
SENIOR PORTFOLIO

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Work of Media

Hello, nice to informally meet you. For those who do not know me, my name is Nakiya Gorham. I am originally from Atlanta, GA, and I have been a student attending the University of Tampa (U.T) since Fall 2017. When I moved from Atlanta, I received an Associate's degree in Journalism and a certificate in Audio & Visual Technical Production. When I came to the University of Tampa, I was in the pursuit of being in a new environment, wonderful weather, a beautiful campus, and an exciting program. As beautiful as the sunshine state has been to me, my college experience has been even more beautiful.

When I first visited UT during my sophomore year of high school it was a no-brainer that I wanted to attend. It was my “dream school” and I was very eager to start the next chapter of my life. During my freshman year of college, I decided to pursue both being an International Relations & Communication major. However, after two semesters I realized my passion was not in International Relations, but it was Communication. I fell in love with COM 222, with Lisa Inserra, and COM 344 with Minjie Li. Both classes allowed me to be creative but also use my voice and address social issues that impact in ways that I felt communicated the messages properly whether it be a [video](#), [blog](#), [photography](#), or curating a whole [social media page](#) dedicated to social issues that I am passionate about. Being a Communication major has allowed me to feel like I genuinely contributing to society whether it be through my words, art, or other mediums. Through the ups, like conducting my own independent study, and downs to moving back home during the pandemic and pushing back my graduation date. However, through it all, I have enjoyed the process and my college experience.

Since I was 16 years old I have been attending college. Even though it was an associate’s degree I always had the passion to share, create, and tell a story whether it be my own, or others. When I attended Georgia State University through my dual enrollment program I selected the

Journalism track. A year later, I was able to apply to the Sports Broadcast Institute which allowed students to that had an interest in sports broadcasting and sports journalism to receive a degree in journalism but also a certification in Audio & Visual Technical Production. There I was able to partner with networks like ESPN, Turner Broadcasting, and Georgia Public Broadcasting. There I was able to learn what critical aspects make the best communicator. My old professor once told me, “the best communicators are the best storytellers. You’re able to make people feel and relate.” That quote always stuck with me because I genuinely believe in that philosophy.

However, I did not understand the importance of painting the picture and using my voice until much later in life. When I was smaller, I witnessed things most kids should not be around. I grew up in a toxic household where I was taught it is better to stay quiet than speak up because it would look like I was “challenging” or disrespecting the authority. The authority in my house was my father. I come from a two parent household and my parents are still together 26 years later, but the abuse and toxicity I experienced and witnessed growing up is something I don’t wish on anyone, especially any child. I’ll never forget it was Friday, May 24, 2013 it was the last day of school, and I was excited because this was the end of middle school and I was transitioning into high school. I remember coming home so excited to celebrate with my family because every Memorial Day weekend my family went on our annual trip to Florida. I remember getting off the bus and running through the door, expecting to see my mom excited to see her “sweet girl” come home. Instead, I caught saw my mother on the floor crying covering her face with my baby sister Trinity in her playpen crying. I immediately start rushing to aid my mother, trying to comfort her. I try to get her to speak to me but all my mother can end up saying is, “why God”. I try to get her to talk to me but then my older sister Kaylyn comes from upstairs visibly upset telling me that my grandmother on my dad’s side had passed away. However, my father did

not handle too well and got physical with my other as she tried to help calm him. At that moment, I asked only one question, “where is he?” Kaylyn being the oldest sister tried to isolate my father from the rest of us. She was always the one who was going to speak her mind and feared zero consequences, I admired her strength and resilience. Me, I would keep my mouth shut because I feared my father until that day. I made a vow to myself on that day that I can not and will not just watch people be mistreated, abused, or discriminated. Growing up in such a tumultuous household during my early adolescents helped me realize and recognize I had a burning passion to help others. However, once I realized the power of having a voice I knew that the Communication field was made for me.

Learning to stand up to my father through his abusive and toxic periods helped motivate me to want a better life for not only myself but also my family. I started getting active in community service initiatives and partnerships with local shelters like Rebecca’s Tent to help create a resource fund for women who found themselves victims of domestic violence, homelessness, or any other misfortunes. When I transitioned to Tampa in my first year I suffered from extreme anxiety about being away from home. The constant stress and worries about my family being okay with my dad often haunted me. Even though he had gone a good period without displaying abusive behaviors I constantly worried that one day he would snap and no one could protect my mom or little sister. My GPA freshman year was terrible. It was the worst I have ever done academically, and I am not proud of it. Honestly, I am quite embarrassed my first semester I received a 2.5 GPA, and my second semester I made a 2.65 GPA. I know that I am not the perfect student, but I am a hustler. With experience with anxiety and depression, I was able to push myself and I can proudly say I have a 3.12 GPA. Seeing that now is a constant reminder

that I pushed myself even when I did not have much left in me. That I earned my degree because I never gave up on myself even when I wanted to.

