

# **African-American Identity as Depicted in Skin Whitening Advertisements**

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Bachelor Thesis  
2012



**Tomas Bata University in Zlín**  
Faculty of Humanities

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Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně  
Fakulta humanitních studií  
Ústav anglistiky a amerikanistiky  
akademický rok: 2011/2012

## **ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE**

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Martina SKLENSKÁ**  
Osobní číslo: **H09553**  
Studijní program: **B 7310 Filologie**  
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi**

Téma práce: **Zobrazení Afroameričana v reklamách na produkty  
bělení pleti**

Zásady pro vypracování:

**Nastudování odborné literatury a histografie**  
**Sesbírání potřebných materiálů k tématu**  
**Sestavení a formulace hypotézy**  
**Testování hypotézy na základě analýzy materiálů**  
**Předložení výsledků analýzy a její závěr**

Rozsah bakalářské práce:

Rozsah příloh:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Seznam odborné literatury:

**Amgborale Blay, Yaba. 2011. Skin bleaching and global white supremacy: By way of introduction. Journal of Pan African Studies 4, no. 4: 4-46.**

**Frith Toland, Katherine, and Barbara Mueller. 2010. Advertising and societies: global issues. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.**

**Kerr, Audrey Elisa. 2006. The paper bag principle: class, colorism, and rumor and the case of Black Washington, Part . University of Tennessee Press.**

**Kusmer, Kenneth L., and Joe William Trotter. 2009. African American urban history since World War II. University of Chicago Press.**

**Walker, Susannah. 2007. Style & status: selling beauty to African American women, 1920-1975. University Press of Kentucky.**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce:

**PhDr. Katarína Nemčoková**

Ústav anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Datum zadání bakalářské práce:

**30. listopadu 2011**


Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce:

**4. května 2012**

Ve Zlíně dne 6. února 2012

  
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## **ABSTRAKT**

Tato práce pojednává o fenoménu bělení pleti ve Spojených Státech Amerických a o způsobech, jakým byli Afroameričané zobrazováni v reklamách na produkty bělení pleti. Práce obsahuje teoretickou a praktickou část. Teoretická část pojednává o důvodech, které podnítily myšlenku bělení pleti v USA a vývoj reklam od dvacátých do padesátých let dvacátého století. Analytická část obsahuje podrobnější rozbor reklam v šedesátých letech.

Klíčová slova: reklama, Afroameričanka, bělení pleti, kolorismus

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis deals with the phenomenon of skin whitening in the United States of America and with ways how African-Americans were depicted in the skin whitening advertisements. The thesis is divided into theoretical and analytical parts. Theoretical part discusses the main reasons which led mainly African-American women to the idea of skin whitening in the USA and the development of advertisements from the 1920s till 1950s. The practical part describes in more detail advertisements in the 1960s.

Keywords: advertisement, African-American woman, skin whitening, colorism

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank to my supervisor PhDr. Katarína Nemčoková for her guidance, patience and precious feedback. I also want to thank to Christine Minářová for her advice and to my family for their support.

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## INTRODUCTION

“In this jar...your fastest way to a brighter skin” (Ebony, May 1964).

“To lighten dark skin, try white’s specific face cream” (Ebony, September 1961).

“New faster-working Hydroquinone formula actually searches out and fades darker pigment” (Ebony, July 1964).

These are three examples of how skin whitening products were advertised to African-Americans from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the late 1970s. Products which made one’s complexion look whiter became popular especially in the communities of African-American women. The motivation for whitening the skin was simple: lighter skin was considered more beautiful and promised better life chances. Since African-American beauty was influenced strongly by white beauty standards, African-American beauty was very often put into question. The following quotation from the documentary *Dark Girls* captures the feelings of many African-American women. “I can remember being in the bathtub asking my mum to put bleach in the water, so that my skin would be lighter, and so that I could escape the feelings that I had about not being as beautiful, as acceptable, as lovable.”

Skin whitening has a long tradition in the USA. African-American women started to bleach their skin in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But it wasn’t until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that small beauty companies started to develop and began to do business in skin whitening products. These products were usually introduced and promoted through printed advertisements in magazines designated for African-American people. Because the advertisements were aimed mainly at African-American women to bleach their skin (and thus improve their looks) they were very often less than complimentary. The identity of African American women in these advertisements was diminished and damaged. Companies very often used offending, racist and stereotypical ways of presenting African-American women, and to some extent also African-American men.

From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century skin whitening advertisements were carrying the same message: lighter skin equals beauty and success. This trend started to change slowly during the 1960s, when the Civil Rights Movement came. The depiction of African-American men and women improved in the skin whitening advertisements in the second half of the 1960s.

Even though advertisements for whitening products were also targeted at White women, I will focus in my thesis only on the advertisements in the African-American press. These had a direct impact mainly on African-American women, who were at the centre of so called African-American beauty culture.

On the basis of my research, I will point out some crucial reasons which led African-American women to yearn for white skin. To be able to understand the phenomenon of skin whitening it will be necessary to point out major historical events. Afterwards I will focus on the advertisements promoting skin whitening products from the 1920s till the 1950s. This part will be based on my collected information and will present the way in which African-American women were depicted in the skin whitening advertisements of that particular period.

The last part of my thesis will focus on the results of my own analysis. I will demonstrate through my research how the advertising of whitening products changed during the period of the 1960s. My main aim will be to uncover whether the Civil Rights Movement had some significant impact on the skin whitening industry and marketing strategies.

The archives of the renowned African-American magazine *Ebony* will be used for this part of the thesis. I will discuss the frequency of the advertisements, their message and the way in which the African-American women (and to some extent also men) were depicted in these advertisements. This research will be based partially on the historical background.

## **I. THEORY**

## 1 Skin whitening in the USA

The phenomenon of skin whitening (or skin bleaching) has a long tradition in the world. Whiteners were used very frequently already in Ancient Rome, during the Elizabethan Era and in Asia (especially Japan or China), where whitening was a part of the cultural history. The phenomenon of skin whitening is a current issue even today. Especially in Asian and African countries skin whiteners and bleachers are very commonly used by many women and men.

In the United States skin whitening products were popular in the African American community mainly during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. At that time post-colonial American society was divided by a hierarchy based on skin color, according to which people were assigned to certain social position. At the top of the hierarchy were white people holding all the privileges. On the other hand racial groups (like African-Americans) were at the bottom of this hierarchy. For this particular type of discrimination which divides people according to their skin color, scholars use the term **colorism**.

### 1.1 Colorism as a Reason for Skin Whitening

The whole concept of colorism is based on the different shades of one's complexion. Robert Hall gives a concise definition: "The key characteristics of colorism is distinguishing people with lighter-skin hues over darker-skin hue individuals, based on a higher value being places on lighter-skinned individuals" (Hall 2008, 177). To understand deeper the discrimination of colorism in the USA, it is necessary to give a historical account, since the idea of colorism is inevitably connected with the ideology of White Supremacy.

White Supremacy, which in the words of Doctor Blay expressed "the "natural" and divine superiority of Whites" (Blay 2001, 12), was an ideology prevalent in the United States during the time of slavery and colonialism. This ideology was also based on the superiority of Whiteness over Blackness. "The ideology of White Supremacy that European colonists brought included the association of blackness with primitiveness, lack of civilization, unrestrained sexuality, pollution and dirt" (Glenn 2009, 169). Mark Hill also adds that "Whiteness became identified with all that is civilized, virtuous, and beautiful; blackness, in opposition, with all that is lowly, sinful, and ugly" (Hill 2002, 77).

