

Kill the media

Media



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The formation of personal identity in present-day society can be seen as awkward and challenging. Many teenagers gravitate towards the media for direction on how to stay up-to-date and fresh on trends while going through a tumultuous puberty stage. The dominant influence of accepted media affects every individual's sense of self. Lauren Moak, author of "Is This What You Really Want?" attempts to explain the effect media portrayal has on a younger audience's stance on beauty and self-esteem.

She states, "The media sends the same message on every commercial, billboard, and television show out there. If you do not have the perfect shape, clear complexion...well, you're not "beautiful". " (Moak). Moak verifies that the mainstream media crafts images that youthful individuals struggle to become. Every day many girls strive to fit the mold the media has created. Girls fixate over thin frames, tan skin, and unattainable facial features. What many fail to realize is that most, if not all, images are airbrushed or photo-shopped to transform the average face of a model to an unrealistic being.

Moak further elucidates her point by saying, "The media says that if we all fail at achieving this "ideal" body image, we must try harder no matter what the costs. "(Moak). Attempting to assemble an identity in a media-saturated world is nearly impossible. Everything one does is inspiration from the media and what society deems as "right". Self-individuality cannot coexist with popular media. Personal identity, as well as gender identity suffers from the media. Many images from popular media exhibit cliched, constricting, and naive perceptions on various issues, most commonly being gender.

David Sedaris, author of “ I Like Guys”, explains his self-awareness of his own sexuality and the portrayal of homosexuals by the media and close people around him. Early into his essay, he describes, “ It was my hope to win a contest, cash in the prizes, and use the money to visit a psychiatrist who might cure me of having homosexual thoughts. ” (Sedaris). By Sedaris wanting to instantly be cured from homosexual thoughts, it shows that homosexuality is not acceptable in his society. He also explains viewing homosexual men on television and looking down upon them.

This is parallel to the gender identity issues in present-day society because the media is yet again forcing their viewpoints onto others and limiting individual's perception of people. This, in turn, leads to new stereotypes and discrimination against sexes. One should not feel ashamed, but instead entitled to one's own views and standpoints on issues. Sedaris expresses the immediate shame he felt after an encounter with another boy. He states, “ My jealousy stemmed from the belief that he had been cured.

One fistful of my flesh and he had lost all symptoms of the disease...why couldn't I do the same? ” (Sedaris). The media's continuous backlash to painful topics causes gender identity issues to prevail. Judith Ortiz Cofer, author of “ The Myth Of The Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria” attempts to explain the effect media portrayal has on a younger audience's stance on beauty and self-esteem. She states, “ The media sends the same message on every commercial, billboard, and television show out there. If you do not have the perfect shape, clear complexion...well, you're not “ beautiful”. (Cofer). Moak verifies that the mainstream media crafts images

that youthful individuals struggle to become. Every day many girls strive to fit the mold the media has created.

Girls fixate over thin frames, tan skin, and unattainable facial features. What many fail to realize is that most, if not all, images are airbrushed or photo-shopped to transform the average face of a model to an unrealistic being. Moak further elucidates her point by saying, “ The media says that if we all fail at achieving this “ ideal” body image, we must try harder no matter what the costs. (Cofer). Attempting to assemble an identity in a media-saturated world is nearly impossible. Everything one does is inspiration from the media and what society deems as “ right”. Self-individuality cannot coexist with popular media. The formation of personal identity in present-day society can be seen as awkward and challenging. Many teenagers gravitate towards the media for direction on how to stay up-to-date and fresh on trends while going through a tumultuous puberty stage. The dominant influence of accepted media affects every individual’s sense of self.