulted in a harsh dieting to an extent of self-starvation.<sup>75</sup> This indeed creates serious health problems or eating disorders including bulimia and anorexia nervosa. Eating disorders can be defined as mental illnesses characterized by abnormal eating habits that affect somebody’s psychological or physical health.<sup>76</sup> According to the American National Institute of Mental Health:

An eating disorder is marked by extremes. It is present when a person experiences severe disturbances in eating behavior, such as extreme reduction of food intake or extreme overeating, or feelings of extreme distress or concern about body weight or shape.<sup>77</sup>

Therefore, it is an exaggerated eating behavior be it a decrease or increase in the amount of food taken in a given period of time. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, “A person with an eating disorder may have started out just eating smaller or larger amounts of food than usual, but at some point, the urge to eat less or more spirals out of control.”<sup>78</sup>

In fact, women with eating disorders cannot control themselves; they consider food as their relatives and best friends so as each time they feel sad, they begin to eat whatever they find just to forget their bad situation. As stated in the following extract:

Some days I’m really good, and I only have an apple all day. But then when I start to eat at night I can’t stop. Sometimes I even make myself sick. Then I promise myself that tomorrow will be different, and I’ll try much harder. But tomorrow is always the same. I’m so ashamed. I’ am an ugly fat pig. Eating loads of crisps, cakes and chocolate helps me forget how bad I feel for a while. Food is like my friend, it makes me feel better like nothing else can. But then afterwards I look at myself in the mirror and just cry and cry.<sup>79</sup>

Bulimia and anorexia are the most common types of eating disorders. The first one is the removing of food after being eaten and the second refers to the lack of eating. In fact, bulimia or bulimia nervosa is a term first coined by the psychiatric Gerald Russell in his 1979

scientific paper entitled *Bulimia Nervosa*.<sup>80</sup> It is a desire of overeating and according to the American National Institute of Mental Health; bulimia is associated with uncontrollable eating large amounts of food that results in some behaviors such as vomiting. As it puts it:

Bulimia nervosa is characterized by recurrent and frequent episodes of eating unusually large amounts of food (e.g., binge-eating), and feeling a lack of control over the eating. This binge-eating is followed by a type of behavior that compensates for the binge, such as purging (e.g., vomiting, excessive use of laxatives or diuretics), fasting and/or excessive exercise.<sup>81</sup>

According to the same source, women with bulimia can be with an average weight, but with a terrible fear of being fat and they are defined by a sort of dissatisfaction about their body shape.<sup>82</sup> There is also shame that controls this category of women that causes psychological illnesses such as depression, anxiety and/or substance abuse problems.<sup>83</sup>

Lizzie Parry in her “*Number of anorexic and bulimic teenage girls admitted to hospital DOUBLES in three years*”<sup>84</sup> published on June 2015 for *The Mail Online*, admits that the number of girls suffering from eating disorders has doubled in the last three years. In this issue, some experts blame advertisements as being the primary cause behind these young girls’ suffer either from anorexic or bulimic behaviors.

Anorexia nervosa is another type of eating disorders that many women suffer from, it is more common in women than in men. It refers to the lack of the amount of food being eaten as a result of fear to gain weight. This process of dieting harms the psychological side of women because they are controlled by the socio-cultural idea of being thin to an extent of starving themselves just to attain thinness, and this leads them to face other more serious health problems. As illustrated in the following:

In AN, pathological thoughts and behaviors concerning food and weight, as well as emotions about appearance, eating, and food, co-occur. These thoughts, feelings, and behaviors lead to changes in body composition and functioning that are the direct result of starvation.<sup>85</sup>

As a matter of fact, both Bulimia and Anorexia Nervosa are serious illnesses that affect women rather than other categories of people as they are the most common class that is

influenced by the emergence of the socio-cultural idea of thinness and attractive body shape. As Eating Disorders, they are associated with the psychological troubles of the affected people the thing that shape negatively their mental as well as physical state.

### **c. The Influence of the Ideal Body Image on Young Girls and adolescents:**

The images of women beauty and especially the ideal body image that is highly promoted in television, advertising, pornography and films has a great influence on the way young girls view themselves as well as their level of self-esteem. Young girls are faced daily with media images of beauty and messages that invite them to follow certain instructions in order to look attractive and sexy. The exposure to this type of images everyday created in young girls an ambition to know more about sexuality, attractiveness and beauty in an earlier age. Therefore, just like old women, young girls and adolescents are influenced by the role models, the thin and attractive body image to an extent of trying to imitate and attain this unrealistic image of women.

