MSOS Ramseyer-Winter body scanner

3D TECHNOLOGY HAS TRANSFORMED OUR MOVIES AND THE WAY WE CAN SEE IMAGES OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS. NOW, IT MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO HELP YOUNG WOMEN BETTER APPRECIATE THEIR BODIES.

IN A RECENT STUDY, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI BODY IMAGE EXPERT VIRGINIA RAMSEYER WINTER FOUND THAT IMAGES FROM 3D BODY SCANNERS CAN BE USED TO HELP YOUNG WOMEN APPRECIATE THEIR BODIES.

IN THE STUDY, YOUNG WOMEN CREATED 3D AVATARS OF THEMSELVES USING A BODY SCANNER AND DIGITALLY PAINTED BODY PARTS THAT THEY APPRECIATED FOR THEIR USEFULNESS. FOR EXAMPLE, A WOMAN WHO PAINTED HER THIGHS MIGHT DISCUSS HOW THEIR LEG MUSCLES HELP THEM CLIMB STEPS OR HIKE TRAILS. MONTHS AFTER COMPLETING THIS ACTIVITY, PARTICIPANTS REPORTED INCREASED BODY APPRECIATION AND LESS FEELINGS OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY.

“The entire intervention really focuses on shifting away from aesthetics, or appearance, and toward function and appreciation. And what the research says is that when women really appreciate how their bodies function as opposed to how they look, that they fair better all the way around in terms of health outcomes and health behaviors.”

RAMSEYER WINTER ADDS THAT EVEN WITHOUT ACCESS TO BODY SCANNING TECHNOLOGY, YOUNG WOMEN CAN STILL MIMIC THE STUDY’S EXERCISE BY CONSIDERING HOW PARTS OF THEIR BODIES HELP THEM IN EVERYDAY LIFE AND REFLECT ON POSITIVE BODY APPRECIATION.

I’M CAILIN RILEY, WITH A MIZZOU SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE.