

How *Seventeen* Undermines Young Women

1. A Harvard professor was studying the psychological development of teenage girls in 1988, and found that they experience a major drop in self-esteem when they reach adolescence and only a fraction of the girls said they were happy with the way they are. The article argues that *Seventeen* only reinforces cultural expectations and that adolescent women should be more concerned with her appearance, her relations with other people, and her ability to win approval from men than with her own ideas or expectations for herself. *Seventeen* is aimed at an audience of teenage girls but it does a lot of reporting on men where they have a section all about men's views on relationships with women. There are articles in *Seventeen* about anorexia among teenage girls, written by a man, along with fashion and beauty stories centered on men in a teenage girls magazine. It also features fashion articles with young women in short bloomers and cowboy boots captioning "How to Rustle up a Ranchero" along with fashion spreads labeled 'Romance 101' which has pictures of young women gazing adorably at her boyfriend. An average issue of *Seventeen* has only two or three full-length articles on non-beauty products, these articles mainly deal with a teenage girls relations with other people rather than ways for her to be happy with her own life. In the year of the Women, *Seventeen* only published a full-length article about sexual harassment, makeup and trendy clothing, and there was only a three paragraph column about political issues like the abortion debate and about the year of the Women. They even turned environmental issues into beauty issues; by saying that the environment is in trouble and it's because of that it makes you have bad skin, they're showing that skin care is the first thing on their minds when it comes to environment issues. They're telling young girls that their minds are unimportant and the most important thing in her life is her looks and their relationships with men.
2. In my opinion the article is mainly for teenage girls because they're displaying things that they think will appeal to young women. They show these things so girls will buy their magazine but when young girls read this they get the wrong idea about themselves and the wrong idea on what their minds should be set on. They're teaching young girls that their looks are the most important thing, along with attracting men. Even though the magazine puts up articles from a man's point of view, the magazines target audience aren't boys because they have more things that are appealing to teenage girls rather than to boys or even teachers or parents.
3. I agree with what this article is saying about *Seventeen* because if what they're saying about it is true then that magazine isn't healthy for teenage girls. That magazine tells girls that their minds are unimportant and their looks are the most important thing which isn't right because it's teaching young girls to choose looks over brains and if they do that they will get a boyfriend. *Seventeen* will give girls the wrong ideas on how they should be and it's unhealthy for them to read this because it will cause low self-esteem, low self-confidence, and could even lead to anorexia and depression because they will realize later on that that magazine is wrong about how they should act or just realize that they can't live up to the expectations that the magazine put in their head.