



The discussion of body image comes up every year at my middle school. Young girls worry about weight, skin, hair, and clothing. Sadly, as a woman myself, helping guide these young woman to loving themselves is a challenge, because society surrounds us with as Nicole Clark calls it “kryptonite” against our self esteem . I had the privilege of watching Nicole’s documentary *Cover Girl Culture* at the National Council of Teacher’s of English conference. Her documentary is perfect for middle and high school girls to open their eyes to the realities of the media’s exploitation of the female body in advertisements. I used parts of this documentary in our advisory curriculum, and then followed up with Nicole’s workshop “Kung Fu Self Esteem”.

In her assembly Nicole’s dynamic personality and personal story behind the modeling industry, connects her to the students. My students left the assembly really thinking about what they use as comparisons for what they want to look like. One student wrote, “Those perfect girls in teen vogue magazines and commercial ads aren’t as perfect as they seem. More than half of what you see is all photo-shopped and fake. Their skin color, their body image, everything is fake, and this creates fake self-esteem in kids today.” This reflection is so important for young woman to have because as Nicole says in her assembly, “we are bombarded by media daily, causing us to use it against our self esteem”. Another seventh grader

wrote, “Mrs. Clark left an impression on me, and I don’t think I will ever think about magazines, TV shows, and the media in quite the same way. Whenever I stare at a magazine ad of some sort, I will try to decode it.” Making sure our young girls are aware of the dangers surrounding the media’s depiction of perfection is vital in building strong, young woman, and Nicole helps guide young woman towards judging themselves for themselves not by the images “created” by the media.

I highly recommend Nicole’s documentary and assembly as a part of middle or high school curriculum for girls. Nicole reminds the girls that we are challenged daily with keeping our “confidence bubble” strong and fighting the unrealistic images of woman’s skin, bodies, hair and weight. If you have questions about the assembly “Kung Fu Self Esteem”, please feel free to email me at alaird@chandlerschool.org.

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