

Syracuse University

## SURFACE

---

Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects    Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects

---

Spring 5-1-2010

### True You Magazine

Amanda Romaniello

Follow this and additional works at: [https://surface.syr.edu/honors\\_capstone](https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#), [Modern Literature Commons](#), and the [Nonfiction Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Romaniello, Amanda, "True You Magazine" (2010). *Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects*. 343.

[https://surface.syr.edu/honors\\_capstone/343](https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone/343)

This Honors Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects at SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact [surface@syr.edu](mailto:surface@syr.edu).

# ***True You Magazine***

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at  
Syracuse University

Amanda Romaniello

Candidate for Bachelor of Science Degree  
and Renée Crown University Honors

April 2010

Honors Capstone Project in Magazine Journalism

Capstone Project Advisor: Professor Melissa Chessher

Honors Reader: Professor William Glavin

Honors Director: Eric Holzwarth

Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2010

## **Abstract:**

*True You Magazine* was created because of the turmoil and conflict that today's media creates for young girls between the ages of 10 years old and 14 years old. Girls of this age are highly susceptible to influences of any media form, including magazines, television shows, and movies. In the magazine industry, there are many women's and teen fashion and health magazines. Unfortunately, the majority of these publications lack healthy representation of female bodies. Some of these magazines also discuss and advise on topics, like sex or dieting, that girls in this young age range should not be reading.

Knowing the personal effects of some of these pressures, and the damage that these pressures can ultimately cause, specifically eating disorders, a magazine needed to be created that gave young girls a different perspective on what a fun and interesting magazine could be. According to MediaFamily.org, "over 45 percent [of girls] indicated that those images [in magazines] motivated them to lose weight." A study done by the Social Research Centre showed that "81 percent of ten-year-old girls had already dieted at least once." These pressures combined with the normal stages of going through puberty can create an environment that does not help girls to grow in a secure and comfortable perspective.

Every magazine possesses a mission statement. *True You Magazine* takes its reader to a place where smart meets fun and informative. *True You* wants readers to successfully navigate the pressures of outside media and to learn something new, but still have fun. This magazine is a place where we won't alter photographs. *True You* believes that the best way to live, to read, and to learn is through being honest with yourself, and only allowing positive outside forces to lead you to be the best that you can be.

With this idea in mind, *True You Magazine* serves as a medium to allow easily influenced girls at this age to read a magazine that their mothers would purchase or subscribe to. *True You* serves as a fun and informative place where girls can read and learn without feeling as though they are bogged down in academic or boring writing. By keeping the balance in the magazine with both text and large images, readers should not feel as though they are forced into reading lengthy pieces about topics that have little or no interest in their lives.

Being able to produce a magazine that caters to young girls will help to break the cycle that media creates with insecurity among young easily influenced girls. When girls are already intelligent it only forwards the mission of many who want to end this problem that the media creates. As much as some would want to believe that the media does not have such a great influence, there are many people who do not have the self-esteem and security to know that some content in magazines is doctored to make women look thinner, and more "perfect."

**Table of Contents:**

Acknowledgements	i
Advice to Future Honors Students	ii
Capstone Reflective Essay	1
Sources Cited and Consulted	18
Summary of <i>True You Magazine</i>	19

## Acknowledgements:

i

I would like to thank the following people who have aided me in creating and completing *True You Magazine*. The following people have not only supported me academically, but they have also been mentors in my personal life that allowed me to complete my thesis project for the Honors program.

To begin, I would like to thank Melissa Chessher. Not only has she been a wonderful thesis advisor, she has also been an academic advisor, editor, mentor and friend. Without our short, or long, meetings in her fun-filled office, and too many email exchanges to count, I would not have been able to grow and learn as much as I did throughout my time at Syracuse University,

I thank Bill Glavin for his guidance, support, and honesty about my project. Even when I was discouraged, he still helped me to keep my focus on my original project. His compassion when I could not work on my project for personal reasons gave me the perfect amount of distance and support.