Coloristic tendencies were already visible in the years of slavery, when "lighter skinned slaves were given more prominent work positions than black skinned ones"

(Russell 2003, 161). Even after the abolishment of slavery and after the turn of the new century colorism did not disappear. Many researches from the 1950s and 1960s showed that African-American women and men with lighter skin were likely to have better socioeconomic status. (Hertel and Hues 1990, 1106). As Lillie Fears pointed out, “colorism played an important role in many aspects of African-American lives such as education, life opportunities, self-consciousness or beauty” (Fears 1998, 30). To better their life chances, many African-Americans started to use the skin whitening products, which were intended to make their skin “less black”. Lighter skin promised a better life, potential assimilation and acceptability.

## **1.2 The Influence of Colorism on Personal Appearance and Beauty**

Colorism also had an important influence on another area of African-Americans’ lives apart from life chances. That was their personal appearance and beauty. Lillie Fears stated, that “colorism also includes attitudes and beliefs suggesting, that Blacks are more attractive and more intelligent when their hair textures and facial features resemble more closely to that of Whites rather than the typical Afrotypic look” (Fears 1998, 30). Thus, whitening of the skin started to be used by African-Americans not only as a way how they were gaining their life opportunities and assimilation. It was also the way how they were trying to look more beautiful or handsome in order to reach white beauty standards. Many scholars claimed that “because the personal appearance and beauty is usually more important for women in societies generally, it was African-American women, who were mostly influenced and affected by the coloristic ideas of beauty” (Fears 1998, 30; Thompson and Keith 2001, 339). African-American women were also the main target of the African-American beauty industry and of skin whitening advertisements.

## **1.3 Beauty Standards and Skin Whitening**

What is clear from the previous paragraph is the fact that the ideal of African American feminine beauty was strongly influenced by white beauty standards at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At that time a light complexion imparted to women a certain social status in society. A light complexion was considered a sign of prestige. “Having light skin implied that one was a woman of high class, education, and leisure. A woman’s light skin meant she did not need to work outdoors to make a living” (Rondilla and Spickard 2007, 82). Since a light complexion represented and promised better living conditions and

standards, many African-American women started to value and desire the lighter hues of the complexion. The following quote from the book by Marita Golden *Don't play in the Sun* gives an insight into how African-American beauty standards were perceived in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. "The equation is simple and complex. Light skin, "White" features plus straight hair equals beauty. Dark skin plus coarse hair equals ugly. But, dark skin plus long thick straight hair and "White" features can equal beauty. Light skin, "Black" features, and coarse hair equals ugly" (Golden 2005, 18). From this quotation can be deduced, that African-American beauty standards were influenced by white ones in many ways. What was desirable was a light complexion, Caucasian features, long straight hair and a slim figure. Too dark skin, kinky hair or broad lips and nose were not approved of. These features represented in the eyes of many Whites and also African-Americans, what was neither desirable nor beautiful. To obtain the desired look, numbers of African-American women began to use skin whitening products in order to become more beautiful, successful and acceptable. These products were produced by developing beauty companies and were later advertised in the African-American press.

#### **1.4 The Development of Beauty Culture and the Beauty Industry**

Skin whitening ointment, hair products and other cosmetic treatments are often called by scholars like Kathy Peiss or Susannah Walker a part of so called "beauty culture". During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the use of cosmetic products (such as make-up) was considered immoral and only women of easy virtue used them. This attitude was slowly changing by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. "In the early stages of the development cosmetics industry, from the 1890s to the 1920s, women formulated and organized "beauty culture" to a remarkable extent" (Peiss, 2011, 4). It was during this period that women started to set up beauty salons where they offered beauty culture products and treatments (mostly manufactured by themselves). These beauty salons were the foundation stone of what was to become the beauty industry established both by White and African-American women. In the first twenty years of the twentieth century the beauty industry developed and expanded. Early advertisements for beauty products could be found in the local press. As the demand for beauty culture products (including skin whiteners) increased, beauty salons began to turn into small firms which started to grow. Some of them developed into successful companies operating throughout the better part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 2 The Development of Advertising

### 2.1 The Beginning of the Century and Skin Whitening Advertisements

Once the beauty industry developed properly it was only a matter of time before companies invested in advertising in the national press. Despite the fact that advertisements promoting beauty culture products existed already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the owners of beauty companies realized a real power of marketing.

Since skin whitening products were becoming popular among African-American women advertisers developed successful marketing strategies in the African-American magazines and newspapers. Products for skin whitening began to appear in the press together with hair straighteners and hair products. As Doctor Audrey Kerr pointed out “the paradoxically “white” standard for beauty in African-American communities was confirmed and promoted through advertisements in the black press” (Kerr 2006, 12). The advertisements which were appearing in periodicals such as “*The Crisis*, *The Coloured Americans* or *The Chicago Defender*” (Gooden 2011, 84) were promoting explicitly or implicitly the white ideal of beauty and very often carried the racist overtones. The identity of the African-American women was very often misinterpreted and the whole content of the advertisements was influenced by racial bias.

Doctor Jacob Dorman argues, that “advertisements for skin bleaching creams appealed to consumers’ desires for beauty, attractiveness, social advancement and self-betterment” (Dorman 2011, 56). In most of the advertisements African-American women’s features like curly (or “kinky”) hair and dark skin were considered as something undesirable which needed to be improved or got rid of. In other words, advertisements carried the message that the use of the skin whitening products will improve the person using it. As a good example can be used Hartona advertisement from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century: “Hartona face bleach will gradually turn the skin of a black or dark person five or six shades lighter, and will turn the skin of mulatto person almost white” (Lindsey 2001, 107).

The advertisement was also supplemented with pictures of an African-American woman before and after using the Hartona cream. The “after” African-American woman however looks more like a Caucasian type of woman and has a pale, white skin.

## 2.2 1920s – 1930s – Lightness as a Way to Success

By the 1920s most of the African-American press contained advertisements promoting beauty products and skin whiteners. These were successfully sold to African-American women all over the United States. According to the Johnson's research on advertisements in the African-American press from 1925, the most frequently occurring advertisements were those which were promoting beauty culture commodities (including skin whiteners) (Johnson 1925, 2). The beauty industry was turning out to be a very promising business which was developing at a rapid speed.

Advertisements by cosmetic companies such as Nadinola, Quick-Bleacho or Poro, were frequently appearing on pages of the African-American periodicals. These advertisements were emphasizing the importance of African-American women's good appearance. Suzannah Walker pointed out, that "cosmetics advertising emphasized that women were constantly on public display, that their looks were continually being judged, and that beauty was necessary for success in life" (Walker 2007, 35). Advertisers chose to promote skin whiteners to African-American women as a way to "improve" themselves. Light skin was depicted as a way for African-American women to succeed in society, become more popular among friends, and earn more money at work. This was the key message of most of the advertisements in 1920s and 30s.

The advertising slogans were very often offensive, and in many cases openly criticized the darker hues of the complexion. In one of the advertisements, which Johnson cited in his survey, darker skin color is seen as an "obstacle" which needs to be removed with the help of Bleacho cream: "Lightens your skin or money back – Safe-Sure-Quick-Bleacho. Be more popular. Earn more money. Safely and secretly you can now remove the greatest obstacle to your success. Bleacho is guaranteed to lighten your skin regardless of what is it now" (Johnson 1925, 2).

The connection between white (or light) skin and respectability in the eyes of friends and society was demonstrated in the Nadinola advertisement from 1929, which says: "If you want a whiter, prettier complexion, you can have it with Nadinola! You can secure the light-tone beauty that all your friends will admire and envy with this double-quick, extra-powerful bleach. Nadinola, the skin-whitener, will bring you this new loveliness just as it has done for thousands of attractive women" (Dorman 2011, 57).



