The Effects of Social Media on Models
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In recent years, eating disorders among the young population in the United States have become much more prevalent. This is mainly due to the body standards set by media influencers and models. As young, impressionable minds see social media influencers with better features, some try to replicate those facial or bodily features, which can cause an unhealthy obsession in those who wish to look like, for example, their favorite celebrity. Models who work in this industry face these dangerous body standards, as well. They can develop an unhealthy obsession with what they look like, which can lead to the development of eating disorders. The modeling industry may also contribute to models' harmful mindsets. But, as people learn about the horrible emotional and physical consequences of body standards, they fight to change how society views "the perfect body." Although most of the evidence presented in this paper is about women, the concepts related apply to men since the evidence does not relate to any gender differences. This paper evaluates the rising demand for advocacy surrounding the problems of models and considers how those who work in the social media industry struggle to deal with the consequences of body standards.

The common view of the social media industry is that models are kept on strict diets and regulate their caloric intake very intricately and in the most healthy way possible. Young consumers of social media and marketing believe this to be the case. However, this perspective holds for a very small percentage of models. Nikki DuBose, an advocate for modeling rights, describes it as, "...a poorly regulated industry" (DuBose, 2022). Although Dubose stated this in her blog, her message is reliable since she gives a firsthand account of what goes on in the modeling industry. She goes on to say that poor regulation in such a delicate industry can cause all sorts of unhealthy and unsafe things to happen (DuBose, 2022). This implies that the industry does not place much importance on the health of the models, which can lead to disastrous outcomes. DuBose describes her experience as a model as "ravaging" her mind, body, and spirit (Dubose, 2022). Moreover, some models become so drastic in their attempts to keep the "ideal" body type that their caloric deficiency becomes deadly. In recent years, countless models have died due to anorexia, including Karla Alvarex, Karen Carpenter, Isabella Caro, and many more (Sydney, 2007). These deaths are due to the lack of attention the industry gives models, in terms of health and well-being. Anorexia, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, is "a mental illness causing somebody to control the amount of food they eat in an extreme way that leads to dangerous weight loss" (Oxford, 2022). To put it plainly, the employers of these deceased models are partially responsible for their deaths. Empathy, compassion, and patience are all virtues that are lacking in these corporations. If these values were displayed in the workplace, many of these ill models would not suffer.

Although many social media influencers face strict body standards, those in the modeling industry finally have opportunities for empowerment. As an illustration, advocates have appealed to the State of California to help enforce better working conditions and healthcare for

models. A recently passed bill, according to the California Legislature, defines an occupational and health standard for models. The bill also states that modeling agencies must address the "prevention and treatment of eating disorders" (California, 2016). This means that those affected by the pressure of being in the modeling industry have resources to help them cope with the mental and physical strain. Doubtless, workers will take advantage of these resources, which helps to prevent eating disorders among this population. In addition, those struggling with eating disorders or body image issues have access to resources to help them cope with their situation. Lisa Ruben from Arizona State University conducted a study on the exploration of body consciousness in women, which concluded that "feminism provided participants with an alternative way to interpret cultural ideologies of women's bodies, and offered specific strategies to resist these ideologies on a personal and societal level" (Rubin et al., 2004). In other words, the participants who relate their experiences with body image issues and eating disorders to others feel better about themselves, rejecting the common societal view. Such resources help the ill recover from their disorders and learn to be more confident in their skin.

Society tends to see overweight people as essentially less than the average person. Skinny is deemed as good and fat is seen as bad. But in recent years, that perspective has shifted. People have become more tolerant and accepting of overweight people. In their peer-reviewed article, Adwoa Afful and Rose Ricciardelli write, "Bloggers use online platforms to innovate popular [fat activist] protest strategies and bridge their online experiences of social marginalization" (Afful & Ricciardelli, 2015). Such bloggers include the previously mentioned Nikki DuBose, who suffered from eating disorders and body image issues. This push for a change in how society views fat people is supported by organizations like the National Association to Advance Fat Americans (NAAFA). The organization's founders purposely took inspiration from the title of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to show how fat discrimination parallels racial discrimination (Afful & Ricciardelli, 2015). In trying to advance their well-being, some fat people turn their backs on the norm of skinniness and work as overweight models "in an effort to change the discourses surrounding fatness" (Afful & Ricciardelli, 2015). This exposure and publicity positively influence how the average person perceives fat people, which is one of the main goals of NAAFA (Afful & Ricciardelli, 2015). Overall, the shifting perspective of what models should look like invites impressionable minds to reevaluate what they want their bodies to look like. This reduces the regularity of eating disorders since people are more comfortable in their natural bodies and do not desire to alter them.

Despite these promising changes, there is still much more progress to be made. With each generation, models come closer to a positive working and social environment. People on social media are starting to change the way they see themselves and others. Positivity is slowly becoming a trademark of the industry. Although models are far from achieving their dreams of a perfect environment, these changes are important milestones in their journey toward complete acceptance. Younger generations may finally learn to embrace themselves for who they are when they see fearless models on social media, who are not afraid to show their body fat.

Modeling has come a long way, and it has a long way to go, but the pace at which acceptance comes along is speeding up.

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