

Lindsay Anton

Creative Performance

Research Week

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Abstract: Performing Arts

Title – Life in Plastic: Woven Poetry

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Abstract

This study examines narrative poems that critique plastic surgery and the unrealistic beauty standards maintained by the media. The woven poem uses a Barbie doll as a central illustration. According to the Journal of Clinical and Aesthetic Dermatology, 370,000 teens underwent cosmetic surgeries within the year alone, and this number continues to grow (Amiri et al., 2021). This study prompts a research question: How does the Barbie doll contribute to the normalization and acceptance of plastic surgery for young girls, and how is this phenomenon portrayed in narrative poetry? The Journal of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery identified that women typically believe their mental health disorders would heal if they could change something

about their physical appearance. However, this study found that mental health problems worsen after cosmetic surgeries (Mehrzad et al., 2021). This poem conveys the repercussions of conforming to these beauty standards through vivid imagery, symbolism, and narrative techniques. This performance highlights the stories of people who have suffered from the evilness of these societal guidelines. Overall, this research study hopes to prove that a simple piece of woven poetry can bring awareness to this issue and foster more inclusive and authentic representations of beauty. The woven poetry includes: "Song of the Pretty Bird" by Shay Alexi Stewart, "Pretty" by Katie Makkai, "What guys look for in girls" by Savannah Brown, and "Barbie girl" by Jack of Spades.

Christian Worldview Integration

Ultimately, no child should feel like they need to alter themselves to feel pretty. Everyone is created in God's image: "So, God created man in His own image; male and female He created them" (English Standard Version, 2001, Genesis 1:27). This verse emphasizes the inherent value of each person, regardless of their physical appearance. While it may sound cliché, Christians should not find their identity in outward beauty. The idolization of the perfect plastic life seeks to attack people of all different ages, races, and genders. However, the scriptures write, "Do not let your adorning be external... but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious" (English Standard Version, 2001, 1 Peter 3:3-4). Outward adornment is fleeting, but there is eternal unfading beauty in a gentle and quiet spirit. Christians should value what the Lord values. No one will find true fulfillment when they seek value in their physical beauty. Eventually, beauty fades. Appearances change with age. A biblical worldview warns against idolatry. God is a jealous God, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God" (English Standard Version, 2001,

Exodus 20:4-5). It can become an idol when individuals find their purpose in plastic surgery.

Through a Christian Worldview, this piece of poetry promotes a healthy, realistic view of beauty that focuses on inner character. Plastic surgeries can reflect harmful, idolatrous behavior.

References

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