### 2.3 1940s – 1950s – Black & White Love

The beauty industry had a strong position on the market at the beginning of the 1940s. Production of the skin whitening creams was increased by new developing companies which were continually joining the older ones. As Suzannah Walker stated “in the years between World War II and the early 1960s, the number of companies that produces beauty products for black women and advertised in black magazines increased dramatically” (Walker 2007, 97). Apart from older companies such as Poro and Nadinola, new brands arose (e.g. Show White or Apex) and came on the market. The development of new companies caused an increase in advertising in African-American newspapers and magazines.

Besides new companies new magazines were also founded. In 1945 John H. Johnson established the new *Ebony* magazine. “It provided prosperous African-Americans a place to showcase their successes and offered inspirational blueprints for others as they attempted to reach similar heights” (Rooks 2004, 131). The pages of *Ebony* magazine (and later *Jet* in 1951) were directed exclusively at the African-American population and reported on achievements of their most successful actors, writers or political activists.

On the other hand, *Ebony* quickly adopted the advertising trend and thus advertisements promoting skin whitening products started to appear on the pages of this popular magazine. The message of these adverts in the 1940s was usually the same as it was during the 1920s or 30s. In 1948 a Snow White advertisement was saying: “In just 3 minutes, Have the complexion tone you want! Amazing Snow White Make-Up Cream Works “Miracles” on Dark Skin” (Flickr: vielles\_annonces). There were again two pictures of “before using” and “after using” effects. What is quite interesting is the fact, that even though the cream is designated for dark skin, there are Caucasian women featuring in this advert who should enhance the beauty and necessity of the white skin.

The 1950s, however, brought some changes in the marketing strategies. Firstly, magazines such as *Ebony* or *Jet* gave beauty products promoters new opportunities in form of photos, colors and big headings which could be used when promoting their brands. Especially popular became photos of models featuring in the skin whitening advertisements. These models were usually depicted as very light skinned African-Americans or White women, who were supposed to demonstrate the power of skin bleaching products. Nonetheless, these women looked more like just a distant reflection of

the real African-American woman. Audrey Elisa Kerr even called them a “caricature of black women” (Kerr 2006, 13).

Moreover, especially in the 1950s, companies like Nadinola, Apex or Black and White bleaching cream started to emphasize the idea that women with lighter hues of complexion were more likely to find a suitable mate. Thus, according to the advertisements, the darker the African-American woman was, the smaller was her expectations for love life, sex-appeal, and personal happiness. Audrey E. Kerr stated that the “important promise of these advertisements was heightened womanhood but not to vanity’s sake. Becoming more attractive to men – and thus finding a good mate – was the unstated aspiration, since successful men presumably sought fair-toned women” (Kerr 2006, 13). Personal popularity, professional success and social position were partially replaced by the longing for love and relationship. Most of the advertisements were putting darker African-American women in a bad light and were suggesting that, without lighter skin, they have no chance of a successful love life. Many advertisements were similar to these:

“Lighter skin leads the way to brighter evenings! The nicest things happen to girls with light, lovely complexion” (Edye Deloch-Hughes, Black Copy My Perceptive Perspective, comment posted January 8, 2012).

“I wanted these roses to see how lovely you are. Wonderful things happen you’re your complexion is clear, bright, Nadinola Light” (Flickr: vielles\_annonces).

There is an interesting difference in the depiction of African-American women and men in these advertisements. Whereas the female models featured in the advertisements were usually light skinned or nearly white, the male models were always dark-skinned with typical African-American features (darker shades of skin, broad nose, and dark curly hair). Thus there is a quite explicit implication that African-American men are more likely to choose a woman whose complexion is light and pale (even White), instead of dark skinned African-American woman. This sort of message could have caused a sense of fear in African-American women that if their skin is not light, they would not find a suitable mate. These types of advertisements were based on the sexual stereotypes which saw African-American men as a “sexual predators” (Battle and Barnes 2009, 140) or even ““studs” who possess suprahuman sexual power” (Walker 1992, 37) who desire White women.

## **II. ANALYSIS**

### 3 1960s – A Time of Changes & “Black is Beautiful”

The end of the 1950s and 1960s brought many political changes to the United States and the 60s in particular were influenced by the Civil Rights Movement. For many African-Americans these were the years of hope and change. The slogan “Black is Beautiful” was often used as a motto by Civil Rights Movement activists as well as by ordinary African-American people. This motto should have celebrated all the different aspects of African American identity: "black pride, black beauty, black achievement, black history, and the use of the term 'black' rather than “Negro“(Jones 2000, 1519). African-American beauty standards especially started to change in the reflection of the Civil Rights Movement. The beauty companies producing beauty culture products inevitably had to respond to the changing values of society.

The main goal is to determine whether the atmosphere of the sixties had a crucial impact on African-American beauty culture and industry. My first aim is to discover whether the production of skin whiteners continued and how the African-American women and men were depicted in advertisements.

As my source to examine the advertisements of the 1960s I have decided to use the archives of the *Ebony* magazine. The Ebony Corporation partners with Google and offers the possibility of browsing online through the archives of magazines from the 1960s up to the present day. This archive provides me with enough information to show how the African-American beauty culture changed under the influence of the Civil Rights Movement.

From what was said on the previous page it might seem that the 1960s were the end of skin whitening advertisements. According to my research the truth turn out to be quite different. The skin whitening advertisements promoting bleaching products (usually ointments and creams) were present in the *Ebony* magazine during the whole of the 1960s. The high number of advertisements remained stable until 1966 when the frequency of these advertisements decreased.

Besides skin whitening advertisements also advertisements for hair products (such as ointments and hair straighteners) were present in the *Ebony* magazine. These were even and more prevalent. Though these were not the focus of my research I will mention them later because they were part of the beauty culture and underwent important changes during the mid and late 1960s.

### 3.1 Companies Producing Skin Whitening Creams

As mentioned above, in the first half of the 60s skin whitening advertisements were very common in *Ebony* magazine. Despite the political changes which were taking place during the first half of the decade, skin whiteners were very actively promoted to the African-American population. Advertisements promoting skin bleaching products were appearing in each issue of *Ebony* magazine and the frequency ranged from at least 4 up to 6 or more pieces per issue. Paradoxically, it was not rare to find an advertisement promoting a skin whitener next to articles celebrating African-American history or political leaders.

Despite the fact that advertisements for hair and teeth products, cigarettes or whiskey were more prevalent, skin whitening advertisements were undeniably hard to overlook. The sizes of advertisements varied: from full page to not bigger than a column. But all of them had the same themes and intentions as before; to persuade African-American women in particular to buy the product and use it in order to become more successful or beautiful. The cosmetic companies which were repeatedly promoting their products on the pages of *Ebony* were the following:

Artra	Mercolized Wax Cream
Black and White Ointment	Nadinola
Bleach and Glow Cream	Posner's Skitona
Black and White Bleaching Cream	Pond's Vanishing Cream
Dr. Fred Palmer Skin Whitener	Vanishing Cream

#### 4 1960 – 1965 – Bleaching Continuous

When looking at advertisements from the first half of the 1960s one will notice that they echo those from the 1950s in many ways. The depiction of African-American women and men remained practically the same, as well as the whole notion of advertisements. The main message proclaiming that lighter skin is more beautiful stayed implicitly inserted in all advertisements and was promoted to the African-American population. The superiority of white beauty standards was visible in more or less every advertisement.

