

Young Women's Perceptions and Experiences of Skinny and Fat Shaming

by

Tia L. Carpino

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Abstract

This research compares women's perceptions of the hurtfulness and social acceptability of fat and skinny shaming and their experiences as perpetrators and victims of both types of body shaming. In total, 500 female students (M age = 20.0 years, SD = 4.7 years) read a vignette depicting an instance of skinny shaming and a vignette depicting an instance of fat shaming. Subsequently, they completed measures of their perceptions of the body shaming depicted in the vignettes, as well as their own experiences, their body satisfaction, attitudes toward skinny and fat women, and demographic characteristics. Participants viewed fat shaming as more hurtful and unacceptable than skinny shaming. These perceptions varied according to participants' body satisfaction and attitudes toward skinny women. Participants also reported perpetrating and experiencing skinny shaming more frequently than fat shaming. The limitations and implications of these findings are discussed.

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Young Women's Perceptions and Experiences of Skinny and Fat Shaming

Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging.

Brené Brown, 2004

During her interviews with over 200 women, Brené Brown (2004) found that appearance ranked second among the 10 main sources of women's shame.¹ This is, perhaps, not surprising, given that a woman's body weight has a profound effect on how she is viewed and treated by others. Indeed, a woman's weight has been described as a "central trait" because it carries information about the other characteristics a woman is regarded as having (Yoder, 2013). Thin White women, for example, are not only seen as more attractive than heavy White women, they are also viewed as having more favourable personalities and more successful futures (Wade & DiMaria, 2003). What's more, thin women are paid more income than heavier women (Judge & Cable, 2011).

For many women, appearance-related shame stems from what is known as "body shaming," that is, people's negative comments about women's bodies, particularly their weight. Like other appearance-related commentary, such as comments about facial features, hair, height, and clothing (Rieves & Cash, 1996), body shaming may involve teasing, negative comments and gestures, or some combination of these (Schwartz, Phares, Tantleff-Dunn, & Thompson, 1999; Thompson & Smolak, 2001). As indicated in the review that follows, a plethora of research has established the negative effects of

¹ The other nine sources of women's shame were identity, sexuality, family, motherhood, parenting, mental and physical health, aging, religion and a woman's ability to stand up and speak for herself.

fat shaming on over-weight women's psychological and physical well-being. For these women, the slow but growing shift toward celebrating the full-figured female body likely provides much welcome relief. Unfortunately, in the process of this cultural shift, the thin body appears to have become the target of a comparable form of prejudice and discrimination referred to as *skinny shaming*. Thin women are currently sharing their experiences of skinny shaming through social media and online blogs (e.g., <http://www.thin-shaming.tumblr.com>). In their accounts, these women indicate that they have been subjected to a skinny shaming discourse comprised of teasing and ridicule not unlike that experienced by their full-figured counterparts. They describe being taunted by men who, for example, claim, "Men like women with curves. Only dogs go for bones." Women are also implicated in skinny shaming, with those aspiring to the thin ideal (Brown & Slaughter, 2011; Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, & Kelly, 1986) described as saying things such as, "You're so skinny. I hate you."

One result of women's online accounts of their experiences of skinny shaming is an ongoing debate regarding the comparability of skinny and fat shaming. Women who believe that fat shaming is more problematic than skinny shaming argue that, while both fat and skinny shaming occur interpersonally, only fat shaming occurs on a societal level. Specifically, these online bloggers claim that fat shaming is a symptom of the hierarchical power structure of our social institutions (e.g., the workplace, education, health care) in which over-weight people are oppressed by others. Some victims of fat shaming also note that their experiences of weight-based teasing do not typically occur in isolation in that they are often coupled with, or lead to, more discriminatory behaviour (e.g., exclusion, aggression, etc.). Some of these women also argue that, although thin

women's feelings may be hurt by weight-related teasing, thin women continue to occupy a position of power and privilege in society.

Other women argue that skinny shaming is more similar to fat shaming than it is different. Proponents of this view note that skinny shaming and fat shaming are both founded on inaccurate assumptions about personality and physical health. Consistent with this perspective, Puhl and Heuer's (2009) review of research examining weight-related biases toward adults highlighted several instances in which obese and over-weight women have been stereotyped as lazy, undisciplined, and sloppy, among other things. Similarly, skinny women are subject to negative stereotypes that, for example, depict them as bitchy and self-centered (e.g., Dreisbach, 2012). Although often unsubstantiated, these stereotypes both cause and justify the negative comments directed toward thin and heavy women alike. These women also assert that both types of body shaming exist within a patriarchal society that polices and enforces the female body through people's evaluations, judgments, and comments (Bordo, 1993).

Yet another group of thin women claim that skinny shaming has more devastating consequences because it occurs more frequently than fat shaming. According to these women, thin women receive more negative comments about their bodies than over-weight women do because it is less socially acceptable to body shame over-weight women. These women also report that their experiences of skinny shaming and other weight-related difficulties are trivialized when women say things like, "I wish I had your problem." What's more, and unlike fat shaming, skinny shaming may take the form of *complimentary weightism* (Calogero, Herbozo, & Thompson, 2009). Compliments such as, "I wish I had your body," "I wish I looked like you," and, "You're so lucky" may

seem harmless and, in fact, are often intended to make the recipient feel good. Yet, such compliments serve to remind women that their bodies are on display for others to evaluate (Calogero et al., 2009). As a result, appearance-related compliments may contribute to self-objectification processes such as body monitoring (i.e., comparing one's body relative to the social ideal) and subsequent body dissatisfaction (Calogero et al., 2009). Indeed, appearance-related compliments may lead to greater body dissatisfaction than appearance-related criticism (Calogero et al., 2009).

In contrast to women's debates about the relative impact of skinny and fat shaming, "researchers have almost exclusively examined teasing experienced in the context of being over-weight or obese" (Lundgren, Anderson, Thompson, Shapiro, & Paulosky, 2004, p. 139). In view of this, as well as the apparently increasing numbers of girls and women reporting experiences of skinny shaming, the research in this thesis compares women's perceptions and experiences of fat and skinny shaming. This research also examines whether these perceptions vary as a function of women's weight, body (dis)satisfaction and attitudes toward fat and skinny women. Before outlining the proposed methods of this research, a brief overview of relevant research is in order.

Prejudice Toward Over-weight and Thin Women

Prejudice is defined as a negative attitude toward a person based on their group membership (Allport, 1954). By extension, weight-based prejudice, or weight bias, is defined as "negative weight-related attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and judgments directed toward individuals who are over-weight and obese" (Washington, 2011). Puhl and Brownell (2001) describe prejudice toward individuals on the basis of their weight as "the last acceptable form of discrimination" (p. 788). Other researchers have described

weight bias as “socially sanctioned bigotry” (Young, 2005, p. 250). Consistent with these views, race, religion, sex, and age, among other things, are protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but weight is not (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982). Unfortunately, existing research on weight bias is largely limited to prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviour toward over-weight and obese people (Brochu, Gawronski, & Esses, 2011). As Alberga, Russell-Mayhew, von Ranson, and McLaren (2016) note, the definition of weight bias should be extended to include individuals of low weights as well. Accordingly, a review of the existing literature that has examined prejudiced attitudes toward both over-weight and thin women is warranted.

Perceptions of over-weight and thin women. Several studies have examined people’s stereotypes of over-weight and thin women. In one study, Anderson and Bresnahan (2013) had a predominantly female sample of 197 undergraduate students view photographic images of the torsos (i.e., from shoulders to hips) of one of five women wearing a halter-top and black shorts that left their midriffs exposed. Each woman had a different body size, ranging from small (i.e., very little flesh and a small bone structure), lean (i.e., no visible body fat, moderate muscle definition and moderate bone structure), muscular (i.e., no visible body fat, extreme muscle definition and a large bone structure), medium (i.e., some visible body fat and no muscle definition) to large (i.e., a substantial amount of visible body fat and no body definition). After viewing one of these images, participants provided a written open-ended description of the woman they had just viewed.

Anderson and Bresnahan (2013) examined the content of participants’ descriptions guided by Smith’s (2007) “stigmatizing communication theory.” According to Smith

(2007), stigmatizing messages contain information that distinguishes some people from other people (e.g., on the basis of weight), categorizes these distinguished people into a separate social group (e.g., over-weight or under-weight), links this social group to physical (e.g., health risks) and social dangers (e.g., increased health care costs), and blames people for their membership in a stigmatized group (e.g., people should eat properly to avoid being over-weight or under-weight). Analyzing the data using these criteria revealed that the amount of stigmatizing content in participants' written comments varied significantly across the five body types. The largest proportion of stigmatizing comments occurred for the small (87.3%) and large (82.8%) body types. A moderate 48.4% of the comments about the muscular female were stigmatizing, and notably fewer comments about the medium (12.9%) and lean (4.8%) body types were stigmatizing. Examining the nature of the comments revealed that, although the small and large woman were most frequently stigmatized by the same three types of comments, comments regarding the physical health risks posed by her weight were more commonly made regarding the small woman (27.4%; e.g., "emaciated," "sick," "near death," "unhealthy") relative to the large woman (11.1%; e.g., "obesity is a health risk"). On the other hand, comments describing her body as deviating from the ideal body type were more common for the large woman (33.9%; e.g., "obese," "over-weight," "too pudgy," "too much extra fat") relative to the small woman (23.2%; e.g., "skinnier than she should be," "under-weight," "too thin"). The second most common type of stigmatization for both small and large women involved the use of dehumanizing words that equated the woman with her physical attributes, although this occurred more frequently in response to the thin woman (24.8%; e.g., "boney," "grossly skinny," "disgusting," "nasty," "ugly,"

“bones are not sexy”) relative to the large woman (17.6%; e.g., “fat,” “sad,” “flabby,” “unappealing”). Interestingly, these descriptions of the thin female body are the antithesis of the way thin women are portrayed by the media.

Other research has compared the personality traits attributed to over-weight and thin women. *Glamour* magazine, with the help of Rebecca Puhl, Ph.D., recently conducted a survey of 1,800 women between 18 and 40 years of age (Dreisbach, 2012). In this survey, women were asked to imagine a woman whom they knew nothing about, except that she was either “thin” or “over-weight.” They were then asked to describe this hypothetical woman by selecting one adjective from several pairs of adjectives (e.g., *ambitious* or *lazy*). Participants were also given the option of selecting neither of the adjectives for each pair, but less than half of the participants chose to do so on at least one of the adjective pairs.

The findings of this survey revealed that participants endorsed negative stereotypes of both over-weight women and thin women. Relative to a thin woman, participants more frequently described an over-weight woman as “lazy” (11 times more often), “sloppy” (9 times more often) and “undisciplined” (7 times more often). Relative to an over-weight woman, participants more frequently described a thin woman as “conceited” and “superficial” (both 8 times more often), “vain” and “self-centered” (both 4 times more often), and as “bitchy,” “controlling” and “mean” (all twice as frequent). Importantly, and perhaps surprisingly, these stereotypes were manifested by all of the participants, including women who were themselves over-weight or under-weight.

Body Shaming

The frequency of body shaming experiences. Researchers have examined how

often thin women (and men) and over-weight women (and men) have been the targets of weight-based commentary. For example, in a sample of 183 undergraduate students (102 females, 81 males), those classified as being under-weight (Body Mass Index [BMI] < 21) reported more frequent ($M = 9.4$) experiences of being teased than students with both average ($M = 6.6$) and high BMIs ($M = 6.3$) (Lundgren et al., 2004). Similarly, in a sample of 515 undergraduate students, just over half of whom were female, 33% reported being teased for being under-weight, while 35% reported a history of being teased for being over-weight (Tantleff-Dunn, Hayes, & Braun, 2009). Such findings are consistent with the views of women who argue that skinny shaming is at least as prevalent as fat shaming. However, in a large study of the prevalence of weight-related teasing in a sample of almost 5,000 adolescents, Neumark-Sztainer et al. (2002) found that 48.4% ($n = 45$) of the thin (BMI < 15th percentile) female participants and 63.2% ($n = 158$) of the “very over-weight” (BMI \geq 95th percentile) female participants reported a history of body-related teasing by their peers. That more “very over-weight” than “thin” girls reported histories of body-related teasing may simply be a result of selecting “very over-weight” girls from a more extreme end of the weight distribution (i.e., the weight of the very over-weight girls was in the top 5% of the weight distribution while the weight of the “thin” girls was in the bottom 15% of the weight distribution). While the results of these studies appear to be inconsistent in terms of which group experiences the most body shaming, they are consistent in indicating that both over-weight and under-weight people are frequently subject to weight-related body shaming.

Effects of body shaming. Several studies have been conducted to examine the effects that weight-related teasing has on over-weight and obese women. Considerably

less attention has been given to understanding the negative impact of weight-related teasing on thin women. Nonetheless, the negative effects of both types of body shaming will be discussed in turn.

