

# Social media is evolving American beauty standards

Chao, Mary . Asbury Park Press ; Asbury Park, N.J. [Asbury Park, N.J]. 03 July 2022: A.1.

[Łącze do dokumentu w serwisie ProQuest](#)

---

## PENY TEKST

It's an image I'll never forget.

As a 10 year-old just arrived to Los Angeles from Taiwan, I looked in awe at a giant image of Kris Kristofferson with Barbara Streisand at Hollywood's Grauman's Chinese Theater. "Hair, so much hair," I thought of the "A Star is Born" promotion. Kristofferson was sporting a full beard –something I've never seen in Taiwan. Streisand tilted her head of tousled curls.

The 1976 film was my first foray into understanding the differences in Western and Eastern aesthetics. The stars of my youth in Taiwan were clean cut –like Brigitte Lin with her long, straight hair or the cleanshaven Han Chin. Quite a shocking difference for a young kid in a new country.

Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but there are many external factors that shape our beauty standards. Media has an outsized influence in what we consider attractive. Think about George Clooney or Megan Fox –the constant promotion of their images convince the masses they are the standard for attractiveness.

For most of America's history, beauty standards were based on Eurocentric ideals. Thin, blonde, blue-eyed for women and tall, muscular male sporting facial hair. But as America becomes more diverse and as Americans connect globally with people around the world via social media, that narrow ideal is changing. No longer are Eurocentric aesthetics the standard. We truly are a melting pot –blending an array of cultural perspectives. Not since the 17th century has there been such a globalization of beauty ideals, said Anne Higonnet, an art history professor at Barnard College of Columbia University. Multicontinental trade then influenced how people dressed as the French sought Chinese silk and other Europeans looked for Indian cottons, she said.

With social media, the world and the United States have undergone a seismic shift, Higonnet said.

Social media "brought different cultures together not seen since 17th century global maritime trade," Higonnet said.

Consider BTS, the seven-member South Korean boy band. It's a cross-continent sensation and the first K-pop band to top the Billboard 200 chart with their album, "Love Yourself." BTS also won top social artist two years in a row at the 2017 and 2018 Billboard Music Awards, beating out Canadian Justin Bieber, an American heartthrob. With their slim physiques and colored hair, the members of BTS have challenged Western viewpoints on masculinity and attractiveness. The band is part of a revolution happening in this country and around the world, blurring lines in what is culturally attractive.

Eastern and Western standards of beauty are very contrasting. Asians prefer tiny figures and pale skin while Americans tend to prefer curvier female figures and tans. Growing up in Taiwan, I was always self-conscious about my full lips. The standard in Asia is thin lips, which I desperately wished for as a young girl. Moving to America, my full lips are now considered an object of desire, with women paying money for injections to achieve the look. The drive for diversity intensified in media about a decade ago, said Mary Therese Friel, who owns upstate New York-based modeling agency MTF Models and was Miss USA in 1979.

"Marketers got smart," she said. "Beauty comes in all shapes and sizes."

A model since she was 11, Friel banked on her all-American good looks with long blonde hair and blue eyes. That "California girl" look was the go-to image in the 1970s for models, Friel said.

Now, her diverse models are regularly in demand as the market changes to reflect the diversity of this country, she said.

"The market has to do what the market is demanding," Friel said.

Even as the world globalizes, elements of colonialism remain. Asians and Asian Americans commonly undergo the knife for blepharoplasty –or double eyelid surgery. It's a cosmetic surgery where the skin around the eye is reshaped to create a crease. The surgery aims to mimic the look of Western eyes while downplaying the natural single eyelid Asian look.

In developed East Asian countries such as Korea and Taiwan, undergoing the knife for bigger eyes is the most common form of cosmetic surgery. Parents budget for it for their daughters the same way American parents budget for braces to correct their children's teeth. In East Asian countries, the bigger your eyes are, the prettier you are deemed to be.

Consider the much studied cases of light skin privilege among Black Americans. Skin tone is a marker used to evaluate and rank the social position of minorities, according to research by National Library of Medicine. Those of lighter skin are awarded social and economic privileges.

Change takes time. Let's hope that with the passing of time and the connection of people from all backgrounds and all races, we will come to accept a blend of beauty ideals from all corners of the world.

Email: mchao@northjersey.com

## SZCZEGÓY

<b>Temat:</b>	17th century; Hair; Asian people; Asian Americans; Skin; Eurocentrism; Cosmetic surgery; Social networks
<b>Termin zwizany z indeksowaniem biznesowym:</b>	Temat: Social networks
<b>Lokalizacja:</b>	United States--US; Taiwan
<b>Tytu:</b>	Social media is evolving American beauty standards
<b>Autor:</b>	Chao, Mary
<b>Tytu publikacji:</b>	Asbury Park Press; Asbury Park, N.J.
<b>Pierwsza strona:</b>	A.1
<b>Rok publikacji:</b>	2022
<b>Data publikacji:</b>	Jul 3, 2022
<b>Rozdzia:</b>	News
<b>Wydawca:</b>	Gannett Media Corp
<b>Miejsce publikacji:</b>	Asbury Park, N.J.
<b>Kraj publikacji:</b>	United States, Asbury Park, N.J.

**Temat publikacji:** General Interest Periodicals--United States

**Typ roda:** Gazeta

**Jzyk publikacji:** English

**Rodzaj dokumentu:** News

**ID dokumentu w serwisie ProQuest:** 2683525493

**Adres URL dokumentu:** <https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/social-media-is-evolving-american-beauty/docview/2683525493/se-2?accountid=11664>

**Prawa autorskie:** Copyright 2022 - ASBURY PARK PRESS - All Rights Reserved.

**Ostatnia aktualizacja:** 2022-07-03

**Baza danych:** ProQuest Central

---

Prawa autorskie dotyczce bazy danych © 2022 ProQuest LLC. Wszelkie prawa zastrzeone.

[Warunki uytkowania](#) [Kontakt z serwisem ProQuest](#)