Skin whitening creams were still presented as a method of self-improvement intended to help African-American women get rid of their dark skin – the most vivid feature of their African-American identity. By removing dark skin women were supposed to acquire certain social attributes which (according to advertisements) they did not possess before using the cream. This notion was reflected in the themes of advertisements depicting African-American women in different contexts situations. First main theme was carried over from the 40s and 50s and proclaimed the idea that light skin is a pre-condition for a successful love life. The second theme addressed the beauty of African-American women. Advertisements with this theme were promoting the idea that African-American women can feel good and charming when their complexion is lighter and clearer (a more personal approach).

The common attribute of all these advertisements was, apart from the themes, the way in which marketers were promoting the whiteners to African-American women. The beneficial results of the skin whitening creams were guaranteed by the new chemical formulas added to the skin whiteners. To be more persuasive, all the advertisements were promising that the skin bleachers were based on “medicated ingredients” and that “modern science knows no faster way of lightening skin” (Ebony, January 1960). Artra was proclaiming that its cream “contains no ammoniated mercury” (Ebony, February 1960). On the contrary most of the products contained Hydroquinone, (which is nowadays considered as highly dangerous and its use is even banned in certain countries (Melville 2009, 12). Other “magical ingredients” which should have helped African-American women to get their skin of dreams were Zinc Phenolsulfolate “F.A.7.”, medicated ingredient A-M or G-Plus action. All of these claimed to create “magic” on dark skin. Despite the fact that many of them might have been unreal the companies asserted, that they were “developed by doctors” (Ebony, February 1960).

## 4.1 Good Skin vs. Bad Skin

Most of the advertisements had a narrative to demonstrate the battle of the African-American women with “bad skin”. These “personal stories” had a persuasive effect. African-American women could identify with the protagonists whose “bad skin” was seen as an obstacle in either their personal or professional life. The protagonist was usually depicted as a clueless African-American woman who succeeded in her life after she used the skin whitening product. None of the advertisement was saying that she could succeed as a dark skinned woman.

The “bad skin” was usually described as dull, oily, messy, dark with freckles, blotches, pimples and spots. The “good skin” on the other hand was light, clear, bright, soft, smooth, lovely, fair, glowing and radiant. In most cases advertisements were not saying out loud that dark skin was ugly or not nice. Nonetheless, due to the connotations of words describing bad or good skin, the reader subconsciously created in his or her mind the idea which skin or woman was considered more beautiful and which not. A more detailed description of these advertisements will be discussed in the following chapters.

### 4.1.1 Promoting White Ideals

Though most of the advertisements were not expressing directly that the dark skin was unattractive or bad, there were, nonetheless, exceptions which occasionally appeared on the pages of *Ebony* magazine. These advertisements did not mince words and quite explicitly suggested that darker hues of complexion were not desirable and can be removed. It is rather interesting that these advertisements were from the later 60s (specifically from 1964 and 1965).

The advertisement for the new German Palidia cream encouraged women to lighten their skin in order to get a better (lighter) look. To stress more the difference between white and dark complexions, a white model was featured in this advertisement (though the advertisement was in an African-American magazine). Parts of her body where she obviously used the cream were of a lighter hue and the rest of her body (“The Neglect Zone”) was dark. The heading was quite expressive itself: “Lighten Dark Skin Face...Neck...Hand Spots...Ugly Elbows...Solves Dark Color Problems as No Cosmetic Before” (*Ebony*, July 1964). The text in the advert was openly saying: “Now dark skin can be lightened! Now dull complexion can be bright“(Ebony, July 1964).

In 1965 the Ultra Nadinola Company chose a very disturbing approach to promote their product. The cream promised discoloration effects on one's skin. The advertisement featured a color photo of a woman in four different stages of using the cream. In the first picture she was depicted as a dark African-American and in the last one she looked more like a Caucasian type of a woman. This advertisement was very openly promoting the white standards of beauty and quite openly urged women, to think about bleaching their skin with the heading "Bright Idea" (Ebony, May 1965). This rather polysemous heading could be understood in a variety of ways. Bright idea might have been interpreted as an idea of the light skin in connection with the picture. At the same time, the reader might have deduced from the idiomatic expression "bright idea", that lighting the skin is a brilliant idea.

#### 4.1.2 Lighter, Fairer Promise

Advertisements from previous the chapter were, however, extremes. The majority of advertisements were selling skin bleachers to women in a less expressive way. Nevertheless, all of them were implicitly promoting the white standards of beauty through premeditated combinations of texts, headlines and pictures. Here are some typical examples of skin whitening advertisements from the first half of the 1960s.

"Lighter, fairer, lovelier skin...so easily yours with Bleach and Glow" (Ebony, February 1960).

"Now you can be lighter, lovelier, thanks to the new wonder of modern science" (Ebony April, 1960).

"Lighter, brighter skin may be yours in 7 days" (Ebony, July 1962).

"Lighter, lovelier skin beauty for you is...the Artra promise" (Ebony, April 1962).

"Discover Ultra Nadinola for a brighter, lighter, more even-toned look in all these beauty areas" (Ebony, September 1964).

It is possible to notice, that no advertisement was directly saying "whiten your skin to be more beautiful". Instead, all advertisements contained a high frequency of words such as: lighter, brighter or lovelier. These adjectives, especially in combination with the theme of the advertisements and pictures of smiling women using these creams created subconscious ideas in the reader's mind. The reader usually deduced from the



advertisements that light colored skin is something that makes a person better and more successful. Moreover, all advertisements were formulated to make the reader to believe that every woman (even African-American) can have a light skin. Every African-American woman could be beautiful and loveable because all she had to do was to buy the cream (usually for a very reasonable price) and use it.

To be more trustworthy and persuasive many advertisements featured famous African-American personalities. A good example can be Pond's advertisement from 1961 which was saying: "Light up your skin with beauty" (Ebony, March 1961). This was the heading and also the quote of the main protagonist of the advertisement, Helen Williams, who was a famous model in the 1960s. This light skinned beauty repeatedly promoted the use of the whitening creams and was supposed to demonstrate the result of using the skin whitener. Her statement about lighting the skin encouraged the impression that African-American women can be successful and beautiful when their skin is light.

Helen Williams was not the only famous African-American personality promoting the practice of skin whitening. Other famous African-American women featured in the advertisements were famous light skinned actresses Barbara McNair and Hilda Simms. Barbara McNair especially appeared in several advertisements for Posner and usually promoted the modern ways of bleaching to help women to "discover their light and radiant skin" (Ebony, September 1961).

Many advertisements were very similar to those mentioned above. Generally they all indirectly promoted skin whiteners in a quite unimaginative manner. Nonetheless, there were also advertisements which were more inventive and contained metaphorical or idiomatic expressions which were creating in the mind of the reader the idea that light skin is better.

The heading of Bleach and Glow skin whitener stated: "Come out of the shadows" (Ebony, February 1962). This advertisement contained a very evocative picture. The background of the picture was very dark (almost black) with the slightly visible shadow of the main protagonist, a very light skinned African-American model. The lightness of her skin was put into a contrast with the dark background to emphasize the obvious difference between these two colors. Therefore, shadow in this advertisement can be understood in two ways: either as a real shadow or as a metaphoric expression for dark skin. The word shadow automatically evokes in the reader the idea of darkness, discomfort and sometimes even anxiety or fear. It is usually something everybody wants to avoid. This advertisement

might have given African-American women the feeling that it was possible to “escape” from the shadows of dark skin and become a better (lighter) person.

Another example is Dr. Palmer’s advertisement which said: “Enjoy the light side of life” (Ebony, October 1961). This advertisement was very imaginative and relied on the knowledge of the reader. The heading included a play on the idiomatic expression the “bright side of life” which is usually interpreted as a “better side of life”. The word “bright” was replaced by “light”, which was referring to the light skin color in this particular advertisement. The fact that these two adjectives were cleverly switched may have caused that someone who knew the original idiomatic expression connected the original meaning with the new one. Therefore that person could deduce that light skin leads to a better life. The advertisement featured an unnaturally light skinned African-American woman surrounded by a black background.

