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A SPACE FOR Beauty

While waiting for a connecting flight from Paris to Bulgaria where I presented a six-hour course on cosmetic dentistry, I was instantly struck by the October 2010 model the editors chose to be on the cover of French *Vogue*. Or to be more precise, the only part of her face that was not covered by a mask was her gapped tooth smile. The profound visual statement the editors of this huge (600 plus pages) issue were making was that the new trend of beauty is indeed changing.

Marking a shift from the staid trends in fashion models who often showcased perfectly aligned faces with straight white teeth, the fashion and entertainment industry is changing again and is now celebrating the über-natural. This year, there is no doubt that we have seen more models either with a natural gap between the central incisors or a dentist produced gap. In the 1950s Brigitte Bardot pioneered the idea that natural is beautiful and flashed her gap-toothed smile. Even today, Lauren Hutton refuses to have her gap narrowed and has had an increase in work within the past year thanks in part to her diastema, the dental terminology for gap teeth. I question if we are yet again altering our appreciation for what is beautiful...or if this is a trend being promoted only by the fashion and entertainment industries.

What often drives trends in beauty is the desire to be one of the elite. Going back to the Elizabethan era, Desmond Morris discusses in his book "The Naked Woman" how blackened teeth became fashionable because only the wealthy could afford sugar which ultimately would cause ones teeth to rot and discolor. It became a status symbol to have black teeth like the Queen because it showed that one could afford the sugar candies. Today we look at high fashion magazines, movies, and TV to dictate what is beautiful and in 2010, diastema was everywhere. We saw gap-toothed actress Anna Paquin from "True Blood" on the cover of September's *Rolling Stone* magazine, music icon Madonna led a fashion campaign for Dolce and Gabbana, and rising models Georgia Jagger,

Jessica Hart, Ashley Smith, and "It" girl Laura Stone graced the covers of magazines and couture ad campaigns. New York City's Mercedes Benz Fashion Week was abuzz in September with casting directors flocking to models with gap teeth. Fashion designer David Delfin, who had a space created in his front teeth as a metaphor for the separation he was feeling for his deceased father, had named his spring 2009 collection "Diastema."

Assessing this new trend of keeping gap teeth in tack or even having front teeth separated by a dentist is "America's Next Top Model" cycle 15 runner-up, Chelsey Hersey. On the September 22, 2010 episode, Hersey had .25mm shaved off both front teeth per Tyra's recommendation. Interestingly enough, Tyra had the opposite procedure done to cycle 6 winner, Danielle Evans, just a few years ago. With changing trends and the desire to have the "in" look, our society has been overly concerned with media smiles and trying to copy them without regard to how their individual appearance may be different from the person they would like to copy. The best cosmetic dentists and plastic surgeons never tell a patient they could look better unless the patient wants a new look or seeks an opinion about how to change his or her appearance.

Even though my practice is about 75% cosmetic, I am always careful how I approach the subject of esthetics with first-time patients. Therefore, I always do a functional health analysis and the last subject I approach is "Is there anything that concerns you about your smile"? Most new patients have already seen or read my consumer book, "Change Your Smile," that has virtually all the options of improving the smile, so if they don't bring it up...I certainly don't. But then there are so many individuals who are not happy with their appearance, and since self-esteem is so important they should be encouraged to seek the best advice on how and what they would like to change.

Although the gapped-tooth look had not yet come to Bulgaria, I did notice while sightseeing that there seemed to be a universal agreement that earth-tone make-up should be evenly applied to the entire face. I thought at first these young

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women were actresses in a play, but as I continued walking I realized that the stage would have to hold a cast of thousands if this were true. If society's concept of body types and facial appearances has and does change over time, it has appeared to me that today's concept of self-image is certainly about "self"...and that "self" wants to stand out as never before. Hence, casting directors for the Paris, Milan, and New York runways are looking more and more for models making a statement about their bodies as well as their smiles. Tattoos, different shaped noses, crooked teeth and, now, gapped teeth seem to be in demand.

In recent years I have seen an increase in demand for more natural looking veneers. The concern is that patients don't want their teeth to look too perfect and "chicklit" like. So many more consumers now want their veneers to have all the characteristics of natural teeth, blemishes and all. But don't expect to see consumers staying away from the



Lara Stone covers the 90th anniversary and October 2010 issue of *Vogue Paris* photographed by Mert & Marcus. The spectacular cover of this 600 page issue caught the eye of Dr. Ronald Goldstein at the airport in Paris. The avant guard image perfectly depicted the concept that the perception of beauty does not always include perfectly aligned teeth.

orthodontist...fashion and trends in society are just that, and for most of us we depend on conservative opinions as to what our appearance should look like to be successful. And this conclusion is backed by thousands of studies of what it takes to be successful in both

the business and social world we live in. So if the desire for gapped teeth sticks around long enough to be more than just a trend, then I expect to see a full shift towards natural beauty of all kinds evolving into our culture for years to come.



WITH A LIFELONG INTEREST IN BEAUTY, DR. RONALD GOLDSTEIN CONDUCTS ONGOING RESEARCH ON THE PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS PHENOMENON AND ITS ROLE IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PERSONAL SUCCESS. HIS DENTAL PRACTICE WAS THE FIRST TO MOVE BEYOND THE SMILE AND FOCUS ON OVERALL FACIAL HARMONY. HE WRITES EXTENSIVELY FOR BOTH CONSUMERS AND THE DENTAL PROFESSION ON BEAUTY, ESTHETIC DENTISTRY AND RELATED TOPICS. DR. GOLDSTEIN IS THE AUTHOR OF THE 2-VOLUME TEXTBOOK, *ESTHETICS IN DENTISTRY* AND *CHANGE YOUR SMILE* (8 FOREIGN TRANSLATIONS), WHICH NOW IN ITS 4TH EDITION IS THE TOP-SELLING CONSUMER GUIDE TO DENTISTRY FOUND IN THOUSANDS OF DENTISTS' RECEPTION ROOMS AROUND THE WORLD. HE IS ON THE ADVISORY BOARD OF *NEW BEAUTY* MAGAZINE AND WRITES FOR IT AS WELL. HE IS THE FOUNDER OF TOMORROW'S SMILES, A NATIONAL NON-PROFIT FUND THAT HELPS DESERVING ADOLESCENTS RECEIVE LIFE-CHANGING SMILES THROUGH COSMETIC DENTISTRY. HIS MULTIDISCIPLINARY PRACTICE IS IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA.