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Ms. Boyd

AP English 12: Literature and Composition

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Sweeny, Camille. "Skin Deep: Seeking Self-Esteem Through Surgery." *The New York Times* 15 Jan. 2009. *NYTimes.com* 4 Apr. 2010 < <http://www.nytimes.com> >.

Summary of Article

The focus of this article is to discuss current motivations for plastic surgery.

Pathos

Heartbreaking examples are ^{PV} given of adolescents, tormented by unrealistic standards of beauty, who find themselves trapped into believing the only option for a joyful life is through a medical procedure. Even with the high costs of surgery and poor economy, the number of ^{PV} procedures being performed on teenagers is on the rise. However, professionals involved are attempting to reduce the number of unnecessary surgeries by advising personal adjustments (such as a new diet or exercise plan) rather than physical alterations to their patients.

Reaction to Article

I was well aware of the popularity of plastic surgery and the powerful motivation for it created by disgust with one's own image. However, I did not realize the enormous number of teenagers opting for the drastic effects ^{of} surgery. I do applaud the doctors for trying to navigate the 'fine line between corrective and cosmetic [surgery]'. Instead of allowing patients to waste money on unsatisfying or reversible operations (such as liposuction where the fat can easily be replenished), the doctors are providing support for

specific numbers?

effective use of SC for balanced sentence

these people to make permanent lifestyle changes. I believe that all teenagers should be made aware of these options so as to be proud of themselves rather than a doctor's handiwork.

Flaherty, Julie. "Surgery Heals Scars Both Physical and Emotional." *The New York Times* 6 Jan. 2001. *NYTimes.com* 7 Apr. 2010 <<http://www.nytimes.com>>.

Summary of Article

In 1994 the ROSE (Regaining One's Self-Esteem) Fund was created as a nonprofit organization that would provide funding for reconstructive surgery of battered and abused women. The surgeries this fund provides save lives—because many of these women have injuries that impede their every day routines, such as broken noses that make it extremely difficult to breath—as well as allow the harmed women to recover confidence and stop hating themselves for their unjustified deformities. This program serves as more than a kindness to those in need: it helps women who have been emotionally and physically scarred to cope with their past and move on to a successful future.

Reaction to Article

This article focuses on the most honorable reason for plastic surgery to be used: as a tool to correct the cruel actions unfairly enacted upon the unfortunate few. The powerful and moving stories contained in this article forced me to realize that plastic

surgery is being used for more admirable purposes than an easy confidence boost. I cannot be entirely against the whole institution of plastic surgery because of the life changing capabilities it has for these women. I'm not sure that this makes up for the multitude of unnecessary surgeries occurring every year, but it cannot be ignored that without plastic surgery battered women would be forced to live with the trauma of their past for the rest of their lives.

Your voice and perspective are strong in this reaction. You clearly understand your field.

Cullen, Lisa Takeuchi. "Changing Faces." *Time Magazine* 5 Aug. 2002, Asia. *Time.com*

8 Apr. 2010 < <http://www.time.com/time/asia/covers>>.

Summary of Article

Although plastic surgery is common in the West, Asia itself has had an unprecedented increase in the number of these procedures performed yearly. The common trend now is to look Caucasian by wanting bigger eyes, larger busts, and longer legs. In China especially, plastic surgery is a sign of wealth and a valuable asset for job hunting. Unfortunately, with this rise in demand has also come a plague of unqualified and illegitimate practitioners seeking a profitable scam. This desperate need that the Asian people have for physical reconstruction drives them to plastic surgery even with high costs and dangerous—sometimes life threatening—procedures.

This is a fascinating article in your field. Fascinating! I'm glad you're interested!

Just general fiction of a reaction?

Reaction to Article

When reading about the common surgeries performed in Asia—such as eyelid and calf muscle reductions—I was not surprised by the fact that Asians are willing to

alter their appearances, because I was well aware of the tradition of foot-binding.

However, the sheer number of cosmetic surgeries and lack of concern for safe and proven methods astounded me. The value placed on appearance, in my opinion, is placed perilously high; it seems to me that Asian society has a near obsession with obtaining a perfect body, and this can only lead to more hazardous attempts at beauty and ultimately death.

What do you think of the desire to look Caucasian? Does this suggest extremely negative influence of Western culture - possibly through media and advertising images?