When the pandemic hit I was in my junior year and I was thriving. Being active in my extracurricular activities and clubs, being a part of executive boards, started showing interest in grad school, studying for the GRE, and my mental health was at an all-time high. When the pandemic disrupted everything and I had to move home I already knew I was going to go through a depressive slump. I finished my spring semester with a 3.50 GPA but I started to feel myself sink into a slump. When the discussion for me to return to school to finish my senior year of college I was not given the choice to physically return back. The day my parents told me they had contacted my advisor and spoke with student disability I felt so heartbroken. Being stripped of the opportunity to graduate with my friends who became my family, being forced to live in the same household that took me years of therapy to heal from, and to make matters worse I was going to have to give up my way of living because my parents were scared that I would be a statistic on the news. However, little did they know a piece of me died when I was told I wouldn't be returning to school for the fall. My mother witnessed my mental health deteriorate, and as much as she tried to help or encourage me to take care of myself the damage was done. I had to find an outlet and fast because I was about to hit rock bottom. One night I was giving some serious thought to my future and what my passions are. The idea of "ADORA" came to light, a digital magazine publication that allowed creatives to have a platform. I started creating the first issue of my digital magazine. Every night after I finished class I would connect and Facetime with creatives from all around the world from places like; Paris, South Korea, the Philippines, and Sierra Leone. In creating my first issue I was able to incorporate things such as graphic design, storytelling, social media strategy, and journalism. After college my plan is to

expand, I have recently secured a contract with multimillion-dollar brand, God is Dope based in Atlanta, GA. I will be partnering with them to be their private cultural community liaison. Where I will be responsible for curating and hosting events on behalf of the brand whether it be fashion shows, small business events, celebrity birthday parties, album releases, discussion panels, small business expos, and music festivals. I have learned that community and culture are everything, I plan to utilize the things I have learned here in my studies from internal communication, creative aesthetics, social media strategy growth, and marketing research and techniques. I have centered my final classes for my last semester around things that will increase my skill set, earn a certification, and allow me to become better suited for the clients I help in the future. This semester I have learned how to create my own logo using Adobe InDesign, photoshop and enhance photos more professionally in Adobe Photoshop in my Digital Media. To finally learn the newest research approaches in Marketing/Advertising from my Communication Research & Methods course. With the spirit of the eagerness to learn, grow, and adapt I am very confident I will be successful wherever I apply myself.

My time at the University of Tampa has been centered around the common theme of advocacy, I chose a paper that I felt best showcased this. The paper I selected is titled, “Social Media: The New Social Currency” was written for my Writing & Research (AWR 201). I received a B on this paper but that’s not the reason I chose it. I chose this paper because I wrote it during the peak of my depression when I was contemplating dropping out of school. When I received my first grade I received a D on the first draft and then a C on the second submission. I remember reading my critiques and immediately feeling pitiful for myself. I was the only person who was responsible for this poor grade, and that was completely due to my lack of effort and motivation. I realized I needed to get a game plan on how I can make my grade back up. By this

time I had already withdrawn from half of my classes and was a half-time student only in two classes. I forced myself to grow up, stop feeling pitiful for myself, and start putting in real effort. Even though it was a writing and research course class that pushed me. It felt like the biggest achievement when I received a B for my final paper. This paper highlighted issues that need to be addressed in our society. Being raised in the generation of social media there has been plenty of cons to its existence, currently, we see issues like adultification, eating disorders, mental health issues, gender norms, the male gaze, and more. These topics are of extreme importance to me because these societal issues are topics that need to be addressed. Being an advocate for social justice I wanted to educate myself more about these topics. It only fueled me to enroll in classes that supported me being able to educate myself and others on social issues but also advocate for them as well. Currently, I see the shift in advertising and mainstream media to be more diverse and inclusive. Brands are starting to have a corporate social responsibility and consumers are starting to pay more attention to them. The instructions for this paper were to deliver a research paper in polished form. The research topic had to be approved by the professor and be related to the student's major. I chose to discuss the power of social media and the negative effects it can have on adolescents. As part of the assignment we had to argue, and find works whether it be peer-reviewed, academic journals, or other outside sources.