Fat shaming and women's well-being. Correlational studies suggest that fat shaming may have a host of negative effects, including diminished self-esteem, poor body image, elevated rates of depression, and unhealthy eating behaviour. For example, Friedman et al. (2005) had a sample of 93 obese individuals complete the *Stigmatizing Situations Inventory* (Myers & Rosen, 1999), a measure of how frequently participants experienced a variety of stigmatizing events, and Rosenberg's (1979) *Self-Esteem Scale*. These data indicated that more frequent experiences of weight stigmatization were significantly related to lower self-esteem ($b = -.27, p = .02$). In another study, Annis, Cash, and Hrabosky (2004) compared the relationship between stigmatizing experiences and self-esteem in three groups of women: those who were currently over-weight ($n = 58$), formerly over-weight ($n = 42$), and average-weight ($n = 65$). Among women who were currently over-weight, stigmatizing experiences were related to diminished self-esteem during both childhood ($r = -.40, p = .05$) and adulthood ($r = -.32, p = .05$). Similarly, among women who were formerly over-weight, stigmatizing experiences during childhood ($r = -.45, p = .05$), but not those during adulthood, were associated with diminished self-esteem. Taken together, the findings of this study and those of Friedman et al. (2005) suggest that weight-related teasing has significant implications for over-weight women's self-esteem.

Several studies have also documented a correlation between women's childhood experiences of weight-related teasing and their body image as an adult. In the study by

Annis et al. (2004), over-weight women who reported more frequently being stigmatized during childhood (e.g., being called names, laughed at, teased, not being able to find clothes that fit, etc.) also reported moderately more body image dissatisfaction as adults ($r = -.58, p < .01$). In a clinical sample of 40 over-weight women, Grilo, Wilfley, Brownell, and Rodin (1994) also found that the frequency of weight-related teasing during childhood and adolescence was associated with moderately more body dissatisfaction as an adult ($r = .53, p < .001$). Other research has replicated these findings (e.g., Rosenberger, Henderson, Bell, & Grilo, 2007).

Researchers have also documented correlations between weight-related teasing during adulthood and body satisfaction. For example, Annis et al. (2004) noted that more frequent stigmatization during adulthood was associated with moderately greater body dissatisfaction ($r = -.56, p < .001$). Similarly, Matz, Foster, Faith, and Wadden (2002) found that more frequent teasing during adulthood was associated with greater body dissatisfaction in their study of 79 over-weight and obese women. Together, then, these findings suggest that teasing at any point during the lifespan may contribute to the development and maintenance of body dissatisfaction among over-weight and obese women.

In addition to contributing to low self-esteem and poor body image, fat shaming may mediate the observed link between obesity and depression. In this regard, Annis et al. (2004) found that stigmatizing experiences in both childhood and adulthood were related to depression among currently over-weight women ($r = .45, p < .05$). Further, Rosenberger et al. (2007) observed that a history of childhood teasing was associated with higher levels of depression among bariatric surgery candidates, and that this

occurred over and above any effects of childhood obesity on depression. These findings suggest that it is not just a childhood history of being over-weight that contributes to adult women's depression. Rather, it is weight-related teasing that makes obese children vulnerable to experiencing depression, among other things (Rosenberger et al., 2007).

Weight-related teasing among over-weight and obese individuals is also associated with disordered eating behaviour. Neumark-Sztainer et al. (2002) examined the link between weight-related teasing and unhealthy weight control behaviours (i.e., fasting, self-induced vomiting, diet pills, laxatives, skipping meals, smoking cigarettes) in a sample of almost 5,000 adolescents, half of whom were female. Among the over-weight girls (whose BMI scores were between the 85th and 95th percentiles), unhealthy weight control behaviours were reported by 79.6% of those who experienced frequent weight-related teasing ($n = 225$), but only 67.5% of those who did not experience frequent weight-related teasing ($n = 422$). Given the dangers associated with such weight control behaviours, which include the risk of heart failure, muscle loss and weakness, severe dehydration (National Eating Disorders Association, n.d.) and even death, weight-related teasing is far from trivial.

Skinny shaming and women's well-being. The extent to which skinny shaming is or is not similar to fat shaming is difficult to determine given the paucity of research examining the effects of skinny shaming (Lundgren et al., 2004; Tantleff-Dunn et al., 2009). Conceivably, the lack of scholarly attention devoted to understanding the effects of skinny shaming may stem from the misconception that there are no negative consequences, as well as the assumption that thin women are satisfied with their bodies. To the contrary, however, Lox, Osborn, and Pellett (1998) found that 28 under-weight

female college students reported levels of social physique anxiety, body image dissatisfaction, and self-esteem comparable to the levels documented in research with over-weight women. These findings suggest that, even if thin women do occupy positions of greater power and prestige than those occupied by over-weight and obese women, their favoured status does not make them any less vulnerable to the teasing and negative commentary of others.

In an attempt to understand *doing thin*, or, “the way in which a thin individual thinks, feels, and behaves as a result of being classified by oneself, and perhaps more importantly, others as being thin” (p. 374), Beggan and DeAngelis (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 self-described thin women (of whom six were under-weight using BMI criteria) and four self-described thin men (none of whom were under-weight using BMI criteria). While these participants said they were generally happy with their weight, they reported being distressed by the comments and actions directed toward them as thin individuals, something they experienced as often as “once a week.” Like their over-weight counterparts, they described being singled out for being thin as both intrusive and unwelcome because such attention made them feel self-conscious, uncomfortable, and even guilty for being thin. Consistent with the stigmatizing comments made in response to the images of over-weight and thin women noted by Anderson and Bresnahan (2013), these thin respondents also reported “feeling othered,” where *othering* involved being viewed as an outgroup member because of their thinness (Canales, 2000).

Consistent with online bloggers who assert that skinny shaming involves a number of negative experiences that make it at least as hurtful as fat shaming, if not more

so, Beggan and DeAngelis (2015) also documented a number of phenomena that appeared to be unique to thin people. For example, unlike the social inappropriateness of commenting on over-weight women's bodies, these thin participants noted an air of permissiveness when it came to people commenting on their bodies. As one woman put it, "When you're skinny, people think they can ask you your weight as if that's socially acceptable" (Beggan & DeAngelis, 2015, p. 379). Participants also said they were bothered by people's apparent unawareness of the hurtfulness and offensiveness of their comments. Added to this, some participants described being pegged as lacking empathy for people struggling with being over-weight or obese. For example, one participant noted that people would tell her things like, "I guess you wouldn't know what the struggle is like." However, several of the participants spoke to the fact that they did, in fact, understand this struggle.

Beggan and DeAngelis (2015) also noted that these thin participants used a variety of problem- and emotion-focused ways of coping with people's unsolicited comments about their weight. One problem-focused coping strategy involved avoiding situations in which their size may be particularly salient. For example, one woman said she stopped wearing shorts so that people would not have the opportunity to comment on her thin legs, while others said they refrained from using the restroom after a meal at a restaurant so that people would not presume they were purging. An additional problem-focused coping method involved avoiding making any comments that could be misconstrued as being insensitive to the experiences of over-weight people. In this regard, one participant said she avoided saying, "I feel like I'm not as fit as I used to be." These participants also said they tried to minimize the chance of being accused of implying that the size of

over-weight people is a result of their slothfulness by attributing their own thinness to factors beyond their control, such as luck, genetics, or a good metabolism, rather than to personal factors, such as diet or exercise.

In addition to these problem-focused ways of coping, these thin participants also reported using emotion-focused coping methods to deal with the negative social and psychological consequences of being singled out for possessing a certain attribute (Beggan & DeAngelis, 2015). Some of the participants said they reframed people's comments about their thinness (i.e., by viewing it as a compliment or joke). A second emotion-focused coping strategy involved reducing the personal relevance of people's comments, for example, by telling themselves that the person who made the comment did not really know them. Still others would go along with the comments and downplay their emotional response, with some even making "self-deprecating" comments. For example, when someone referred to one of the participants as anorexic, she responded by saying, "Me and the toilet have become really good friends."

Importantly, none of these problem- and emotion-focused strategies involved directly challenging the people who commented on their bodies. This is particularly problematic if those who tease and criticize thin women are unaware of the effects of their comments, as suggested by these participants, because it means that thin women will continue to be vulnerable to the hurtful effects of people's weight-related commentary (Tantleff-Dunn et al., 2009).

In view of the above, the proposed research is designed to assess whether women regard skinny shaming as more socially acceptable than fat shaming and whether they are less aware of the hurtful impact of skinny shaming relative to fat shaming, as suggested

by the participants in Beggan and DeAngelis' (2015) study. This research will also examine women's perceptions of skinny shaming relative to fat shaming as a function of their own weight. In view of Beggan and DeAngelis' (2015) findings, it is expected that both average-weight and over-weight participants will regard skinny shaming as more socially acceptable and less hurtful than fat shaming. In contrast, it is expected that thin women will regard skinny shaming as being just as problematic as fat shaming (i.e., they will regard both forms as equally unacceptable and equally hurtful). Further, this research will examine women's perceptions of skinny and fat shaming as a function of their satisfaction with their body. Women who are more satisfied with their body are expected to view both types of body shaming as more problematic (e.g., socially unacceptable and hurtful) than women who are less satisfied with their body. In addition, this research will assess women's perceptions of skinny and fat shaming as a function of their general attitudes toward fat and skinny women. Women with more positive attitudes toward fat and skinny women are expected to view fat and skinny shaming as more hurtful and less socially acceptable. Finally, the frequency of women's own experiences of engaging in fat and skinny shaming, as well as the frequency of women's experiences as victims of such body shaming and the perceived hurtfulness of these experiences, will be examined.

Method

Participants²

Using SONA, an online recruitment system, female students enrolled in first and second year undergraduate psychology classes at Carleton University were invited to participate in an anonymous 30-minute online study of the “Women’s Perceptions of Body-Related Evaluations” hosted on Qualtrics (see Appendix A for the recruitment notice). They were told that they would receive a 0.5% research credit as remuneration for their participation.

In total, 500 undergraduate female students participated in this study. The mean age of participants was 20.0 years ($SD = 4.7$ years). Of the 500 participants, 59.8% ($n = 299$) were in their first year of study, 25.4% ($n = 127$) in their second year, 7.6% ($n = 38$) in their third year, 2.8% ($n = 14$) in their fourth year, and 1.4% ($n = 7$) indicated that they were in a higher year of study. Less than 5% (3%, $n = 15$) of participants did not indicate their year of study. Approximately half (50.2%, $n = 251$) of the participants indicated that they were a student of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, while 20.0% ($n = 100$) belonged to the Faculty of Public Affairs, 16.4% ($n = 82$) belonged to the Faculty of Science, 10.8% ($n = 54$) belonged to The Sprott School of Business, and 1.8% ($n = 9$) belonged to the Faculty of Engineering and Design. Less than 1% (0.8%, $n = 4$) did not

² In the Canadian Community Health Survey (Statistics Canada, 2014) of 18 to 19 year olds, 7% reported being under-weight, 67% reported being average-weight, and 26% reported being over-weight or obese. Given these findings, a large sample was recruited to ensure that a sufficient number of under-weight women participated.

indicate their faculty. Participants indicated that they were majoring in Psychology (28.0%, $n = 140$), Criminology (12.6%, $n = 63$), Commerce (7.8%, $n = 39$), Cognitive Science (7.2%, $n = 36$), and Child Studies (5.0%, $n = 25$). The remaining participants indicated that they were majoring in other fields. None of the participants indicated that they were currently pregnant.

Procedure

Upon obtaining informed consent (see Appendix B), participants read and responded to a vignette depicting an instance of fat shaming and a vignette depicting an instance of skinny shaming (see Appendix C). After reading each vignette, participants were asked to complete measures of their perceptions of the instance of body shaming depicted in the vignette (see Appendix D), their experiences of comparable body shaming, and measures of their body satisfaction, their attitudes toward skinny and fat women and their tendency to give socially desirable responses. Finally, the women were asked to answer questions regarding their demographic characteristics, including their age, year and area of study, and their height and weight.

After completing the study, participants were presented with a written debriefing (see Appendix E) outlining the purpose of the study and a list of resources they could access in the event that they experienced any negative thoughts or feelings as a result of their participation in this study.

Materials

Vignettes. Participants were randomly assigned to read and respond to one of two possible vignettes depicting an instance of fat shaming and one of two possible vignettes depicting an instance of skinny shaming. The order of the presentation of the fat and

skinny shaming vignettes was counterbalanced. The vignettes read as follows, with the wording of the skinny shaming version in the text and the wording of the fat shaming version beside it inside parentheses:

Eating cookies: At a small gathering, a group of young women are chatting about their plans for the upcoming break. The hostess of the gathering has gone through a lot of trouble to provide her guests with an array of appealing treats and snacks. While everyone is happily talking, laughing, eating and drinking, Myra suddenly interrupts the conversation and singles out Alice, who is sitting across from her. Alice is obviously skinny (vs. obviously over-weight) for her height. Myra says in a snide, spiteful tone of voice, “A *third* cookie?! Oh, you skinny girls can eat whatever you want!” (vs. “Do you really want to eat a *third* cookie?!”)

Evening gown: Kathy and Helena are out shopping for evening dresses to wear to their end of year formal. They’ve been looking for hours but Kathy hasn’t quite found what she’s looking for. It’s almost 9 pm and they are at the last store in the mall that carries evening gowns. Kathy comes across a beautiful long silk gown and says, “This is perfect!” Helena turns to look at the dress and says, “No, you can’t wear this. You’re all bones! You’ll never fill it out. Here, take this one – it totally suits you better.” (vs. “No, you can’t wear this, with your full figure you’ll spill out everywhere! Here, take this one – it totally suits you better.”)