Mom and Dad, although I created much angst and frustration with my decision to continue with the Honors program, and to finish this project, without you, I would not have completed *True You*. You may not have physically been here for me, but you were always in my mind. Even when I was beyond frustrated, I felt as if you were sitting beside me throughout every exciting and disappointing moment. I love you very much, and thank you.

I would also like to thank my sister for her words of encouragement because she is unconditionally supportive of my work even when I do not show enough appreciation for her help.

Thank you to my contributing writers: Ashley Christiano, Mary Desmond, Jamie Miles, Mallory Passuite, and Kaitlyn Pirie. And thank you to Sandy Hurd, Carla Lloyd, and Eric Holzwarth, for their academic and personal guidance. And thank you to Greg Hedges, David Chenell, and Charlie Scott for their assistance in design.

The Honors department, past students, and every other person involved in your project will tell you to start early, and to avoid leaving your entire project for the last minute. If I could give any advice, that would be my exact advice. I am so extremely grateful that I decided to take the time to organize and plan ahead.

It was such a wonderful feeling knowing that I had an almost complete project with months to spare before our deadline. I avoided the pressure to rush to finish, and the worry that I would not finish in time. As a senior, the last thing you want to be doing is cramming 18 month's worth of work into a month.

For magazine Journalism students, I would advise you to take the creative track for the project if you enjoy a creative challenge. I enjoyed being able to use my skills from class and to put them into my very own production. I know that as a magazine student, you are given the option to write a paper, but if you are at all interested in putting your knowledge, passions, and skills to good use, create your own magazine.

## Reflective Essay

As a magazine journalism major, I was given two options. Write a paper analyzing a magazine, or an aspect of the magazine business, or create my own magazine. I chose the latter. Growing up in an image-obsessed world, there's no avoiding that too-perfect celebrity or model on the covers of magazines. When I was younger, I would idolize the beautiful women who were sprawled across the pages of *Seventeen* Magazine. It took quite some time before my younger sister and I were even allowed to subscribe to these magazines, and then finally purchase *Cosmopolitan*, a magazine that some women consider their "bible."

Somewhere around the ripe age of 17, I started to obsess over my body image. An eating disorder ensued, and after admitting my problem to my parents, I went through hours, months, and even now, I have struggles with my body image. But what woman, or even man, doesn't find faults in themselves? And who do I blame for this obsession with body image?

Because this is a topic that affects young girls through adult-age women, much research has been conducted to prove that there is a correlation between body image and magazines. According to the Social Issues Research Centre (SIRC), "recent experiments have shown that exposure to magazine photographs of super-thin models produces depression, stress, guilt, shame, insecurity, body-dissatisfaction and increased endorsement of the thin-ideal stereotype." Also according to the SIRC, "by 13, at least 50 percent of girls are significantly unhappy about

their appearance.” Without even looking at a magazine, or comparing other factors, young girls are confronted with body dissatisfaction and insecurity.

It would be difficult to blame this obsession with perfectionism on media alone. My eating disorder did not spawn directly from the magazines I read, scrutinized, and idolized. There were other factors that fed into it, but I know that there were pressures from the outside world that made me feel like I could not accept myself for who I was, and how my genetics created my beautiful body.

As a result of my eating disorder, I wanted to help others, specifically young girls. I felt the need to prevent this awful disease from consuming another young girl’s life. Thus the idea of a magazine came to me, but I didn’t want a magazine like *Seventeen*, the former *Y.M.*, or the defunct *CosmoGirl*. I wanted a magazine that my mom would appreciate. I wanted to create an inspiring magazine that didn’t feed the mental loop of body image, fashion, beauty, and “health.” After relaying this concept to my reader, Professor Bill Glavin, he recommended I speak with Professor Carla Lloyd, an associate professor in the advertising, media studies, and mass communications departments.

Professor Lloyd and a group of former students conducted a case study on elementary school students to learn more about body image, and when dieting became a concern for that age of girls. Their study found that

girls started thinking about dieting in third grade, at the age of seven or eight. At this moment, my magazine, *True You*, was born.

It was only the beginning of my junior year in college, and I knew very well that I had ample time to complete my project. My adrenaline pumped with excitement about my magazine because I was actually going to do something proactive with the self-inflicted pain I had created only a few years ago.