When I reflect on the paper now, I feel like I could definitely add more to it in regards to discussing how impactful hypermasculinity, toxic-masculinity, privilege, and adultification (especially among girls of color) can create a breeding ground for a poor social media climate and environment. I would also discuss how now apps like TikTok have partnered with mental health apps like Headspace to help monitor users' consumption. I would also discuss how apps like Instagram now allow you to put a time limit you can spend on the app to monitor users' daily

consumption as well. Social media is constantly evolving, which in hand means marketing is evolving, but also the way we communicate is evolving too. The evolution of communication is revolutionary, now businesses are making innovative ways to allow public discord. Places like the Metaverse, Web 3.0, and others becoming new ways the public can communicate, disseminate, and internalize information. These advancements in our society are impacting our daily lives as we speak. I also believe that I could have written clearer, and the paper can become to sound a bit dense. However, I rather have more information than too little information.

For my work of media, I chose my digital magazine publication ADORA. The whole first publication is 30 pages, all hyperlinked, crediting all my creatives and their work. I also took the initiative to create the magazine's own [social media page](#), Spotify channel for the [monthly curated](#) playlists, and [more](#). Creating this digital magazine publication allowed me to showcase aesthetic principles of design. Utilizing space, type, color, and graphics. However, when I first created the first issue I had no idea about Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator. I had to teach myself how to use the app and honestly, it was a challenge. I naturally am drawn to more minimal design concepts but with a magazine, I've learned that less makes your cover page look boring. You have to use text and colors that will captivate your viewer's eyes. However, I took it upon myself to learn a minimalist design and layout as well just in case one of my clients desires that look and feel. There are other areas of improvement I can work on such as page layout and spacing. Understanding how the publication will look on a computer versus a mobile device. Aside from that, I am proud of how my first issue turned out. If you look at the second issue you can see I started to get a better grasp of layout and aesthetics.

I am very fortunate to have attended the University of Tampa. It pushed me to see more potential in myself than I ever noticed before. It help me use my voice for issues I am passionate about, and finally, it just helped me grow into the woman I am today. I felt that it was important to include the personal aspect of what I have experienced for you to understand why I am so passionate to use my voice. I do not know what exactly the future holds for me. Of course, I have a 10-year plan for my life. However, if the pandemic has taught me anything it is that life changes, things happen, but you must be adaptable because the world we live in is constantly evolving.

Social Media: The New Social Currency

In today's society, women are constantly scrutinized and are trying to meet the societal standards of beauty every day. Over the past decade, the use and purpose of social media have transformed throughout the years. As time has progressed society has allowed social media to influence and dictate what is deemed beautiful and what is not. By doing so, this actually causes more harm than benefit to adolescents, more specifically adolescent women. Women are left with two choices; be confident in their bodies or fall into society's trap and attempt to reach society's current beauty standards. Unfortunately, in today's society, the new standard of beauty causes women to focus on appealing to the male gaze, which could potentially cause harm to either or both their mental and/or physical health. The problem this essay will address is how the excessive use of social media specifically towards adolescents negatively impacts young women and their mental health. It will highlight the negative effects of how apps like Hot or Not and Instagram create a toxic social environment for women to potentially feel as if they are only desirable solely based on their looks and what society determines to be beautiful.

An article by Today.com highlighted that "A study by the "Keep it Real" campaign found that 80 percent of 10-year-old American girls have been on some type of diet." (Knorr, Today.com) There are plenty of examples of negative teen body images all over the Internet. Today, adolescents are rating each other across the different social media outlets based on social media currency such as likes and reposts, body image, and public opinion of their peers who are also online. They post themselves and yearn for feedback on their social media, to receive some

type of validation. Body dissatisfaction has unfortunately been a product of cultural pressures. Cultural pressures have been implicated in the high prevalence of women's body dissatisfaction today (Wertheim, 47). In particular, researchers blame the mass media for their unrealistic ideal of thin attractiveness. As time progresses, various mediums of media continue to showcase 'thin is still in'. From actresses, and beauty pageant contestants, to fashion models the representation of beauty has become progressively thinner over the years (Silverstein, 1986). Media trends like these have coincided with the rising prevalence of women's body dissatisfaction and eating disorders.

