

adults are willing to investigate."
Luna (16 years old)

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A Tangled Web

The Fraught Relationship between

Teenage Girls & Instagram

“This picture is fun and I had a good night so I guess I would want to share that

and post something that had meaning to me,” Lea* explained to her mother while the two skimmed through pictures Lea chose not to post to her Instagram account. “But I have a bald spot in my hair...”

“Bald spot?” interrupted her mother. “Where? I don’t see it.”

“...And you can see roots of my hair and wisps,” continued Lea, “and it’s a weird angle and my leg looks so strange in this position. It looks kinda big.”

“That is so sad to me that you think that,” her mom said. “Because it looks like such a nice picture of you and your friends after soccer having fun and that makes me very sad”

Special Section Edited by cont. on next page

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Downhill from there

“I would say, at a point in my life, middle school, it was pretty toxic.” said Ella, a high school senior. “In middle school, I would definitely spend way too much time on social media. I would compare myself to people a lot and I think that that was not very good for my self-image. I was obsessed with the way I presented myself.”

As Ella explains it, this obsession quickly spiraled out of control in middle school. “I think everyone looked a certain way and everyone, at least that I knew, at the time was FaceTuning and trying to change how they looked. So for me to be that sole outlier was kind of weird and was kind of this peer pressure mentality. So, I felt the need to [FaceTune] to fit in.”

“I would say it [Instagram] definitely worsened my mental health,” said Ella.

How bad does it get?

We showed all the girls we interviewed a segment from the 60 Minutes interview with Frances Haugen. In the segment, Haugen claims Facebook knew that when teen girls begin to consume content on Instagram, it can make them more depressed and pull them into using the app more. Talia has seen this phenomenon first hand. “If you are already in a bad mood and end up scrolling on Instagram and

see other people feeling happier or having better experiences, you’re only going to feel worse about yourself,” she said. “But there is the pressure we all should be on social media...we continuously go back to these apps...you keep doing the same thing.”

Ella echoed Talia’s experience. “Anytime that I was in a bad place I looked at it [Instagram] and sometimes even seeing a post of someone who I thought looked better than me kind of spiraled me into this really really bad self doubt.”

After watching the 60 Minutes clip, Macie, another senior, said “I think it is completely true and it’s really sad.”

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As it turns out, Lea’s decision not to post the picture from a night filled with pleasant memories is more common and much more complicated than her mother knows.

From an outsider’s perspective, it may seem that teen girls over-share their lives on Instagram – from friends’ birthdays to family vacations. However, the pictures that make it to a teen girl’s Instagram often go through a multi-stage

ritual of self censorship:

1. Reduce the selection of photos down to the five best
2. Apply filters and occasionally Facetune
3. Ask friends (if they are in the photo) if it is okay to put on Instagram (aka The “Don’t Post Without Permission” stage)
4. Decide if the post is “Instagram worthy” or if it should go to a less popular platform like VSCO
5. Make a caption for the post (if the post makes it this far)

The result? The best, most polished pictures make it, leaving some major life events (e.g., Homecoming) out. From an outsider’s perspective, this process may appear benign and as old as female beauty itself. Yet, we have recently learned through the whistle-blower affidavit by former Facebook employee Frances Haugen and the subsequent congressional hearing that Instagram may be driving this self censorship to toxic levels young girls have never experienced before. Given the gravity of the claims in Haugen’s testimony, it is surprising that teen girls have been left out of the discussion. From Congress to CNN, the so-called experts have been reluctant to put the so-called victims on the stand. We want to correct that. We want to explore the relationship between Instagram and teen girls from their perspective to see if the relationship is as toxic as Haugen describes.

How Instagram took over

In 2012, Facebook bought Instagram for \$1 Billion. The already popular Instagram then became the central photo-sharing platform for teens. The same trend still follows: about 22 million teens are active on Instagram in the U.S. every day, compared with only five million teens who are active on Facebook. 16-24 year olds spend a median of 3 hours a day on social media. Why do teen girls spend so much time on Instagram? Psychologist Laura Gray does not hesitate to call it an “addiction.” When a teen curates a post, according to Dr. Gray, she seeks validation. This becomes like an addiction which stems from the serotonin that process releases. You can read more about our conversation with Dr. Gray on page 28.

On September 14th, 2021, The Wall Street Journal published, “Facebook knows Instagram is toxic for teen girls, company documents revealing Facebook's role in this “addiction”. Internal documents show that Facebook knew that Instagram makes “body image is worse for one in three teen girls” You can read more about the Facebook revelations on page 27.

