

Critical Argument Paper Assignment # 2

Modernity

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Contemporary Issues in Fashion

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In the early 20th century, “modernity” is like the progress of change and pushback from traditional values. For instance, the 20th century revolutionized how people lived, worked, and viewed themselves, including beauty standards. However, women could be considered to be the main topic of this “modernity” era due to gaining visibility and new transitions. This occurrence made it possible for women to openly express their contemporary identities in the world of fashion. In this essay, 20th-century beauty advertising shaped the concept of modernity by influencing women's roles and cultural trends. Furthermore, the beauty industry played a significant role in shaping our modern understanding of beauty and self-expression. The beauty industry influenced how we perceive beauty and how we express ourselves through our decision-making when it comes to our appearance. Yet, today, this influence is still occurring and is continuing to shape ideas about what is considered beautiful and desirable.

Among the many changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, Europe, and America transformed from societies focused on farming and crop production into urban, modern societies that experienced strong development in the arts, design, consumer goods, and beauty

culture. For instance, American industrialist Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, pioneered the automobile industry with his Quadricycle (Ford, 2024), which marked his first step toward mass-producing affordable vehicles. Additionally, this early vehicle, built in 1896, was a four-wheeled machine powered by a four-horsepower engine (Ford, 2024), this innovation marked a significant role in automotive

Figure 1
The Quadricycle

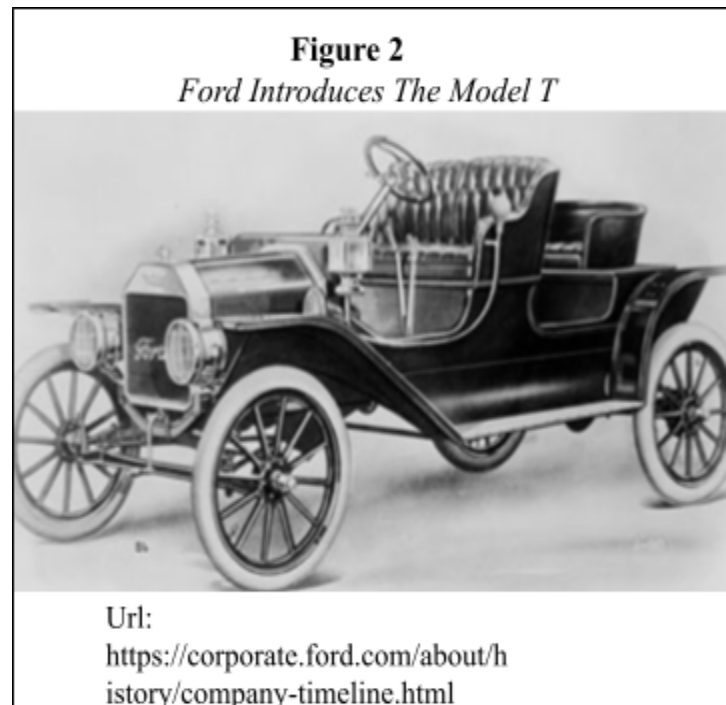


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<https://corporate.ford.com/about/history/company-timeline.html>

history, revealing the early potential of motorized transportation and paving the way for future advancements in the field. However, unlike modern cars, it steered with a tiller and had a two-speed transmission with no reverse gear (Ford, 2024), which led to further advancements in the automobile industry. As advancements occurred in the early 20th century, Ford introduced the Model T was meant to be a simple, affordable, and durable automobile (Ford, 2024). This allowed Ford to make the car more accessible to the average American, revolutionizing the automotive industry and setting a new standard for affordable transportation due to the Model T's design focused on mass-production techniques.

However, the Model T was developed on the Ford Motor Company's moving assembly line at Ford's revolutionary Highland Park Plant. This mass production method helped reduce the vehicle's cost, ranging from \$260 and \$850, which allowed Henry Ford to pass the savings on to his customers (Ford, 2024). Today this change is largely due to the evolution of mass production over time. However, this evolution in mass production techniques has not only made products affordable but has continued to

contribute to advancements in efficiency and quality control, further benefiting consumers and industries alike. Banton states, "Mass production can create higher levels of efficiency because mass-produced items can be assembled at a quicker rate through automation. Rapid assembly aids the prompt distribution and marketing of an organization's products that, in turn, can create a competitive advantage and higher profits for a company." (Banton, 2024). Automated mass



production speeds up assembly, distribution, and marketing, boosting competitiveness and profits. Furthermore, mass production has also revolutionized the beauty industry by allowing for the efficient manufacturing of large quantities of products, yet this method has benefited both businesses and consumers. Lastly, the continued evolution of mass production techniques has not only transformed industries like automotive and beauty but has also played a crucial role in shaping the modern consumer economy by making products more accessible, efficient, and with higher quality.

