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# THE SOCIOLOGY SENTINEL

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London, England

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## THE 'SELFIE' EPIDEMIC

**SOCIAL MEDIA OR SOCIAL CRISIS? EXPERTS WARN OF  
THE DANGERS OF THE 'SELFIE' CULTURE**



Over the last decade, the rise of social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat has led to a proliferation of the “selfie” culture, where individuals, particularly young people, are constantly sharing images of themselves online. While some view selfies as a harmless trend, others are concerned about the long-term effects on mental health and body image.

“The pressure to look perfect online is overwhelming,” said Emily Thompson, a 17-year-old high school student. “Everyone is posting these photos with filters, and it makes you feel like you’re not good enough if you don’t look the same.”

Professor Linda Harris, a psychologist specializing in adolescent development, has warned that the pressure to maintain a perfect image online can lead to issues such as anxiety, depression, and eating disorders. “The constant comparison to curated, filtered versions of other people’s lives can significantly damage young people’s self-esteem and exacerbate mental health problems,” Harris explained.

In response to these concerns, the Youth Wellbeing Foundation has launched a public campaign encouraging young people to take a step back from the constant use of social media. “We must stop normalizing the idea that we need to look flawless for validation,” said Dr. Lucy Parker, the foundation’s director. “We need to teach young people the value of authenticity and self-acceptance.”

Meanwhile, MP Lisa Harrington, a member of the Health and Social Care Committee, has suggested that social media companies should be held responsible for the impact their platforms have on users’ mental health. “It’s time we demanded action from tech giants who profit from promoting unrealistic beauty standards,” Harrington said.

**Answer the following questions on the article -"The 'Selfie' Epidemic"**

**Knowledge and Understanding (AO1):**

According to the article, how has the 'selfie' culture impacted mental health?

What role does the **Youth Wellbeing Foundation** play in addressing the issue?

Which politician is quoted, and what is their stance?

**Application, Analysis and Evaluation (AO2/AO3):**

How might feminist sociologists interpret the pressures of social media on body image?

Does this article reflect a wider societal concern or an exaggerated panic? Justify your answer.

How does this moral panic potentially benefit the ruling class or dominant ideology? What structural factors (like gender or class) might influence how individuals experience social media pressure?