The relationship starts early. Very early.

Many of the girls we interviewed started using Instagram before they even hit puberty. Talia, a high senior, says she and her friends started on Instagram as early as elementary school. “Even in elementary school if you didn’t have it [Instagram] you felt left out of things,” she said. “So I was kinda pressured to join Instagram in the first place and it's all kinda been downhill from there.”

Cora, a Sophomore, had a more troubling introduction to Instagram. “I do have a more unique experience. I was actually groomed online when I was like ten so that definitely had a huge impact ...The friends I made online wouldn’t have been able to help me and I wouldn’t have been able to reach out of my very small, not healthy friend group.”

A stronger handle on things

Many of the girls we spoke to think they now have a better handle on the impact of Instagram than their middle school selves had.

Many said that at the earlier ages of their adolescence, they were constantly comparing themselves to others, but as time went on they became more self

aware. They generally noted that they realized how Instagram was affecting them, and in some cases they made a change.

Remembering her middle school relationship with Instagram, Ella says, “I’m really glad that I’m not in that right now.”

Macie shared a similar feeling that she had gotten better at navigating her relationship with Instagram since middle school. “I used to be more affected by social media for self perception. I used to look at a lot of people’s Instagram and want to be like them and post like them and look like them. Now I’ve kinda grown out of that which I’m really happy about, But yeah, in middle school, I used to have really bad self esteem issues because of Instagram.”

Is this what being in control looks like?

Although some of the Seniors we spoke to said they were more aware of and in control of their Instagram usage (compared to their younger selves), this control seems fleeting. The pressures of Instagram do not take time off. As Dr. Gray explains, “the challenge with social media is that you’re not getting a break from it. Previously if you went on vacation or you came home from school, you got a break, you had space, you had peace. You weren’t constantly bombarded.”

“I think Instagram causes me a lot more stress than any other positive feelings...” said Talia. “I [still] find myself comparing myself to most people I follow on Instagram and celebrates and that has made me more self conscious and aware of the differences between me and other people.”

“It just pollutes everything and it really covers all areas of my life” explains Cora. “It impacts how people see me, how I see other people and whole friendships. I know people focus on how body issues affect teen girls, but honestly I think social media is so much more complex than that, I mean obviously body image is a huge issue but the problems created by social media go so much deeper than what a lot of adults are willing to investigate.”

Feedback loop

“**Feedback loops in nature are about**

stability and equilibrium (homeostasis). ...Yet, Haugen's allegations suggest that on Instagram, the negative (not positive) feedback encourages girls to use the app more.”

Despite Haugen's affidavit, many still doubt that teen girls using Instagram should be considered victims. After all, a girl who does not like how Instagram makes her feel can simply delete the app or delete her account all together and walk away.

Yet, it may not be that simple.

Instagram is about agency. Instagram allows girls to project their identity in ways unimaginable a decade ago. Instagram is also about the “illusion of agency.” The influence of other people and other forces, including Facebook’s algorithm, may be driving all those filters and Facetune tweaks. The relationship between Instagram and teen girls is also a feedback loop of sorts- a wholly unnatural feedback loop. Feedback loops in nature are about stability and equilibrium (homeostasis). Positive feedback encourages more of the desired behavior and negative feedback encourages less of the undesired behavior. Yet, Haugen's allegations suggest that on Instagram, the negative (not positive) feedback encourages girls to use the app

more. **Where do we go from here?**

When asked about the ongoing struggles teens have with their Instagram selves, Talia explains, “I’m just not sure what we are going to do about it.”

When Haugen’s allegations came to light, it seemed like the perfect time for teenage girls to boycott...no “girl-cott” Instagram. But, based on our interviews, it does not appear teen girls will take that step.

The testimony was “validating” one girl explained, “but it won’t change anything.”

Some of the girls we interviewed plan to approach Instagram with a

new caution. But avoid using Instagram all together? Move completely to a platform like VSCO? Those kinds of moves seem too big for the vast majority of teen girls to take.

The toxicity of social media is so ingrained in our society that people don't even view it as a priority to fix. It's just accepted.

Let us return to the example of Lea as she explains to her mother the pictures she did not post to Instagram.

"My forehead looks big here and it's

a weird angle," said Lea describing a picture taken at Homecoming: "You can only see one of my earrings and my nose doesn't really look like it exists and that's annoying. And there's the crease of my arm..."

"Wow that's so picky," her mom explains. "To me it just looks like a nice photo but you're really zooming in and picking it apart. You look so beautiful, I don't see that at all."

Ultimately, Lea did not post any pictures from Homecoming 2021.

*all names have been changed.

Written By Ailey Gold,
Rebecca Lewis, Giovanna Lynn
and Lola Nordlinger



Instagram





Girls of Color Have Struggled With This For Centuries

By Mariam Asmare, Halle Darko, Leianna Morgan

You wake up and you have no energy, no motivation. You get up and get ready but you can't even look in the mirror. When you look in the mirror, all you see is shattered glass where your face is supposed to be and imperfections in your body, your legs, and your arms. You open Instagram, start scrolling and see: thin waist, flat stomach, slender arms, slender body, long legs, and a perfect face. You see; a thousand-dollar Gucci bag and thousand-dollar shoes.

You see nothing but a perfect life. As you scrolling you think: why can't I look like that face...why can't my life look like that.

For years, girls from across the globe have been sacrificing themselves at the altar of Instagram- second-guessing an outfit, Face Tuning a whisper of facial hair, deleting whole life events because the photos were just short of amazing.

Well, girl, welcome to the club. Girls of color have struggled with this for centuries, battling self doubt and questioning self worth based on beauty standards they have no control over. There is one big difference, however. While anyone can get fed up and delete Instagram. Girls of Color cannot delete

societal standards. No matter what we do we will never reach the beauty standard because we just aren't white. For all of eternity we are being compared, put down, hurt.

We didn't need Instagram to feel bad about ourselves. Others' eyes were our Instagram and it got to your head. It became our lives.

Girls of Color get the message that they are ugly or basic from peers main stream media and social media. Even a child who grows up in a house that preaches body positivity and teaches that everyone is beautiful in their own way is not immune. No girl can be raised sheltered from the cruel world of media, social media and "real life" and all the unreasonable standards those spheres create..

Social media allows many to portray an idealized version of themselves. Yet, Social media often places an additional form of pressure on Girls of Color. It becomes another way for people to criticize them.

The standard for beauty has been around and consistent for centuries. There is still only one baseline standard (white, blue eyes, blond hair, skinny). We have seen a few tweaks to accept a

bit more diversity. Light skinned Girls of Color, for example, are accepted. Any shades darker and there will be points deducted from your self worth.

According to Psychologist Leon Festinger's Theory of Social Comparison; there are three kinds of social comparison:

1. Downward Social Comparison: people compare themselves to others considered "inferior"
2. Lateral Social Comparison: people compare themselves to others considered "equal"
3. Upward Social Comparison: people compare themselves to others considered "better" than they are. Girls of Color have been caught in a trap of Upward Social Comparison for centuries. Instagram mimics that experience for all girls.

So, what do we do about any of this? Of course, there is the usual, sound advice. All girls need to realize that they are comparing themselves to "carefully curated images." Most of the things on social media are not real.

But, that advice alone will not meet the moment.

We need to share resources with all girls and teach them empowering skills

like photography. and how to spot edit ed photos.

We need to blow up tired old beauty standards. How? The power of the Internet lies in numbers- not companies or algorithms. Need an example? In 2021, a group of Reddit users took on

Wall Street, drove up GameStop stock 1000 fold, and brought hedge fund firms to their knees. If they can disrupt Wall Street we can disrupt beauty standards.

It will not be easy. Beauty is power and wealth for women in society. And,

many do not want to give up that power. Yet, there has never been a moment like this. An entire generation of girls have discovered, all at once, that they have been played. That's a lot of potential allies. Let's meet the moment.

Why it Takes Us So Long to Get

Ready By Kiera Spry

“Is that your real hair?” “You need to cover up there are men in the house” “You can’t walk around the house like that.” “Go put a bra on what the hell is wrong with you?!” “Keep wearing stuff like that you gonna end up getting raped.” Yes, it is my real hair. What type of “men” do you have coming into our home? What is wrong with what I’m wearing? I thought I could be comfortable in my own home. I’m not comfortable when I’m being catcalled in the streets, cars of perverted strangers honk at me when I just got dressed to go to the store. I’m not comfortable when I’m dressed coded at school for

wearing something “too revealing;” but the white girls walk around in shorts so short that you can see their behinds. No one says anything to them. They sexualize our black curved bodies, wide hips, big breast, even small hips, and small breasts. Anything we wear that shows a little too much shoulder, a little too much stomach, it’s “too revealing,” “it’s inappropriate, “it’s too much.” It’s like they don’t want to see us comfortable in our own bodies. It’s our bodies, we should be able to wear whatever we want without having someone else

say, “You need to cover up.” “Put a bra on.” We just want to feel comfortable. If we can’t feel comfortable in society, at school, or at home, then where or when can I ever feel comfortable? Can’t even feel comfortable in the clothes that I want to wear, I have to think twice before I put on a pair of pants or a damn shirt, that’s the reason why it takes us so long to get ready.

We Asked Girls Across the United States...

by Karena Barmada

“I felt like I needed social media to be liked and connected to people. I had social media and soon started to realize how much of a problem it was”

“So if on my friend's post I see a really good picture of her, I'll be like ‘dang I wish I looked like that’. Or I wish I got that many likes or comments on my posts.”

“Sometimes,

I judge myself on social media based on how I may look or something, but that was before I started to appreciate more that my body is my own and I should love it no matter what.”
super insecure

“When I post something I get about whatever it is I am posting, afraid of what other people will think. Sometimes I will stare at a post for too long and find some random flaw and delete it. I am constantly worried about what other people will think of what I am posting.”

Letter to My Middle School

Self By Rebecca Lewis and Lola Nordlinger

Dear Middle School Self,

As your middle school years begin, what you know as social media is already evolving into something all-consuming. It makes you pick yourself apart, the way you look, act, talk, and think. And unfortunately, you’re already learning to analyze every photo you take of yourself - to scrutinize your flaws, find fault in the way you smile and the way you pose. You constantly ask yourself and your friends

“is this weird to post” and hope that their answer eases your stress.

The stress of "posting a picture," a concept that 20 years ago was gibberish, now consumes your thoughts and has too much control over your self-esteem. Your mom doesn't understand why you're in a bad mood because you didn't think you look pretty enough, or why you were sad after the boy you like didn't like the picture you posted. She can't understand, and you can't get out of the horrid head-space that the algorithm of social media had trapped you in. It's not your fault. "The algorithm" was crafted to make you spend more time on the apps by

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predicting what you want to see and giving you more of it. Even if it makes you feel left out or not good enough. The algorithm doesn't care about your mental health; it just cares about your usage. You and your friends are vic

tims of this algorithm. It's a terrible cycle; a time sucking habit that causes a flood of insecurity and self-doubt. I think you might even know that social media is hurting you. But you don't know how to stop using it.

Looking back, the way you feel isn't crazy, so many other girls all over the world are feeling the exact same way. They experience the same defeat when they don't like the way they look in a picture, feel the same disappointment

when they don't get "enough" likes, and they too feel the wrath of the algorithm telling them they are not good enough.

Now I'm a Senior in high school and although I'm not perfect, I know I'm more than just a picture. The most important things in my life no longer include the number of likes I get or the immense stress I felt when my smile was a little crooked in one post. I promise everyone is so focused and worried about their own insecurities that they don't even notice yours. I've learned that it is unfair to judge myself based on one still picture. But that doesn't make it any easier. This social media stuff is all-consuming and dangerous even to this day, but as you get older you will learn to separate real life from what's online. You will learn that the posting and comparison never stops, but you can take control of the narrative. As my high school years have progressed I've become a journalist and learned to take a critical look at social media and how

it affects me and the people I love. I want to tell you it will all be okay. Nobody else can be you and you can't be anyone else! So fight to be yourself, don't edit your life, embrace it.

With love,
Future you

... "How Do You Feel When You See Yourself on Instagram?"

just that surprise, 'wow, that's me!'"

"Sometimes it's nerve racking seeing myself, anxiety

can run through after posting something and seeing how my friends react to it. Like posting a photo that you may have felt confident about in the moment but looking back and not seeing

the feedback or validation I sometimes seek."

"I get embarrassed and I hate every picture and video because I feel like even if no one says anything they're silently judging me,"

"I feel like it isn't me sometimes, it's the image I want to portray to others."

"Sometimes, when people post me on social media (like in Snapchat stories) I feel included and loved. It's nice that I get to be shown and be a part of that person's life. It's

Blowing the Whistle on Instagram

By Kate FitzGerald

In September 2021, The Wall Street Journal began publishing a series of articles known as The Facebook Files

which revealed internal information that outlined how Facebook has amplified societal unrest. This information described how Facebook changed

their algorithm to make the app more addictive and the effect the app has had on teenage girls' mental health. In October 2021, Frances Haugen came

forward to reveal herself as the Facebook whistle-blower. Haugen was a data scientist at Facebook and left the company in May 2021. But before she left the company, she collected thousands of internal documents detailing Facebook's private research, which was used in The Facebook Files. She appeared on 60 Minutes to explain why she left Facebook and call out the malfeasance she witnessed in the inner workings of the company. In her words, "the thing I saw at Facebook, over and over again, was there were conflicts of interest between what was good for the public and what was good for Facebook. And Facebook, over and over again, chose to optimize for their own interests, like making more money."

