

Alleyna Sampey

Editorial 4

10/12/2023

Trying to Fit in a One-Size-Fits-All World

Fashion is a common way for us to express ourselves. Wearing fabrics that hug our curves in all the right places makes us feel good. Additionally, shopping for clothes can be therapeutic, unless you're like me, a girl with a plus size body. Going to the mall with a group of averagely-sized friends makes me feel like an outcast. Even in a giant shopping mall, like the one in Baton Rouge, I feel limited to what I can buy.

While some stores have a plus size section, they're small, and almost completely empty. They mostly consist of clothes that were trending in the early 2010s. Other clothing brands, like Forever 21, don't even offer plus size clothing in-store. Everything for plus size folks can only be found online.

Andy Worthy, a junior attending Southeastern, explains what it's like shopping for clothes at the mall, "I feel invisible. I've never liked shopping, ever. Even when I was little... ..I make jokes

about myself to my friends... it's how I cope with the fact that my body will never be accepted. I've never felt so big and so small at the same time.”

This is what infuriates the plus size community. Most of the time, we don't have the luxury of going to a store to buy clothes. If we see something we like, it's only offered in plus sizing online. If we order it online, we have to wait for it to arrive before we can try it on. If the sizing isn't right, we send it back. Clothes shopping is more of an ordeal for us, rather than the pleasant experience that it should be.

“I know how it feels to not fit in. Buying t-shirts is okay, because most t-shirts run fairly around the same sizing. Buying formal clothes, on the other hand, is a nightmare,” stated Claudia Olah, a junior attending Southeastern Louisiana University.

Everyone has different experiences with their body, whether they're petite, average, or plus size like me. However, it seems like there are many similarities between members in the plus size community.

“When I was in high school, I suffered from Anorexia. I was barely a size small, and while I loved the way I looked, my health was declining fast. Since then, I've become overweight, and had to look for plus size clothing. I was treated differently between the time of my recovery and now. It's disgusting.” stated Olah.

Although some may disagree, the beauty standard in America has never included being overweight. While present-day modeling industries have begun to incorporate diversity in their teams, they include overweight people to meet a quota, not for the direct cause.

To fully understand the plus size community, as an outsider looking in, research the history of plus size clothing, and what businesses are doing today to combat the stigma of “fat = ugly.” Most importantly, listening to the struggles of community members is vital to expanding the group further, for others to understand what it’s like being plus size in a one-size-fits-all world.