

Lipstick, Union of Saints

If a man or woman came to your house, held a gun at you, and said, “No more lipstick.”

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What would you do?

“The Nazi regime discouraged, and in some specific contexts banned, the use of red lipstick to promote a “natural” Aryan ideal, viewing makeup as selfish, artificial, or a decadent remnant of Weimar culture. While no total nationwide ban was implemented, it was prohibited at party meetings in some areas as early as 1933.

Key details regarding the lipstick restrictions include:

- Nazi ideal vs. reality: The Nazi ideology favored a “peasant-like” look for women—no makeup, no dyed hair, and no lipstick.
- Restrictions: In 1933, the Nazi Party in Breslau banned “painted” women from meetings. Some SS personnel were also instructed not to wear lipstick.
- Contradiction: Despite this disapproval, there was no full ban; however, by 1943, the cosmetics industry was gradually shut down to support the war effort.
- Defiance: Ironically, the belief that Hitler disliked red lipstick led some, including Eva Braun, to continue wearing it.
- Allied response: Conversely, *The Seamstress of Bloomsbury* notes that Allied forces viewed red lipstick as a symbol of patriotism and morale, with some units even issuing it to women in uniform.”

For this reason, we believe that women’s autonomy is more important than all else. More than makeup, lipstick or chapstick helps nourish the lips and prevent them from becoming dehydrated. Women have been wearing lipstick and dyeing their hair for thousands of years. It is as natural for women as it is for a man to put on his T-shirt.

It has been the experience of many women, especially in recent years, that men, or women attempt to control what a woman wears or how she presents herself through makeup. Her choice can become a wicked and harmful game in which the other person has the final say. Ultimately, we acknowledge that opinion, when left unchecked, can cross the line into coercion. If authority over a woman outweighs her freedom, it constitutes a form of slavery.

This is why it is important to recognize the value of freedom and to understand the many forms coercion and control can take. Women may wear lipstick, or they may choose not to wear makeup at all. Ultimately, this is her choice, and a choice that she alone should make.