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Ralph Lauren: Stop Distorting Images, Say Protesters

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Protesters call to an end of unrealistic photo retouching in front of the Ralph Lauren flagship store in New York. (Diana Hubert/The Epoch Times)

NEW YORK—Protesters gathered outside Ralph Lauren's flagship store on the Upper East Side on Sunday to demand Ralph Lauren stop portraying women as unrealistically thin in its advertisement campaigns.

Recently there has been a lot of controversy surrounding a photograph of former Ralph Lauren model Filippa [Hamilton](#) whose body was dramatically retouched for a campaign which was according to [the company](#), mistakenly released and not approved for the U.S.

"We are demanding that Ralph Lauren stops photoshopping models so severely," said

Sonia Ossorio, the organizer of the protest and part of NOW, the National Organization for Women. She said that with the extent to which the images are altered, there should be a disclaimer on the photo.

"If models can't catch a break, how can the rest of us [hope](#) to have a healthy self-image?" said NOW-NYC President Sonia Ossorio in a press statement. "Starting at younger and younger ages eating disorders, low self-esteem, and a preoccupation with appearance plague women and girls. Ralph Lauren and the [advertising](#) industry are complicit in making real women feel less sexy and less beautiful than they really are."

This April, Hamilton, who weighs 120 pounds at 5-foot-10, was fired from Ralph Lauren after having been with the company for eight years since she was fifteen. "They fired me because they said I was overweight and I couldn't fit in their clothes anymore," said Hamilton to the Daily News. Polo Ralph Lauren released a statement saying that it was "a result of her inability to meet the obligations under her [contract](#) with us," as attributed by the Daily News.

Filmmaker Darryl Roberts who recently shot a documentary titled "America the Beautiful," interviewed many young women with poor body image as a result of fashion [advertisements](#). "I can't sit back and watch the self-esteem of young girls erode," said Roberts in a press statement. "If Ralph Lauren is truly sorry for his past blunder, then we're asking him to step up and truly commit to making a change."

Ossorio, who has been with NOW for ten years fighting to eliminate unrealistic images of women in the media, says that these advertisements are very damaging. "They're breaking down women's spirits," she said.

"Ralph Lauren has an opportunity to set a new industry standard," said Ossorio in a press statement. "They can choose to promote images that depict women that are sexy and beautiful but also healthy with realistic body proportions."