

# The New York Times

It's not shut up and look pretty anymore!  
Models are more like "Us" than we think.

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PingHuaChou Illustration



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## The Beginning of a Change

Tonight is a little hang out with your close friends and you all lowkey dressed up . Go to dinner, eat , laugh , and then there's always that one spot in the restaurant or outside where you all take pictures. Or that 15 minute bathroom trip ,when your friend instantly becomes a photographer and you a model and the rest your hypemen . We all have that moment where we are feeling ourselves and simply like how we look and feel good. So we pose and take pictures and post it on instagram, to show the world how good we look , that we are living our live to the fullest. We all have that 'model' moment; but modeling isn't just posing and looking good , well it's not anymore.Fashion and modeling go hand and hand .

Fashion is evolutionary and modeling is revolutionary. Now when I say fashion is evolutionary it means it mirrors the same slow changes as our culture . In other words trends or looks from back in the day are coming back now but slightly modified due to our difference in generation but still very similar , it's a cycle . Modeling is becoming revolutionary because of the dramatic changes that are taken place, in the best way. You see diversity in the runways now ,you see models with all different shades ,all types of skin color all types of backgrounds .You see size 12 size 16 size 22 size 8 on the runways , it's not only size 00 anymore. In the article All the Curve Models who Walked During Fall



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2019 New York Fashion Week stated, "At New York Fashion Week, the fall 2019 shows featured 94 appearances by curve and non-sample-size models. It's the most size diversity we've seen since the spring 2018".

This is the start of something absolutely beautifully amazing, we are finally seeing body shapes that are more realistic in society. Meaning it's unrealistic that everybody is size 00 and is fair skin and tall, most of us don't look like that. And the question was always, why only white extremely thin and tall women get to be models, there's more shade and sizes. The fact that now we see more of the reality on the runways, now we are slowly embracing all of our differences and what makes us unique, and that it's okay to look different from the person next to you, we are all not meant to look the same. Steven Kolb, the organization's president and CEO, wrote. "American fashion can lead the path." which it can and it will, fashion has a lot of influences on people whether we notice it or not and modeling is one of the influences and now models are being influencers.

## **Models' after Time**

Modeling wasn't always what modeling is to us now, in fact how we use models now is the way they used mannequins back then. In other words, instead of having an actual person wearing your design, they used mannequins to 'model' their design. In the 1850s is when modeling took a turn, "Before this, [Charles Frederick Worth](#), who is considered by most to be the "father of haute couture," had his wife model his designs in the early 1850s....Worth's wife, Marie Augustine Vernet, was his "live mannequin," and is considered the first ever fashion model." As stated in the article [A Brief History of Fashion Modeling](#). "The 1970s and 1980s brought better wages and working conditions for models, as well as models landing cosmetic and hair endorsements. [Modeling competitions](#) were popular ways to find new models in the 1970s and 1980s." This is when modeling actually became a profession or a hobby for some, but was taken more serious.

Until 1974 we started to see a big change, it was the start of a change in diversity "Beverly Johnson became the first African-American model to grace the cover of American Vogue." In the 90s, that's where supermodels was born, and that's when they also started to get 'curvier' women as models, like Tyra Banks and Heidi Klum. They had



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more of a figure but still petite but it was a slow change of the 'look' of a model. "The 2000s brought a whole new aspect to the modeling world: social media. Now, models are more involved than ever with their fans as they share parts of their lives no one got to see before. Models like Kendall Jenner, Gigi Hadid, and Cara Delevingne have millions of followers on their social media accounts, and this is often a big factor in a brand's decision to hire them." So basically becoming a model isn't as hard as before, now anybody can become a model, and social media made that easier and also benefits brands by making it easier to promote their product.

This is more recent but it's something that has happened for decades, and still happens unfortunately, but now models have a voice, and they are finally being heard; so the model life is slowly changing for the better. Stella Duval from Cali said, "My mother was a model, and she never forced anything upon me, but she was taking me to castings in Los Angeles when I was younger. Agents wanted my hips to go down, they were saying I can't even have a bag of chips, they wanted me on a 700-calorie diet. I remember going into an agency and they said, " 'You're beautiful, but you're a little pudgy here. You got a little hip here.' I was only 14 and being called fat." Made it seem like it was a crime to have meat on the bone. And being so young, you're just starting to learn about your body and having people telling you constantly that your body is ugly and there's something wrong is psychologically sickening. "I think 13 is way too young and 14 is way too young and 15 is way too young. You're just not developed and you're not ready. I see models who are 13, 14, 15. I've had someone tell me that she hadn't eaten for two days because she didn't know where to go to eat. I saw girls doing lingerie at 14." That's physically and mentally unhealthy in so many ways, but that's how models were treated. Models didn't have the voice they have now, they were mentally abused and sexually abused, weren't allowed to say or opine on anything, it was just walk the runway and stay quiet about everything.

Renee Peters age 20 from Nashville said, "The girls at castings that were getting selected were all very, very skinny. And so I put a lot of pressure on myself to be that girl because I wanted to succeed. And I developed anorexia and bulimia. That lasted five or six years, and it wasn't until a couple of years ago that I realized that I had a problem." Reading this specifically made me feel some type of way because she tried so hard to





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look like the rest to be noticed to feel successful , and it's so sad because she was young and what she saw was skinny models being praised and shown love and if you had slight curves you were considered ugly and too big ; when in reality you're just in a healthier state or just physically are build with curves ... nothing wrong with that.

