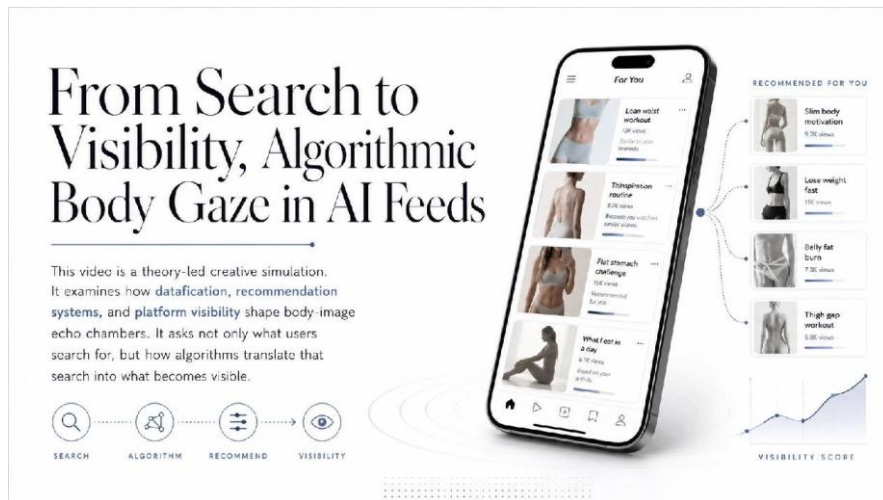


From Search 🔍 to Visibility 🙈



Algorithmic Body Gaze 👤 in AI Feeds 🤖

A theory-driven simulation of body image echo chambers in AI-driven platform societies



Opening title frame

Creative output format ↓

- ★ 1'40" split-screen narrative video
- ★ Fictional short-video platform interface
- ★ Search topic: body image/shape management
- ★ Main concern: unequal visibility, body norms and self-surveillance

Core claim ↓

AI-driven recommendation systems do not simply personalise content. They can organise body visibility, amplify narrow ideals of health and discipline, and encourage users to self-regulate under algorithmic body norms.

I. Project Overview

How the creative video reframes the enquiry around body image



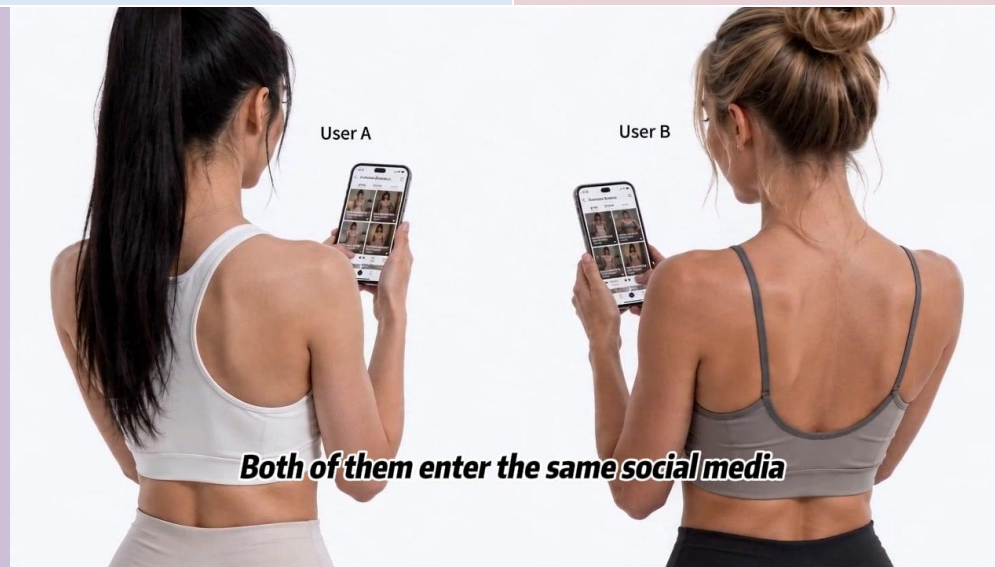
Research enquiry

- ♥ How do AI-driven recommendation systems and generative AI contribute to algorithmic echo chambers around body image?
- ♥ How do personalised feeds make some bodies and ideals more visible while marginalising others?
- ♥ What forms of critical media literacy are needed to recognise and challenge algorithmic body norms?

