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### Real vs Fake Life: Has Social Media Affected People's Insecurities?

Since touch phones were invented, social media has played a huge role in the twentieth century. Although social media has been around for decades, every year social media changes and has a different effect on people. In the generation we live in today, social media revolves around our lives. If you're going out to eat or going on vacation, you're most likely posting on social media. Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, etc all play a huge role in some peoples day to day lives. Some people do not see themselves without social media, which eventually leads to insecurities and wanting to live up to everything seen on the media.

Social media began to evolve in the early 2000s. The beginning of social media slowly began to grow more when smartphones started to get more popular. As time went on social media grew, it began as something to communicate with others to something people probably would not have expected. Maryville University writes about the evolution of social media and they point out, "In less than a generation, social media has evolved from direct electronic information exchange, to virtual gathering place, to retail platform, to vital 21st-century marketing tool." (1). Social media was only used to catch up with friends and family, long distance friendships/relationships to later people making tons of money off sponsorships, influencing, and launching their businesses on. Social media plays a huge role in businesses,

many people have become millionaires just off social media and at times getting people to sponsor their business.

People try to live a life on social media that they do not live up to in real life. Anna Delvey, the socialite scammer, as New York named her, known for her tricks in finessing people for money. People fail to realize why she began to scam people/businesses for their money to live a life that clearly wasn't real. Anna Sorokin or better known as Anna Delvey lived a fake rich heiress life just to live up to society's standards. She wanted to be a NYC socialite at the beginning of her very much fake life. Emma Dibdin wrote an article reflecting on Ms. Delveys life writing, "Sorokin, a one-time Instagram addict, wasted no time getting back into the social media game." (1). Ms. Delvey's every move was posted on Instagram, showing the world the lavish life she was living. In reality, Ms. Delvey was broke, so the life she lived on Instagram, rich and wealthy, in real life she was broke and homeless.

Social media tends to bring out people's insecurities, making those compare themselves to the lives they see on social media. Instagram is the most common app in this generation today, which is the cause of many peoples insecurities. Sasha Sklarov wrote about social media causing insecurities stating, "We are so used to seeing our friends edited lives online, even our own lives. We start to believe that those lives are perfect, amazing and full of talent, while ours are just...not the same."(1). People tend to go based on what they see on social media and begin to believe life is supposed to be perfect. There are certain people who will go broke just for an Instagram post, to keep up with what's known as the "wave" on Instagram. Instagram is an app where you post pictures, people tend to post their best looking pictures so you'll get accustomed to seeing the perfect lifestyle Instagrammers are deemed to have. Sklarov continues by pointing out, "Not only does it allow everyone to hide their flaws behind the screen, it is also turned into a

competition between people online. Only wanting to satisfy our followers, it becomes our main objective to keep up the facade and post pictures we think others want to see.” (1). Instead of it being you vs. you, people make it you vs. whatever is seen on social media. Comparing yourself to the people online is the worst way to destroy your self esteem. You're looking at what they wanted you to see so it's made out to look perfect, but no one's life is perfect. “If you're like most people, you probably curate your Instagram posts to make you look flawless, happy, and generally at your best.” (1). Instagram evolved into something to show others how good you look, how amazing you're doing in life, all the amazing things you do in a day, but what we fail to realize is people do not go to Instagram with none of their problems or bad days. People post things to make their followers happy and to get good feedback on what they post.

People use social media for different purposes. There are those who use it for business, influencing, promotions, communication, etc, but there are also those who use social media for personal reasons/family only. Private social media accounts just for those who are friends and family. Udemy Editor writes about how social media is important in people's day to day lives, they write, “Social media's big draw is that it is a quick and easy way to connect with friends and loved ones. You can share exciting news about your life through statuses, pictures and videos. Or you can share details about your day, basically you can share anything you want about your life. For family living miles away, it gives them a chance to feel like they are a part of your life without a plane ticket or long-distance phone calls.” (1). There are plenty of people who only use social media to keep in touch with their friends and family, those who don't like the public in their personal lives. Those people are portraying real lives for their social media because everything that is posted is authentic for their friends and family to see. There are also people who tend to live the double life, meaning they have their public Instagram account where life

looks glorious and perfect but they create a second account, which are now called “Finstas” meaning either “fun” Instagram or “fake” Instagram. Makenzi Wood writes about finstas and writes, “A finsta lets you be super-selective about who’s following you, so you have the freedom to be as weird with your squad as you want. Plus, if you want to share more personal updates that are a little overshare-y for regular Instagram, a finsta makes it okay to share.” (1.) This is another way people have private accounts for close friends and family. People create finstas to really be themselves, while also having a public instagram account for the public where they are portraying the perfect life.

Although social media has been around for decades, social media has a huge impact on our generation, every year social media changes and has a different effect on people. Everyone has their own variety of reasons to use social media. Most of the time, social media is known for building up people’s insecurities. Social media is something that portrays people's lives as perfect online, people fail to realize that everyone on social media are regular people just like themselves. Social media can also be used for only friends and family.

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