#### **4.1.3 Be Lovely, Light and Loved**

Apart from the advertisements promoting personal beauty, there were advertisements stressing the importance of light skin in relationships. These were very popular in the first half of the 1960s. In particular, companies like Nadinola, Bleaching cream or Artra used this type of promotion very frequently. These advertisements were the only ones in which both African-American women and men appeared.

The male characters were depicted as dark skinned African-Americans who fell in love with the female character, who was much lighter than themselves. There was, again, the stereotypic notion that African-American men tend to seek out lighter skinned women. Thus light skin in women (not dark) was considered to be the key to the heart of every man. All advertisements were similar to the following ones.

In a Nadinola advertisement the protagonist was portrayed as saying: “He never gave me a second look...till Nadinola gave me a new look” (Ebony, September 1960). The advertisement continued with a description of how dark and dull complexion can deprive woman of popularity and love. There was a very effective picture included in this advertisement. To stress the main message (that African-American men are likely to choose a light skinned woman) there was a picture of an African-American couple looking at the engagement ring on the woman’s finger. It is possible to observe a certain contrast between these two protagonists. The African-American woman is light skinned and dressed

in white. The man, on the other hand, is of darker hues of skin and dressed in black. It might be disputable whether this was coincidence or a marketing move. But since Nadinola Company used this motif repeatedly in their advertisements, I believe these pictures were intended to demonstrate men's preference for light skinned women and emphasized the difference between black and white.

Another Nadinola advertisement proclaimed: "Look how men flock around the girl with the clear, bright, Nadinola-light complexion" (Ebony, April 1960). The importance of lightness is expressed both in the heading and in the picture. An apparently African-American man is placed at each side of the picture both standing with their backs to the reader. However, only their black silhouettes can be recognized. In the centre there is a light skinned African-American woman, again dressed in a white dress, peeking at one of the men. This advertisement is cleverly made. Since the woman is surrounded only by the shadows of the men, her lightness is even more visible and recognizable.

However it was not only Nadinola Company which demonstrated the light feminine beauty through their advertisements. The Posner Company proclaimed that, "No matter how close he gets, your skin will look lighter, softer and lovelier with Skitona" (Ebony, July 1965). There is a picture playing with the shadows in this advertisement. There are two protagonist, very pale African-American woman and dark skinned man. As he is standing in the shadow next to her, he is hardly recognizable and almost blends with the darkness. The light skin of the African-American woman on the other hand sort of shines and comes out of the darkness.

## 4.2 Early Changes in the Beauty Industry

Though producers were still promoting skin whitening products in the first half of the 1960s, some beauty companies started to foresee the changes that were inevitably coming to the beauty industry. Despite the fact that the Posner Company had produced skin whitening products and hair straighteners for many years, in late 1965 Posner came up with a new cosmetic line created especially for African-American women. The advertisement for this new cosmetic claimed: "Posner creates color tones especially to blend with your deep-toned beauty" (Ebony, October 1965). The line was included lipstick, face powder and also foundation all of which were to "enhance the beauty of your natural coloring" (Ebony, October 1965). The model featured in the advertisement was not really a dark skinned African-American woman, but her skin was not lightened or pale. She was

depicted as a brown skinned African-American with African features (broad nose, full lips etc.)

This was an innovative approach. The fact that the beauty company depicted brown skinned African-American woman in its advertisement was extraordinary and new. She did not have to get rid of her dark skin but enhanced it instead. Although it took a couple more years to change the attitude of advertisers in general, these were the first baby steps which led to the slow change in the African-American beauty industry.

## 5 1966 – 1970 – The Time of Change

The second half of the 60s was a time of great changes in the beauty industry. African-American beauty standards, which for many years mirrored white ones, started to move in a new direction. The change was caused mainly by the political changes which took place in the 1960s. It was a time when personal appearance and beauty started to play a significant role in lives of African-American people.

The Civil Rights Movement period was not “just” about fighting for the rights and equality of African-American people, but it also represented the fight for their dignity and racial pride. Many African-American women and men started to demonstrate their beliefs and awareness through personal appearance in the second half of the 1960s. “A growing Civil Rights Movement politicized appearance and the use of hair straighteners and skin lighteners declined” (Black 2004, 37). As the usage of the hair products and skin whiteners decreased, advertisements started to change and adapt to the new changing market. African-American features such as darker skin, broad lips, kinky hair, were no longer portrayed as negative. The depiction of African-American women in the skin whitening advertisements began to change in a new and positive way. However, the changes in advertisements promoting hair products were even more vivid.

### 5.1 Hair as a Demonstration of Racial Pride

Beauty companies which had for a long time promoted permed and straight hair slowly started to adapt to the new demands and trends. Reflecting the political changes in the country, they turned from the older “white” style of hair to the “Natural Look”. It was in 1967 that a model with an Afro hairdo (or so called Natural hair) appeared in an advertisement for the first time (Ebony, December 1967).

As Paula Black stated “the “Afro” was adopted as a fashion and a political statement, and phrase “Black is Beautiful” was used in order to elevate the markers of race to a position of pride” (Black 2004, 37). Noliwe Rooks also adds that “The Afro was understood to denote black pride, which became synonymous with activism and political consciousness” (Rooks 1996, 6). The politicization of the Afro hairdo is visible in many advertisements in *Ebony*. In the late 1960s and early 1970s it is possible to find many advertisements featuring female and male models with Afro hairdo.

## 5.2 Skin Whitening Advertisements under the Influence of Political Changes

The fact that African-American men and women started to embrace their appearance and beauty had also a big impact on companies producing skin whitening products. The lower demand for their products caused a decrease in their advertising activities. When looking at issues of *Ebony* magazine from the second half of the decade, one will find out that the number of advertisements started to fall rapidly in 1967. By the end of 1970 each issue contained a maximum of 3 advertisements promoting skin whitening products. It was possible to find an issue without a single advertisement for skin whitening creams.

There were beauty companies which were still promoting whiteners in the same way as before. In 1966 Nadinola was proclaiming: “Brighten your skin, brighten your life with Nadinola” (*Ebony*, August 1966). The notion that lightness equals beauty and success was present in some of the advertisements. The African-American woman featured in this advertisement was very light skinned.

However, many beauty companies began to use less insistent ways to promote skin bleachers and started to depict African-American women in a different way. Their approach was more politically acceptable. When looking at the advertisements from the second half of the 1960s, it is possible to notice, that most of the advertisements were generally trying to hide the real purpose of skin whitening products. The pejorative adjectives largely disappeared from advertisements as well as any hints of the “lightening effects” of the skin whitening products. Instead, the advertisements claimed that the creams would remove blotches, oily skin and blemishes. The word “light” which was so popular in previous years was replaced by words such as “clear” or “bright”. The Noxzema Company advertisement was even propagating the idea that “clear skin is a clean skin” (*Ebony*, February 1969).

The message of advertisements moved towards the notion that using these creams will give women a healthier, clearer and perfect complexion. The fact that it will also whiten their skin was either suppressed or not mentioned at all. Below I give some of the main headlines from these advertisements from the second half of the 1960s. . When comparing them with previous headlines from the first half of the 60s, the change is quite obvious.

“The blotch remover” (Ebony, March, 1968).

“Stop oily skin blemishes” (Ebony, November 1969).

“Glow radiantly with brighter clearer skin” (Ebony, May 1969).