Along with the rising need for customized beauty goods, the beauty industry has found that mass production is a very successful business model. Beauty businesses can increase profitability and make their products more widely available by utilizing economies of scale, which allow them to create huge quantities of goods at a reduced cost. Dove, a leading beauty brand, represents beauty and inclusivity. It advocates for natural beauty and empowers individuals of all shapes, sizes, and ages to embrace their beauty (Unilever PLC, 2024). By leveraging economies for scale and embracing values like inclusivity, Dove not only drives profitability but also cultivates a positive brand image that resonates with a diverse, global consumer base. In the early days of Dove, Unilever developed the Dove beauty bar that wasn't simply a soap but contained a formula that was enriched with moisturizers, leaving the skin feeling softer and smoother with every use, launching in the U.S. in 1957 (Unilever PLC, 2024). This innovative approach to skincare, combined with their commitment to promoting real beauty, has established Dove as a trusted and problem-solving brand in the beauty industry. Yet, Dove has long been committed to promoting skincare that prioritizes hydration and gentleness, a promise that dates back to its early advertising campaigns. For example, Dove made a promising formula for women that contained a quarter moisturizing cream (Unilever PLC, 2024), and its

commitment to hydrated skin has remained the focus point of the brand's identity. Additionally, following the brand's product success, Dove began using women in its ads for the first and by 1979, dermatologists began recommending the Dove bar to patients (Unilever PLC, 2024). This shift towards authenticity and expert endorsement helped develop Dove as a trusted skincare brand, resonating with consumers and gaining credibility in the dermatological industry. As the Dove product became successful, the brand developed a variety of products such as Dove deodorants, body washes, body lotions, foaming facial cleaners, and hair products (Unilever PLC, 2024), all designed to represent the brand's commitment to gentle, nourishing skincare. The utilization of mass production is essential to Dove's success and global reach as it produces various items. Though it wasn't always taken into account in the beginning, Dove's use of mass production acknowledges the environmental impact of creating enormous quantities of plastic, a

Figure 3
Dove's AD

Soap dries your skin, but
DOVE creams your skin while you bathe



Sensational new bath and toilet bar is one-quarter cleansing cream

DOVE is a completely new formula—DOVE actually creams your skin while you wash! Because DOVE is one-quarter rich cleansing cream, it leaves your skin feeling soft and smooth—with some of that dry, tight

feeling you get from soap. DOVE makes soap old-fashioned! Lever Brothers guarantees DOVE is better for your face, your hands, your whole body, than any toilet soap—or your money back!

Url:

<https://www.unilever.com/news/press-and-media/press-releases/2019/dove-moves-to-100-recycled-plastic-bottle-s-and-plastic-free-packs-for-its-beauty-bar/>

typical method of mass production across sectors. Furthermore, as mass production of plastic over the decades has led to environmental issues, Dove's responses involve reducing the use of virgin plastic newly manufactured plastic not yet recycled by substituting sustainable packaging and materials (Dove, 2022). The brand's dedication to sustainable practices demonstrates its understanding of environmental responsibility and demonstrates that it not only supports ethical consumption but also works to reduce its environmental impact. In other words, unlike today, environmental protection was not a primary focus in the production industry during the early 20th century. This shift has occurred largely because our environment now faces significant threats from climate change and global warming. During the Industrial Revolution, it may have gained economic growth but it had its own negative impact. For example, the use of heavy machinery led to increased reliance on fossil fuels, which eventually caused a sharp rise in carbon emissions and significant environmental pollution, including environmental degradation, water pollution, urban overcrowding, and the depletion of natural resources (Anderson, 2024). In conclusion, while the Industrial Revolution spurred economic progress, it also set the stage for many of the environmental challenges we face today, underscoring the need for sustainable practices in modern industry to protect our planet for future generations. That's why today, many brands, such as Dove, are taking extra precautions and making changes in their product development to ensure they do not harm the environment. Moreover, Dove is fully committed to paving the way for the rest of the sector with industry-leading innovations by eliminating the use of plastics where possible by using alternative materials and new packaging formats (Unilever PLC, 2019). In conclusion, Dove's dedication to sustainability, inclusivity, and cutting-edge skincare sets a strong example for the beauty sector, showing that companies can attain

worldwide recognition and financial success while maintaining principles that appeal to ethical customers and have a beneficial effect on the environment.

Overall, the 20th century opened a transformative era in modernity, where progress and innovation reshaped societal norms, industry, and personal identity, especially for women. The beauty industry emerged as a powerful force, influencing cultural perceptions of beauty and self-expression while fostering inclusivity and authenticity. Yet, mass production revolutionized industries, from automotive to beauty, making products more accessible, efficient, and widely available. Brands like Dove set a new standard in beauty by promoting inclusivity and environmental responsibility, illustrating how modern businesses can balance profitability with ethical commitments.

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