Measures

After reading each vignette, participants were asked to use 7-point semantic differential items to rate the extent to which they believed the comment made the recipient feel bad (vs. good), upset (vs. calm), sad (vs. happy), worthless (vs. valued) and rejected (vs. accepted). Participants were then asked to use 5-point Likert-type scales to indicate how often they said something like this to someone and how often someone said something like this to them. Further, participants were asked to use a 6-point Likert-type scale to indicate the social (un)acceptability of the comment. Finally, participants were asked to use 7-point semantic differential items to rate the extent to which they were hurt by their own experiences as victims of comparable body shaming.

The Body Esteem Scale. The women then completed the Weight Concern subscale of The Body Esteem Scale (BES; Franzoi & Shields, 1984) to assess whether body esteem or other factors associated with their weight (or BMI) were responsible for any observed relations. In this 10-item self-report scale, participants used a scale ranging from *Have strong negative feelings* (1) to *Have strong positive feelings* (5) to rate each of 10 parts of their body (e.g., thighs, buttocks), parts that can be altered through exercise and diet (i.e., changes that require more than cosmetic alterations). The Body Esteem Scale has been shown to be reliable, valid and internally consistent ($\alpha = .87$) in samples of young adults (Franzoi & Shields, 1984).

Attitudes toward fat women. Participants' attitudes toward fat women were measured using a slightly modified version of Crandall's (1994) Antifat Attitudes Questionnaire. The modification consisted of minor changes in wording and using a response scale ranging from *Strongly disagree* (1) to *Strongly agree* (5) rather than the

original 9-point response scale. This measure has three subscales. The *Dislike* subscale consists of eight items assessing antipathy toward over-weight and obese people (e.g., *I really don't like fat women much*). For the purposes of this study, an item assessing whether participants believe over-weight and obese women are nice was added to the *Dislike* subscale. The *Fear of Fat* subscale consists of three items designed to measure a person's concern for their weight (e.g., *One of the worst things that could happen to me would be if I gained 25 pounds*) and the three-item *Willpower* subscale assesses people's beliefs regarding the controllability of weight (e.g., *Fat women tend to be fat pretty much through their own fault*). Each subscale of the Antifat Attitudes Questionnaire is reasonably internally consistent. Crandall (1994) reported an alpha coefficient of .84 for the *Dislike* subscale, .79 for the *Fear of Fat* subscale, and .66 for the *Willpower* subscale.

Attitudes toward skinny women. Participants also completed a measure of their attitudes toward skinny women that was developed on the basis of Crandall's (1994) Antifat Attitudes Questionnaire. This measure consists of two subscales. The *Dislike* subscale consists of eight items assessing the extent to which individuals dislike skinny people (e.g., *Skinny women make me feel somewhat uncomfortable*). The *Willpower* subscale consists of three items that measure people's beliefs about the controllability of weight (e.g., *Some women are skinny because they're obsessed with controlling how much they eat*). Again, participants were asked to respond to each item using scales ranging from *Strongly disagree* (1) to *Strongly agree* (5).

Social Desirability. Subsequently, participants completed the short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (SDS; Reynolds, 1982) to assess the extent to which they had a tendency to provide socially desirable responses. Using this scale,

participants indicated whether each of 13 statements was true or false of them (e.g., *I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable*). According to Reynolds (1982), the SDS is internally consistent, $r_{KR-20} = .76$, and its concurrent validity is reflected by its high correlation with the original 33-item Marlowe-Crowne Scale, $r = .93$.

Demographics. Finally, participants were asked to answer questions about themselves, including questions regarding their demographic characteristics (i.e., age, area and level of study). In this context, participants were asked to provide their height and weight in order to calculate their BMI using this formula: $\text{weight (kg)}/\text{height (m)}^2$ (Health Canada, 2003). Because pregnancy leads to a weight increase, participants were also asked whether they were pregnant and, if so, how long they had been pregnant.

Results

The analyses were conducted in three steps. Preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the quality of the data and test statistical assumptions, among other things.

The main analyses tested the effects of participants' weight, body satisfaction, and attitudes toward fat and skinny women on their perceptions of the hurtfulness and social acceptability of fat and skinny shaming, as well as participants' own experiences of body shaming. Finally, additional analyses assessed whether social desirability might account for any observed relations.

Preliminary Analyses

Preliminary analyses were conducted to examine statistical assumptions and the homogeneity of scale items, to create categorical groups from continuous measures and to examine the descriptive statistics.

Tests of statistical assumptions. For each statistical test, outliers within each cell were identified using both box plots and standardized residuals. Participants who had a standardized residual greater than 3.29 standard deviations away from the mean were flagged as potential outliers. Across all tests, four participants were consistently identified as potential outliers. Because the results were the same when these outliers were included and excluded from the analyses, the results that follow include these four participants.

Little MCAR's test was conducted to assess the nature of missing data points. This analysis revealed that the missing data points were missing at random, $\chi^2 = 14.07$, $df = 15,878$, $p = 1.000$.

Whether the data satisfied the assumptions of normality within each cell and homogeneity of variance across cells was examined. The assumption of normality was assessed by examining the histograms of the distribution of dependent variable scores within each cell. These analyses revealed that participants' scores were positively skewed for most groups. In an attempt to normalize the data, participants' dependent variable scores were transformed in various ways (i.e., SQRT, LG10, and INV). These transformations had little effect on the distributions underlying participants' scores. Given this, each of the statistical tests reported below was conducted using both the untransformed and the transformed data. Because the findings were comparable, the results are reported for the untransformed data. In addition, homogeneity of variance was examined for each test with Levene's test. Across the majority of tests, this assumption was violated. However, transforming the data had minimal effect on the homogeneity of variances across tests.

Item analyses. Item analyses were conducted to assess the homogeneity of the items comprising the various scales. These analyses revealed that the five semantic differential items provided internally consistent measures of the perceived hurtfulness of the body shaming depicted in each of the four vignettes (skinny shaming–cookie: $\alpha = .90$; skinny shaming–evening gown: $\alpha = .83$; fat shaming–cookie: $\alpha = .81$; fat shaming–evening gown: $\alpha = .88$). Given this, total hurtfulness scores were created by computing the mean value of participants' semantic differential items for each vignette they responded to. This resulted in hurtfulness scores ranging from 1 to 7, with lower scores indicating that participants viewed the behaviour depicted in the vignette as more hurtful.

Reliability analyses indicated that the 10 items of the BES provided a homogeneous measure of body satisfaction ($\alpha = .90$). Accordingly, total BES scores were created by computing the mean of participants' responses across the items. Hence BES scores ranged from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more body satisfaction. Additionally, reliability analyses indicated that the items comprising the Attitudes Toward Fat Women (AFW) scale ($\alpha = .84$), and the Attitudes Toward Skinny Women (ASW) scale ($\alpha = .84$), were internally consistent. Total scores were calculated for each of these measures by calculating the mean of participants' responses to the relevant items, resulting in lower scores reflecting more positive attitudes.

Reliability analyses revealed that the five semantic differential items provided internally consistent measures of the hurtfulness of participants' own experiences of body shaming comparable to that depicted in each of the four vignettes (skinny shaming–cookie: $\alpha = .92$; skinny shaming–evening gown: $\alpha = .94$; fat shaming–cookie: $\alpha = .94$; fat shaming–evening gown: $\alpha = .92$). Given this, total self-hurtfulness scores were created by computing the mean value of the semantic differential items for each vignette that the participant responded to. Total hurtfulness scores ranged from 1 to 7, with lower scores indicating that participants rated their experience as more hurtful.

Finally, item analyses revealed that the items comprising the SDS were internally consistent ($\alpha = .65$). Total social desirability scores were calculated by computing the mean value of these items, with higher scores reflecting more socially desirable responding.

Categorical variables. Given that Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) require predictor variables to be categorical in nature, the various predictors were transformed

into categorical variables. Using Health Canada's (2003) guidelines, participants were classified as being under-weight (i.e., BMIs < 18.5; $n = 53$, 10.6%), average-weight ($18.5 \leq \text{BMI} \leq 24.9$; $n = 312$, 62.4%), or over-weight ($\text{BMI} > 25$; $n = 127$, 25.4%), which is comparable to the findings of the Canadian Community Health Survey (Statistics Canada, 2014). Eight participants (1.6%) failed to provide the information necessary to calculate their BMI.

Participants were categorized as being less ($n = 274$, 54.8%) or more satisfied ($n = 226$, 45.2%) with their body by conducting a median-split at 2.80 on their total BES scores. In addition, participants were categorized as having more ($n = 249$, 49.8%) or less positive ($n = 251$, 50.2%) attitudes toward fat women by conducting a median-split at 2.14 on their total AFW scores. Similarly, participants were categorized as having more ($n = 239$, 47.8%) or less positive ($n = 261$, 52.2%) attitudes toward skinny women by conducting a median-split at 1.45 on their total ASW scores.

Finally, participants were assigned to one of two vignette pairs according to the pair of the vignettes they responded to. Participants were assigned to vignette pair 1 if they read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes or vignette pair 2 if they read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes. In total, 247 participants were assigned to vignette pair 1 and 253 participants were assigned to vignette pair 2.

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive analyses were performed on the continuous predictor variables. Participants' average BMI was 23.54 ($SD = 5.57$). The mean BES score of 2.81 ($SD = .93$) indicates that, in general, participants had moderately negative to neutral feelings about their body parts and functions concerned with their weight.

Additionally, the average total AFW and ASW scores were 2.13 ($SD = .58$) and 1.58 ($SD = .54$), respectively, suggesting that participants had positive to strongly positive attitudes toward fat and skinny women.

The vast majority of participants, 81.2% ($n = 406$), reported that they had never perpetrated fat shaming, while 16.4% ($n = 82$) reported doing so once or twice, 1.8% ($n = 9$) a handful of times, and 0.6% ($n = 3$) many times. None of the participants indicated that they had perpetrated fat shaming countless times. Among the 94 participants who indicated that they had perpetrated fat shaming at least once, 51.1% ($n = 48$) indicated that they had engaged in this behaviour because they were playing around, 30.9% ($n = 29$) because they were having a bad day, 17.0% ($n = 16$) because they disliked the woman, 16.0% ($n = 15$) because they were jealous of the woman's body, 13.8% ($n = 13$) because they wanted revenge, 11.7% ($n = 11$) because they were jealous of the woman's talent, intelligence, etc., and 51.1% ($n = 48$) because of some other reason. A content analysis of the "other reasons" listed by participants indicated that 54.3% ($n = 19$) of those who engaged in fat shaming similar to that depicted in the evening gown vignette did so because they wanted to be honest about how they felt the woman looked in the dress, while 27.3% ($n = 3$) of those who engaged in fat shaming resembling the behaviour depicted in the cookie vignette indicated doing so because they were concerned for the woman's health.

Just over half of the participants, 58.0% ($n = 290$), reported that they had never perpetrated skinny shaming, 30.4% ($n = 152$) once or twice, 8.6% ($n = 43$) a handful of times, 2.4% ($n = 12$) many times, and 0.6% ($n = 3$) countless times. Of the 210 participants who indicated that they had perpetrated skinny shaming at least once, 64.1%

($n = 134$) indicated that they had engaged in this behaviour because they were playing around, 47.8% ($n = 100$) because they were jealous of the woman's body, 31.1% ($n = 65$) because they were having a bad day, 22.0% ($n = 46$) because they were jealous of the woman's talent, intelligence, etc., 6.7% ($n = 14$) because they wanted revenge, 4.8% ($n = 10$) because they disliked the woman, and 13.9% ($n = 20$) because of some other reason.

In addition, 34.0% ($n = 170$) of participants reported that they had never been the victim of the fat shaming depicted in the vignettes, 33.6% ($n = 168$) said they had been once or twice, 18.8% ($n = 94$) a handful of times, 9.2% ($n = 46$) many times, and 4.4% ($n = 22$) countless times. Similarly, 35.0% ($n = 175$) of participants reported that they had never been the victim of the skinny shaming depicted in the vignettes, 26.6% ($n = 133$) once or twice, 17.6% ($n = 88$) a handful of times, 11.2% ($n = 56$) many times, and 9.6% ($n = 48$) countless times.

Correlational analyses. Correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among the continuous predictor variables and among the dependent variables. As shown in Table 1, participants' body satisfaction and BMI scores were moderately correlated, indicating that participants with higher BMI scores were less satisfied with their body.³ Participants with higher BMI scores also had slightly less favourable attitudes toward skinny women, while participants who were more satisfied with their body had slightly more positive attitudes toward fat women. Finally,

³ An assessment of the possible inverse quadratic relationship between BMI and body satisfaction revealed a linear relationship. Thin participants indicated that they were satisfied with their body. As BMI increased, body satisfaction decreased.

Table 1
Simple Correlations Among the Continuous Predictor Variables

Measure	1	2	3
1. BMI	-		
2. BES	-.37**	-	
3. AFW	.06	-.17**	-
4. ASW	.11*	-.04	.54**

Note. * $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

participants with more positive attitudes toward skinny women expressed moderately more positive attitudes toward fat women.

