

# How mass media affect beauty assignment

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Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter have become a huge part of most teens' lives. But do they help or hurt our self-esteem and body image? Currently, we are exposed to more and more images of an impossible beauty due to social networks. For instance, before we had images of perfect celebrities on TV, in magazines, but we weren't sitting around looking at them for hours every day. Clearly it's not just the exposure to these images that is damaging most teenagers.

It's our interaction with them-- the pressure to have the perfect profile picture, the comparisons we make between each photo and our own and others' bodies. When we look at images of girls in a magazine almost all of us know that they are altered electronically to appear perfect, but the problem arises when it comes to social media such as Facebook, because teenagers believe that they are looking at 'real girls.' This can really impact girls in a negative way by causing them to have unrealistic expectations about what beauty is, and what is worse, it can lead to health problems, such as anorexia or bulimia.

In addition to this, people also say things they would never say to your face, which leads again to psychological problems while the vast majority of images of women are being digitally altered. So are our perceptions of normal, healthy and beautiful. One of the strategies used by advertising and marketing to attract the female audience is to show models and actresses that are underweight or close to it, or by making the models and actresses fit their idea of ideal thinness and beauty through digital manipulation. For instance, according to research released by the National Heart, Lung and Blood

Institute, in a survey offered to girls 9 and 10 years old, 40 percent have tried to lose weight. Another survey, released by the National Institute on Media and the Family, 78 percent of teenage girls are unhappy with their bodies by the time they turn 17. Perspectives, like media and politics, are able to determine how one feels about their own body. Clothing stores, magazines and fashion designers continue to use young teens to model their clothing aimed toward adult women. Lingerie catalogs and women's magazines are filled with supermodels who have been photodiodes to the mint of looking unrecognizable.

Women especially need to gain education about what is healthy and ideal for their specific bodies. The Photodiodes and overly-edited images that flood our minds are not real. When supermodels like Hide Glum or Giggles Punished can no longer take a picture without a body part supposedly needing retouching, the ideal image of beauty has gone too far. Once women no longer allow media images to determine how they should look and feel, women will undoubtedly to be able to accept their own beautiful, naturally- created bodies.