Models featuring in these advertisements were light or browned skinned African-Americans. To be politically correct and not discriminating some companies started to put models of different ethnic backgrounds in their advertisements. The tendency to put women of many origins in skin whitening advertisements started as early as 1965 (this approach was initially taken mainly by the Artra Company). In 1966 Artra used an advertisement with three female protagonists: African-American, Caucasian and Asian. They were all depicted as equal (Ebony, August 1966). Men appeared minimally in skin whitening advertisements by the second half of the 1960s. This was due mainly to the rapid decrease of skin whitening advertisements promoting light skin as a precondition for a love life.

One advertisement from Nadinola Company in 1970 came as a great surprise. The company which was for so long spreading the ideals of white beauty and white skin, could no longer resist the pressure of the new political climate in the country. The brand new advertisement from 1970 was proclaiming: “Black is Beautiful” (Ebony, September 1970). The picture featured an African-American woman, with Afro hairdo, ethnic earrings and dark skin. This was a very innovative approach for Nadinola and proved that companies had to adapt to the new political climate of the country. In this advertisement Nadinola promoted “only” the removal of blotches and blemishes. The whole advert was closed in a very positive way with the words: “Just a beautiful you. Black is beautiful. What makes it even more beautiful? Ultra Nadinola” (Ebony, September 1970).

## 6 White No More

Some companies producing whitening product responded to the changing market in a quite different, positive way. Instead of producing skin whiteners and bleachers, they adapted their production to beauty lines enhancing African-American beauty. This tendency as early as the first half of the 60s and was continually developing until the 1970s. The advertisements of these companies were no longer promoting white beauty standards and focused more on African-American beauty. African-American women featuring in these advertisements were depicted as beautiful, successful and proud. They had no more need to change their appearance in order to be lighter or whiter.

One of the first companies to chose this innovative approach was Posner. This was in 1965 and in the following years Posner Company continued to African-American beauty. The advertisement from 1966 claimed: “Only the darker-than-fair can have The Exotic Look! And only Posner Custom Blends...cosmetics designed exclusively for brunette-toned complexions...can bring out your warm exotic beauty...your true natural loveliness” (Ebony, November 1966). This advertisement was enriched by a picture of a brown skinned African-American woman, a girl from Paris and one from Venice. The advertisement was proclaiming that the African-American woman can be beautiful and, above all, she is unique and can have an exotic look. In the late 60s Posner completely abandoned skin whitening products and focused mainly on cosmetics and hair conditioners designed for African America women.

A new company, Noxzema, came onto the market and promoted soap designed especially for African-American women. The advertisement said: “If girls with the most beautiful skin in the world wash with Noxzema...why shouldn't you?” (Ebony, September 1969). The advertisement was full page and contained a big photograph of girls from the Black Beauty model agency. All of them were dark skinned or brown skinned African-American; some even had an Afro hairdo, or were wearing ethnic jewellery. Both Afro and jewellery were supposed to demonstrate African-American racial pride.

In 1970 the Libra Company came up with a new cosmetic line aimed exclusively at African-American women. Instead of creams for changing the skin color, it promised: “A brilliant new line of cosmetics especially created for all dark skin tones” (Ebony, November 1970).



## 7 Skin Whitening in the United States Nowadays

From the previous chapter it might seem that the skin whitening phenomenon is a matter of past in the United States of America. However the truth is different. Though the skin whiteners are no longer promoted in the African-American press, the developing technologies allowed marketers to promote their products mostly on the Internet. The presence of the skin whitening WebPages and blogs proofs the fact, that there is still an existing demand for the skin whitening products.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to say that skin whitening has both supporters and opponents. The strong discussions whether skin whitening is all right or not are culminating especially when famous African-American personalities like Vybz Kartel, Rihanna or Iman make a public appearance with their skin lighter than before. They are very often criticized for being bad role models for younger generations or African-Americans generally. Moreover they are sometimes described as not proud of their ethnic background or lacking the racial pride.

The latest African-American celebrity who was accused of skin whitening was influential R&B singer Beyoncé Knowles. The speculations whether or not she is bleaching her skin appeared after L'Oreal Company released its advertisement for hair products. Beyoncé, who featured in this advertisement, was depicted as a very light skinned African-American with straight ocher hair. In comparison with other advertisements she featured in, her appearance was more Caucasian than African-American. Bad reactions were also received after the launch of new photos promoting her latest album "4". Outraging reactions were coming from many different sides and articles were arguing whether it is still Beyoncé featuring in these photographs. She was posing in a very daring outfit, with almost white skin and blond hair. Though the photographs were in all likelihood airbrushed, the fact that the famous African-American singer was willingly depicting herself as almost white woman, resulted in many negative reactions.

From what is said above it is possible to deduce, that the skin whitening (whether digital or real) is an issue even today. Though skin whiteners are no longer promoted in the same way as in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, their presence is undeniable and whitening products are freely available mostly on the Internet. The desire to change shades of skin is still alive among African-American population and it remains a matter of future whether the skin whitening production will continue or not.

## CONCLUSION

The skin whitening advertising and skin whitening itself has a long tradition in the United States of America. When looking at many skin whitening advertisements from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is possible to make up an image of how the society perceived ideals of beauty. Skin whitening advertisements, which were usually promoting the white beauty standards, were very common in the African-American press from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The ways how African-American women and men were depicted in these advertisements echoed opinions of the society about African-Americans generally. The depiction of African-Americans was very often based on stereotypes, colorism and racism. All skin whitening advertisements were either explicitly or implicitly showing the superiority of whiteness.

The development of the skin whitening advertising from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was covered in the theoretical part of the thesis. Skin whitening advertisements started to appear in the in the national African-American press from the early 1920s. As it was demonstrated in the first chapters, skin whitening products were advertised especially to African-American women as a way of self improvement. The main notion of the advertisements was the idea that African-American women could succeed in the society or become more popular if they remove African-American features (black skin or kinky hair). The racial identity of African-American women was often seen as an obstacle, which needed to be removed.

During the 1940s and 1950s, the beauty industry developed considerably. New companies entered the market and started to promote whitening products. Some of them chose innovative ways of how to promote the skin bleachers to African-American women. Advertisements featuring both African-American women and men became very popular. As it was shown on examples, African-American men were usually depicted as sexual predators, who seek out much lighter women, than themselves. This depiction of African-American men was based on the stereotypical notion which connected blackness with sexuality and lust.

The analytical part of my bachelor thesis focused on my own research and discussed the skin whitening advertisements in *Ebony* magazine in the 1960s. During the examination of corpus, I took into account the political situation in the USA which was influenced by the Civil Rights Movement.

I found out that marketing strategies of beauty companies did not change much during the first half of the 1960s. The skin whitening creams were promoted as a self-betterment method which should have improved the looks of the user. As it turned out, many advertisements were similar to those from the 1950s. All advertisements were either explicitly or implicitly promoting white beauty standards. The racial identity of African-American women was seen as an obstacle. This was shown on the selected advertisements from different beauty companies. According to my research, light-skinned African-American women were still seen as an ideal of the feminine beauty. African-American men were depicted in the same ways as in the 1950s.

The advertising underwent major changes in the second half of the 1960s. The African-American beauty standards began to change slowly in the reflection of the Civil Rights Movement. Since many African-Americans started to use African features (like Afro hair or dark skin) as a demonstration of racial pride and political awareness, advertising strategies of beauty companies transformed. Political changes caused that it was no longer acceptable to depict African-Americans in an offensive way. According to my research, advertisements featuring African-American men especially almost disappeared and also advertisements with African-American women changed.

In comparison with previous years, advertisements from the second half of the 1960s were toned down, and their real purpose was usually hidden. As I demonstrated on the examples, new advertisements were moderate and less expressive in comparison with the early 1960s. During my research I also found out that some of the beauty companies, previously promoting skin whiteners, abandoned this business and focused on the production of beauty products enhancing African-American beauty. These companies usually started to depict African-American women especially as proud and beautiful.