Then I hit a bump in my life that would change me forever. In early October, my boyfriend passed away. I was devastated. *True You*, along with every thing else in my life, was put on hold, and would not be revisited until my proposal was due in November. Even then, I was still less than thrilled to be doing a project, especially one that now seemed so insignificant to the big picture of life. It took until about January of 2009 for me to wake up from a severe depression and come back to reality. I still needed to finish out three semesters of college and somehow create a thesis that no longer felt like a passion of mine.

The next time that I really began thinking about *True You* was toward the very end of my junior year. It was time to start planning, prepping, and organizing. I made lists, lots of them. But I would only peek in at them throughout the summer. Those peeks caused me to fill with anxiety about how I would complete this daunting project. Then I shoved the lists back into a folder, to only be brought out again for another short moment of anxiety.

Just as I was getting ready to start my senior year on a positive note, I was devastated with more sorrowful news. One of my closest friends from home passed away in a tragic car accident. Even though I had started to move beyond the grief I felt from the passing of my boyfriend, every emotion came boiling back to the surface. As much as I did not want my emotional state to interfere with the progress of my school work and *True You*, I still felt an ache in my body that would overpower my focus. As much as my life was pained, I managed to compartmentalize my emotions, and come back to campus in one piece. A small motivator with taking the next step in my grieving process was how I knew that my friend had also survived an eating disorder. I knew that she was looking down on me and would be proud of the work that I would eventually continue.

But it was the fall of senior year. I was forced to start working, but it wasn't by the deadlines that the Honors department provided, but by me. As a part of taking steps forward in my recovery, and moving forward in my life, I decided that doing work would be a great opportunity to reclaim myself. And then an idea dawned upon me. What if I created a magazine for students? This magazine could be created specifically for college-age students who were lost in the hustle and bustle of their college lives, and weren't sure of what they wanted to do with their lives. Where did this inspiration come from? My life and my confusion of what I would like to do with my life became a conflict and source of information. There are many students who present a façade about being super sure of themselves and

their career paths. In reality, we are all the same and all riddled with questions concerning doubt. And just as I was at a very large turning point in my life, where much of my academic work no longer held meaning, I felt the need to change my magazine to something that I could relate to in the present moment.

I drafted a proposal and presented the idea to Professor Glavin, my Capstone reader. My excitement was too much though. His response to my idea was harsh, blunt, but real. My dream of changing my magazine was crushed, and the meeting ended in tears. So it was back to *True You*, a magazine that lacked a spark for me at this time in my life.

As the semester crept on, I failed to begin many of the articles that I had planned on writing. This is when I truly began to understand the role of both an editor at an actual magazine, but also an advisor for a project of this size. I met with Professor Chessher, who did what she did best -- helped. She had been aware of my losses over the past year, so not only did she help with emotional support, but also with academics.

We poured over my original list of articles, and both realized that I would torture myself trying to complete them all, and design and edit an entire magazine by April. But that's what I am: an editor, a designer, a writer all piled into one. So what better way to teach me how to play the role of an editor-in-chief than to actually be one?

Together, myself as an editor, and Professor Chessher as my editor, we discussed which articles would work well in my magazine. Of all

the students taking her magazine-writing courses, we came up with several talented peers whose articles would fit perfectly with the mission of my magazine. With optimism about the future of my magazine, and an actual plan in place, I felt ready to go.

I emailed all of the students, and all were more than accommodating with sharing their work for my thesis, with the promises on my end that they would each get copies of their spreads to add to their own portfolios. I gave them each a deadline for when they had to give me their pieces, which was my way of acting as though we were not students at Syracuse University, but operating in the publishing world. Not only was I acting as an editor, I was being an editor.

Of all the previous projects that former Syracuse University students created for their Capstone project, the majority of the projects completed were all only written by that one student. Because I chose to not write all of the articles, I was able to add diversity and a variety of voices to my magazine in a way that some other projects may not have been able to do. I liked that I was getting different tones in my articles. Because as much as I may try to write differently depending on the article, I would still fail to be able to create as much range in my magazine.

