

Photoshopped Images Could Carry Warnings in France

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Image: by casillar, photobucket.

(PhysOrg.com) -- A law has been proposed in France that would see digitally enhanced images carry a warning to viewers that the image has been retouched to change the physical appearance of a person. The proposed statement may eventually apply to political campaigns, billboards, photos on packaging, art photos, and press photographs as well as advertisements in magazines and newspapers.

The law has been proposed by Valerie Boyer, a member of parliament in France, because of concerns that airbrushed or "photoshopped" images can distort how people, especially young people, see themselves. Boyer is an advocate for awareness of body image problems such as obesity and anorexia, and worries that the preponderance of enhanced images in magazines encourages people to believe in a non-existent reality.

Boyer believes the disclaimers could help young people realize that touched-up images distort reality. She said that many adolescents, especially young girls, have difficulty distinguishing between what is real and what is not, and they can develop [body image](#) problems and unrealistic expectations, that can sometimes lead to anorexia and other serious health problems.

Boyer, a member of French President Nicolas Sarkozy's UMP party, is backed by fifty other politicians, who are also concerned about protecting consumers, especially young people. Boyer said the group wants to fight the stereotype of women all being young and slim. The move follows a charter agreed to voluntarily by the fashion industry in France to avoid promoting extreme thinness.

If the proposal becomes law French advertisers could be fined up to half the cost of their advertising campaign, or over \$54,000 (US), if they do not include the statement. The law is currently being debated in the French parliament.

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