As shown in Table 2, participants who perceived fat shaming as more hurtful regarded fat shaming as moderately less socially acceptable. The same was true of skinny shaming. Additionally, the less problematic (i.e., less hurtful and more socially acceptable) participants viewed either type of body shaming, the more frequently they perpetrated fat or skinny shaming. Moreover, the hurtfulness of participants' own experiences of body shaming was highly correlated with their perceptions of the hurtfulness of the body shaming depicted in the vignettes. Similarly, social acceptability scores were moderately correlated with self-hurtfulness scores for both types of body shaming. Perpetration and victimization scores were moderately correlated for fat shaming, but not skinny shaming, suggesting that the more frequently participants were victims of fat shaming, the more frequently they perpetrated similar behaviour toward others. Finally, perpetration and self-hurtfulness scores were correlated for both types of

Table 2

Simple Correlations Among the Dependent Variables as a Function of the Type of Body Shaming

Dependent variable	1	2	3	4
Fat shaming vignettes:				
1. Hurtfulness	-			
2. Social acceptability	.39**	-		
3. Frequency perpetrated	.22**	.36**	-	
4. Frequency victimized	-.04	.12**	.24**	-
5. Self-hurtfulness	.64**	.32**	.26**	-.06
Skinny shaming vignettes:				
1. Hurtfulness	-			
2. Social acceptability	.48**	-		
3. Frequency perpetrated	.36**	.32**	-	
4. Frequency victimized	.10*	.10*	.05	-
5. Self-hurtfulness	.72**	.46**	.40**	-.06

Note. * $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

body shaming, indicating that the less hurtful participants viewed their own experiences of body shaming, the more frequently they perpetrated similar behaviour toward others.

Main Analyses

The main analyses consisted of mixed-factor ANOVAs examining the effects of type of body shaming (fat vs. skinny; within-participants factor), vignette pair (fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes vs. skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes; between-participants factor), and one of four

characteristics (i.e., either participant weight, body satisfaction, attitudes toward fat women or attitudes toward skinny women; between-participants factors) on participants' perceptions of the hurtfulness and social acceptability of fat and skinny shaming.

Comparable ANOVAs examined the effects of these variables on the frequency participants reported perpetrating and being a victim of body shaming comparable to the behaviour depicted in the vignette, as well as the hurtfulness of their experiences of being body shamed.

Effects of type of body shaming, vignette pair and their interaction. The main effects of type of body shaming and vignette pair, as well as their interaction, were significant in almost all of these ANOVAs. These effects are therefore presented here and summarized in Tables 3 to 6. As shown in Table 3, the main effect of type of body shaming was significant across all of the ANOVAs. Specifically, participants regarded fat shaming as more hurtful (M partial $\eta^2 = .332$, range = .267 to .358) and less socially acceptable (M partial $\eta^2 = .183$, range = .144 to .202) than skinny shaming. They also reported more frequently perpetrating (M partial $\eta^2 = .125$, range = .075 to .144) and more frequently being the victim of (M partial $\eta^2 = .028$, range = .020 to .037) skinny relative to fat shaming, and described their experiences of fat shaming as more hurtful than their experiences of skinny shaming (M partial $\eta^2 = .160$, range = .108 to .212). The main effect of vignette pair was significant across the majority of the analyses, as shown in Table 4. In particular, participants perceived shaming associated with the fat woman who reached for another cookie and the skinny woman who wanted to purchase a revealing gown as more hurtful than the shaming associated with the skinny woman who reached for another cookie and the fat woman who wanted to purchase a revealing gown

Table 3

Effects of Type of Body Shaming for Each Dependent Variable and Each Participant Characteristic

Dependent variable	Type of body shaming				<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
	Fat		Skinny					
Participant characteristic	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>				
Hurtfulness								
Participant weight	1.65	.05	2.53	.07	1, 423	154.08	.000	.267
Body satisfaction	1.63	.04	2.48	.05	1, 432	238.12	.000	.355
Attitudes toward fat women	1.63	.04	2.47	.05	1, 432	240.56	.000	.358
Attitudes toward skinny women	1.62	.04	2.45	.05	1, 432	232.56	.000	.350
Social acceptability								
Participant weight	1.72	.06	2.34	.07	1, 485	81.37	.000	.144
Body satisfaction	1.71	.04	2.30	.05	1, 495	125.16	.000	.202
Attitudes toward fat women	1.71	.04	2.29	.05	1, 495	119.31	.000	.194
Attitudes toward skinny women	1.71	.04	2.28	.05	1, 495	117.87	.000	.192

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Dependent variable	Type of body shaming				<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
	Fat		Skinny					
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>				
Participant characteristic								
Frequency perpetrated								
Participant weight	1.25	.03	1.57	.05	1, 486	39.27	.000	.075
Body satisfaction	1.22	.02	1.56	.03	1, 496	79.84	.000	.139
Attitudes toward fat women	1.22	.02	1.57	.03	1, 496	83.07	.000	.143
Attitudes toward skinny women	1.22	.02	1.57	.03	1, 496	83.16	.000	.144
Frequency victimized								
Participant weight	2.21	.06	2.58	.07	1, 486	18.89	.000	.037
Body satisfaction	2.13	.05	2.35	.06	1, 496	9.93	.002	.020
Self-hurtfulness								
Participant weight	2.12	.12	2.95	.16	1, 180	21.83	.000	.108
Body satisfaction	2.00	.08	2.93	.12	1, 186	49.95	.000	.212

Table 4

Effects of Vignette Pair for Each Dependent Variable and Each Participant Characteristic

Dependent variable	Vignette pair				<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
	1		2					
Participant characteristic	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>				
Hurtfulness								
Participant weight	1.75	.07	2.42	.06	1, 423	56.71	.000	.118
Body satisfaction	1.73	.05	2.37	.05	1, 432	85.87	.000	.166
Attitudes toward fat women	1.74	.05	2.36	.05	1, 432	83.00	.000	.161
Attitudes toward skinny women	1.72	.05	2.35	.05	1, 432	84.87	.000	.164
Social acceptability								
Participant weight	1.87	.08	2.19	.07	1, 485	9.57	.002	.019
Body satisfaction	1.83	.06	2.18	.06	1, 495	19.30	.000	.038
Attitudes toward fat women	1.83	.06	2.17	.06	1, 495	18.37	.000	.036
Attitudes toward skinny women	1.82	.06	2.17	.06	1, 495	20.81	.000	.040

(continued)

Table 4 (continued)

Dependent variable	Vignette pair				<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
	1		2					
Participant characteristic	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>				
Frequency perpetrated								
Participant weight	1.32	.04	1.50	.04	1, 486	10.23	.001	.021
Body satisfaction	1.27	.03	1.51	.03	1, 496	30.68	.000	.058
Attitudes toward fat women	1.27	.03	1.51	.03	1, 496	30.45	.000	.058
Attitudes toward skinny women	1.27	.03	1.51	.03	1, 496	31.64	.000	.060
Frequency victimized								
Participant weight	2.38	.08	2.41	.07	1, 486	0.11	.740	.000
Body satisfaction	2.14	.06	2.35	.06	1, 496	6.74	.010	.013
Self-hurtfulness								
Participant weight	2.33	.14	2.74	.16	1, 180	3.61	.059	.020
Body satisfaction	2.28	.11	2.65	.11	1, 186	5.52	.020	.029

Note. Vignette pair 1 consisted of the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes and vignette pair 2 was comprised of the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes.

(M partial $\eta^2 = .152$, range = .118 to .166). Similarly, participants regarded the shaming associated with the fat woman who reached for another cookie and the skinny woman who wanted to purchase a revealing gown as more socially unacceptable than shaming associated with the skinny woman who reached for another cookie and the fat woman who wanted to purchase a revealing gown (M partial $\eta^2 = .033$, range = .019 to .040). Additionally, participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes reported engaging in comparable body shaming more frequently than participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes (M partial $\eta^2 = .049$, range = .021 to .060), as well as more frequent experiences of being the victim of comparable body shaming (M partial $\eta^2 = .006$, range = .000 and .013). Finally, participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes viewed their experiences of comparable body shaming as more hurtful than participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes (M partial $\eta^2 = .024$, range = .020 and .029).

In addition to these main effects, the Type of body shaming x Vignette pair interaction was significant in the analyses of the perceived hurtfulness of the behaviour depicted in the vignettes (M partial $\eta^2 = .015$, range = .013 to .019), perpetration (M partial $\eta^2 = .038$, range = .027 to .042) and victimization (M partial $\eta^2 = .032$, range = .031 and .033) scores, but not the analyses of their social acceptability and self-hurtfulness scores, as shown in Table 5. Table 6 shows the results of the simple effect analyses that were conducted to shed light on the nature of these interactions. These analyses revealed that participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes rated fat shaming (M partial $\eta^2 = .094$, range = .058 to .106) and

Table 5

Type of Body Shaming x Vignette Pair Interactions for Each Dependent Variable and Participant Characteristic

Dependent variable				
Participant characteristic	Interaction F	df	p	Partial η^2
Hurtfulness				
Participant weight	8.40	1, 423	.004	.019
Body satisfaction	6.47	1, 432	.011	.015
Attitudes toward fat women	5.53	1, 432	.019	.013
Attitudes toward skinny women	5.86	1, 432	.016	.013
Social acceptability				
Participant weight	0.69	1, 485	.405	.001
Body satisfaction	0.12	1, 495	.725	.000
Attitudes toward fat women	0.25	1, 495	.615	.001
Attitudes toward skinny women	0.20	1, 495	.656	.000

(continued)

Table 5 (continued)

Dependent variable				
Participant characteristic	Interaction F	df	p	Partial η^2
Frequency perpetrated				
Participant weight	13.61	1, 486	.000	.027
Body satisfaction	21.51	1, 496	.000	.042
Attitudes toward fat women	20.89	1, 496	.000	.040
Attitudes toward skinny women	21.55	1, 496	.000	.042
Frequency victimized				
Participant weight	16.49	1, 486	.000	.033
Body satisfaction	16.08	1, 496	.000	.031
Self-hurtfulness				
Participant weight	0.55	1, 180	.459	.003
Body satisfaction	1.53	1, 186	.218	.008

Table 6

Simple Effect Analyses of the Type of Body Shaming x Vignette Pair Interactions for Each Dependent Variable and Participant Characteristic

Dependent variable		Vignette pair				<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
		1		2				
Participant characteristic	Simple effect	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>			
Hurtfulness								
Participant weight	Fat shaming	1.41	.07	1.88	.06	26.19	.000	.058
	Skinny shaming	2.09	.10	2.96	.09	43.63	.000	.093
Body satisfaction	Fat shaming	1.38	.05	1.88	.05	50.48	.000	.105
	Skinny shaming	2.09	.07	2.87	.07	56.89	.000	.116
Attitudes toward fat women	Fat shaming	1.38	.05	1.88	.05	51.45	.000	.106
	Skinny shaming	2.09	.07	2.85	.07	53.93	.000	.111
Attitudes toward skinny women	Fat shaming	1.37	.05	1.87	.05	50.57	.000	.105
	Skinny shaming	2.07	.07	2.84	.07	55.74	.000	.114

(continued)

Table 6 (continued)

Dependent variable		Vignette pair				<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial η^2
		1		2				
Participant characteristic	Simple effect	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>			
Frequency perpetrated								
Participant weight	Fat shaming	1.25	.05	1.24	.04	0.02	.897	.000
	Skinny shaming	1.38	.07	1.75	.06	16.62	.000	.033
Body satisfaction	Fat shaming	1.19	.03	1.25	.03	1.86	.174	.004
	Skinny shaming	1.35	.05	1.77	.05	36.96	.000	.069
Attitudes toward fat women	Fat shaming	1.19	.03	1.25	.03	1.93	.166	.004
	Skinny shaming	1.36	.05	1.77	.05	36.46	.000	.068
Attitudes toward skinny women	Fat shaming	1.19	.03	1.25	.03	2.08	.150	.004
	Skinny shaming	1.36	.05	1.78	.05	37.58	.000	.070
Frequency victimized								
Participant weight	Fat shaming	2.36	.10	2.05	.08	6.23	.013	.013
	Skinny shaming	2.39	.11	2.77	.09	7.42	.007	.015
Body satisfaction	Fat shaming	2.17	.07	2.09	.07	.661	.416	.001
	Skinny shaming	2.11	.08	2.60	.08	18.30	.000	.036

Note. Vignette pair 1 consisted of the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes and vignette pair 2 was comprised of the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes.

skinny shaming (M partial $\eta^2 = .108$, range = .093 to .116) as more hurtful than participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignette. Further, while vignette pair did not affect the frequency of perpetrating fat shaming, participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes reported more frequently perpetrating comparable skinny shaming than participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes (M partial $\eta^2 = .094$, range = .058 to .106). Finally, participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes reported more frequent experiences as victims of skinny shaming than participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes (M partial $\eta^2 = .026$, range = .015 to .036). In contrast, participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes reported more frequent experiences as victims of fat shaming than participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes (M partial $\eta^2 = .007$, range = .001 to .013).

In addition to the effects of type of body shaming, vignette pair and their interaction noted above, the mixed-factor ANOVAs uncovered a number of other significant effects, as outlined below.

Perceptions of the hurtfulness of body shaming. The mixed-factor ANOVAs on participants' perceptions of the hurtfulness of the body shaming depicted in the vignettes revealed main effects due to body satisfaction and attitudes toward skinny women. Specifically, participants who were less satisfied with their body ($M = 1.94$, $SE = .05$) viewed body shaming as more hurtful than participants who were more satisfied with their body ($M = 2.17$, $SE = .05$), $F(1, 432) = 10.77$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .024$.