Although I had not originally planned to be an editor in this way, it helped me to realize that as much as I enjoy writing and researching for articles, I think that I also enjoy managing people, critiquing their work, and adding a different eye to what starts off as a great article. I enjoy

helping to make the writer the best that she can be. I did not expect to come into this thesis learning as much as I have about the magazine industry, but for some reason, I did. Because I did choose the creative track for my project, I was automatically putting myself into a different category than what many think about in terms of a thesis project.

As the journey continued, I found that editing the articles was enjoyable. But my next task became overwhelming. Professor Glavin recommended that I find photography students to take photos for my magazine, but being realistic, and not knowing anyone in the photography major, I decided against this. My original plan was to complete all editing of the articles, find all stock photographs online, and sketch out the lay-out of each spread by hand. I did not have access to the programming used for this project during my winter break, so I found that if I kept organized I could keep up, and be ready to work when I returned to campus.

Unfortunately, I did not keep to this plan completely. Maybe I should not have set such high goals for myself; however, I was able to complete the editing of all my articles prior to returning to campus. Then another bump -- or in this case, slip -- in the road occurred. A week before returning to campus, I slipped in my house, dislocated my kneecap, and severely sprained my knee. This would be my third time on crutches in Syracuse, but little did I know, this would be the biggest blessing in disguise.

Because I was in a cumbersome knee brace, with little mobility, and had been confined to the couch, what better way to spend my time, than to prop my leg up in the Newhouse computer labs, and work on *True You*. I do not think that I could tally the hours that I spent in those labs, but I know for a fact that I spent enough to have a very complete project far sooner than any other Honors student creating their own magazine.

At this point, the whole project seems to blur together, but I know there were far too many moments of thinking I just wanted to give up. It disappoints me to say this, but I know that if my parents had not told me that I had to graduate with Honors, I probably would have dropped the project. Now, I look back upon their voices of disapproval when I did not want to push through, and I am grateful. Not only can I add this magazine to my portfolio, but I can also hold a tangible object, and say to someone that I wrote some of this. I edited all of this. And I completely designed *True You*. I have yet to meet many students or peers that can say they have completed a work like this one.

I was able to use my creative talents, and my logical mind, in a way that produced a magazine that I wanted to make and that I hoped would make a difference in a young girl's life. Yet, I did not always keep that perspective, and understanding throughout the process of creation because of the frustration and obstacles I faced.

To start, I had forgotten the majority of what I had learned in my introduction to graphics course, which I took a year ago. Although, the use

of the tools eventually came back to me, it did take some time of using the Internet to re-teach myself how to do some of the simple tasks in the program. Once I created a layout of my magazine, including the size and automatic page numbers, I started to play with where I would put certain articles. I did not start off in any logical order, and then I decided to just take my spread from graphics class and throw it into the layout.

Then arrived the longest and most irritating time: going through page after page on Flickr.com in search of the perfect photographs that would capture the pieces that I did not have photographs pre-provided to me. I set myself up for frustration because I could have chosen to take my own photographs, or I could have had someone else take the photos for me. I had images in my mind of what I would have liked to show up on my pages, next to these well-written and well-edited words, and yet, I dug myself into a hole.

I spent hours upon hours looking at great photos only to realize that they were too small, or not quite the right fit, or just not the right look for what I wanted. Maybe because I am very particular in my tastes, a perfectionist in my work, and hold myself to a certain standard, I created this madness for myself. But I think that if I lacked this kind of drive, and did not hold myself up to such a high place in my academic world, I would have failed myself, and the expectations for what a great Capstone project should turn out to be.

Finally, I found photographs for my work that reflected my vision, and yet, I was still not content. I am extremely grateful for the fact that one of my writers, Mallory Passuite, had taken her own photos for her article, and she gave me access to those photos. Not all of the photos fulfilled my size requirement; however,, some of the photos were able to be positioned in a way that the pages were completed for the “Jean-ology” spread.