Final video focus

- ♥ The video begins with two users searching for “How to manage your body shape”.
- ♥ The two users appear to access the same platform, but their different identities and interactions lead to different body-image feeds.
- ♥ The final narrative moves from search, to datafication, to feed divergence, to critical questioning.

The video uses body image as a way to make platform power visible.



Both of them enter the same social media

Both users search the same phrase: “How to manage your body shape”

Rather than treating body-image content as merely individual preference, the project asks how platforms shape self-perception by repeatedly recommending certain body ideals, fitness routines and self-management narratives.



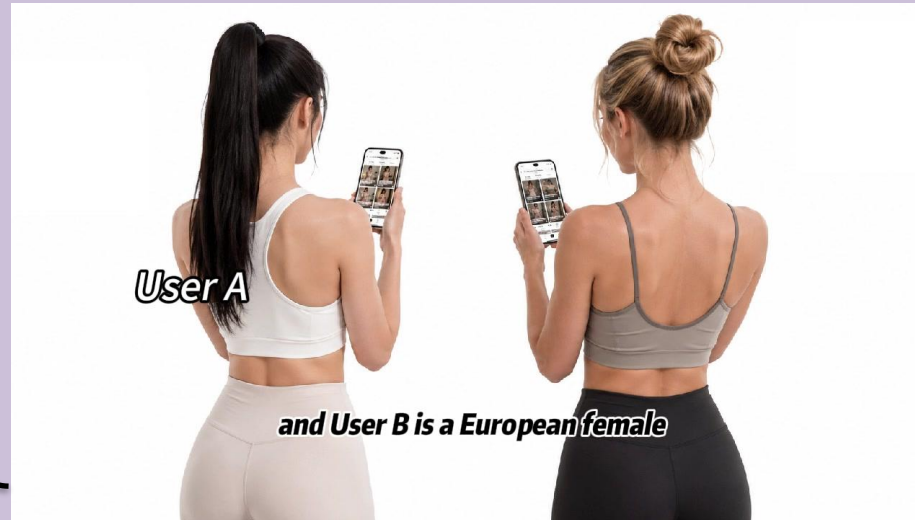
2. Methodology: Theory-Driven Simulation



Clarifying what the video does and does not claim

What the video is ✓

- ✓ A conceptual simulation of algorithmic recommendation logics.
- ✓ A visual explanation of how body-image feeds may diverge through datafication.
- ✓ A creative output designed to make abstract processes such as ranking, visibility and feedback loops easier to see.



The simulation deliberately gives the users different identities to foreground visibility and difference.

What the video is not ✗

- ✗ It is not empirical platform research.
- ✗ It does not claim to reproduce real social media platforms data.
- ✗ It does not use real user profiles, real analytics or identifiable individuals.

Why these matter

This framing responds to the need for methodological clarity.

The split-screen narrative simplifies platform processes for critical explanation,
while the portfolio reflects on the limits of this simplification.

The aim is analytical and pedagogical rather than statistically representative.

3. Theoretical framework

Concepts informing the creative decisions

Critical Media Literacy

The video asks who controls visibility, whose bodies are rewarded, whose bodies are missing, and how platform business models shape body-image knowledge.

Song's DLAE Model

Likes, saves, comments and watch time become behavioural data; hashtags and interface affordances shape circulation; engagement feeds back into future recommendations.

Hall: Representation

Body image is not shown as natural or neutral. It is constructed through repeated visual codes: thinness, fitness, discipline, femininity, and self-improvement.

Algorithmic Power

The platform appears to serve personal choice, but it also ranks, filters and amplifies certain body ideals while making others less visible.

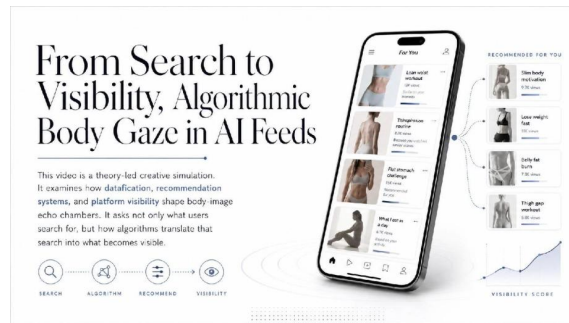
Theory-to-video Logic

The video makes theory visible through design: split-screen feeds show personalisation; interface icons show afforde/coding; search terms and hashtags show lin/coding; repeated body images show representation; the final questions show critical media literacy.