Further, participants with more positive attitudes toward skinny women ($M = 1.89$, $SE = .05$) rated body shaming as more hurtful than participants with less positive attitudes toward skinny women ($M = 2.18$, $SE = .050$), $F(1, 432) = 17.43$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .039$.

The ANOVAs on participants' hurtfulness ratings also revealed three significant two-way interactions, one of which was between attitudes toward fat women and vignette pair, $F(1, 432) = 9.20$, $p = .003$, partial $\eta^2 = .021$. Simple effect analyses yielded a significant simple effect of vignette pair for participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women, $F(1, 432) = 74.00$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .146$. Specifically, participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women regarded the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 1.56$, $SE = .07$) as more hurtful than the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 2.40$, $SE = .07$). Although the simple effect of vignette pair was also significant for participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women, it was notably smaller, $F(1, 432) = 18.40$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .041$. Like their counterparts, participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women rated the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 1.91$, $SE = .07$) as more hurtful than the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 2.33$, $SE = .07$).

The next 2 two-way interactions qualified the main effect of the type of body shaming discussed above. One of these involved the interaction between the type of body shaming and attitudes toward fat women, $F(1, 432) = 13.58$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .030$. Simple effect analyses revealed that, while the simple effect of participants' attitudes toward fat women did not affect how hurtful they viewed fat shaming, $F(1, 432)$

$= .97, p = .325, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .002$, it did affect how hurtful they viewed skinny shaming, $F(1, 432) = 10.48, p = .001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .024$. In the latter case, participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 2.31, SE = .07$) viewed skinny shaming as more hurtful than participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 2.64, SE = .07$).

The main effect of the type of body shaming noted earlier was also qualified by its interaction with attitudes toward skinny women, $F(1, 432) = 9.55, p = .002, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .022$. Simple effect analyses revealed that, while participants' attitudes toward skinny women did not affect their perceptions of the hurtfulness of fat shaming, $F(1, 432) = 2.78, p = .096, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .006$, it did affect how hurtful they viewed skinny shaming, $F(1, 432) = 19.80, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .044$. Specifically, participants with more positive attitudes toward skinny women ($M = 2.23, SE = .07$) viewed skinny shaming as more hurtful than participants with less positive attitudes to skinny women ($M = 2.68, SE = .07$).

Summary of hurtfulness analyses. In addition to the main and interactive effects of type of body shaming and vignette pair noted above, these analyses revealed that participants who were less satisfied with their body viewed body shaming as slightly more hurtful than participants who were more satisfied with their body. The effect of type of body shaming was also qualified by attitudes toward both fat and skinny women. In this regard, women with more positive attitudes toward fat or skinny women viewed skinny shaming, but not fat shaming, as slightly more hurtful than participants with less positive attitudes toward either fat or skinny women.

Perceptions of the social acceptability of body shaming. These analyses revealed main effects due to attitudes toward fat women and attitudes toward skinny women. Participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 1.85$, $SE = .06$) viewed body shaming as more socially unacceptable than participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 2.15$, $SE = .06$), $F(1, 495) = 14.03$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .028$. Similarly, participants with more positive attitudes toward skinny women ($M = 1.85$, $SE = .06$) rated body shaming as more socially unacceptable than participants with less positive attitudes toward skinny women ($M = 2.14$, $SE = .06$), $F(1, 495) = 14.09$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .028$.

In addition, the main effect of type of body shaming mentioned earlier was qualified by its interaction with two participant characteristics, namely body satisfaction, $F(1, 495) = 7.52$, $p = .006$, partial $\eta^2 = .015$, and attitudes toward fat women, $F(1, 495) = 4.16$, $p = .042$, partial $\eta^2 = .008$. In the first case, simple effect analyses revealed that, while the simple effect of body satisfaction on fat shaming was non-significant, $F(1, 495) = .008$, $p = .927$, partial $\eta^2 = .000$, participants who were less satisfied with their body ($M = 2.15$, $SE = .07$) viewed skinny shaming as more socially unacceptable than participants who were more satisfied with their body ($M = 2.45$, $SE = .08$), $F(1, 495) = 8.09$, $p = .005$, partial $\eta^2 = .016$. In the second case, while the Bonferroni-adjusted simple effect of attitudes toward fat women on the acceptability of fat shaming was non-significant, $F(1, 495) = 4.82$, $p = .029$, partial $\eta^2 = .010$, participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 2.09$, $SE = .07$) rated skinny shaming as more socially unacceptable than participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 2.49$, $SE = .07$), $F(1, 495) = 15.26$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .030$.

Summary of acceptability analyses. In addition to the effect of type of body shaming and vignette pair, these analyses revealed that the effect of type of body shaming was qualified by body satisfaction. In particular, participants who were less satisfied with their body viewed skinny shaming as more socially unacceptable than participants who were more satisfied with their body. Participants' attitudes toward fat and skinny women also affected their perceptions of the social acceptability of body shaming. Specifically, participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women viewed skinny shaming as more socially unacceptable than participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women, whereas women with more positive attitudes toward skinny women viewed body shaming in general as more socially unacceptable than participants with less positive attitudes toward skinny women.

Participants' experiences of body shaming. Mixed-factor ANOVAs were conducted to assess the effects of participants' weight, body satisfaction, and attitudes toward fat and skinny women on their experiences as both perpetrators and victims of fat and skinny shaming.

Perpetrating body shaming. Four mixed-factor ANOVAs were conducted to assess the effects of body shaming (fat vs. skinny), vignette pair (1 vs. 2) and a participant characteristic (either participants' weight, body satisfaction, attitudes toward fat women or attitudes toward skinny women) on how often participants perpetrated body shaming.

Participant weight. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 3 (participant weight: under- vs. average- vs. over-weight) mixed-factor ANOVA on participants' frequency of perpetrating body shaming similar to that depicted

in the vignettes yielded a significant two-way interaction between participant weight and vignette pair, $F(2, 486) = 4.76, p = .009$, partial $\eta^2 = .019$. Simple effect analyses yielded a significant simple effect of vignette pair for average-weight, $F(1, 486) = 18.36, p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .036$, and over-weight participants, $F(1, 486) = 22.02, p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .043$, but not for under-weight participants, $F(1, 486) = .46, p = .499$, partial $\eta^2 = .001$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that among average-weight participants, those who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 1.49, SE = .04$) indicated more frequently perpetrating comparable body shaming than those who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 1.26, SE = .04$). Among over-weight participants, those who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 1.67, SE = .06$) reported more frequently perpetrating comparable body shaming than those who read fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 1.27, SE = .06$). The remaining effects were non-significant ($ps > .05$).

Body satisfaction. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 2 (body satisfaction: less vs. more satisfied) mixed-factor ANOVA on participants' experiences of perpetrating body shaming similar to the behaviour depicted in the vignettes yielded a significant two-way interaction between type of body shaming and body satisfaction, $F(1, 496) = 5.39, p = .021$, partial $\eta^2 = .011$. Although the simple effect of body satisfaction on the frequency of perpetrating comparable fat shaming was non-significant, $F(1, 496) = .099, p = .753$, partial $\eta^2 = .000$, the simple effect of body satisfaction on the frequency of perpetrating comparable skinny shaming was significant, $F(1, 496) = 5.76, p = .017$, partial $\eta^2 = .011$. Specifically, participants who were less

satisfied with their body ($M = 1.64, SE = .05$) reported more frequently perpetrating comparable skinny shaming than participants who were more satisfied with their body ($M = 1.48, SE = .05$). The remaining effects were non-significant ($ps > .05$).

Attitudes toward fat women. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 2 (attitudes toward fat women: more vs. less positive) mixed-factor ANOVA on how frequently participants perpetrated body shaming similar to the behaviour depicted in the vignettes yielded a significant main effect of attitudes toward fat women, $F(1, 496) = 9.43, p = .002$, partial $\eta^2 = .019$. Participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 1.46, SE = .03$) reported engaging in comparable body shaming more frequently than participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 1.33, SE = .03$).

The main effect of type of body shaming was also qualified by its interaction with attitudes toward fat women, $F(1, 496) = 8.11, p = .005$, partial $\eta^2 = .016$. Simple effect analyses yielded a significant simple effect of attitudes toward fat women on the frequency of perpetrating comparable skinny shaming, $F(1, 496) = 12.47, p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .025$. Specifically, participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 1.69, SE = .05$) reported more frequently perpetrating comparable skinny shaming than participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women ($M = 1.45, SE = .05$). The simple effect of attitudes toward fat women on the frequency of perpetrating comparable fat shaming was non-significant, $F(1, 496) = .26, p = .611$, partial $\eta^2 = .001$. The remaining effects were non-significant ($ps > .05$).

Attitudes toward skinny women. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 2 (attitudes toward skinny women: more vs. less positive)

mixed-factor ANOVA on the frequency participants perpetrated body shaming similar to that depicted in the vignettes revealed that, although the main effects of type of body shaming and vignette pair, as well as their interaction, were significant, the remaining effects were non-significant ($ps > .05$).

Summary. In addition to the effects of type of body shaming, vignette pair, and their interaction noted above, these analyses revealed that participants' body satisfaction, but not their weight, was related to the frequency of their perpetration of both fat and skinny shaming. In particular, participants who were less satisfied with their body reported more frequent perpetration of comparable skinny shaming than participants who were more satisfied with their body. The effect of type of body shaming was also qualified by its interaction with attitudes toward fat women, but not attitudes toward skinny women. In this regard, participants with less positive attitudes toward fat women reported more frequently perpetrating comparable skinny shaming than participants with more positive attitudes toward fat women.

Being a victim of body shaming. Two mixed-factor ANOVAs were conducted to assess the effects of body shaming (fat vs. skinny), vignette pair (1 vs. 2) and a participant characteristic (participants' weight or body satisfaction) on how often participants reported being victims of body shaming similar to that depicted in the vignettes.

Participant weight. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 3 (participant weight: under- vs. average- vs. over-weight) mixed-factor ANOVA on how frequently participants experienced body shaming similar to the behaviour depicted in the vignettes yielded a significant main effect of participant weight,

$F(2, 486) = 8.77, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .035$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that under-weight participants ($M = 2.74, SE = .12$) reported more frequently being body shamed than both average-weight ($M = 2.19, SE = .05$) and over-weight participants ($M = 2.25, SE = .08$).

The main effect of type of body shaming was also qualified by its interaction with participant weight, $F(2, 486) = 61.91, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .203$. Simple effect analyses yielded a significant simple effect of participant weight for fat shaming, $F(2, 486) = 20.30, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .077$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that over-weight participants ($M = 2.69, SE = .10$) reported more frequent experiences of comparable fat shaming than both average-weight participants ($M = 2.00, SE = .06$) and under-weight participants ($M = 1.92, SE = .15$). There was also a significant simple effect of participant weight for skinny shaming, $F(2, 486) = 39.17, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .139$. Pairwise comparisons revealed that under-weight participants ($M = 3.56, SE = .17$) reported more frequent experiences of comparable skinny shaming than both average-weight participants ($M = 2.38, SE = .07$) and over-weight participants ($M = 1.80, SE = .11$). Average-weight participants ($M = 2.38, SE = .07$) also reported more frequent experiences of comparable skinny shaming than over-weight participants ($M = 1.80, SE = .11$).

The three-way interaction between participant weight, vignette pair, and type of body shaming was also significant, $F(2, 486) = 8.03, p = .000, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .032$. To follow up on this interaction, two-way between-participants ANOVAs were conducted to assess the simple two-way interactive effects of participants' weight and vignette pair on the frequency of their experiences of fat and skinny shaming. Statistical significance of a

simple two-way interaction was accepted at a Bonferroni-adjusted level of $p = .025$. There was a significant simple two-way interaction between participant weight and vignette pair for fat shaming victimization, $F(2, 486) = 5.90, p = .003$, but not skinny shaming victimization, $F(2, 486) = 3.43, p = .033$. Simple simple effect analyses were conducted to follow up on the significant simple two-way interaction, again using a Bonferroni-adjusted alpha level of .025. There was a significant simple simple effect of weight on the frequency of participants' experiences of comparable fat shaming for participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes, $F(2, 486) = 7.35, p = .001$, and those who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes, $F(2, 486) = 21.36, p = .000$. All pairwise comparisons were performed for both significant simple simple effects, with Bonferroni corrections within each simple simple effect (adjusted p -values are reported). Among participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes, over-weight participants ($M = 2.62, SE = .14$) reported more frequently experiencing comparable fat shaming than average-weight participants ($M = 2.02, SE = .08$). Among participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes, over-weight participants ($M = 2.77, SE = .13$) reported more frequently experiencing comparable fat shaming than both average-weight ($M = 1.98, SE = .09$) and under-weight participants ($M = 1.39, SE = .19$). Average-weight participants ($M = 1.98, SE = .09$) also reported more frequent experiences of comparable fat shaming than under-weight participants ($M = 1.39, SE = .19$). The remaining effects were non-significant ($ps > .05$).

