



The Body, Culture, Earth..... and Instagram

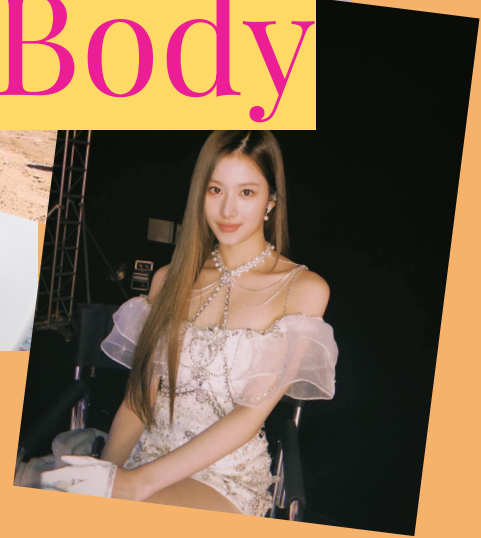
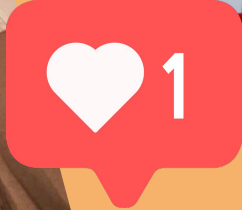
Shaelea Perkins • Project 3



Social media encompasses a great deal of your lives as modern people. It has helped to solve many social issues that the human race has faced. However, it has also brought unprecedented consequences upon us that no one has been spared from. From our bodies and minds to the impacts on the earth, social media has taken its toll on our way of life and how we view the world around us. But one culprit of this has faced massive backlash for this reason, and yet, it seems we haven't taken a chance to dig real deep into just HOW much we are affected. I'm of course referencing Instagram.



Instagram and The Body



Instagram is well known to increase depression, encourage social anxiety, and decreased self esteem.

60% of girls say they are upset that their appearance does not match how they look online (Inkumsah, 2022).



“Men are less likely to use Instagram for social comparison and status seeking, but those who do experience a similar level of harm as women”.

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/03/feature-minimize-instagram-effects>



“Posting edited “selfies” on apps like Instagram is also correlated with disordered eating behavior. In one study of 2,475 undergraduate students led by doctoral student Madeline Wick and her advisor, Pamela Keel, PhD, a psychology professor at Florida State University, 1 in 3 women said they edited images to alter their weight or shape before posting photos on Instagram”(Inkumsah, 2022).



The simplest advice would be to slowly decrease your time limit on there, but if not, then it would be best to privatize your account so you have control over who views your content, disable likes and comments if numbers are something you tend to fixate on and utilize the block button on accounts you find are being pushed on you that contain content that you find bothersome.



Instagram and Social Culture



Individuals use different features of social media sites in order to bond with others. As a result, using these features may lead to higher feelings of social presence (Kircaburun, 2018).



When we are young areas of our brain linked to social rewards develop a significant increase in dopamine and oxytocin receptors during our adolescence, which motivates teens to seek approval from their peers. (<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/03/feature-minimize-instagram-effects>)

Some find it hard to interact with others in a physical world when they have become so used to the interactions online.

Which is by design as Instagram capitalizes on users' biological drive for social belonging—and nudges them to keep on scrolling.

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/03/feature-minimize-instagram-effects>

Often, we find ourselves partaking in social interactions that we secretly would not authentically be interested in for the sake of “getting some cool stuff for our feed”. This reduces our experiences down to not how they made us feel or how they enriched our lives, but rather if other people think we are cool for doing it.





Even the establishments we often use for a setting for Instagram photos know this. Restaurateurs have adapted the lighting in their dining rooms to be conducive to photos, knowing diners' pictures are among their most powerful marketing tools. Splashy lettering, loud wallpaper, neon signs — these have become the default aesthetic of eateries looking to nab a spot in Instagram feeds (Halzack, 2019).