However, in the most recent years, there has been a trend of body positivity on the rise. Body positivity aims to challenge society's beauty standards of what is acceptable in regards to appearance ideals; foster acceptance and respect for all bodies regardless of shape, size and features; and focus on appreciating the functionality and health of the body rather than solely focusing on its appearance (Sastre, 923-944). This development was created in reaction to the constant bombardment of media images promoting unrealistic and unattainable appearance ideals. With over 11 million posts tagged with #bodypositive, four million for #bodypositivity, and over one million for #bopo (Instagram, 2021) the trend for women to love the skin that they're in has been heading in an upward movement. (Cohen, 68). In a recent content analysis of 640 Instagram posts sampled from fashionable body-positive accounts, authors found that body-positive posts usually embody pictures of various body sizes and appearances that are underrepresented in the beauty industry. (Cohen et al., 2019). The majority (94%) of body types presented in popular body-positivity posts ranged from traditional weight to overweight, and just below half (40%) featured attributes that diverged from social normative beauty ideals like

cellulite, love handles, body rolls, and stretch marks. These pictures were accompanied by captions that promote body acceptance and seeing beauty in numerous appearances and internal attributes (Cohen et al., 2019). Alternative hashtags related to body positivity and also the fat acceptance movements embody #healthateverysize, #effyourbeautystandards, and #fatspiration. Cohen's analysis examined how different types of fat acceptance messages among four hundred Instagram pictures found that those labeled with #fatspiration usually sent messages of fat acceptance through fashion and beauty-related policy, whereas pictures related to the hashtag #healthateverysize supported physical activity, health, and welfare (Webb et al., 2017).

Social media has become an integrated part of daily life, with an estimated 3 billion social media users worldwide. Adolescents and young adults are the most active users of social media. (Schønning, 1949) With a huge following, there is pressure on women to present themselves accordingly to appeal to the male gaze. The majority of currently popular social media apps are created and managed by tech executives, 83% of whom are white males. Having this misogynistic market that is marketing off the idea that "sex sells" and it can affect young women's mental health. Apps like Hot or Not, Tinder, and Bumble were created to judge women based on their physical appearance. This can lead to an increase in the over-sexualization of young women and cause them to experience eating disorders, mental health, and low self-confidence.

The media, there are three stereotypes of women that seem to dominate in the media, namely the 'sex object', 'person trying to be beautiful for men', and 'wife and mother'. (Brandt, 233-243) Nancy Jo Sales discusses how in 2014, Vogue announced, "We're Officially in the Era

of the Big Booty”. (Sales, 332) the article mentions how the big booty epidemic caused some women to feel inferior compared to women who exemplified the new beauty standard. This supports the notion of how young women are usually pressured by the media and other mediums to either be a part of the trend that’s in or be seen as the odd ones who didn’t follow societal trends. Amber also mentions how girls are willing to risk their lives just in hopes to gain a Nicki Minaj silhouette. According to Common Sense Media's body-image study, children, teens, media, and body image, teens who are active online are concerned about how they're perceived. The trend of body dissatisfaction appears to be on the rising in the United States.

A study by the “Keep it Real” campaign found that 80 percent of 10-year-old American girls have been on some type of diet. (Knorr, 78) There are plenty of examples of negative teen body images all over the Internet. Today, adolescents are rating each other across the different social media outlets based on social media currency such as likes and reposts, body image, and public opinion of their peers who are also online. They post themselves and yearn for feedback on their social media, to receive some type of validation. Body dissatisfaction has unfortunately been a product of cultural pressures. Cultural pressures have been implicated in the high prevalence of women's body dissatisfaction today (Wertheim, 47). In particular, researchers blame the mass media for their unrealistic ideal of thin attractiveness. As time progresses, various mediums of media continue to promote skinny culture. Media trends like these have coincided with the rising prevalence of women's body dissatisfaction and eating disorders.

