Journal 10

The chapter assigned was *Beauty Cult*, which discussed the many ways in which women are held to a higher standard and how those standards are causing women to literally die for beauty. Valenti went into depth about how the internet plays a huge role in how women view themselves and other women saying it’s both helpful to pushing the movement to stop hating your body but at the same time cruel comments from so many people can easily push people over the edge. She also writes about the use of the word ugly and beauty and how these standard both need to be gone, not just beauty, for the way women view themselves and are viewed to change. Valenti then moves into more specific examples about sexaulization, eating disorders, and plastic surgery. The example with the biggest impact on my thoughts was the plastic surgery, which I believe also had the biggest impact on Valenti because she spent the most time talking about it. In all the examples used she brought up the most important point that I think a lot of women don’t realize, that consumerism is at play in everything.

For teaching this chapter, I want to focus the sections Valenti has sorted out because she does a fantastic job of doing so. The first section will be about language and the use of the words ugly and beauty in society. Next, the focus will be on the issues with being fat, like eating disorders and “general fuckability” (208). Last, the focus will be on how women change being fat through consumerism and plastic surgery. All three of these areas and their components make up the beauty cult. Aiding the PowerPoint with images always drives a message home and connects the dots. While reading Valenti made two references to which I was unaware, so photos of both these references will be included for those who didn’t know them also. Valenti also specifically brings up the Dove Real Beauty campaign, which stuck out. Most women see this campaign as a final change for the traditional scope of beauty but Valenti says it’s still about consumerism. Included with the traditional real beauty advertisement, there will be images of dove products that clearly go against real beauty, like cellulite cream.

The mini-activist project will be about the traditional scope of beauty. The students who choose this chapter as their favorite chapter or the chapter in which they hold the most interest will be put into a group together. In this group, I will tell them the textbook definition of beauty. After hearing the textbook definition, I will ask them to redefine beauty in whichever way they deem necessary. Based on Valenti’s chapter, some people think the word beauty all together should be gone because it serves no purpose but to oppress and others think the word just needs a new meaning that is inclusive. The activity will be open to their interpretation but they must use Valenti’s chapter as a reference while creating a new definition. After they define beauty I want them to write it down on paper with marker and make it pretty with supplies I will provide. They will then take this definition and place it on a bathroom mirror in campus. The purpose of this is to not only change the way they view beauty and the way they see it but to also take people off guard while they’re using the bathroom and let them know that beauty has many definitions that are not uniform.