Haugen also revealed in her interview that in 2018, Facebook made a change to their algorithm that aimed to keep Facebook users drawn to the app. This algorithm picks content to show up on a person's feed based on what a person engaged with most in the past. Its goal is to keep supplying content that people will want to engage with to keep them coming back

to the app. This algorithm change has made kids more vulnerable to becoming addicted to Instagram, which was bought by Facebook in 2012.

Just a few days after her 60 Minutes interview aired, Haugen testified in front of a subcommittee of the U.S. Senate's Commerce Committee. She expanded on her complaints against Facebook. Referring to Instagram's harm to children, Haugen said in her testimony that when kids use Instagram, they develop "feedback cycles where children are using Instagram to self-soothe, but are exposed to more and more content that makes them hate themselves." She added that "teenagers don't have good self-regulation. They say explicitly that 'I feel bad when I use Instagram, yet I can't stop.'"

When referring to how Instagram harms teenage girls, Haugen noted that "Instagram is about bodies, and about comparing lifestyles." This often leads teens to be hyper-aware of their appearance, including physical attractiveness, weight, complexion, and social life. This damage is shown

in Facebook's own data, which Haugen revealed. Their research showed that after spending time on Instagram 13.5% of teen girls reported that the app made suicidal thoughts worse, 17% said it made eating disorders worse, and 32% said it made them feel worse about their bodies.

Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, responded to the information shared by Frances Haugen regarding the harm Instagram causes teen girls by saying "I found it difficult to read the mischaracterization of the research into how Instagram affects young people... In fact, in 11 of 12 areas on the slide referenced by the Journal — including serious areas like loneliness, anxiety, sadness and eating issues — more teenage girls who said they struggled with that issue also said Instagram made those difficult times better rather than worse."

A Psychologist's View on the Social Media

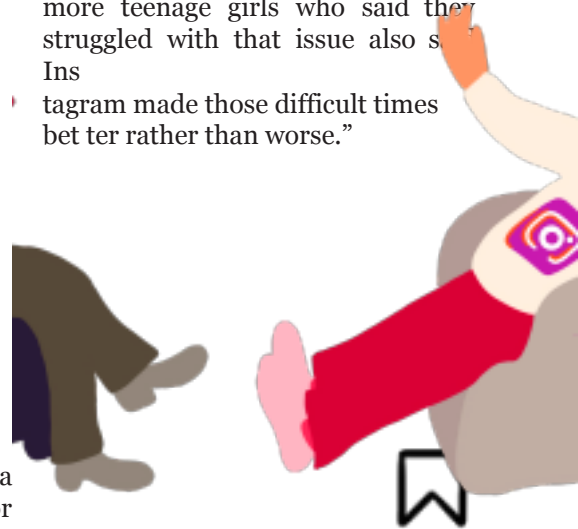
Debate By Hannah Gandal and Nikki Mirala

studying these relationships.

Dr. Grey, who works with patients dealing with clinical diseases or various mental illnesses, believes that social media is one of the biggest challenges perpetuating the symptoms of mental illness amongst teens. "Some key things that contribute to anxiety and depression are all the 'I should's', comparisons, and all the ways that we can beat down on ourselves," she explained.

Social media feeds right into these mindsets and patterns, adding to the self-doubt and lack of confidence amongst teens. Dr. Grey mentioned that while there have always been channels to funnel comparisons through, such as magazines and commercials, "the difference with social media is how accessible it is and how constant the exposure can be."

Due to its dire impacts, many



people believe that all social media should be filtered or banned, but Dr. Grey says that this would cause more harm than good. She believes that if teens delete social media, they'll feel "disconnected, and [feeling] disconnected contributes to loneliness." Even with that being said, voluntary media breaks can be extremely recharging and stress-relieving. "It has to come from the individual. If it were your parents or school that are directing it, that certainly isn't going to be

There has been much discourse recently surrounding social media and its effects on teens, especially girls. Most forms of social media have negative effects on brain chemistry and its development, and psychologists like Dr. Laura Grey have spent their lives

as helpful," she adds.