In *Living in a Sexualized Society: The Effects on Young Girls (2012)*, Anna Webster argues that media shows sexualized images of women everyday and depicts them as an attractive model and this has created a notion for young girls who think that they “should look “hot” not later but now”.<sup>86</sup> Even fashion designers try to seduce young girls through making their cloths and designing them just like those intended to adults. Moreover, media spread a view that slim women have the perfect body. This has led young girls to believe that there is no other images worth aspiring to except the “hot, thin and sexy one”.<sup>87</sup>

The exposure to media images that focus on appearance and body shape of women influences young girls in a negative way. One of the bad effects of the ideal body image on young girls and adolescents is body dissatisfaction which in turn leads to a lower self-esteem. As Daniel Clay and others state: “Body image is central to adolescent girls’ self-definition,

because they have been socialized to believe that appearance is an important basis for self-evaluation and for evaluation by others.”<sup>88</sup>This means that the importance given to women’s appearance in the mass media has pushed young girls to understand that if they do not appear beautiful, they would not be accepted in society. This idea leads them also to seek ways by which to attain the ideal body image and impose on themselves the duty of dieting. In addition to this; young girls aspiring to reach the promoted body image face a serious health problem that is eating disorders which is a result of trying to lose weight through dieting. As Anna Webster puts it, “Girls become more aware of dieting to lose weight and in some cases this may lead them to engage in disordered eating habits.”<sup>89</sup>

In this respect, *The Daily Mail* serves to support young girls to follow dieting from an early age. There is a contradiction in the way issues are covered in this paper. We notice clearly this through articles such as “*One fifth of girls under 11 have already been on a diet: study shows schoolgirls think women are judged more on appearance than ability*”<sup>90</sup>. This article gives statistics about schoolgirls and their attitudes towards their body image. It conveys the idea that many schoolgirls are interested in diet though their age is between five and 11 and that many girls face the problem of body dissatisfaction. The reporter argues that many young girls are influenced by the images of thin women shown in advertising and therefore, they began to give much value to their appearance. This type of articles shows that there is awareness among the reporters of *The Daily Mail* about how much the images of media affect young girl’s perception of themselves as well as the health effects that these images can cause.

On one hand, the above article informs the reader about the fact that young girls are in danger of low-self-esteem due to media images but on the other hand, we find that *The Daily Mail* publishes articles that invite these young girls to follow the unrealistic media images. This means that there is an unbalance and contradiction in the way *The Daily Mail* reports

women issues. From this, we can deduce that this paper contributes in influencing young girl's self-esteem as well as their body perception.

In her book *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women* (1991), Naomi Wolf argues that women's lives nowadays are put in an "Iron Maiden". According to her, beauty is used as an instrument of torture for women just like the Iron Maiden which is a German instrument that was used in the Medieval Age to torture people.<sup>91</sup> Thus, when women as well as young girls fail to attain the standards of beauty imposed by male institutions, they are tortured by facing psychological problems and death due to eating disorders.

### **Endnotes:**

<sup>71</sup> Jillian Croll, 'Body Image and Adolescent', in *Guidelines for Adolescent Nutrition Services*, ed. Jamie Stang et al ( University of Minnesota, 2005), 155

<sup>72</sup> Wolf, *Beauty Myth*, 13.

<sup>73</sup> Maggie Wykes and Barrie Gunter, *The Media and Body Image* (London: Sage Publication Ltd, 2005), 2.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>76</sup> Wikipedia.org

<sup>77</sup> Eating Disorders: *National Institute of Mental Health* (US: Department of Health and Human Services, 2007), 9.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Lesley Maunder and Lorna Cameron with contributions from Healthcare Staff and Service Users in Northumberland, *Eating disorders: A Self Help Guide* (Northumberland: the Patient Information Centre, 2009),3.

<sup>80</sup> Chrissie Giles, A Burst From the Blue –is Bulimia Nervosa Really a Modern Disease?, 17 october 2015. <<http://blog.Welcome.Ac.uk/2012/02/20/a-burst-from-the-blue-is-bulimia-nervosa-really-a-modern-disease/>.

<sup>81</sup> *Eating Disorders: National Institute of Mental Health* (US: Department of Health and Human Services, 2007), 9.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Parry, Lizzie. ‘Number of Anorexic and Bulimic Teenage Girls Admitted to Hospital DOUBLES in Three Years’. *The Daily Mail Online*, 25 June 2015. Viewed on 3 October 2015.