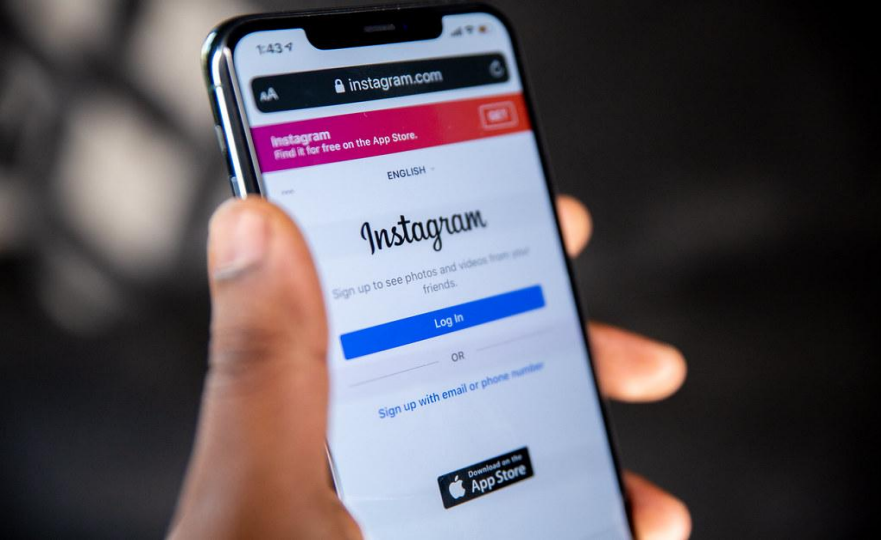
Opting for polaroid or non disposable film cameras could be a fun way of capturing the moment without utilizing your phone, just like not bringing your phone to events or limiting screen time while socializing with others would be even better. And actually asking yourself if you are only taking part in an event to get those pictures and perhaps start taking time to do thing that you know you would enjoy with the use of your phone.

Instagram and Consumerism



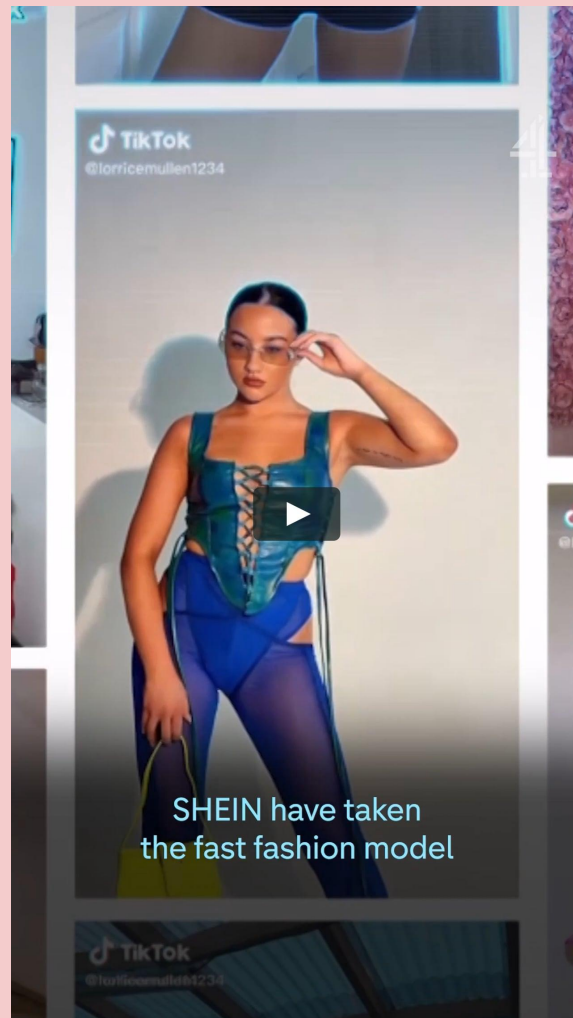


“Instagram has played a crucial role in altering both the look and nature of products people buy and the physical spaces where they shop. Certain items were elevated to the must-have list this decade because they were shareable”(Halzack, 2019).



Often very frivolous products have become hot commodities because of how aesthetic or popular they have become on sights like Instagram or TikTok. This leads to a global consumerism attitude of buy for the sake of having and never giving any foresight into whether or not these items are practical or even useful (Guentert-Baldo, 2022). This has taken a massive toll on landfills and has helped to perpetuate the issue of child labor and sweatshops.

Instagram is well known to be designed to be addictive and add to the feeling of FOMO with not just how much we interact and post but what we post. Often the need to display a luxurious lifestyle in order to gain internet relevance comes at the cost of having to “buy your image” leaving users in debt. This most commonly involves fast fashion.



Shein is one of these online stores which has grown popular on apps like Instagram and TikTok. It is fast fashion from sweatshops that are peddled by Instagram as a cheap source of replicas of other expensive brands in order to appear the most trendy. Not only has it become one of the cheapest, and most overproduced of all online stores thus far, it has been found to rip off designs from smaller brands in order to sell similar designs at a cheaper price. And a vast amount of this fast fashion, once no longer considered trendy, ends up in landfills.



Go into your instagram settings and edit your ad suggestions to avoid things you're more likely to impulse buy. Push your shopping to physical locations where you are more likely to put more thought into what your buying. And even better, try to utilize second hand stores as an eco friendly means of not adding to the incredibly destructive fashion industry.

Citations

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