One of my writers, Jamie Miles, wrote an article about trans-media in the classroom. This article focused on a high-school teacher who used photography combined with poetry to give students a voice and to improve literacy. Luckily, I was given permission to use the photographs from the class. After showing this spread to both Professor Chessher and Professor Glavin, it was decided that the best way to present the article would be by keeping all the text at the beginning of the spread, and creating a photo-essay of some of the photos and the corresponding poems, at the end of the article. The reasoning behind this was to avoid creating a choppy article, but also to keep the reader’s attention on either the photos or the story or both.

After bringing a draft to both professors, I got a great amount of feedback, but the majority of the feedback was positive. Although I still was not at my finishing point, I was still much farther along than the majority of their other advisee students. Some of the changes to be made

were problems with indentation, removing some formatting on the type, and to avoid using so much variety when it came to my fonts.

Another obstacle that I had yet to overcome was the cover. Then Professor Chessher made a great suggestion: to use one of the photographs from my article by Ashley Christiano, and that would make a great eye-catching cover. My only issue, at the time, was that the photos were all taken in the fall, and featured brightly colored leaves that suggested autumn – not spring or summer. And yet, I had no genuine attachment to making this issue of my magazine be a spring issue, so I decided to make it a fall issue.

I also decided that instead of making this a monthly magazine; why not make it a quarterly magazine? Because my magazine was not a fashion or beauty magazine, it did not need to be put out monthly, or even weekly. Because *True You* was just beginning, I thought that it would be more cost-effective to test out the magazine quarterly before planning for the magazine to be monthly.

After deciding on a cover, I was one step closer to my final product. I still had some questions on how to do make some small changes in my layout and design, so I sought the help of Professor Greg Hedges, one of the professors in the graphics department. I will not dwell on the frustrations that I had with receiving help from another professor, but I will simply be grateful for the ease and brevity of time that it took for Professor

Hedges to give me the basic steps that I needed to make certain changes to the layout. I finally felt like I was at an almost complete point.

Each of the articles in my project found a different place in the total magazine spread. I went back and forth when deciding if one article was better suited for the front versus the back of the book. I find that rearranging the articles helped me to realize how much of a role placement of articles plays in the creative flow of a magazine. My decision to not use advertisements was also essential. Campus publications, along with my magazine, do not rely on advertising in order to continue publication. However, when you look at many mainstream magazines, advertisements fund the entire magazine. Depending on the magazine, advertising may consume almost three-fourths of a magazine's content.

I decided to scan advertisements from other magazines to see what advertisements may look like as a part of *True You*. But after reassessing the layout, and reverting back to the main focus of my magazine, I decided that I did not like the way that they looked, nor did I like the idea of putting them in my work.

This magazine is supposed to be about breaking a media cycle, not about feeding it. And as much as advertising provides money for magazines, and also put food on the table for many of the people working at magazines, this academic work does not need an advertisement to survive. What *True You* is about is giving life some social value, and not conforming to the pressures that advertisements can put on readers. If I

were to choose to include advertisements, my hope would be to attract companies that would support the message of *True You* and help break the cycle of some negative messages put out by other magazines.

I placed my editor's note on the inside cover because I felt that it needed to be at the forefront. It was not because all other magazines place an editor's note at the beginning, but because I find that there is no point in having a note explaining my magazine anywhere else but the start. Opposite that page was the table of contents, which I designed to tease the reader into flipping to the page page with the writing possible, but just enough to give the reader a taste of each article is about.

Following this came a page devoted to both my contributing writers, and also a small masthead. I wanted to give my writers extra emphasis for their work and experience because they were doing me a favor by sharing their articles with me. My masthead is small. But it is an extremely important piece because the masthead gives credit where credit is deserved. Opposite the page with the contributing writers and the masthead, I placed an image and a quote by Roald Dahl:

“And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it.”

This quote has always been a form of inspiration for how I live my life and how I hope to continue to grow as a graduate and student of the world.

The next part of magazine was about healthy living. I put in the spread an article that I wrote on tanning. This was also intended to be an informative article. At this age, I remember knowing that tanning was bad, but did not completely grasp the concept of the negative effects that the sun can have on your skin. I also wrote an article about Facebook because the social-networking site has become so popular. Readers of any age should accept that not everyone will be as agreeable, helpful or trustworthy once you are on the Internet. Next came, the article about the basics of vegetarianism written by a former classmate and newspaper journalism major. Mary Desmond wrote a basic article about understanding vegetarianism. A shorter article, with an accompany photo makes beginning the magazine not at all daunting.

After my front-of-the book pieces, the shorter pieces, came my features. The first of the three features was written by Ashley Christiano. This article focused on how popular culture is moving past its *Twilight* fueled obsession with vampires and is turning toward magical creatures like fairies. Christiano also wrote a shorter piece to accompany the feature about some of the historical famous fairy characters that some of us may not realize are a part of the fairy world. This sidebar serves as an additional entry point to the feature and provides visual interest to the text-driven feature.

Following Christiano's articles was Mallory Passuite's piece on denim and the role of jeans play in our society in spite of the economic

down turn. She wrote about denim's history, the upscale denim market, and the science and marketing of jeans, and she used a denim-obsessed college student as the narrative tool of her story. Jamie Miles' story about trans-media in the classroom brought a great close to the feature well because of the combination of article and photo essay.

The last article in *True You* was written by Kaitlyn Pirie. Pirie gave eight easy advice tips on how to do well on the SAT. Although my magazine is targeted at elementary and middle-school aged girls, I know that as a young girl, providing articles older than your actual life presents the idea that you are of the age to be thinking about college and growing up. All magazines are about fantasy (not all the readers of *Vogue* are a size zero, and not all the readers of *GQ* buy the \$2000 suits). My readership fantasizes about growing up and going to college.

Unfortunately, at this point in the semester, nearing the mid-way point, I was completely sick of my project. I no longer felt a drive to complete it based on love alone. But just like many things that you spend so much time on, you can ultimately get sick of it, which was happening with *True You*. And this was not a time when I could just decide to stop. Luckily, a vacation appeared -- spring break -- and I freed my mind of my project, any writing, or work.

Back to reality, and it's crunch time. My project looks great when I return to it, but at the same time, I am completely unimpressed with it. Maybe it's because I have spent so much time on my project, that I could

re-design it in my sleep. I just held out hope that when the final product was in my hands, fresh off the printer, I would be both overjoyed and relieved.

Although we are advised to avoid criticizing our own projects, I find that I should acknowledge the fact that I did become frustrated with the project at times. I need to keep some perspective when I reflect about my criticisms. I forget that many magazines are staffed by many people, each of who have their own specialties and abilities. With this, I have accepted my project for what it is, and that the product is something powerful. This magazine was created as a result of me wanting to provide an alternative, realistic, positive image to counter the tsunami of altered, doctored, perfect images that assault young girls everyday.

The content of the magazine also plays a major role. Although at a certain age, I only wanted to flip through the magazine and look at the photos, I would go back to read the articles. By including articles that are educational and beneficial, already intelligent young girls can be influenced in a positive way that they'll happily receive.

In the end, I could not have asked for a better opportunity to take something with value, and turn it into a magazine. Even though my intentions were never to take *True You* to a publisher in hopes of having a quarterly magazine, I did find that the entire process of creating something was an incredible learning experience. My skills as a student of magazine journalism, but also having experience in the business school definitely

assisted me in creating a well-rounded project. The creative and entrepreneurial sides of my experience helped me to come up with a project idea. My past life experience gave me a foundation for the project because I had a personal connection to the topic.

Without the help of advisors, professors, family and friends, I would not have been able to formulate such a wonderful and complete project. The satisfaction that is found in being able to know that you created something so great all by yourself is indescribable. And for a writer to lack the words to describe how she feels about a topic of great substance means a great deal.

