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BUF 4700 Response to Toxic Beauty

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Toxic Beauty Documentary

Everyone, regardless of age, has a beauty-loving heart and wants to meet other people with their best appearance (what a person wants their appearance to look like). The desire for beauty is not a person's fault, but in the pursuit of beauty, many "obstacles" arise, such as allergic reactions to certain materials in certain products. We should be mindful of the ingredients in the products we use in our daily lives.

Before watching this film, I considered myself to be a person who rarely uses beauty products because, for some reason, I do not wear makeup and do not own any makeup products, but I do have some skin care products. However, after watching the film, I discovered that I use more than six beauty products per day, including creams (using lotion to keep my face and body moist every day before going to bed), sunscreen (most commonly used between June and August of the year), hair products (using shampoo and conditioner when I wash my hair), toothpaste (twice a day), deodorant (before going out), and perfume (sometimes). Johnson & Johnson baby powder, mentioned in the movie, was also used many times. My mother used baby powder on me when I was a baby, after every bath and after every diaper change. Not only do I have my own experience with baby powder, but my family uses it as well. Before we moved, my mother used to sprinkle baby powder around our necks every time she did haircuts for us (my whole family) because it made the broken hair easier to clean or remove from our necks (especially for my father). But when I search for Johnson & Johnson baby powder on Google, there are still a

lot of products that pop up. I clicked on the one that ships from Amazon, and on the title it says, “Hypoallergenic and Free of Parabens, Phthalates.” But when I look at the ingredient lists, talc is still included (in the first place), even if talc is harmful to humans in several aspects. The good news is that Johnson & Johnson will no longer sell baby powder all around the world at the end of this year (Golden, 2022).

If I had not seen the movie, I guess I would not have learned about these harmful ingredients in beauty products in such a short time because every time I go to buy skin care products, I do not specifically look at the ingredients of the specific product that I intend to buy. I will keep reusing the same product if it works for me. For example, Nature Republic’s Aloe Vera 92% Soothing Gel, which I have been using since I was in junior high school. I had no idea that some ingredients used in beauty products could increase the risk of ovarian cancer in women, affect women’s fertility, lead to early menopause in women, or cause hormone-related diseases (Toxic Beauty, 2019). Without a doubt, entrepreneurs will never inform consumers about these and will make no mention of them on the labels of their products.

Since my skin is sensitive, most of the beauty products I have are skincare, and I do not even have a lipstick. This is because in 2019, I had repeated episodes of lip herpes caused by lip balm. It took me about three months to fully recover. I went to the doctor during the repeat period, but the effect was not obvious. After many observational trials, there is only one lip balm that I do not have an allergic reaction to, and that is Mentholatum mint lip balm. I have also had makeup on a few times, but whenever the makeup is on my face, I feel itchy, and the area where the makeup was applied turns red after washing. So when I try a product and don’t have an allergic reaction, I keep buying it, but I never pay attention to the ingredients that produce it. It is the film Toxic Beauty that makes me want to search online to find out what kinds of ingredients

are used to produce my daily use beauty products. One of my most used beauty products is Dove's deodorant. There are 21 inactive ingredients needed to make a bottle of deodorant. When I looked up the 21 ingredients on the Internet, I found that not every ingredient was safe to use, and when I found some harmful ingredients, it made me feel scared. It turns out that I spray some harmful substances on my skin almost every day. Butane and isobutane in Dove deodorant can increase the risk of human cancer (Team Circle, 2022). BHT will cause damage to organs like the lung and kidney (Cottis, 2023). Limonene can cause allergic reactions in some product users (Harley Street Emporium, 2016). Based on the above research and the movie, I will change my buying habits for the above two reasons. After that, when I buy any beauty product, I will search the ingredients online in advance and make sure that they are safe to use before I choose to buy them. It may take some time, but health is the most important thing.

I believe this movie is effective after watching it. It uses many real examples to warn or attract consumers' attention, so that they will pay attention to the ingredients used in beauty products. One of my favorite quotes in this movie is from Dr. Ami Zota: "You have no way of knowing what's in your products" (Toxic Beauty, 2019). I agree with this because the designer, manufacturer, or owner of beauty products are all businessmen, and they will not tell you which ingredients they use to produce these products that are beneficial or harmful to the human body. They just want to make money. That is another reason I believe this movie is meaningful. This movie taught me a lot about how some production ingredients affect our health. Without the film, people may never know some other "secrets" behind the beauty products. It also let me re-examine my buying habits after watching this film. I am not thinking that all beauty products bring harm to people, but be careful of the ingredients that are included in the product before you make a decision to buy it.

All in all, some production ingredients bring some benefits for us, like making people look more elegant or making their skin more moisturizing. However, some production ingredients will bring whole life affection for us, such as cancer. It is time for us to pay more attention to the ingredients.

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