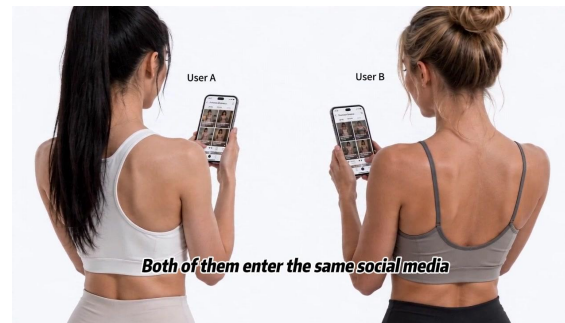


4. Storyboard of the final Video

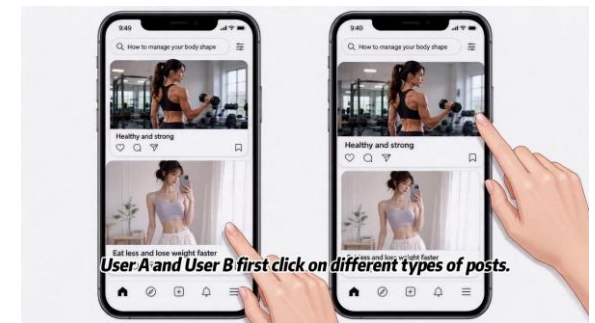
Actual screenshots from the video



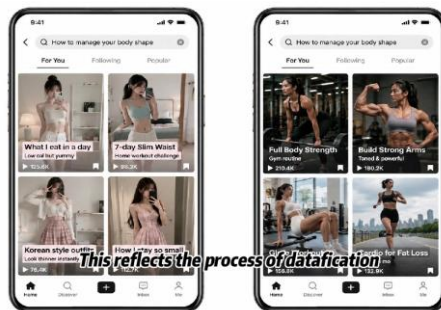
0s: Opening title



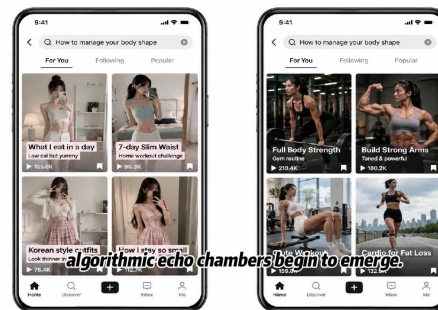
15s: Same search



25s: First clicks diverge



38s: Datafication and platform system



46s: Algorithmic echo chambers emerge

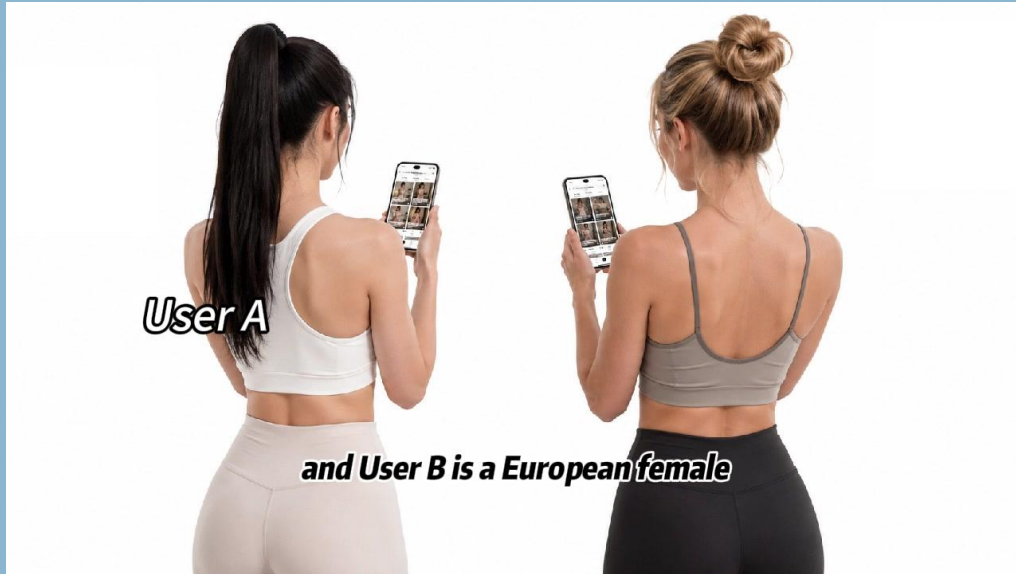


60s: Critical media literacy moment

5. Scene Analysis: Search, Identity and First Visibility



How the video establishes different user positions



User A and User B are introduced with different visible identities.

Critical Interpretation

The video does not treat users as identical abstract subjects:

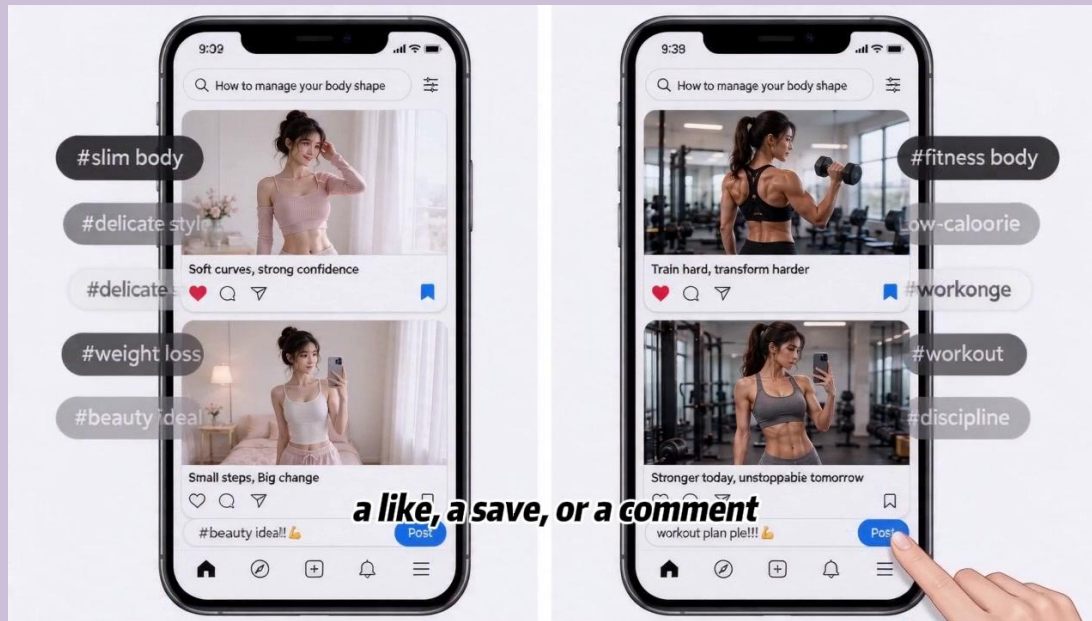
✂ User A is presented as an Asian female, while User B is presented as a European female.

✂ This visual difference supports the project's concern with body norms, race, gender and platform visibility.

✂ The opening search appears equal, but equality of access does not guarantee equality of recommendation.

6. Scene Analysis: Interaction Becomes Data

Clicks, likes, saves and comments as platform signals



A like, save or comment is transformed into data.

Connection to Song's DLAÉ model

- **De/encoding:** the users interpret body-management content differently through their clicks and viewing choices.
- **Afforde/coding:** interface features such as like, save and comment guide interaction.
- **En/decoding:** these interactions are decoded by the platform as behavioural data.

The scene shows that **user agency** is real but structured by **platform design**.



