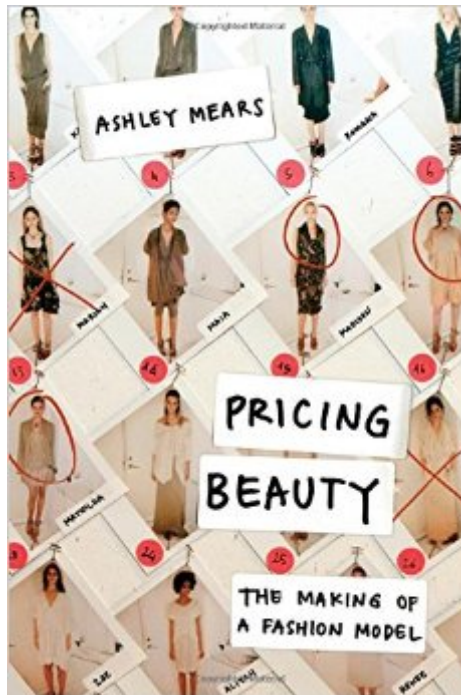


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# Pricing Beauty: The Making Of A Fashion Model



## Synopsis

Sociologist Ashley Mears takes us behind the brightly lit runways and glossy advertisements of the fashion industry in this insider's study of the world of modeling. Mears, who worked as a model in New York and London, draws on observations as well as extensive interviews with male and female models, agents, clients, photographers, stylists, and others, to explore the economics and politics and the arbitrariness behind the business of glamour. Exploring a largely hidden arena of cultural production, she shows how the right 'look' is discovered, developed, and packaged to become a prized commodity. She examines how models sell themselves, how agents promote them, and how clients decide to hire them. An original contribution to the sociology of work in the new cultural economy, *Pricing Beauty* offers rich, accessible analysis of the invisible ways in which gender, race, and class shape worth in the marketplace.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is a thorough, academic treatment of the modeling industry. The author ably covers a number of fascinating sociological aspects of one of the more extraordinary industries in modern culture. This is so even though really she never defines beauty, and so has a tough time talking about its economics. Part of the problem rests in the style of the study, focused as it is on interview. It is clear that the author is very bright, but she insists on forming her argument around quotes from industry professionals, very few of which are as sophisticated or insightful as she is. The result is chapters filled with inane statements and colloquialisms that can't possibly be viewed in an intellectual light. The 'like's and 'you know's can be humorous if viewed objectively, but certainly

detract from an otherwise engaging survey. As it is, then, it seems as though no real point is made, and one can refute the vague impressions that are made with mere questions. For instance, this reader would have liked to have seen a more robust investigation into the nature of beauty, and why certain models are chosen over others. Thanks to a myriad of quotes, we know that commercial models appeal to 'your mom' and editorial models look rather 'freakish', but we don't necessarily know the source of these standards. If nothing else, this investigation would help in the attempt to uncover some of the more provocative arguments made in the chapter on race and thinness. Throughout, however, the author maintains a very academic tone, treating all of her subjects as if they were saying anything important. The result is something of a burlesque--perhaps more telling about the state of academia than anything else.

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