

Tania Garcia

New York City College of Technology CUNY

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Size inclusivity

Women and their image are frequent topics of debate. From our weight to our choice of clothing, we find ourselves under scrutinization with no escape. With the rise of the body positive movement gaining popularity within the last decade, women have been able to take control of their own narrative and change the dialogue regarding body image. The motivation behind such movement is to stop the ridicule and shame of anyone above a certain size. In a country in where the average size for a woman is 16 to 18, according to an article published by Byrdie, why haven't industry and beauty standards caught up? Movements such as the body positive movement have sparked the conversation and action to include more body inclusive lines. A common argument against the body positivity movement and the fight for a more inclusive fashion industry is that it promotes an unhealthy lifestyle. The truth is, that woman are growing tired of sad and pathetic attempts made by companies to become "inclusive." The majority of the fashion industry produces clothes targeted to the plus size market but their sizing does not feel like they were made with plus size people in mind. I remember watching videos of newer plus size lines being ridiculed because of their inability to understand the figure of a plus size woman. "Just because we're bigger woman does not me we are taller," I remember casually scrolling through my for you page and hearing an influencer say after the jeans seem to be twice her stature. As fashion continues to evolve into a modern time and style, why does it seem like a majority of woman do not have access to this new style. We have seen clothing produced for bigger sizes that are meant to hide our figure instead of highlighting it. Shirts that drape like

curtains with shoulder cut-outs to make our shoulders less broad. Being shunned from wearing form fitting cropped clothing after being told “no one wants to see that” because why would we want to be seen if we don’t look as petite as possible. Almost as if taking up the least amount of space is what we need to do to be viewed as a suitable woman.

Clothing brands not only need to produce well made clothing, but also market these clothes with women who fit said clothes. Not long ago size 6 model, Karoline Bjørnelykke, went on TikTok to post a shocking video about her experience working with a company promoting plus size clothing. In this video she brings to light a brand who hired her to promote their sizes XL to 5XL. The unnamed brand picked Karoline despite not being plus size because of her slender face and neck. To fix that “issue” they made her wear a “fat suit,” an under garment with padding under the clothes, to achieve this look of slenderness and fullness the company thought was ideal. Karoline later states in an interview with the daily mail UK, “It's because they want the neck and the face to look really slim and sharp, which doesn't just create unrealistic standards but impossible ones.” Karoline’s statement further proves a point of the unrealistic body size standard clothing brands bring to regular consumers’ lives. Plus size models are not rare or hard to come by. The company could’ve easily hired someone with the right measurements to come and model their clothes. It is unacceptable and illogical for brands to not use plus-size models to advertise plus size clothing. The false marketing and improper sizing of the plus size industry can lead to an increase in insecurities, leaving women wondering why they do not look like the “plus-size model” from the advertisements. These fashion companies seem to do what they can to uphold the outdated beauty standards that they themselves put onto everyone with little motivation or seemingly no intent of changing.

As companies begin to market their products more accurately it really solves a portion of the problem. Solving this problem really just helps the unrealistic standard of beauty loosen its grip on us and doesn't solve the bigger issue at hand. We want to be regular consumers like everyone else. We want clothes our size not due to special treatment, but because we have the right to want to dress like everyone else. The affect of the body positive movement is evident with the reemergence of pre existing trends that were targeted for thinner more slender body types now including plus-size women. Influencers like Sian wesley who collaborated with Refinery29, stated in an interview with them that "Popular trends were solely focused on one particular body type. It wasn't inclusive at all... Plus-size women are now reclaiming a trend that once excluded them by taking it in their own hands and adapting it to suit their figures" proving that what we want is something simple, choice. We want to walk into a store and pick out what we want to buy just like any other consumer and not jump through hoops to get what we want.

Works Cited

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