However, in the most recent years, there has been a trend of body positivity on the rise. Body positivity aims to challenge society’s beauty standards of what is acceptable in regards to

appearance ideals; foster acceptance and respect for all bodies regardless of shape, size and features; and focus on appreciating the functionality and health of the body rather than solely focusing on its appearance (Sastre, 923-944). This development was created in reaction to the constant bombardment of media images promoting unrealistic and unattainable appearance ideals. With over 11 million posts tagged with #bodypositive, four million for #bodypositivity, and over one million for #bopo (Instagram, 2021) the trend for women to love the skin that their in has been heading in an upward movement. (Cohen, 68). In a recent content analysis of 640 Instagram posts sampled from fashionable body-positive accounts, authors found that body-positive posts usually embody pictures of various body sizes and appearances that are underrepresented in the beauty industry. (Cohen et al., 2019). The majority (94%) of body types presented in popular body-positivity posts ranged from traditional weight to overweight, and just below half (40%) featured attributes that diverged from social normative beauty ideals like cellulite, love handles, body rolls, and stretch marks. These pictures were accompanied by captions that promote body acceptance and seeing beauty in numerous appearances and internal attributes (Cohen et al., 2019). Alternative hashtags related to body positivity and also the fat acceptance movements embody #healthateverysize, #effyourbeautystandards, and #fatspiration. Cohen's analysis examined how different types of fat acceptance messages among four hundred Instagram pictures found that those labeled with #fatspiration usually sent messages of fat acceptance through fashion and beauty-related policy, whereas pictures related to the hashtag #healthateverysize supported physical activity, health, and welfare (Webb et al., 2017).

Second, the strain of body image continues negatively influence women regardless of shape and size, Gay writes,

Bodily obsession is perhaps a human condition because of its inescapability.” Gay was implying humans have an over obsessive behavior that constantly makes them reflect on their flaws, and by doing so it’s becoming inescapable. Women have started to practice this over obsessive behavior of trying to compare themselves. This behavior only creates negative effects on the woman. There are times when our bodies betray us or our bodies are betrayed by others. I think about my body all the time, how it looks, how it feels, how I can make it smaller, what I should put into it, what I am putting into it, what has been done to it, what I do it, what I let others do it. This bodily preoccupation is exhausting. (Gay, 99)

This evidence helps justify the fact that society perpetuates an extremely negative body image. Then often women become obsessed with parts of their body they dislike. Evidence found that 89% of participants who spent more time on social media were more likely to feel envious of their peers or other accounts that they follow in their social network because they feared they were missing out. This helps identify that such stress from social media can cause anxiety, depression, and, or worse suicide. It mainly highlighted young women were the affected demographic (Abi-Jaoude, 131-143). This overuse of social media can possibly lead to eating disorders, susceptibility to peer pressure, low self-esteem, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorders that greatly affect a person’s health and quality of life. For adolescents, there is a pressure that causes them to feel like they have to overcompensate. The stress of keeping up on social media can cause individuals but mainly young women to feel like they have to keep up. Having things that highlight being thin versus loving your body may tend to make one lack self-confidence and feel like an outcast.

In addition, Gay notes that “All I wanted to do was eat. My body grew, more noticeable, and more invisible at the same time.” (Gay, 110). This shows that some women cope by eating to manage their stress however, by her eating and becoming overweight she became invisible to society because she was not genuinely acknowledged since there’s no emphasis in the beauty industry to highlight and appreciate women who are not considered to display the ideal beauty of society. These women are considered to be outcasts, by feeling like an outcast can potentially lead those who feel outcasted by society’s beauty standards to feel unworthy of admiration or attention. Words with negative connotations are most often applied to women who seem to not toe the line set forth by their circle in society. As a woman’s body begins to diverge from the expectation of society, it becomes invisible, hidden from praise and kind words, and mainly relegated to the basement without encouragement. Compliments are paid more in a passive-aggressive tone. Women who are considered larger than the acceptable average weight are those who get the most looks of scorn and disdain. As the body shrinks and becomes smaller, people often use the word “healthy” and begin to give more positive feedback for a person, regardless of what weight they feel most comfortable at.

As their weight decreases, their beauty increases, until you have run into the “model caste”, of women whose BMI is so low as to be considered underweight. A model caste is a form of social stratification characterized by body type, weight, and acceptance in society. On the top are those who represent thin and slim. Next are your average bodies, next are your mid-size women who may have more curves than your average-sized girls, and then finally are your plus-size women who often get associated with being obese just because they’re not the average size. The women are often portrayed to represent the ideal woman in the beauty industry and are often thin. While this is not close to the body type or weight of the average woman, they are still

idolized as valuable, not for their insights but for their presentation of their physical bodies in the public sphere. This behavior just feeds into the lack of self-esteem of women who identify as mid-size or plus-size body types.

In a study, one hundred thirty-five female college students at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland were randomly assigned to rate pictures of fashion models on weight, intelligence, or health. Intelligence and health were given as alternative comparison factors to weight because models stereotypically are thin. The results revealed that women with higher levels of trait body dissatisfaction reported a larger ideal body shape and decreased body dissatisfaction after rating fashion models on intelligence dimensions, but reported a smaller ideal body shape and increased body dissatisfaction after rating models on weight dimensions. Women with lower levels of trait body dissatisfaction were unaffected by the type of comparisons. These findings indicated that women with higher levels of trait body dissatisfaction were more susceptible to the manipulation than were women with lower levels of trait body dissatisfaction and that intelligence is a more effective alternative comparison dimension to weight than is healthy. (Lews, 543) This helps prove that women who do not identify with the ideal body type are more dissatisfied with their bodies than those who are the ideal body type.

The evaluation of women's value as their physical presentation and weight is a large problem for young women who do not fit the "thin is beautiful" schema, and young girls, both of whom may feel the need to fit in and to alter themselves in order to fit the standard of beauty they feel society requires of them in order to be accepted, valued, and to find fulfillment. Without the knowledge and support that their value is inherent, and comes from inside, the environment

surrounding these women can be very negative and corrosive, leading to low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy. In the book *American Girl*, Sales witnessed why many women turned to the Internet for body image validation. Today's adolescence has become self-conscious and insecure about their physical appearance due to today's standards of beauty. In today's culture adolescents has yearned for the need for peer validation, but due to the Internet and social media's influence on beauty standards, this causes conflict because the ideals of beauty have become oversexualized and unrealistic for adolescence. Research on media and body image currently focuses on the "traditional" mainstream media such as television, video games, music, magazines, advertising, movies, and other mediums containing unrealistic, idealized, and stereotypical portrayals of body types. (Mills, 47)

Part of this negative influence comes from the validation of a male gaze solely fixed on women as objects of sexual pleasure, relegating the value of a woman to the numbers on the scale. The over-sexualized nature we see of girls that we see on social media is because of the technological frat-boy culture that was created in Silicon Valley. In 2013 a Fenwick & West survey revealed that 43.3% of the top 150 Silicon Valley companies had no female directors, and 40% had just one. This institutionalized sexism helps perpetuate unacceptable 'frat-boy' behavior. When an environment excludes a certain demographic it intensifies the problem that women are still seen as objects versus human beings. (Evans, 32) By women breaking the glass ceiling and challenging Silicon Valley's sexist norms women can gain the equality that's been denied them and shift the misogynistic culture that was created in not only Silicon Valley but the IT industry. All current popular social media apps and nearly all social media apps altogether are created and managed by tech executives, 83% of whom are white males. (Sales, 26) There are

valuable details about the clear connection between the tech industry's frat-boy culture and the rampant sexism found in many apps on the market. These misogynistic men are trying to market off the idea that "sex sells". Apps like Hot or Not, and Bumble were created to judge a woman based on her physical appearance and market off of the woman but appeal to men. This also influences the normalization of sexual assault. This can lead to an increase in sexual assault, and disenfranchisement of the female ideas, opinions, and needs. (Lazuka, 85)

Additionally, women who have been socialized to see their value as only given by the male ego may not have the skills to cope with negative or inappropriate advances from men. The dangers of this situation may not be immediately apparent but do put society, and the women within that society specifically, at risk of losing the brainpower, guts, and gifts that half of the society has to offer by refusing to acknowledge the merit of a woman simply because she is not a size zero, as West writes in *Shrill*, "reading about fat people, particularly fat women, accepting and loving themselves as they were, infuriated him in ways he couldn't articulate at the time" Being a woman means certain men think they have dominion over your body; being a fat woman means they don't bother to hide it. Fatness thus confers a grim power of discernment, an antenna for the character that survives even if you become skinny. Fatness gives you an insight into a world of cruelty many people can't imagine.

In conclusion, recognizing the risk associated with presenting women with an unrealistic standard for beauty can help combat the current obsession with trying to obtain the unattainable. Popular media figures appear to play a strong role in promoting these unhealthy beauty standards. In the documentary *Miss Representation*, it was said: "Media is a message and

messenger.” In today’s society, the media is delivering content as a message to people, and in this specific context, the people are women. However, the evidence does point one way: social media affects people differently. Plus-size girls were once looked down upon and ignored but now with trends like body-positivity girls who don’t look like society’s ideal type are finally being celebrated and appreciated. However, the use of social media can negatively impact women due to the pressure to upkeep their image, focus on appealing to the male gaze, and potentially can cause harm to either or both their mental, and/or physical health. Unfortunately, creates a toxic environment that sadly only negatively impacts women.

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