featured three plus-sized models on the cover of their June 2011 issue, and certain measures have been introduced to keep models healthy – such as banning under 16s from the catwalk. The vast variety of people at this talk means that these conclusions and topics that they discussed to show an average opinion, not just a one sided one. The fact that these things have to be discussed shows they are a problem, but things like using plus-sized models shouldn’t be something that makes the headlines, it should be the norm. For this reason I am not going to think of these points as key ones on the side of the media portraying a good body image.

Another example of this is in store mannequins. In the UK the average woman is 5 foot 3 inches tall, weighs 11 stone and wears a size 16. So when the fashion industry uses size 16 models and calls them plus-sized this is still saying that most people are smaller than these, which is simply not true, these plus-sized models aren’t plus-sized, they are the most normal representation of women (Guardian newspaper). Similarly Debenhams launched new ‘plus-sized’ side 16 models. This makes their ordinary size 8 mannequins be seen as normal sized. However, this can still be seen as a good thing. Bringing in larger sized mannequins will make larger people feel more comfortable, and less sceptical of the thin manipulated images they can see elsewhere. Customers actually trust a healthy realistic image more, and are three times more likely to buy clothes when they are shown on models their own size. I saw this online, where someone took a photo of the ‘plus sized’ mannequin and it went viral. It could also be seen through primary research, when walking into shops I saw the ‘normal’ models that are used in shops such as top shop, are supposed to be a size 8 (my size) but standing beside them they are about six foot tall and much skinnier than me, which shows how unrealistic they are. Unfortunately most shops are not following Debenhams, but keep their unrealistic, unhealthy looking mannequins – shops such as Primark actually have mannequins with visible ribs and collarbones. Again, I think that the media has a negative impact on peoples body image perception as it portrays a ‘normal’ body which just isn’t realistic. Although there have been a few attempts to go against this the vast majority of media still uses a perfect and potentially damaging body ideal.

As well as social media being a platform to show and comment on these problems it is also a place used to tackle them. It’s a place for free, unmeditated speech for women (ID magazine). ID magazine uses the example of Protein World’s deeply sexist and sizeist ad campaign that featured a slim model with