Nowadays skin whitening advertisements are no longer appearing in the African-American press. However, skin whitening phenomenon is not over and remains a subject of many debates.

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APPENDICES

**IN JUST 3 MINUTES YOU CAN HAVE THE COMPLEXION TONE YOU WANT!**

**Amazing Snow White Make-Up Cream Works "Miracles" on Dark Skin**

**INSTANTLY COVERS BLEMISHES, BLACKHEADS, AND DARK BLEMISHES**

Yes, **RIGHT NOW** you can look AS YOU WANT TO LOOK—clean, lovely, with the bright, radiant skin radiating you've always dreamed of—you can look like a light, smoother-looking skin that reverses creases!

Yes, **Many Shades Lighter**, with a Honey Peach or Rose Blossom hue that's **BRIGHTENING!** Now it's **EASY** to give your skin the Super tone that's exciting, famous, new, better. And it takes less than 3 minutes with this amazing Snow White Make-Up Cream!

**BEFORE YOU USE Snow White MAKE-UP CREAM**

**"AFTER YOU USE" Snow White MAKE-UP CREAM**

**SATISFACTION GUARANTEED**

You'll receive a 100% refund—every cent of your money back if you're not 100% satisfied.

**Perfect Base for Snow White Face Powder**

For your complexion this dual layer of exquisite richness with Snow White Face Powder. First the moisture keeps your skin **GLAZED**—your individual skin tone. Then, for hours, without rubbing, your face is **ENRICHED** with the results, so you're **GLAZED**.

**Make-Up for Every New Complexion With Evening Face Beauty**

Now, when you're smiling, your face glows with your face's beauty, natural-looking glow—no more dark spots and blemishes, no more looking back and forth all day. Creams that are **rich** in your complexion, and keep you looking lovely, radiant, and glowing.

**FREE** Ask your dealer, or write to: **FREE** Send for your FREE copy of the book "Snow White Make-Up Cream." **RIGHT NOW!** Ask for it at all the splendid Snow White Beauty Products.

**USE Snow White Custom-Styled COSMETICS**

Snow White Products Co., Desk E, Lynchburg, Va.

**Life is a whirl for the girl with a clear, bright, Nadinola-light complexion**

Give someone a chance! Don't let a dull, dark complexion deprive you of popularity. Don't let alluring, big eyes, blackheads cheat you of them. Close every these bad complexion blues with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream. Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your skin faster, in more different ways.

**Caution: wonder-working A-M!** This remarkable multi-acted ingredient of NADINOLA works deep down within the skin to brighten and lighten it, combat blackheads and naturally closed pimples. So your skin feels cleaned and clear, smoother and softer, glowing and glamorous.

**Effective but oh, so gentle!** NADINOLA acts so positively yet is so kind to your skin that we guarantee you will be delighted with its results. There are two types—one for oily skin and the other for dry skin. Choose the type that is right for you. Buy it confidently, use it happily.

**NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM**

*Just one jar will make your complexion brighter, clearer, lighter and lovelier.*

**FOR OILY SKIN**  
New Nadinola Deluxe is non-oily, greaseless. Lightens skin and lessens shine. 75¢ and \$1.25

**FOR DRY SKIN**  
The original, famous Nadinola Bleaching Cream, enriched with fine cosmetic oils. 60¢ and \$1.00

**THE NICEST THINGS HAPPEN TO GIRLS WITH LIGHT, BRIGHT COMPLEXIONS!**

Has your phone quit ringing lately? Perhaps your complexion is to blame. Is it dark, dull and unattractive? Then for goodness sake, do something about it!

See for yourself how quickly NADINOLA lightens and brightens your complexion, loosens blackheads, makes your skin feel softer and smoother, look clearer and lovelier. There are 2 kinds of NADINOLA—both fully guaranteed. Get NADINOLA right away!

**NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM**

*JUST ONE JAR IS GUARANTEED TO IMPROVE YOUR COMPLEXION*

come out of the shadows...

**Bleach and Glow CREAM**

quickly fades away shadowy complexion  
lightens, brightens, smooths skin

How lovely you'll be! For no matter how dull or dark, uneven or dark your skin may be now—Bleach and Glow Cream helps reveal a new, healthful-looking, desired, lighter, more charming-looking complexion! The secret is in the amazing D-Pan Action that works down beneath the skin to remove lighter complexion begins... done in a few seconds!

It needs to help you have a softer, smoother, more beautiful skin. Gentle Bleach and Glow is so nice you'll use it as a make-up base or to pump up your skin at night. Get Bleach and Glow today and start bringing your complexion out of the shadows!

**BLEACH AND GLOW, Dept. 1011, P. O. Box 999, Memphis 6, Tenn.**

Please note: Bleach and Glow is non-toxic, non-irritating, and does not contain any mercury. It is a safe, effective skin treatment for all skin types.

**"Light up your skin with beauty!"**  
says famous model Helen Williams

**She uses Pond's Vanishing Cream**

Completely non-irritating—yet it leaves your skin looking lighter, refines pores, does away with oily shine!

Stunning Helen Williams is all beauty in Paris, where she recently married, as she is in New York. Helen says, "I love the light, smooth look Pond's Vanishing Cream gives my skin. It leaves a lovely luminosity—perfect for any girl who likes to look her best!" And Helen loves the way this gentle beauty cream reveals her skin's natural beauty. It's actually **smoothing** and **softening** your skin!

**Secrets against blackheads, red, light, greasy skin: Pond's Bleaching Cream refines**

**ENJOY THE LIGHT SIDE OF LIFE**

NEW IMPROVED PALMER'S "SKIN SUCCESS" BLEACH CREAM BRINGS CLEARER LOVELINESS BY FAR

Enjoy the popularity and admiration that goes with a lighter, fairer, more radiant complexion. New improved Palmer's "Skin Success" Bleach Cream is the secret. This famous cream now contains more of that dependable bleaching ingredient... ammoniated mercury (more than any other leading cream on the market)... to work faster in fading sun spots, freckles, and blotchy, darkened skin.

Don't let a darkened, spotty complexion cloud your enjoyment of life. Step out on the light side with a creamy, dreamy, fairer look. **Palmer's "Skin Success" Bleach Cream** only 35¢. Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back.

**LOVELIER COMPLEXION TOO**

...plus head-to-toe protection with the deep-acting foamy medication of "Skin Success" Soap. It beauty-bathes while it destroys odor-causing surface bacteria... makes you sure you're nice to be near. **Palmer's "Skin Success" Soap**. Only 25¢.

Announced by German Science—A New Cosmetic Substance to

# Lighten Dark Skin

Face... Neck... Hand Spots... Ugly Elbows  
... Solves Dark Color Problems as  
No Cosmetic Could Before

To lighten skin pigment itself required a new discovery—a new cosmetic substance. Whether the problem is the face—or just darkened neck, brown spots, blotches or merely ruddy complexion, the substance is now available in Paldia.

Paldia, a lovely granular vanishing cream, penetrates to the under skin. Here it stops production of dark pigment by about half, while pigment naturally pro-

duces is steadily carried away. Paldia was tested by West German scientists, clinically tested by American doctors, and is produced by a trustworthy 30-year old laboratory.

Now dark skin can be lightened! Now dull complexion can be bright—those unwanted brown spots on hands, blotches, and dark elbow areas can be lightened—for Paldia really works!



### The Dark Neck Problem

When the neck has been neglected and it then shades darker than facial skin, there is excess pigment present. Apply Paldia to reduce the formation of dark pigment while excess dark pigment (already) is steadily carried away. As neck becomes lighter, feet and creases are relieved—... skin naturally less noticeable.