## Sources Cited and Consulted

### Human Sources:

- David Chenell, assistance with graphic design
- Melissa Chessher, magazine department chair and advisor
- Bill Glavin, magazine professor and reader
- Greg Hedges, assistance with graphic design
- Carla Lloyd, advertising professor

### Print Sources:

- *Drive Magazine*, Honors Capstone Thesis Project, Shannon Sweeney
- *Entertainment Weekly*, Issue # 1013, September 26, 2008
- *Glamour Magazine*, December 2008 Issue, Condé Nast Publications
- *Shape Magazine*, February 2009 Issue, Weider Publications, LLC
- *US Weekly*, Issue # 711, September 29, 2008, Wenner Media LLC

### Web Sources:

- "Beauty and Body Image in the Media" [http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women\\_and\\_girls/women\\_beauty.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/women_and_girls/women_beauty.cfm)
- Facebook Social Networking Site, [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- Gawker, media-based content site, [www.gawker.com](http://www.gawker.com)
- "How does today's advertising impact on your body image?" <http://www.healthypace.com/eating-disorders/main/eating-disorders-body-image-and-advertising/menu-id-58/>
- Kids Health, health expert site, [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org)
- "Media's Effect on Girl: Body Image And Gender Identity" [http://www.mediafamily.org/facts/facts\\_mediaeffect.shtml](http://www.mediafamily.org/facts/facts_mediaeffect.shtml)
- "Mirror, mirror: A summary of research findings on body image," Social Issues Research Centre <http://www.sirc.org/publik/mirror.html>
- PC World website, [www.pcworld.com](http://www.pcworld.com)

## **Summary of *True You Magazine***

*True You Magazine* began as a simple idea of creating a magazine for girls that relied on stories of empowerment and cultural, scientific information and avoided articles on fashion and beauty. I took this route because of those topics and images in these types of magazines that create pressure and reinforce poor body image in young girls. I am concerned about the messages these magazines send about how a beautiful and perfect woman should look and act. Sometimes, this concept can result in negative self-esteem, or even worse an eating disorder. Because of my previous history with battling and beating an eating disorder, my desire to use my experience to help others was strong. And thus the idea for a magazine with a positive influence on young girls was born.

Through research and understanding of the early influences of the media world, it appeared that this topic needed to be tackled, but through a different approach. Instead of preaching about the negative effects of the media, it would be best to flip this problem into something positive and productive that could educate and inspire young girls while enjoying it too. It would have been possible to tackle the topic head-on by creating a magazine that was fashion-based with the promotion of a positive image. And articles could still be based around health, beauty and fashion, but another aspect still presented itself. Sometimes magazines with this

content lack the sanction of parents. Even when the majority did scream that they were healthy examples for you to read.

*True You* needed to be something that a mother would let her impressionable daughter read. But basing decisions off of this creates another obstacle: How do you create a magazine that a girl's mother would buy for her, but also that offered something she would be interested in reading? That's when *True You Magazine* would fall into your lap. A balance between topics devoted to health, information, fun, and the future fills the kind of magazine that would give its readers something to flip through, read, learn from, and then talk about.

The magazine consists of all the basic features typically included in a magazine: a letter from the editor, table of contents, and then a frenzy of short and longer articles. *True You* began as a very text-heavy magazine, but I incorporated photographs to transform the publication into an actual magazine. Using stock photos to accompany the articles, but also including photos that some of the contributing writers took add variety to the magazine. The hours spent designing, editing, and laying out each spread could not be counted; however the end result was outstanding and extremely rewarding.

*True You Magazine* is a shorter magazine, but shorter in context of many of the fashion magazines that were not trying to be emanated. The magazine did not include any advertising, which is what usually creates the heft of other magazines. Depending on the issue, some magazines

are thicker than others because of when advertisers choose to include their products. *True You* breaks away from the mold of the typical magazine because it excluded all advertising. Any form of advertisement would not further the mission of this magazine at this point. I wanted to create a magazine with a message that advertisers would be drawn to. If the right advertisement were to come along that compliment *True You's* message, then it would be welcomed as a part of the magazine. However, *True You* did not need the support of advertisements to cover the costs of producing the magazine.

With the exclusion of advertising pressures, the mission of the magazine can be then be further emphasized. *True You Magazine* invites its readers to flip, read, consume and learn from the content. *True You* readers won't feel the pressures of the media or be influenced in a negative way without being aware of it. *True You* is a place where young girls can go to another place to leisurely learn.