7. Scene Analysis: Feed Divergence and Body Norms ↔

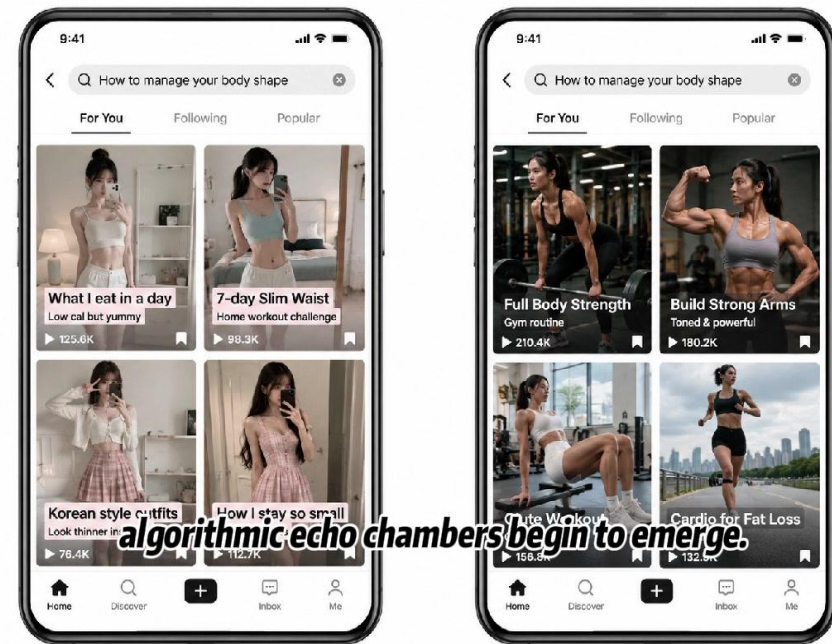
How the recommendations become increasingly different

What the scene shows 🖐️

🌹 The feeds begin from the same search but are reorganised by engagement signals.

🌹 The content becomes more homogeneous rather than more diverse.

🌹 Body image is narrowed into repeated visual ideals: thinness, fitness, discipline and transformation.



Algorithmic echo chambers begin to emerge in the two feeds.



*This shows echo chambers as a visual regime,
not only an opinion bubble.*

8. Scene Analysis: Algorithmic Body Gaze 👁️👁️

How recommendation affects the users' relation to their bodies



Users begin to imitate and self-regulate under algorithm-recommended content.

This scene connects **representation** to **lived experience**: media visibility becomes bodily discipline.

Critical Reading

- ✦ The video moves from feed design to embodied consequences.
- ✦ Body-image recommendations may encourage self-surveillance and comparison.
- ✦ The project uses “algorithmic body gaze” to describe how platforms teach users to look at their bodies through repeated ideals.

2. Scene Analysis: Critical Media Literacy Moment



Questioning visibility, data and platform reward systems

💡 Why am I seeing this body again and again?

💡 What data shaped my feed?

💡 Whose bodies are missing?



💡 What ideals is the platform rewarding?

💡 Why do I have to change?

The user asks critical questions about her feed.



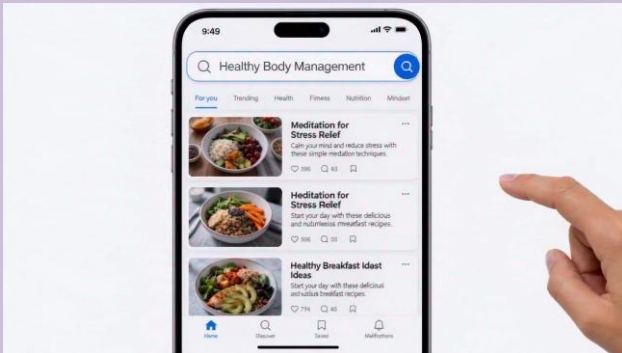
This scene embodies Critical Media Literacy:

The user shifts from consuming content to questioning the system that organised the content.

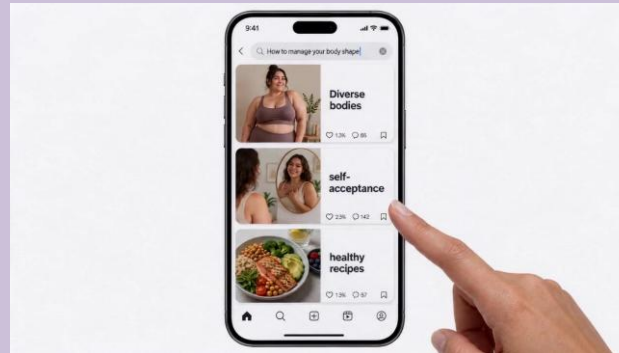
The following search for “Healthy Body Management” continues this reflective turn.