With normal skin—however dark & naturally may be—you should see significant lightening in 4 or 8 weeks—also sooner. Paldia works with nature on skin pigment itself. The action of this vanishing cream on skin is steady—but action cannot be hastened. Do not look for overnight changes.



### Age-Spots and Dark Elbows

These hateful spots that make hands look old are concentrations of pigment. Dark elbow area same concentration of pigment. Dark elbow area same concentration of pigment.



### For Dark Skin Problems of Various Degrees

Dark skin—however dark it naturally may be—is bound to brighten when dark pigment formation is reduced about half. This is what Paldia is designed to do—while the dark pigment naturally present is steadily



"HE NEVER GAVE ME A SECOND LOOK  
...till Nadinola gave me a new look!"

One remains a beauty! Don't let a dull, dark complexion deprive you of popularity. Don't let obvious, big pores, blackheads cheat you of charm. Chase away those bad-complexion blues with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream. Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your skin faster. In same efficient way!

Contains wonder-working A-MI! This remarkable multi-ripened ingredient of NADINOLA works deep down within the skin to lighten and lighten it, combat blackheads

and externally control pimples. Soot your skin from cleaned and cleared, smoother and softer, glowing and glamorous.

Effective but oh, so gentle! NADINOLA acts so positively yet is so kind to your skin that no guarantee you will be delighted with its results. There are two types—one for oily skin and the other for dry skin. Choose the type that is right for you. Buy it confidently, use it happily. Manufacture, Paris, France.



bright idea

...and bright you for discovering it!

the new cosmetic skin brightener

# ultra nadinola

lightens, brightens... makes skin clearer, clearer

When you use our Ultra Nadinola, please don't be shocked if other skin brighteners seem a little dull by comparison. Ultra Nadinola is that different, that effective! Its special ingredients: Hydroquinone, actually soothes wet and faded discolorations, opens up skin to lighter tones, imparts a glow. Its special moisture helps skin feel as dewy-soft and radiant as it looks. Little wonder so many women find our Ultra Nadinola a bright idea in complexion care. Unravels the natural beauty of face, neck, hands, elbows, knees—in beautiful fashion.



Look how men flock around  
the girl with the clear, bright, Nadinola-light complexion

If you want to be pretty and popular, begin with your skin. There is no beauty secret more important than a clear, bright NADINOLA-light complexion. Don't let dull, dark skin rob you of romance. Don't let obvious, big pores, blackheads cheat you of charm. Don't let a poor complexion make you look less other than you are. For a change of face, try NADINOLA Bleaching Cream! Nothing—absolutely nothing—will

and lightens it, combat blackheads and externally control pimples. Soot your skin from cleaned and cleared, smoother and softer, glowing and glamorous. Your friends will say you look quite younger! There are two types of NADINOLA. Buy whichever suits your skin—with our absolute guarantee of satisfaction. NADINOLA, Paris, France.



No matter how close he gets...

your skin will look lighter, softer and lovelier with...



Skintona, the complexion "miracle", contains amazing Hydroquinone. Cleans and clears your skin... fades away dark areas... tightens and brightens... gives your skin a glamorous all-over tone of natural luminosity. Moisturizes, too!

No more dull, drab, gray-looking skin for girls who use Power SKINTONA!

Also—use Skintona to beautify your hands, elbows and knees!

**POSNER creates color tones ...especially to blend with your deep-toned beauty...**

## POSNER CUSTOM BLENDS

Once in a lifetime a really new cosmetic idea is born. "Custom Blends" by Posner... makeup that's color perfect for your deep-toned beauty!

That is the way Posner's custom formulas for face and eye blend with your skin tone to really, properly, correctly... enhancing the beauty of your natural coloring.

Now, but Posner could bring you such perfect color tones for only Posner has specialized in your beauty needs for over 75 years!

Now you have the cosmetics you need—in the colors you want custom blended for you and you alone!

**It's New!**

**It's Just For YOU!**

**Radiant new complexion, beauty**

**ARTRA**  
SKIN TONIC CREAM

brings a brighter, lighter look to women round the world

Daily use of Artra helps bring a smooth, even-all-over radiance to many complexions. This remarkable cream fights skin germs, helps clear away blotchiness, dullness, and the conditions associated with blackheads. And Artra actually fades away freckles and dark spots that can mar your beauty. Smoothed gently on face, arms, neck and legs once or twice daily, medicated Artra can help you have that brighter, lighter look of a radiantly clear complexion. Artra is safe for normal skin. Can't stain clothes, because it vanishes. For a generous trial supply, send 10¢ with your name and address to: Box E-80, Kenilworth, N. J.

**Three easy steps: Spray, Comb, Spray. That's all.** The perfect answer for the woman who wears her hair in the **natural style—the "IN" style** that's new, modern.

**RAVEEN Au Naturelle Easy-to-Comb** leaves hair soft, manageable. Lets you glide a comb through your hair quickly, easily.

**RAVEEN Au Naturelle Spray 'n' Glow** leaves hair with a lovely sheen and lustre. Hair looks radiant, naturally alive with a bright, lustrous glow.

Not a holding hair spray—never leaves hair stiff or sticky.

**Spray 'n' Glow** is a new, modern aerosol hair dressing and conditioner especially for you and your natural look.

Get **RAVEEN Au Naturelle Easy-to-Comb** and **Spray 'n' Glow** at your favorite cosmetic counter, at \$1.50 each. Or send for your free color brochure today!

**Black is beautiful.**

Naturally beautiful, that's the only requirement naturally beautiful skin. That's where Ultra Noxzema comes in. Ultra Noxzema helps you enjoy the beauty of your complexion, gives you a smooth, glowing complexion that's just as lovely as the skin beneath. Noxzema. The skin's best friend.

**Black is beautiful. What makes it even more beautiful?**  
Ultra Noxzema. Naturally.

**Show us a pretty complexion, and we'll show you a Noxzema girl.**

Most skin specialists will tell you, clear skin starts with clean skin. But sometimes washing with soap is not enough—because ordinary soap fights only half the problem.

That's where Noxzema comes in—The Medicinal Washing Cream. Noxzema cleans deeper, cleans because it medicates surface. Cleansing as it cleans. Rinses off with water because it's greaseless. Noxzema fights! You'll love it!

Then put on more Noxzema to help clear up "trouble spots." It's reversible. Wouldn't you like to be a Noxzema skin, with smooth...

**If girls with the most beautiful skin in the world wash with noxzema...**

These are the girls of Black Beauty—New York's foremost modeling agency. They haven't spent millions. They've just learned how to take advantage of every pore and bring its most beautiful. (Shouldn't you share the beauty routine that helps make their skin so flawless?)

Wash with facelifting, all-day oil, vitamin E soap. Noxzema softens & cleans. Fights dryness. Tinted cream. Medicated to help clear sun-  
 loss symptoms with an exfoliating triple.

What's my way to wash? What's a way for

L O R É A L PARIS

I Want Colour So Deep Conditioning, Shimmers From The Inside Out.

I Want NEW Fèria MULTI-FACETED SHIMMERING COLOR

Available in 10 shades. From just \$10.99. It's the way of the future. With the new 50% cream to deposit. It's the way to be inside out. New. Shimmer. It's color. It's shimmer. It's a shimmer.

For more information, go to [www.lorealparis.com](http://www.lorealparis.com). Or call 1-800-LOREAL. For more information, visit [www.lorealparis.com](http://www.lorealparis.com). Visit the internet at [www.lorealparis.com](http://www.lorealparis.com). And be a shimmer!

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