

# Debunking beauty myths

I don't know about you gals, but I get so frustrated watching commercials on TV or skimming through advertisements in magazines where a beauty product promises women the world yet uses "tricks of the trade" to get their messages across.

For example, let's take a simple advertisement for mascara. In my 50+ years of wearing makeup, I've used just about every brand of mascara out there and in every color of the rainbow. Each year, the brush shape and tube size or color changes a bit to make the product "new" and terms like "no clumping" and "voluminous" are tossed around with excitement, much like a quarter-back's fling in a very close football game.

However, not once in all the years that I've been applying this black gook to my eyelashes did I ever come close to the full, lush grandeur of the eyelashes worn by those doe-eyed gals in the advertisements.

## Generations

Peg Demarco

And of course we, as ordinary women on the go who spend less than ten minutes applying makeup, would never think to put on false eyelashes, but that's exactly what all of them are wearing as they wink at you in an expertly planned attempt to get you to spend money. More often than not, we pay eight bucks plus for black mascara at Wal-Mart (low end) or 25 plus bucks in a department store (high end) and can't figure out why we aren't blessed with lush, full lashes like the ones on Beyonce or Drew Barrymore.



And the same goes for "miracle" makeup or face creams that somehow remove "fine lines" and promise that women will look 10 years younger in six weeks. My fine lines, or craters as I like to refer to them these days, rebel at any attempt to be silenced by some greasy makeup or white puffy cream and usually that's the time when the insulted wrinkles transmit a sonar signal to the pores that an invasion has occurred and rebellion is mandatory in the form of a nasty pimple on the tip of my nose.

But, thanks to honest actresses like Jamie Lee Curtis, and other mature ladies who have decided to spill the beans, the truth is out that those magazine covers and advertisements that feature models or actresses with nary a line in sight have actually been airbrushed so many times that there's not much left of the true subject. And unless we are all willing to walk around town with someone at our side airbrushing us as we stroll, sooner or later our true self has got to be shown to the world.

Hair commercials annoy me, too. You older ladies out there will remember "the Breck girls" who were simply gorgeous young women whose cascading waves and immaculate smiles were as perfect as the Mona Lisa and who successfully sold the idea that using Breck shampoo would result in a stable full of young men dying to date you after one head wash.

Today, everyone wants to have a full, lush, shiny head of hair like the one on top of the head of the model walking down a flight of stairs and tossing her long mane behind her. The truth is that more of-

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ten than not the model is wearing hair extensions and if anyone doubts this, tune in to the parade of judge shows on TV in the afternoon. Someone is always suing someone else for poorly done hair extensions.

Is there anyone out there without hair extensions in big cities? Or if you're a fan of "Millionaire Matchmaker," like I am, the first thing Patty Sanger tells the horde of gals trying to land a millionaire is to "get hair extensions" and don't come back without them.

Short hair is obviously much like the plague to anyone hoping to snare a guy with plenty of dough.

Every time I see advertisements or see pictures of women in pointy toed stilettos, I cringe knowing that someday they will be like me — a victim of too tight shoes who now would prefer to leave the house in bedroom slippers. Yet, somewhere in the recesses of every woman's mind, most likely a seed planted by a fledgling shoe designer, high, thin heels make the woman the most desirable creature on earth.

The same goes for form fitting jeans. Designers have been dangling jeans in front of our eyes ever since James Dean made them popular and women figured they could cash in on his coolness.

It was probably the first sign of women's liberation and the idea that woman could be just as sexy in a pair of tight fitting jeans as men could. Yes, we've come a long way, baby.

I've been fighting a war with jeans all my life because I detest uncomfortable clothing and no amount of coaching is going to get me into a pair with a zip up fly. I remember when designer jeans first came out. I was one of the few that relished

breathing and wasn't into having a designer's name on the back of my caboose. I ended up wearing skirts for a couple of decades.

The 1970s introduced us to the hippie 3 inch belted jeans followed today by the low rise jeans. However, the low rise instant hit has seemed to have hit the high road as too many gals have been caught red faced after bending forward and treating the world to a show it shouldn't have seen.

There was a bit of respite when one of the jeans companies featured "real" women in their ads with normal, curvy figures. Although it still didn't tempt me, I was so happy to see that we were finally getting companies to look at the true female form instead of the size zeroes who walk the runways with clanking boney frames.

I think the worst part of false advertising are the diet products that promise women instant happiness if they stick to a prepared meal (loaded with sodium to retain water), eat a "power bar" that tastes like cardboard, swallow a magic pill that takes away hunger (for about 15 minutes), or follow one of a million different diets that are best sellers in the bookstores but collecting dust after a couple of months.

Yes, they do work for a while, but eventually the bathroom scale signals to us in the corner and no matter how much clothing we strip off to get a true reading, the news usually isn't as good as we would like it to be.

I know you gals out there will continue to buy beauty products, as I will, but I'm hoping that you'll realize that advertising comes in many shapes and sizes, is just another way for a company to make money and sell its goods, and that the only true beauty is what's inside you.

Yes, Mom was right again.