10. Scene Analysis: Structural Limits of Recommendation

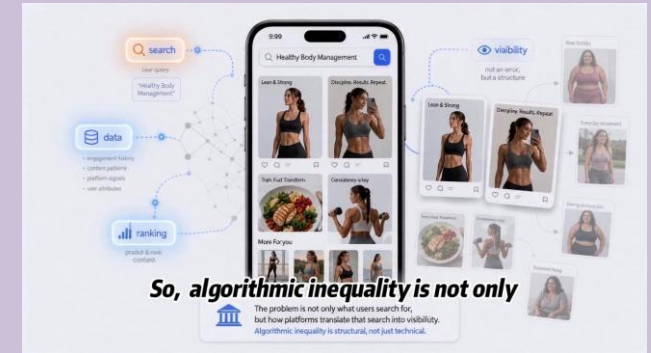
Diversity appears, but the system remains narrow



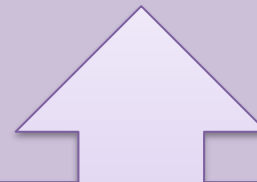
More diverse recommendations begin to appear.



"Body management" is translated into narrow ideals.



Algorithmic inequality is framed as structural.



Interpretation

The ending is important because it avoids a simple "user fixes the feed" narrative. Even when the user searches for "Healthy Body Management", the platform may still translate health into narrow ideals of thinness, discipline, self-monitoring or lifestyle optimisation. This shows that algorithmic inequality is not only a technical error but a structural issue.

II. GenAI Tools and Creative Workflow

How the video was assembled and documented

Purpose of GenAI Use

Generative AI was used both as a production tool and as an object of critique, including Copilot, Deepseek, Jimeng, and Doubao.

The final video uses a fictional short-video interface to simulate how a search for “How to manage your body shape” is converted into visibility through datafication, ranking and personalised recommendation. The split-screen contrast follows User A (Asian female user) and User B (European-American female user), showing how the same search can lead to different body-image echo chambers: slim/delicate/youthful aesthetics on one side and fitness/discipline/body-building aesthetics on the other.

Workflow Reflection

The workflow revealed both the value and limits of GenAI.

It helped us quickly produce coherent scenes, but it also misinterpreted prompts: one output shifted from realistic to cartoon style, a save icon became a blue-bird-like platform symbol, and one video generation unintentionally enlarged the whole scene. These errors were not only technical problems; they showed how GenAI draws on existing visual conventions and platform aesthetics. This made the production process itself part of our critique of representation, datafication and algorithmic visibility.

Creative Workflow

1. Concept + Character Setting

We first asked GenAI to design the differences in pushed content for two users searching for body-management content. This established the split-screen logic: same search, different algorithmic pathways. Back-view characters were used to avoid over-personalising the users and to keep attention on platform systems.

2. Fictional Platform + Search

We generated a clean mobile search interface with “How to manage your body shape”. Prompts repeatedly specified no real logos, usernames, avatars or brands, so the video functions as a theory-driven simulation rather than an empirical study of a real platform.

3. Interaction + Datafication

User A clicks, likes, saves and comments on slim-body posts; User B interacts with fitness/workout posts. Semi-transparent labels (#slim body, #weight loss, #fitness body, #workout, etc.) visualise how user actions become behavioural data.

4. Feed Divergence + Body Gaze

The feeds gradually narrow into different visual norms. User A’s feed becomes dominated by slim, delicate and youthful bodies; User B’s feed amplifies fitness, discipline and muscular body management. This shows echo chambers as repeated visual norms, not just repeated opinions.

5. Affect + Critical Moment

Mirror scenes show body anxiety and aspiration. User A then pauses and asks: “Why am I seeing this body over and over again?” The later search for “Healthy Body Management” introduces a limited resistance, because visibility is still structured by search, data and ranking.

6. Editing + Refinement

Generated images were converted into short 16:9 video clips through Jimeng. CapCut editing assembled the split-screen narrative, added transitions, labels and timing, and kept the white-background research-project aesthetic consistent across scenes.

12. Prompt Documentation Linked to the final Video

Examples to document and refine

Documentation Logic

The prompts were developed iteratively, moving from concept design to interface simulation, user interaction, feed divergence, emotional consequence and critical reflection. Below, representative prompts are condensed by function rather than listed in full. The aim is to show how each prompt group shaped the final video and how we responded critically when outputs became biased, inconsistent or technically inaccurate.

Prompt Group	Condensed Prompt	Output Used in Video	Critical Evaluation / Adjustment
1. Concept + users	Design the pushed content differences when an Asian girl and a European-American girl both search for “how to manage their figures”.	Established User A / User B and the split-screen comparison: slim/delicate/youthful aesthetics versus fitness/discipline/body-building aesthetics.	Useful for narrative clarity, but it risks racialising body ideals. We treat the contrast critically, as a simulation of how algorithmic visibility can organise gendered and racialised body norms.
2. Search + first clicks	Create a fictional 16:9 phone feed with the search “How to manage your body shape”; show slim/youthful posts and fitness posts; User A clicks slim content and User B clicks fitness content. No avatars or real logos.	Created the shared starting point and the first divergence in user behaviour.	The phrase “Eat less and lose weight faster” is harmful diet-culture language. It is used only to critique the type of content that may be amplified, not to endorse it.
3. Likes, saves + data labels	Animate liking, saving and commenting. Add labels: #slim body, #delicate style, #weight loss, #beauty ideal; #fitness body, #Low-calorie Challenge, #workout, #discipline.	Visualised datafication: ordinary interactions become platform-readable behavioural signals.	One version produced a blue-bird-like save icon resembling a real platform logo. We revised the prompt to keep icons unchanged and remove all real platform identifiers.
4. Feed divergence + affect	Generate four slim/youthful posts on the left and four body-building posts on the right; then show mirror scenes where both users experience anxiety or pressure around ideal bodies.	Showed echo chambers as repeated body norms and connected recommendation systems to self-surveillance, aspiration and anxiety.	One output changed from realistic to cartoon style. We added: “Maintain the realistic style... do not change the appearance of the two girls.”
5. Critical reflection + final argument	Focus on User A pausing and asking: “Why am I seeing this body over and over again?” Then change search to “Healthy Body Management” and show diverse bodies / self-acceptance / healthy recipes / joyful movement. Final labels: search, data, ranking.	Created the critical media literacy moment and visualised limited resistance within a system still structured by ranking and recommendation.	The final video argues that the problem is not only what users search for, but how platforms convert search into visibility. Some clips required adjustment when the camera zoomed unexpectedly.

The final video was produced through iterative prompting, testing and adjustment. GenAI enabled us to simulate algorithmic body-image echo chambers, but it also reproduced stereotyped body ideals, racialised visual assumptions, platform-like symbols and overly simplified algorithmic processes. Therefore, GenAI was not only a tool for production; it became evidence for our critical argument about representation, datafication and algorithmic inequality.

13. Critical Evaluation of GenAI Outputs

Stereotypes, simplifications and rejected directions

Risks identified ☒

- ⚡ **Ideal body stereotypes:** thin, young, able-bodied, smooth-skinned, feminine or fitness-coded bodies. ☒
- ⚡ **Racialised beauty norms:** Asian and European users may be positioned through different body expectations. ☒
- ⚡ **Gendered self-surveillance:** body image is framed as a women's issue of discipline and correction. ☒
- ⚡ **Algorithmic neutrality aesthetic:** clean interfaces can make the system appear objective and harmless. ☒

AWHHH!

How we responded ☒

- 😊 We used the final questions to shift from self-blame to platform critique. ☒
- 😊 We made missing bodies and repeated ideals part of the critical message. ☒
- 😊 We avoided using real users or direct platform branding. ☒
- 😊 We treated GenAI outputs as objects of critique, not neutral illustrations. ☒

Portfolio
Insight

The GenAI process revealed the same issue that the video critiques: synthetic media can reproduce familiar visual norms around bodies, health, femininity and discipline. This made GenAI both a production tool and a critical object of analysis.

14. Ethical Reflection and References

Responsible representation in a body-image project

Ethical Choices

- ✗ No real user data or identifiable individuals were used.
- 📱 The platform interface is fictional and short-video inspired, not a direct copy of TikTok.
- 🏃 The video avoids presenting body types as “problems”.
- 💡 The ending critiques platform structures rather than blaming individual users.
- 💡 The portfolio acknowledges the limits of visual simulation.

Key references

- 👉 Hall, S. (1997) Representation.
- 👉 Gillespie, T. (2018) Custodians of the Internet.
- 👉 Noble, S.U. (2018) Algorithms of Oppression.
- 👉 Song, D. (2025) Hall’s encoding/decoding model revisited in the digital platform age.

Final Learning

The final video shows that critical media literacy today must ask not only what body-image content says, but how algorithmic systems organise body visibility, reward engagement and transform self-perception into data.