Body satisfaction. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 2 (body satisfaction: less vs. more satisfied) mixed-factor ANOVA on how

frequently participants experienced body shaming similar to that depicted in the vignettes yielded a significant two-way interaction between type of body shaming and body satisfaction, $F(1, 496) = 60.28$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .108$. Simple effect analyses yielded a simple effect of body satisfaction for fat shaming, $F(1, 496) = 49.09$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .090$. Specifically, participants who were less satisfied with their body ($M = 2.47$, $SE = .07$) reported more frequent experiences of comparable fat shaming than participants who were more satisfied with their body ($M = 1.79$, $SE = .07$). There was also a simple effect of body satisfaction for skinny shaming, $F(1, 496) = 13.45$, $p = .000$, partial $\eta^2 = .026$. Participants who were more satisfied with their body ($M = 2.56$, $SE = .08$) reported more frequent experiences of comparable skinny shaming than participants who were less satisfied ($M = 2.15$, $SE = .08$).

The two-way interaction between vignette pair and body satisfaction was also significant, $F(1, 496) = 4.21$, $p = .041$, partial $\eta^2 = .008$. Simple effect analyses yielded a significant simple effect of vignette pair for participants who were more satisfied with their body, $F(1, 496) = 9.85$, $p = .002$, partial $\eta^2 = .019$. Specifically, participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 2.36$, $SE = .08$) reported more frequently being body shamed than participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes ($M = 2.00$, $SE = .08$). The simple effect of vignette pair was non-significant for participants who were less satisfied with their body, $F(1, 496) = .17$, $p = .685$, partial $\eta^2 = .000$.

The three-way interaction between participant weight, vignette pair, and type of body shaming was significant, $F(1, 496) = 10.24$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .020$. To follow up on this significant interaction, two-way between-subjects ANOVAs were conducted to

assess the simple two-way interactions. Specifically, these tests examined the interactive effect of body satisfaction and vignette pair on the frequency of participants' experiences of both fat and skinny shaming. Statistical significance of a simple two-way interaction was accepted at a Bonferroni-adjusted level of $p = .025$. While the simple Vignette pair x Body satisfaction interaction was unrelated to the frequency participants experienced comparable fat shaming, $F(1, 496) = .45, p = .505$, it was related to the frequency of their personal experiences of comparable skinny shaming, $F(1, 496) = 11.55, p = .001$. Using a Bonferroni-adjusted alpha level of .025, simple simple main effect analyses were conducted to follow up on this simple two-way interaction. This analysis revealed a significant simple simple effect of body satisfaction on skinny shaming victimization scores for participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes, $F(1, 496) = 25.30, p = .000$, but not for participants who read the fat shaming–cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes, $F(1, 496) = .04, p = .851$. All pairwise comparisons were performed for the significant simple simple effect. Bonferroni corrections were made within the simple simple effect (adjusted p -values are reported). Among participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes, participants who were more satisfied with their body ($M = 3.00, SE = .12$) reported greater skinny shaming victimization than participants who were less satisfied with their body ($M = 2.20, SE = .11$). No other effects were significant ($ps > .05$).

Summary. Overall, these analyses revealed that participants reported more frequent experiences of skinny shaming than fat shaming, with partial η^2 ranging from .020 to .037. This effect was qualified by a three-way interaction with vignette pair and participant weight. Specifically, among participants who read the fat shaming–

cookie/skinny shaming–evening gown vignettes, those who were over-weight reported more personal experiences of fat shaming relative to average-weight participants. Similarly, among participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes, those who were over-weight reported more frequent experiences of fat shaming relative to that reported by average-weight and under-weight participants. In addition, average-weight participants reported more frequently experiencing fat shaming relative to under-weight participants. The effect of type of body shaming was also qualified by its interaction with vignette pair and body satisfaction. In particular, among participants who read the skinny shaming–cookie/fat shaming–evening gown vignettes, participants who were more satisfied with their body reported more frequent experiences of skinny shaming than participants who were less satisfied with their body.

Hurtfulness of being body shamed. Mixed-factor ANOVAs were then conducted to assess the effects of type of body shaming (fat vs. skinny), vignette pair (1 vs. 2) and a participant characteristic (participants' weight or body satisfaction) on the hurtfulness of participants' own experiences of body shaming.

Participant weight. A 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 3 (participant weight: under- vs. average- vs. over-weight) mixed-factor ANOVA on participants' ratings of the hurtfulness of their own experiences of body shaming revealed that, although the main effect of type of body shaming was significant, the remaining effects were not ($ps > .05$).

Body satisfaction. Next, a 2 (type of body shaming: fat vs. skinny) by 2 (vignette pair: 1 vs. 2) by 2 (body satisfaction: less vs. more satisfied) mixed-factor ANOVA on the hurtfulness of participants' own experiences of body shaming yielded a significant

Table 7

Simple Correlations between Social Desirability (SD) and the Dependent Variables

Dependent variable	SD
Fat shaming	
Hurtfulness	.04
Social acceptability	-.08
Frequency of perpetration	-.16**
Frequency of victimization	-.10*
Self-hurtfulness	.02
Skinny shaming	
Hurtfulness	-.06
Social acceptability	-.11*
Frequency of perpetration	-.16**
Frequency of victimization	-.09*
Self-hurtfulness	-.02

Note. * $p < .05$, two-tailed. ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

effect due to body satisfaction, $F(1, 186) = 6.33, p = .013$, partial $\eta^2 = .033$. Participants who were less satisfied with their body ($M = 2.27, SE = .11$) viewed their experiences as more hurtful than participants who were more satisfied ($M = 2.66, SE = .12$).

Summary. In addition to the effects of type of body shaming and vignette pair, these analyses revealed that participants who were less satisfied with their body viewed their experiences of body shaming as more hurtful than participants who were more satisfied with their body.

Additional Analyses

Additional analyses were done to assess whether participants' tendency to respond in socially desirable ways might underlie any of the observed relations between the predictor and outcome variables. As shown in Table 7, participants with higher social desirability scores gave slightly lower ratings of how often they had perpetrated and been the victim of each type of body shaming. Participants with higher social desirability scores also gave slightly lower ratings of the social acceptability of the behaviours depicted in the skinny shaming vignettes. When the ANOVAs concerned with the frequency of participants' perpetration and victimization of body shaming, as well as the social acceptability of either type of body shaming, were repeated with social desirability scores included as a covariate, the findings reported above were unchanged.

Discussion

The findings of this research shed light on the nature of the relations between women's weight, body satisfaction and their attitudes toward fat and skinny women, as well as women's perceptions and personal experiences of both fat shaming and skinny shaming. Regarding the first point, the simple correlations indicated that women with lower BMI scores were moderately more satisfied with their bodies and that women with higher BMI scores had slightly less favourable attitudes toward thin women. Together, these findings suggest that the thin ideal (Brown & Slaughter, 2011; Silverstein et al., 1986) is alive and well and continuing to reside in our Western society.

By far the largest and most consistent effect on women's perceptions of body shaming was the type of body shaming depicted in the vignettes. Consistent with the air of permissiveness regarding thin relative to fat shaming noted by the thin participants in Beggan and DeAngelis' (2015) qualitative research and those blogging online (e.g., www.thin-shaming.tumblr.com), the women in this study regarded fat shaming as more hurtful and socially unacceptable than skinny shaming. Importantly, however, both types of body shaming were viewed as hurtful and unacceptable in absolute terms. Said differently, both types of body shaming were recognized as problematic, although fat shaming was viewed as more problematic than skinny shaming. Contrary to the beliefs expressed by the thin participants in Beggan and DeAngelis' (2015) study, then, the women in this study were at least somewhat attuned to the hurtful nature of skinny shaming. Indeed, that participants with higher social desirability scores gave slightly lower ratings of the social acceptability of skinny shaming may also attest to this awareness.

Interestingly, women's perceptions of the perceived hurtfulness and social acceptability of body shaming were influenced, at least to some extent, by the particular pair of vignettes they read. Specifically, participants regarded the body shaming experienced by a woman who reached for another cookie as more hurtful and unacceptable when that woman was over-weight rather than thin. This finding may reflect a woman's dissatisfaction with her own body. Indeed, both over-weight women and women who were dissatisfied with their bodies indicated that they regarded the body shaming experienced by a woman who reached for another cookie as more hurtful and unacceptable when that woman was over-weight rather than thin. To the extent that the women in this study endorsed the thin ideal, as suggested above, it is also conceivable that this difference occurred because telling a thin woman that she is fortunate to be able to eat anything she wants is actually a backhanded compliment, or complimentary weightism (Calogero et al., 2009). As noted by Calogero et al. (2009), however, such body-related compliments remind women that their bodies are on display for others to evaluate, particularly how closely they approximate the thin ideal, and this, in turn, may contribute to self-objectification processes such as body monitoring (i.e., comparing one's body relative to the social ideal) and subsequent body dissatisfaction. That people may be unaware of the potentially negative consequences of such seemingly innocuous comments about thin bodies, as well as their tendency to make these types of comments more often than others, may make appearance-related compliments more problematic than comments that are more obviously negative in nature.

Relatedly, participants also regarded the body-related comments directed toward the woman buying a revealing evening gown as significantly more hurtful when the

woman was described as thin rather than over-weight. This interesting finding warrants future research to explain why this might be the case. Taken together, these findings suggest that body shaming directed toward over-weight women is regarded as most hurtful and unacceptable when it targets her food consumption while body shaming directed toward a thin woman is perceived as more problematic when it targets her physical appearance. In view of this, further research might usefully be conducted to identify precisely what makes some manifestations of body shaming appear more or less problematic than others.

Contrary to what one might intuitively expect, participants' own weight was unrelated to their perceptions of the hurtfulness or social acceptability of either type of body shaming. Participants' weight was also unrelated to how often they reported perpetrating either type of body shaming. These findings are reminiscent of the results of the survey conducted by *Glamour* magazine (Dreisbach, 2012) where women, regardless of their own weight, used negative stereotypes to describe the image that came to mind when they thought of a thin or over-weight woman.

Although the number on the scale was unrelated to women's perceptions of body shaming, their satisfaction with their body and general attitudes toward skinny women played a role, albeit minor ones. As one might expect, women who were less satisfied with their body viewed body shaming in general as slightly more hurtful than women who were more satisfied with their body. Further, women's general attitudes toward skinny women played a minor role in their perceptions and experiences of body shaming. Women who held more positive attitudes toward skinny women viewed skinny shaming as slightly more hurtful than women with less positive attitudes toward skinny women.

The latter finding is not altogether surprising. In fact, it is easy to understand how women who have a particular disdain for thin women may be less sympathetic to thin women's experiences as victims of skinny shaming. Arguably, these women may hold more negative attitudes toward skinny women because of the presumed benefits they associate with thinness. Accordingly, they may be less likely to appreciate how, despite the real or perceived benefits of being a thin woman in contemporary Western society, skinny women are just as capable of being negatively affected by the hurtful words of others as their over-weight counterparts. Put another way, it may be difficult for these women to understand how a thin woman, who presumably "has it all," can be bothered by the (hurtful) comments of others. These findings also support the notion that some people, specifically those with less positive attitudes to skinny women, may be unaware of the hurtfulness of skinny shaming, as noted by the thin participants in Beggan and DeAngelis' (2015) study.

Overall, then, the findings regarding women's perceptions of fat and skinny shaming lend credence to the anecdotal evidence of online bloggers and previous research (i.e., Beggan & DeAngelis, 2015) that suggests that, although both types of body shaming are regarded as problematic, fat shaming is taken more seriously than skinny shaming. Additionally, this research provided evidence to suggest that these perceptions are at least partially influenced by a woman's subjective feelings about her own body, as well as her general attitudes toward skinny women.

Although the majority of the women in this study indicated that they had rarely or never engaged in either fat or skinny shaming behaviour, they nevertheless reported engaging in skinny shaming twice as often as fat shaming. This is not altogether

surprising, given that they viewed skinny shaming as more acceptable and less hurtful than fat shaming. That women who perceived fat and skinny shaming as less hurtful and more acceptable were more likely to say they had perpetrated such body shaming suggests that these perceptions may have contributed to their behaviour, or at least justified it. Either interpretation would be consistent with the fact that most participants said they were “just playing around” when they engaged in both fat and skinny shaming. Indeed, a woman who fails to see the harm in making derogatory comments about a woman’s body may be more likely to engage in such behaviour compared to a woman who is more attuned to the problematic nature of body shaming and, accordingly, may think twice about making a joke at the expense of someone else.

It is worthwhile to note that the particular pair of vignettes that participants read played a role, at least to some extent, in women’s reports of their perpetration of body shaming. In particular, participants who read the vignettes concerned with the skinny woman who reached for another cookie and the fat woman who wanted to buy a revealing evening gown reported engaging in more frequent comparable body shaming than did participants who read the vignettes depicting an over-weight woman who reached for another cookie and the under-weight woman who wanted to purchase a revealing evening gown. This finding, in conjunction with the fact that the participants regarded skinny shaming depicted in the cookie vignette as less hurtful than that depicted in the evening gown vignette and the fat shaming depicted in the evening gown vignette as less hurtful than that depicted in the cookie vignette, suggests that women may be more inclined to comment on a thin woman’s food intake and an over-weight woman’s

appearance because they believe that these type of comments are less hurtful than other forms of skinny and fat shaming.