<sup>85</sup> James Lock and Daniel le Grange, *Treatment Manual for Anorexia Nervosa: A Family- Based Approach* (New York and London, the Guilford Press, 2013), 3.

<sup>86</sup> Anna Webster, *Living in a Sexualized Society: The Effects on Young Girls*(2012),3

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<sup>88</sup> Daniel Clay et all, ‘Body Image and Self-esteem Among Adolescent Girls: Testing the Influence of Sociocultural factors’,in *Journal of Research on Adolescence* (London: University of Sussex, 2005), 452.

<sup>89</sup> Webster, *Living in a Sixualized Society*, 13.

<sup>90</sup> Tania Steer, “One fifth of girls under 11 have already been on a diet: study shows school girls think women are judged more on appearance than ability”. *The Daily Mail*, 30 March 2015.

<sup>91</sup> Wolf, *Beauty Myth*, 17.

## V. Conclusion:

The aim of our dissertation has been to analyze and evaluate the way the British tabloid newspaper *The Daily Mail* portrays, covers and reports gender related issues. Our analysis has focused on four main elements: *The Daily Mail* and its emergence, its portrayal of different categories of women, its coverage of violence against women and the impact of the ideal body image promoted in media especially *The Daily Mail* on women, young girls and society.

The first section provided a historical background about *The Daily Mail* including facts from its emergence with its first editor Lord Northcliffe in 1896 to the present day. This section has been a summary of the most important historical events related to this tabloid. *The Daily Mail* which was the first newspaper to target women readers changed its position from putting emphasis on domestic matters through celebrating marriage and motherhood to become interested in the development of women and their integration into the public sphere by focusing on publishing stories related always to body attractiveness and sexiness. Both ways of representation serve to reinforce male domination. This analysis conducted us to a conclusion that women are still subjugated, put in an inferior position and their roles in society are still limited despite the progress that happened in their lives.

The second section dealt with the representation of women in *The Daily Mail* and it was divided into two sub-sections. The first part put emphasis on what is neglected in women stories by *The Daily Mail*, that is to say the issues that are absent or underrepresented. We have taken the case of the absence of representation of educated women and the underrepresentation of women workers and more precisely women politicians whose achievements in politics are often absent. The second part has dealt with the most emphasized matters in *the Daily Mail*. We have found that its whole attention is put on the beautiful face, thin body size, age and fashion.

The third section has dealt with the coverage of violence against women in the British tabloids and emphasis was put on *The Daily Mail* as a sample. Through this section it has been demonstrated that when reporting violence against women, *The Daily Mail* follows the same method as many other British tabloids in which victim blaming and perpetrator empathy are the main characteristics.

Finally the fourth section has been devoted to the impacts of the promoted ideal body image by the media in general and *The Daily Mail* in particular. This section has concentrated on the negative influence of this unrealistic body image on women, young girls as well as society. It has been shown that the ideal body image creates self-hatred and dissatisfaction among women themselves and violence towards them in society. Physical and psychological health is proved to be the most affected sides with the emergence of social ideas about female thinness, slenderness and attractiveness.

Unlike the past decades, women nowadays have access to education and working outside home in many different fields just like men. However, their marginalization did not stop but rather it has changed its form. Women have got rid of the traditional “private sphere” that limited their roles to child bearers, mothers, wives and households but these traditional stereotypes are nowadays replaced by the “beauty myth” which is promoted by the media as another means of control of women by men’s institutions. Since media texts are discourses that carry a hidden meaning, then, analyzing *The Daily Mail* discourse is important to uncover its hidden messages that aim to support a certain ideology.

Through our evaluation of the British tabloids and particularly *The Daily Mail*’s coverage of women issues, we intended to show how this tabloid uses a sexist language as a discourse to keep women in a weak position. We have also attempted to reveal *The Daily Mail*’s true nature which is in reality a paper that is full of contradictions. On the one hand, it portrays women as sex objects and invites them to follow diet, to buy cosmetic products and

dress in an attractive way. On the other hand, when it covers violent crimes against women such as rape, domestic violence and sexual assault, it usually tries to make women appear as responsible for what happened to them and blames them especially for being attractive. Therefore, *The Daily Mail* advocates male domination and discrimination against women through its way of reporting.

To conclude, the topic of our dissertation has dealt with the misrepresentation of women in *The Daily Mail* and it has been treated from a linguistic and feminist media perspectives. This topic, then, is still an interesting subject that needs further investigation. It can be treated in another way using other perspectives. This can be done, for example; through focusing on *The Daily Mail*'s representation of 'Black' and other minority women such as Muslims and Latinos

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