

**An analysis of cosmetic surgery accounts  
and a proposed counselling framework**

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Sydney cosmetic clinic advertisement. *The Sunday Telegraph, Body and Soul*.  
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## **Abstract**

The thesis determined predominant themes that surround the topic of cosmetic surgery. On the basis of the findings a thematic counselling framework for cosmetic surgery clinical practice is proposed.

A mixed methods design was chosen for this study. A thematic analysis was used to ascertain themes. A quasi-numerative approach was also utilised to establish the relative incidence of themes. Sources of data were media, internet message boards and interviews with men and women about cosmetic surgery.

Two overarching themes emerged within the coding process. These were factors that might persuade someone to have and factors that might dissuade someone from having cosmetic surgery. A number of persuading and dissuading sub-themes were identified. Quantitative results demonstrated that within the two overarching themes 58% of the talk was persuasive of, whilst 42% was dissuasive of having cosmetic surgery. Some of the sub-themes found in the thesis were considered to compete with one another. This is evidence that patients have to negotiate conflicting information about cosmetic surgery.

The findings of the dissertation are interpreted within a theoretical context. Through applying theories of decision-making and cognitive dissonance, suggestions are made about how health professionals might proceed clinically in counselling with cosmetic surgery patients or those considering having a procedure.

The thematic counselling framework proposed within this thesis is intended to assist patients and clinicians with the numerous messages from our social community (societal messages) that shape their relationship to cosmetic surgery. To the author's knowledge, it is the first clinical framework to do so.

## **Declaration**

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provision of the Copyright Act 1968.

Signed:

Date:

Rebecca Gooden

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