It is possible for social media to be a more positive aspect of teenagers' lives. On the topic of social media's influence on physical appearance, Dr. Grey explained that there are campaigns advocating for body positivity and the end of Photoshop, due to its unrealistic expectations. She asked that, instead of only showing the best and most "perfect" aspects of one's life on the Internet, "how can we show more balance, like the struggles and the messiness of our lives?" If this encouragement and realness was more

#BanSocialMedia

By anonymous

As human beings, we all have some degree of moral responsibility. Social media is blurring this line.

It's well known that editing your photos is damaging to yourself and your peers, yet most do it. If not their bodies, then the lighting, the background, and many other minor details that teens become hyper focused on. This furthers each individual's image, but damages that of those who surround them. Each individual is prioritizing their own image over honesty and their moral responsibility to their peers. It seems to me that this idea of self prosperity over moral responsibility is attached to every aspect of social media. Take the congressional hearing over Facebook and Instagram as an example. Frances Haugen, who previously worked high up in the company, exposed it. Those who led the organization knew how damaging their content was to young girls, but

normalized, then "social media could actually become a positive tool."

When asked about the future of the generation that has been negatively affected by social media, Dr. Grey said that while these effects will be long-lasting, most will be resilient. She explained that this generation will be the driving force behind placing limits on social media because "they have grown up with it and are able to sit here and see the parts of it that are toxic, whereas older generations didn't realize that."

Overall, Dr. Grey believes

continued to push it on them. They knew they were inspiring eating disorders, division in our society, and even conflict in our democracy, yet did nothing to stop it due to the enormous profits

they were making. So what are we seeing again? The prioritization of the self over their moral responsibility to many.

This idea continues when we look at other aspects of social media, such as endorsements. Let's take Kim Kardashian for an example. She promoted appetite suppressants to an audience she knows is filled with impressionable teens. This sends a variety of toxic messages. But let's stay focused. Again we see this idea of the prioritization of individual gain over what is morally right. This is a consistent thing with endorsements, celebrities continuously promote BS products to their audience to make money.

Social media creates conflict in our democracy for this same

reason. The algorithm on these sites gives you more of what you like, feeding you content it already knows you prefer. So what if you're a fan of Trump? What pops up on your feed will come from other people who like Trump, and you will never hear from the other side unless you specifically go out looking for it. This creates further polarization in a nation that is already

incredibly divided. It also continues along the theme of the prioritization of the self, as the algorithm feeds you what you want to see.

We are trusting a few leaders of these social media networks with an incredibly addictive, life changing platform. Already our population is becoming increasingly addicted to social media. According to the Addiction Center, "psychologists estimate that as many as 5 to 10% of Americans meet the criteria for social media addiction today." We are trusting

that it depends on the individual as to whether or not the risks of social media outweigh the benefits. "There are some teenagers who have a really hard time socially connecting, which then having social media allows them to find ways to connect with people." This is one positive aspect of social media that can be very beneficial. "Social media is here, so we are going to have to figure out how we move forward with it and how to make it more beneficial.

a few leaders, who have something to gain from our use of social media, with an addictive system. We are putting our faith in them to prioritize the well being of their nation, but, as proved by the Facebook whistle-blower, they are prioritizing their profits instead.

Social media is curated for one's self-interest and those that run it build off of it. Whether it's the leaders that prioritize their profits, or the users that edit their photos, social media allows for individual gain at the expense of society as a whole.



Social Media Can Be a Positive Space

By Rebecca Lewis

A lot can be said for the negative impacts of social media, but that doesn't mean there aren't redeeming qualities.

In the past 20 years or so, social media platforms have become spaces where users can be a part of some thing bigger than themselves. It's a place where historically marginalized voices are heard and change begins.

We've seen the spread of several social and political movements, such as the Black Lives Matter movement. Move

ments like this start and gain traction across the Internet; a lot of the publicity for these movements can be at tributed to social media.

People from all over the world have been able to connect in ways that would never have been possible with out social media. This immense con nection created by social media also creates ways for teens to find and cre ate community. Whether on TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, or Reddit, users can connect and interact with oth ers who have similar interests. Many teens have been able to overcome feel ings of loneliness through the mean ingful relationships they've found in these communities. Especially during the pandemic, when teens found themselves socially isolated,

social media was important in maintaining connection to the "outside world." Social media should not be banned. It is important to be conscious of the effect it can have on our lives, but we should also celebrate the positive in fluences it has on the world.

