

Talking point

Do women's magazines exclude mature women, or are they becoming more diverse?

THE June 2020 edition of "Vogue" was a record-breaking one. The cover featured Dame Judi Dench who, at the age of eighty-five, was the publication's oldest ever cover star.

Women's magazines are often criticised for the lack of diversity in their choice of cover stars.

A survey carried out by the Fashion Spot looked at the diversity of cover stars on 51 of the top fashion magazines in 2019.

This revealed that, of the 745 cover stars surveyed, a mere 41 (5.5%) were aged fifty or above.

Ceri Wheeldon, Editor of *fabafterfifty.co.uk*, said she was delighted to see that the inclusion of Judi Dench by "Vogue" was a regular cover, and "not a token 'age' issue or supplement.

"As a demographic we are as interesting, individual and visible over fifty as we were in our thirties – perhaps even more so!

"We have huge buying power, yet magazines and advertisers generally ignore



us," she said.

Mainstream women's magazines generally make the assumption that their younger readers don't want to read about women older than themselves, or can't gain anything from doing so.

The Fashion Spot's cover analysis did reveal that representation of these women is on the up, though.

In 2019, women over fifty were better represented on magazine covers than plus size models, and a model over fifty was amongst the top 10 most booked cover models across the board.

Publications are changing

their attitudes towards ageing, too. In 2017, US beauty magazine "Allure" stated it had banned the term "anti-ageing" from its pages, to encourage more positive attitudes towards growing older amongst its readers.

The "Vogue" Judi Dench cover is a sign that magazines are recognising the worth of mature women.

While they may have a long way to go, let's hope this is the beginning of a revolution amongst women's magazines, which will recognise that life does not end at fifty. ■



"Here's to fabulous women who refuse to live by the rules"

Adrienne Webster, Features Editor of "Platinum", says: "The women I'm inspired by in my own life are all older women who are refusing to slow down as they age. It's great to see

them represented in magazines like 'Vogue'. Championing these women is central to our ethos on 'Platinum'.

"Here's to fabulous women who refuse to live by the rules!"



"The message sent is that older women aren't wanted"

Denise Taylor, 50-plus life coach, believes: "Marketers prefer youthful images, thinking this is what readers want. Older women aren't wanted, and when they appear, they appear with

Photoshopped skin, which gives us an unfair image to aspire to.

"But we are enough, and we should be encouraged to wear our lines as a sign of maturity and a life that is lived."



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TH A wonderful lady! Deserves to still be out there giving the youngsters a run for their money! Well done, Dame Judi Dench!

BS I noticed four years or so ago a change to include older ladies in some mags, but it seems to have gone back now to young ones. Rather a shame.

TC Wonderful to see Dame Judi Dench on the cover. There has been more diversity in recent times with regards to age and ethnicity, but we still have such a long way to go.

TG I have seen older people on covers in recent years. I think there should be much more, since there are a lot of older folks out there. We do not want to always see younger generations on those covers. There are a lot of great-looking people my age who should adorn the covers of magazines.

AM As an older woman, it's great seeing the likes of Judi Dench and older fashion/hairstyles/make-up etc., as we get forgotten about.



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