That these women reported perpetrating skinny shaming nearly twice as often as fat shaming is particularly curious in that it suggests that, despite living in a culture that glorifies and celebrates thinness, there is an undeniable propensity for women to comment on a thin woman's food intake. One possible explanation for this finding is that women believe they are paying a compliment to a thin woman when they make food-related comments, and, consequently, do not regard their behaviour as unacceptable or hurtful. Accordingly, they tend to engage in this particular behaviour more frequently than other types of weight-related commentary directed toward thin women.

Alternatively, it may be the case that women are envious of the presumed or actual benefits associated with thinness (e.g, greater income; Judge & Cable, 2011). Consistent with this, about half of the women who engaged in skinny shaming indicated that they did so because they were jealous of the thin woman's body. Moreover, women who were less satisfied with their body reported engaging in slightly more frequent skinny shaming behaviour than women who were more satisfied with their body. Ultimately, these findings suggest that many women may engage in skinny shaming out of jealousy. Accordingly, it is plausible that women who are less than happy with their body may project their own weight-related insecurities onto women who most closely approximate the thin ideal. Indeed, skinny shaming may be less about thin women and, instead, stem from the shameful relationship women have with their bodies. Arguably, then, skinny shaming might be regarded as fat shaming in the sense that engaging in such behaviour is more of a reflection of a woman's negative attitude toward obesity than her

attitude toward thinness. In contrast, body satisfaction did not play a role in women's perpetration of comparable fat shaming behaviour. This, coupled with the fact that relatively few (16%) women who indicated that they had engaged in fat shaming noted that they did so because they were jealous of the woman's body, suggests that fat shaming behaviour may have less to do with a woman's own weight-related hang ups than does skinny shaming. Further research might explore the apparently complex relationship between a woman's (dis)satisfaction with her body and her tendency to engage in either type of behaviour.

In addition to understanding women's perpetration of body shaming, this research also provided some insight into women's experiences as victims of body shaming. Two-thirds of the women reported being the victim of fat shaming and a comparable number reported having experienced skinny shaming. As one would expect, over-weight women reported more frequent experiences of fat shaming than average- and under-weight women, and under-weight women reported more frequent experiences of skinny shaming than average- and over-weight women. Women who were less satisfied with their body also reported being the victim of fat shaming more often than women who were more satisfied with their body, suggesting that experiences of fat shaming may affect a woman's relationship with her own body. On the other hand, women who were more satisfied with their body reported more frequent experiences of skinny shaming than women who were less satisfied with their body. One possible explanation for this is that women assume that thin women who are more satisfied with their body are better equipped to handle comments about their weight. Alternatively, and consistent with the

thin ideal (Brown & Slaughter, 2011; Silverstein et al., 1986), women may be pleased with their bodies when others comment on their thinness.

Finally, although the women in this study indicated that being a victim of fat shaming was more hurtful than being a victim of skinny shaming, it is important to note that both types of body shaming were experienced as hurtful in absolute terms. This is significant in that it highlights that skinny women are, in fact, hurt by the comments they receive about their size. This is consistent with the findings of Lox et al.'s (1998) research, which found that levels of social physique anxiety, body dissatisfaction and self-esteem among under-weight female college students were comparable to the levels documented in research with over-weight women. However, while skinny shaming may hurt a woman's feelings, according to online bloggers, fat shaming may not only hurt an over-weight or obese woman's feelings, it may be coupled with, or lead to, more discriminatory behaviour. For example, over-weight women are often paid less than their thin counterparts (Judge & Cable, 2011). Future research might aim to compare and contrast the perceived and actual consequences of both types of body shaming.

Limitations and Future Directions

As is true of all research, a number of limitations may challenge the validity of these findings. First, although self-reported weight and height are believed to be relatively good indicators of actual height and weight (Cachelin, Monreal, & Jaurez, 2006), it was not possible to account for the potential bias created by the tendency for some people to underestimate their weight and/or overestimate their height. In addition, the statistical assumptions underlying ANOVA (i.e., normality, homogeneity of variance) were violated in the majority of the analyses. Fortunately, however, ANOVAs are known

to be robust to violations of these assumptions (Glass, Peckham, & Sanders, 1972). Moreover, the use of two different vignettes for each type of body shaming was a particular challenge in that it became increasingly difficult to tease apart the differences in the types of body shaming that were depicted in the vignettes, as well as whether perceptions of body shaming are contingent upon the particular type of body shaming depicted in the vignette.

Importantly, this research intentionally recruited young women due to the convenience associated with sampling university students. Unfortunately, this precludes understanding middle-aged and older women's perceptions and experiences of body shaming. Previous research has noted that younger women have a greater drive for thinness than older women (Pruis & Janowsky, 2010) and that the latter group expresses a preference for more rounded body figures than conventional beauty standards (Clarke, 2002). These findings suggest that older women may view the thin female body in a more negative light than their younger counterparts and arguably, may be more apt to comment on the bodies of thin women. Without question, future research would benefit from understanding the perceptions and experiences of body shaming among older women.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to this research is its assumption that body shaming occurs in a context in which the prevailing ideal of beauty is that held by young, White, heterosexual, middle class women, an assumption that several feminist theorists have severely critiqued (e.g., Bordo, 1993; Orbach, 1989; Wolf, 1991). Race, for example, is likely implicated in perceptions of body shaming, given that different cultures have different relationships with Western standards of beauty (Poran, 2002). In Kumanyika,

Wilson, and Guilford-Davenport's (1993) research, for example, many over-weight Black women viewed their full-figured body as either attractive or very attractive. Similarly, compared to White women, Black women are more likely to be satisfied with their weight and view themselves as attractive, as well as less likely to strive for the thin ideal and to view this ideal as desirable (Fujioka, Ryan, Agle, Legaspi, & Toohey, 2009; Stevens, Kumanyika, & Keil, 1994). Accordingly, fat shaming may be less meaningful to Black women than it is to their Caucasian counterparts. Added to this, the notion of fat shaming may be inconceivable in non-Western cultures where a full-figured body is associated with positive attributes such as wealth and fertility (Popenoe, 2004) and in other cultures where thinness is regarded as inherently oppressive due to its association with poverty and malnutrition (Rothblum, 1990).

Given the differences in heterosexual and lesbian women's relationships with their body, it would be equally useful for researchers to consider the role of sexual orientation in women's perceptions and experiences of body shaming. For example, Herzog, Newman, Yeh, and Warshaw (1992) found that lesbian women wanted to weigh more and had less of a drive for thinness than their heterosexual counterparts. Conceivably, then, the notion of fat shaming may have less meaning for lesbian relative to heterosexual women.

The findings of this research also fail to facilitate our understanding of how various social identities and systems of oppression combine to create unique experiences of body shaming (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989). For example, adopting an intersectional approach, Wilson, Okwu, and Mills (2011) documented very high rates of weight bias victimization among Black lesbian women. Similarly, sexuality and gender may intersect

to create a particularly unique experience of body shaming for transgender women. According to Bergman (2009), whether trans women are regarded as fat or not depends on how their gender is interpreted. If they are viewed as a man, they are regarded as big men, but if they are perceived as women, they are viewed as “revoltingly fat” (Bergman, 2009). Additionally, the intersection of race and age create a unique perception of ideal body standards for older Black women, who exhibit a preference for a larger body size over a thinner frame (Hughes, 1997). Indeed, as van Amsterdam (2013) pointed out, an intersectional approach to body size discrimination would facilitate a clearer understanding of body shaming, as well as the opportunity for all body types to be appreciated and accepted.

While this study intentionally sought to examine women’s perceptions and experiences of body shaming, it would also be interesting to examine this phenomenon among men. Given that Western society celebrates the muscular male body (Leit, Pope, & Gray, 2001), it is not farfetched to assume that men who deviate from this societal ideal are subject to a body shaming discourse comparable to the negative comments fat women receive. Because women who embody the “thin ideal” are not invulnerable to comments about their bodies, it would be worthwhile to assess whether fit, muscular men are also subject to body-related comments and, if so, the factors motivating such behaviour.

Further, although this study relied on vignettes depicting face-to-face social interactions, because women are increasingly present online, it would be worthwhile to examine their perceptions and experiences of the body shaming that occurs in web-based forums (i.e., on social media, on blog posts, etc.). Of special interest is whether the

anonymity afforded by being online causes women to engage in body shaming more frequently and/or more hurtfully.

Implications

The *Body Acceptance Movement*, which has gained considerable momentum in recent years, “aims to denounce the societal influences and construction of body norms, and instead promotes self-love and acceptance of bodies of any shape, size, or appearance; including rolls, dimples, cellulite, acne, hairy bodies ... fat bodies, thin bodies, and (dis)abled bodies” (Cwynar-Horta, 2016). Undoubtedly, this movement is validating the experiences of women of all body types, particularly those bodies that have traditionally been subjected to weight bias and discrimination (i.e., over-weight bodies). Yet, the findings of the current research suggest that women continue to take over-weight women’s experiences of unwanted body commentary more seriously than thin women’s experiences of comparable commentary. This may be a function of the presumed or actual privilege that is associated with thinness. Although a thin woman’s feelings might be hurt when disparaging comments are made about her weight, she nevertheless continues to occupy a position of power within society (Beggan & DeAngelis, 2015). As one online blogger said to female victims of skinny shaming, “While your internal struggle is real and significant, the point is: You might hate your body, but society doesn’t. That’s thin privilege” (<http://www.everydayfeminism.com/2013/10/lets-talk-about-thin-privilege>). Although the Body Acceptance Movement may intend to promote the acceptance and appreciation of both fat and thin bodies, the real and/or assumed privileges associated with thinness in our Western culture may cause skinny women’s experiences to be dismissed or trivialized even within the movement.

That skinny shaming behaviour takes the form of food-related comments more often than appearance-related comments, coupled with the fact that the women in this study regarded food-related comments as less problematic than appearance-related comments is concerning. Specifically, food-related comments may have a significant impact on thin women's food intake. A thin woman who is frequently exposed to comments about her food intake, or lack thereof, may internalize these comments in such a way that food becomes a particularly salient issue for her. Consequently, and perhaps unknowingly, these comments may contribute to an unhealthy relationship with food, or disordered eating behaviour. Indeed, a significant risk factor in the development of a binge eating disorder is repeated exposure to negative food-related comments from family members (Fairburn et al., 1998). The implications of this are worrisome given the dangers associated with both binge eating and anorexia.

That both skinny and fat women are subject to body-related commentary also has significant implications for their relationship with their body because they highlight the fact that women's bodies are on display for others to evaluate. In their *Objectification Theory*, Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) posit that women and girls internalize the body-related comments made by others and, in turn, engage in self-objectifying processes such as habitual body monitoring, processes that can lead to a host of negative outcomes (e.g., body dissatisfaction). Arguably, then, weight-related comments have the potential to cause some women to come to view their body from the perspective of the commentator and, as a result, grow increasingly less satisfied with their body. Accordingly, it would certainly prove beneficial to equip young girls with the tools necessary to inoculate them from the detrimental effects of the body-related comments of others.

That body-related commentary and shaming exists within a patriarchal society that polices the female body (Bordo, 1993) cannot be ignored. In fact, it is no longer just men who police the female body, assuming it ever was. The fact that body-related commentary is quite common among women (Tantleff-Dunn et al., 2009; Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2002) is of concern, not only for the women who are the victims of such shaming, but for all women. This is because it makes it difficult for women to challenge sexist values and practices when women are at least somewhat responsible for perpetuating and upholding them. Moreover, women's increasing tendency to comment on other women's bodies may lead men to believe they can do the same. Clearly, women have some way to go along their path(s) to equality.

Appendices

Appendix A

Recruitment Notice

We are interested in examining women's perceptions of body-related evaluations. In order to participate, participants must be enrolled in PSYC 1001, 1002, 2001, or 2002. Further, this study is restricted to female participants only. Participants will be asked to read two vignettes, each of which depicts a social interaction between two people during which one person comments on the other person's body. After reading the vignettes, participants will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire asking about their perceptions and evaluations of what occurred in the vignettes. Participants will also be required to answer questions regarding their body satisfaction, their personal attitudes and traits, their attitudes toward skinny and fat women, and their demographic characteristics (e.g., age, year and area of study, etc.). The study will be completed online at a secure site (Qualtrics) and should take about 50 to 60 minutes. Participants will receive 0.5% course credit as remuneration. No serious harm is associated with participating in this study. However, some people may experience some distress as a result of the nature of the social interactions depicted in the vignettes that you will be asked to read. Specifically, some people who are sensitive to/have personal experience with body issues may be uncomfortable with the vignettes they will be exposed to. Given this, at the end of this study you will be provided with information about support services for any distress that might result from your participation in this study. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact Tia Carpino at (tia.carpino@carleton.ca) or Dr.

Connie Kristiansen (connie.kristiansen@carleton.ca). This study has been cleared by Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (Clearance #: 104944).

Appendix B

Informed Consent

CUREB clearance # 104944

Present Study: Perceptions of Body-Related Evaluations

Date of Ethics Clearance: August 8, 2016

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: August 31, 2017

Research Personnel: This research is being conducted by Tia Carpino (tia.carpino@carleton.ca) under the supervision of Dr. Connie Kristiansen (connie.kristiansen@carleton.ca), both in the Department of Psychology.

Purpose: The purpose of this social-psychological study is to assess women's perceptions of body-related evaluations.

Task Requirements: You will be asked to read two vignettes, each of which depicts a social interaction between two people during which one person comments on the other person's body. After reading the vignettes, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire asking about your perceptions of what occurred in the vignettes. You will also be required to answer questions regarding your body satisfaction, your personal attitudes and traits, your attitudes toward skinny and fat women, and your demographic characteristics (e.g., age, year and area of study, etc.).

Duration and Locale: The study will take about 50 to 60 minutes. Students enrolled in PSYC 1001 or 1002 will receive a 0.5% increase in their final grade for participating. Participants enrolled in PSYC 2001 or 2002 will receive 0.5% as a bonus grade. The study will be conducted online using a secure site, Qualtrics.

Potential Risk/Discomfort: No serious harm is associated with participating in this study. However, some people may experience some distress as a result of the nature of the social interactions depicted in the vignettes that you will be asked to read. Specifically, some people who are sensitive to/have experience with body issues may be uncomfortable with reading the vignettes they will be exposed to. Given this, at the end of this study you will be provided with information about support services for any distress that might result from your participation in this study.

Anonymity/Confidentiality: The data collected in this study are strictly confidential and participants' names are not associated with the responses they provide. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the Department of Psychology. The

anonymously coded data will be kept and used for research purposes only, accessible only to the researcher and the research supervisor. Once the project is completed, the data will be kept for seven years and may be used for other research projects on this topic or for teaching purposes. Further, the data collected for this research may be used in publications, presentations, or shared in online repositories. After seven years, the data will be erased. Data will be collected through Qualtrics, a secure website. Please note that Qualtrics is hosted by a server located in the USA. The United States Patriot Act permits U.S. law enforcement officials, for the purpose of an anti-terrorism investigation, to seek a court order that allows access to the personal records of any person without that person's knowledge. In view of this, we cannot absolutely guarantee the full confidentiality and anonymity of your data. With your consent to participate in this study, you acknowledge this.

Right to Withdraw: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study, up until you hit the "submit" button, you have the right to not answer any question or to withdraw from the study without explanation or penalty. You can withdraw at any time before the completion of the study by clicking the "exit" button at the bottom of each webpage. If you withdraw from the study, the information you provided will be destroyed immediately. Because the data are anonymous, it is not possible to withdraw your data from the study after you have submitted your answers.

If you would like a summary of the findings of this research, you are invited to contact the researcher to request an electronic copy. This will be emailed to you as soon as it is available.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB), which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact:

CUREB contact information: Dr. Shelley Brown
 Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B
 613-520-2600 ext. 1505
Shelley.Brown@carleton.ca
 Research Compliance Office
ethics@carleton.ca

Do you consent to participate in this study? Yes _____ No _____

Appendix C

Materials

Note. There are two versions of each of the following vignettes – a skinny shaming version and a fat shaming version. The alternative wording for the fat shaming version appears inside brackets.

Eating cookies: At a small gathering, a group of young women are chatting about their plans for the upcoming break. The hostess of the gathering has gone through a lot of trouble to provide her guests with an array of appealing treats and snacks. While everyone is happily talking, laughing, eating and drinking, Myra suddenly interrupts the conversation and singles out Alice, who is sitting across from her. Alice is obviously skinny (vs. obviously over-weight) for her height. Myra says in a snide, spiteful tone of voice, “A *third* cookie?! Oh, you skinny girls can eat whatever you want!” (vs. “Do you really want to eat a *third* cookie?!”)

Evening gown: Kathy and Helena are out shopping for evening dresses to wear to their end of year formal. They’ve been looking for hours but Kathy hasn’t quite found what she’s looking for. It’s almost 9 pm and they are at the last store in the mall that carries evening gowns. Kathy comes across a beautiful long silk gown and says, “This is perfect!” Helena turns to look at the dress and says, “No, you can’t wear this. You’re all bones! You’ll never fill it out. Here, take this one – it totally suits you better.” (vs. “No, you can’t wear this, with your full figure you’ll spill out everywhere! Here, take this one – it totally suits you better.”)

Appendix D

Measures

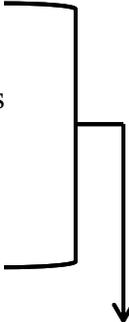
Questions about the Vignettes: These questions will be answered for each vignette.

1. How do you think Alice/Kathy felt after receiving this comment? To answer, please pick the number closest to the word that best reflects your opinion.

Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
Upset	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Calm
Sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Happy
Worthless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Valued
Rejected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Accepted

2. Have you ever said something like this to a woman? (Tick one)

No, never
 Once or twice
 A handful of times
 Many times
 Countless times



If you have ever said something like this *to a woman*, please answer 2b) below:

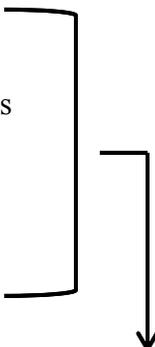
- 2b) Why did you say something like this to a woman? Was it because you:

- disliked the woman? Yes No
- wanted revenge for something she did to you? Yes No
- were just having a bad day? Yes No

- were just playing around? _____ Yes _____ No
- were jealous of the woman's body? _____ Yes _____ No
- were jealous of the woman's talent, intelligence, etc.? _____ Yes _____ No
- Some other reason(s)? _____ Yes _____ No

If you indicated yes, there was some other reason(s), please describe this reason(s):

3. Has *anyone* ever said something like this to you?

- _____ No, never
- _____ Once or twice
- _____ A handful of times
- _____ Many times
- _____ Countless times
- 

If someone said something like this to you *once or more often* please answer 3b below:

3b) When someone said something like this to you, how did it make you feel?

To answer, please pick the number closest to the word that best reflects how you felt.

Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
Upset	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Calm
Sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Happy
Worthless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Valued

Rejected 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Accepted

4. How socially acceptable or unacceptable was this comment? (tick one)

_____ Extremely unacceptable

_____ Moderately unacceptable

_____ Slightly unacceptable

_____ Slightly acceptable

_____ Moderately acceptable

_____ Extremely acceptable

The Body Esteem Scale (Weight Concern Subscale; Franzoi & Shields, 1984)

A number of body parts and functions are listed below. Please read each item and rate how negative or positive you feel about this part or function of *your own body* using the following scale:

- 1 = Have strongly negative feelings;
- 2 = Have moderately negative feelings;
- 3 = Have no feelings one way or the other;
- 4 = Have moderately positive feelings;
- 5 = Have strongly positive feelings.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Strongly negative</u>	<u>Moderately negative</u>	<u>No feelings</u>	<u>Moderately positive</u>	<u>Strongly positive</u>
1. Appetite	1	2	3	4	5
2. Waist	1	2	3	4	5
3. Thighs	1	2	3	4	5
4. Body build	1	2	3	4	5
5. Buttocks	1	2	3	4	5
6. Hips	1	2	3	4	5
7. Leg	1	2	3	4	5
8. Figure or physique	1	2	3	4	5
9. Appearance of stomach	1	2	3	4	5
10. Weight	1	2	3	4	5

Attitudes Toward Fat Women

[Antifat Attitudes Questionnaire Revised (Crandall, 1994)]

Below is a series of statements concerning fat women. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly disagree;
- 2 = Disagree;
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree;
- 4 = Agree;
- 5 = Strongly agree

Statement

1. I really don't like fat women much.
2. I don't have many fat female friends.
3. Fat women are a little untrustworthy.
4. Although some fat women are surely smart, in general, I think they're not quite as smart as average-weight women.
5. Although some fat women are surely nice, in general, I think they're not as nice as average-weight women.
6. I have a hard time taking fat women too seriously.
7. Fat women make me feel somewhat uncomfortable.
8. If I were an employer looking to hire, I might avoid hiring a fat woman.
9. I feel disgusted with myself when I gain weight.
10. One of the worst things that could happen to me would be if I gained 25 pounds.
11. I worry about becoming fat.
12. Fat women could lose at least some part of their weight through a little exercise.
13. Some women are fat because they have no willpower.
14. Fat women tend to be fat pretty much through their own fault.

Attitudes Toward Skinny Women

Below is a series of statements concerning skinny women. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly disagree;
- 2 = Disagree;
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree;
- 4 = Agree;
- 5 = Strongly agree

Statement

1. I really don't like skinny women much.
2. I don't have many skinny female friends.
3. Skinny women are a little untrustworthy.
4. Although some skinny women are surely smart, in general, I think they're not quite as smart as average-weight women.
5. Although some skinny women are surely nice, in general, I think they're not as nice as average-weight women.
6. I have a hard time taking skinny women too seriously.
7. Skinny women make me feel somewhat uncomfortable.
8. If I were an employer looking to hire, I might avoid hiring a skinny woman.
9. Skinny women could gain some weight if they stopped exercising so much.
10. Some women are skinny because they're obsessed with controlling how much they eat.
11. Skinny women tend to be skinny pretty much through their own fault.

Personal Attitudes and Traits

[Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Reynolds, 1982)]

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Please read each statement and decide whether the statement is **True** or **False** as it applies to you.

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged. | True | False |
| 2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. | True | False |
| 3. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. | True | False |
| 4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. | True | False |
| 5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener. | True | False |
| 6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. | True | False |
| 7. I'm always willing to admit to it when I make a mistake. | True | False |
| 8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget. | True | False |
| 9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable. | True | False |
| 10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own. | True | False |
| 11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others. | True | False |
| 12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favours of me. | True | False |
| 13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. | True | False |

Demographic Questions

1. How old are you? _____
2. What is your year of study? _____
3. What is your faculty?
 - _____ Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
 - _____ Faculty of Engineering and Design
 - _____ Faculty of Public Affairs
 - _____ Faculty of Science
 - _____ The Sprott School of Business
4. What is your height (in either):
 - _____ OR _____
 - Centimeters Feet & Inches
5. What is your weight (in either):
 - _____ OR _____
 - Kilograms Pounds
6. Are you currently pregnant? _____ No
 - _____ Yes → How many months? _____

Appendix E

Debriefing

What is the purpose of this research? The purpose of this research is to assess women's perceptions of "skinny shaming" and "fat shaming" and whether or not these two types of body shaming are regarded in the same way. Both skinny shaming and fat shaming are distinct, but comparable forms of body shaming. Skinny shaming consists of teasing and ridicule directed at individuals who are thin, whereas fat shaming is directed at over-weight and obese individuals. There is an ongoing debate regarding which type of body shaming is more problematic. Some argue that skinny shaming and fat shaming are quite different from each other, while others argue that they are more similar than they are different. In light of this, the purpose of this research is to assess whether women view skinny shaming and fat shaming in the same light, and the implications these perceptions might have.

What are the hypotheses? It is hypothesized that average-weight and over-weight participants will view skinny shaming as less hurtful and more socially acceptable than fat shaming, whereas skinny participants are expected to indicate that skinny shaming and fat shaming are equally hurtful and socially unacceptable. It is also anticipated that women who exhibit anti-fat attitudes will not view fat shaming as hurtful or unacceptable behaviour, whereas participants who display anti-thin attitudes will not view skinny shaming as hurtful or unacceptable behaviour. Finally, it is expected that participants who are satisfied with their bodies will view both types of body shaming as hurtful and unacceptable behaviour, whereas participants who are dissatisfied with their bodies will view both types of body shaming as unproblematic (i.e., not hurtful and not socially unacceptable).

Was deception used in this research? Deception was not used in this research.

Why is this important to scientists or the general public? This research is important because, while there is a great deal of research on fat shaming and its effects, there is virtually no empirical research on skinny shaming. As a result, this research will serve as a benchmark for further research on this particular form of body shaming.

Where can I learn more? For information about the effects of body shaming on women, the following research articles may be of interest:

Beggan, J. K., & DeAngelis, M. (2015). "Oh, my God, I hate you:" The felt experience of being othered for being thin. *Symbolic Interaction*, 38(3), 371-392.

Annis, N. M., Cash, T. F., & Hrabosky, J. I. (2004). Body image and psychosocial differences among stable average-weight, currently over-weight, and formerly over-weight women: The role of stigmatizing experiences. *Body Image*, 155-167.

The following web link may of interest:

<http://www.thebolde.com/skinny-shaming-is-a-real-problem-and-needs-to-stop/>

What if I have questions later? The following people are involved in this study, and may be contacted at any time if you have any questions or concerns: Tia Carpino (tia.carpino@carleton.ca) and Dr. Connie Kristiansen (connie.kristiansen@carleton.ca). Should you have any ethical concerns about this research, please contact Dr. Shelley Brown, Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board B, Shelley.Brown@carleton.ca or 613-520-2600 ext. 1505. You may also contact the Carleton University Research Compliance Office directly at ethics@carleton.ca. For any other concerns, please contact Dr. Joanna Pozzulo (Chair, Carleton University Department of Psychology, psychchair@carleton.ca, 613-520-2600, ext. 1412).

Is there anything that I can do if this experiment caused emotional and/or psychological distress? Some people may have found the nature of the social interactions depicted in the vignettes distressing. Should you experience any distress or discomfort as a result of participating in this study, you can contact the 24-hour Ottawa & Regional Distress Centre at 613-238-3311 or the Carleton University Health and Counseling Services at 613-520-6674. Both of these resources are staffed by people trained in helping people who are experiencing distress.

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