'The Body' Slam: Elle vs. Heidi

If there can only be one, does this mean there's going to be a fight? And if so, can we watch?

By Michael Ordoña, Special to The Times
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Two oh-so-heavenly "Bodies" are on a collision course.

In the snap strap heard "round the world, ubiquitous unmentionables peddler Victoria's Secret recently unveiled a campaign for its "The Body" bra, with über model Heidi Klum declaring, "They call me The Body — and now I have a bra named after me."

This caused some thunder down under when Elle Macpherson Intimates spokeswoman Melissa Edwards pointed out that her company's exemplar of genetic perfection has enjoyed that nickname since the '80s. Macpherson has skin care, lingerie and workout products under the "Body" brand, setting up a supermodel smackdown for the ages.

"We saw that and were like, 'Oh, my God!' ... Everything from Harper's Bazaar to Vogue to the recent Sports Illustrated calls [Macpherson] that," Edwards told the New York Daily News. "In terms of public record, that name belongs to Elle."

Meanwhile, Ed Razek of Victoria's Secret backed up Heidi's creds to Sky News: "We have press clippings and newscaster reports for nearly 10 years calling Heidi 'The Body.' There was 'The Body' before Elle and there will be one after Heidi."

So will this battle of the babes go to court? Not likely.

"I think it's dubious that a description as banal and obvious as 'The Body' can receive official protections," said attorney Floyd Abrams, who represented Al Franken in his "Fair and Balanced" case against Fox News Channel. "As for the more critical issue of which of the two supermodels is more deserving of the appellation, I'm with Elle!"

Perhaps the matter can be settled via a body-part-by-body-part comparison. Of course, which of the two can be called "The Legs," "The Neck," etc. may be impossible for even the keenest of observers to conclusively state. Since true beauty comes from within, it may take internal organs to resolve this quandary.

It's likely that the 6-foot-tall Macpherson could lay claim to the title of "The Pituitary Gland," as she has three inches on the 5-foot-9 Klum. However, Klum did once play a giantess (in "Elle Enchanted"), the fact of which conjures images of the two fashion titans towering over Tokyo, knocking down buildings as they tear at each other's de Castelbajac.

The height difference might also garner Elle "The Large Intestine," sticking Heidi with "The Small Intestine," but if the Australian mother of two thought she could snag "The Ovaries," her German rival not only has two kids of her own but a third on the way. That's eins for Fräu Klum.

But who will earn the right to be called "The Pancreas?" "Who 'The Duodenum?" As for "The Lungs," well, they seem pretty evenly matched.
However, if the conflict must come to blows, Macpherson would seem to win the Tale of the Tape: She has the reach and probably the weight advantage on Klum (listed at 119 pounds). In Klum’s corner, she’s not only nine years younger, but has the backing of terrifying hordes of scissors-wielding “Project Runway” fans.

Of course, whoever survives won’t win the title outright — she’ll still have to go through a championship round with former Minnesota governor and pro wrestler Jesse “The Body” Ventura, who has used the moniker since the ’70s. If he loses, he’ll have to wear the triumphant supermodel’s clothing products for a year. But if he wins, we can look forward to a reinvigorated fall line from Jesse Ventura intimates.