“ ‘the thinner you are, the more celebrated you are.’ Every day that you're working as a model, you're objectified somehow. You know, if it's just a simple term of you being a “mannequin” or a “model,” like you're not actually a person and you're just a vehicle for the clothing or the makeup or the hair. And then sometimes it's even like sexual harassment. I had one guy who wanted my nipples to look hard for the shoot. He literally just grabbed my nipple and was like, ‘See, we need it to be hard.’” That's uncomfortable and invading someone's privacy and just straight disrespectful to go and touch somebody like if they weren't even a person ,and treat them like objects. And that's just a little incident, there's more and worse but I'm going to keep this PG.

## **Behind the scenes**

There has been interviews with well known models with different background and race and they had some pretty interesting things to say.

Victoria Lee or as known as Precious Lee from Atlanta was interviewed and her personal experience had to do a lot of racial conflicts and situations ; and being a plus size girl. As stated in the article *What it's Truly Like to Be a Fashion Model* , “I am definitely more than likely always the only black model on set. Sometimes I'm the only black person on the entire set or on the entire floor.” That's a big concern and a problem , that shows that there was a racial barrier in the modeling industry and still was there not too long ago. And those side comments , the looks , the things that were asked and said to her , were just plain all ignorance. “I've encountered some really interesting issues as pertains to my race. I had a casting for a client that was waiting to see me for a while. They asked me my background and I said, “Oh, I've shot for Macy's and Nordstrom's.” And they were like, “No. What's your race?” I said, “I'm black.” They're like, “Oh, you're black? You're just so



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pretty.” And I said, “I didn’t know black didn’t come in pretty.” Needless to say I didn’t book that job.

Young woman Ebonee Davis age 24 from Seattle was told wearing her natural hair looks messy and will eventually get her to lose her job. Why? Because it’s curly and has a different texture and volume ? Because it’s different from the rest , it shouldn’t be aloud? Ebonee didn’t care , she didn’t listen and instead of losing her job , the opposite actually happened. “They told me I was going to lose the clients that I had and new clients wouldn’t want to work with me. But the crazy thing is that less than a month after the decision to wear my hair natural, I booked the biggest campaign of my life: [Calvin Klein.](#)”

**“Being a role model isn’t about showing people how to look like you. Being a role model is about using your freedom to show other people it’s safe to be themselves.”**

I really love this quote , because this doesn’t go just for modeling specifically ; you should always feel confident and comfortable in your own skin . That you shouldn’t be ashamed on how you look or question why God made you this way ; you are beautiful period !! Your flaws , your differences make you you , and make you beautiful and stand out from the others. Embrace your fro , embrace your curls,



embrace your curves ,

embrace your straight long hair , your short hair , your eyebrows , your skin color.

Whether your fare , light , tan , brown , dark , embrace who you are and what you are to



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fear to be yourself . And that is very powerful because a lot of young kids and teenagers suffer with that inner conflict with insecurities and uncertainties.

It feels good to see someone like you on the runway , in a movie , on



a TV show ; feels good because it makes you feel less isolated and makes you feel more 'normalized.' In other words , having only fair skin and skinny models isn't reality . In the real world there's difference race , different body shapes and different background , and for the models to look only one way and call that beautiful , a girl that doesn't look like that feels ashamed about how she looks because she doesn't look like these "beautiful models" and then whether we realize it or not , it's a part of young girls insecurities , that's when they start wishing to be someone they aren't , wishing to look like this and that; and slowly start to lose love for themselves. Which isn't their fault , fashion and modeling has a role in that , but is slowly flipping that negative into a positive .

## **Influence**

Models and celebrities have a similar way on how they influence people in a everyday basis . In a commercial when you see your favorite singer or your celebrity crush or a model you admire using a product and promoting it , it slightly persuades you in thinking maybe this product is good ; maybe I should buy it too. In a way , these celebrities and models are the credible sources and marketers realized that ; and saw the sells going up. That's why you see LeBron James in the nike commercial or Dwayne Wade in the Gatorade commercial , Rihanna in Puma , Migos in sprite or Jennifer Aniston in the Aveeno cream commercial ; marketers know these people have fans/followers so they

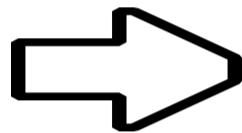


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get them to promote so they can get sells . In the article *Idealized Fashion Models and Purchasing Behavior* states, "They also found that credibility and the attractiveness of the endorser are strong predictors of buying intention. Trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise of celebrity endorsers are significant in forming a positive attitude towards purchase intention (Naz & Siddiqui, 2012). The effect of well-known celebrity had positively affected consumer attitude towards advertisement and products (Agarwal et al., 2013)."

**Likeability**

**Similarity**



**Purchase Intention**

**Belief**

Ashley Graham is a perfect example of a model that helps women that aren't petite to embrace their curves and being 'big' isn't a bad thing , having hips isn't ugly , having a big breasts isn't a problem . And that being petite isn't the only way and shape to be beautiful. She has little interviews with teenagers and young adults that face insecurities and she relates with them , talks with them , encourages them and even brings role models of their own to really connect with that person.

In runways in 2019 you see all shades , all sizes , all types of hair , all type of sizes ; the runway finally looks realistic and shows the true meaning of beauty ..... embracing ones self and self love.





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