

BUF 4700 Contemporary Issues in the Fashion Industry

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Response Paper – *Toxic Beauty* Documentary

It is human nature to love beauty, and "beauty" is subjective; there is no uniform "standard beauty"; in the eyes of others, everyone will be labeled as beautiful or ugly. To pursue beauty, using products/cosmetics that can make people attractive is natural. However, few people know that behind the beauty lies a deadly gene. In our lives, cosmetics and skin care products are very common, and most people use them for attractiveness. But these products make people beautiful, but sometimes they become less attractive and even "killers." Too many people bring beauty simultaneously, get a lot of disease/trouble, and even take people's lives as "murderers." The documentary "Toxic Beauty" we are watching this time reveals shocking facts about the worldwide beauty and personal care industry that are unknown to the public.

In the documentary, the viewer learns that many cosmetics contain toxic chemicals; the state even bans some. These carcinogenic substances pose a massive threat to the health and growth of women, children, and men. Cosmetic products are putting more and more women, children, and men at risk for their health and lives. These products can cause reproductive problems, ovarian cancer, premature births, mercury poisoning, endocrine disorders, and other diseases. By interviewing and documenting the personal experiences of many women and combining them with the world's leading scientific research, we expose the harmful effects of beauty products across the globe. In addition to documenting personal experiments and real-life cases, we interviewed scientists, lawyers, whistleblowers,

construction workers, politicians, and social activists. In addition to exposing the truth, viewers will learn how to apply alternative ways to seek a healthier life.

We all use various care products for the love of beauty, but the most common daily care products are hidden substances that can harm people's health. And every year, a company will issue a recall of harmful substances detected in the announcement. In addition to Johnson & Johnson's body powder mentioned in the documentary, other companies/brands have hidden dangers and will issue recalls. For example, how many of you bought cosmetics at Claire's as a child, or perhaps you recently purchased some for your children? And it was the cosmetics given to children which. Three of their products tested positive for asbestos in 2019. Asbestos has been linked to different forms of cancer, especially mesothelioma. The cause of asbestos found in some cosmetics is talcum powder (Jensen, n.d).

Also, even in winter, sunscreen should be part of your daily routine. It is the very same sunscreen that people rely on that has detected a carcinogenic substance, benzene, which has been linked to blood cancer and other diseases. Among the recalled products are Neutrogena Beach Defense aerosol sunscreen; Neutrogena Cool Dry Sport aerosol sunscreen; Neutrogena Invisible Daily defense aerosol sunscreen; Neutrogena Ultra Sheer aerosol sunscreen; and Aveeno Protect + Refresh aerosol sunscreen (Rendall, 2021). These products were ranked high in sales volume and were already used by consumers when the recall was filed. Temporary memories can still cause physical harm to consumers and can drive consumers to no longer trust the products.

While watching this documentary, I was shocked. I have read about Johnson's body powder in the past, and I stopped using this product because of the reports at the time. But I didn't know that women have used Johnson's Body Powder for decades to get cancer from talcum powder. And there is no record of talc in the ingredients list, nor is there a risk of cancer on the product's surface. Johnson's talcum powder is a product that I have used since I

was a child because it keeps me dry and "fresh." But after watching this documentary, I realized that this product was not just a recall of one batch of goods but has caused ovarian cancer in thousands of women.

When I was introduced to beauty products, I knew that they could contain harmful ingredients, if at all, within the permitted limits. But at the same time, I also care about the ingredient list of the products. Before I buy a product, I know exactly what is in it before deciding whether or not to buy it. However, the documentary reveals that some ingredients must be registered in the ingredient list, making my future purchasing habits even more demanding. As consumers, we cannot verify product ingredients through experiments, but companies can strictly control the dosage during production to gain consumers' trust.

Everyone in the world loves beauty, and using beauty products is essential. Still, negligence on the part of governments, regulators, and companies, or a lack of concern for consumers' health for the sake of sales volume, will lead to more distrust of beauty products. As Emily Nguyen says at 16:20 in the documentary, "We shouldn't be telling girls to stop using products. We should tell governments, regulators, and companies to stop making toxic beauty products." There are thousands of beauty products out there, and governments, regulators, and companies should be strict about the ingredients in their products, not just the volume of sales. The only way to help the beauty industry continue to grow is to allow consumers to use products with confidence.

Reference

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