Essay 1: Comparative Analysis

Description: 850-1,000 words, plus an MLA-formatted Works Cited page
Sources: Kimmel, “Masculinity as Homophobia” and Wolf, “The Beauty Myth”
Total Points: 150
Due Date: Rough draft (3 copies) due Wed, 9-21; Draft of introduction and conclusion (3 copies) due Fri, 9-23; Final draft due Mon, 9-26

The Assignment

Write a comparative analysis of “Masculinity as Homophobia” and “The Beauty Myth”. Your analysis will make a claim about an insightful relationship between the two essays. This relationship should focus on how the two authors use particular strategies to accomplish the purposes of their essays. To do so, rely on concrete details in your analysis to establish the significance (the “So What?”) of this relationship.

Strategies

- Building on your work in your comparative grid and summary assignments, consider the language, audience, and structure of each essay.
- Use Notice and Focus (WA 17-18) to identify interesting similarities or differences and The Method (WA 26-32) to identify patterns of repetition and contrast. These skills should help you see a relationship between the essays that is not immediately obvious. (Be sure to review WA 82-83 and 234-235 on comparison/contrast and our class discussion on the rhetorical triangle as you think through this relationship.)
- After this initial evaluation, formulate a claim about the particular relationship you would like to show your audience. Your claim should be analytical rather than a tally of obvious similarities and differences. Remember that an effective comparison integrates both texts throughout, analyzing each in relation to the other.
- Use “So What?” to push your analysis and argument further, particularly in the conclusion. Don’t just tell us what the insightful relationship is that you’ve analyzed; tell us why it matters to our understanding of these essays.

Criteria for Evaluation

1. Does the thesis clearly establish an insightful relationship between the two essays? Does it focus on how the two authors use particular strategies to accomplish the purposes of their essays?
2. Does the Essay offer a focused analysis of details to support its thesis?
3. Does the Essay remain independent and objective by paraphrasing the authors’ words accurately, using a minimum of quotations, and avoiding judgment or personal association?
4. Does the Essay exhibit coherence through a logical flow of ideas and the use of well-developed paragraphs, transitions, attributive tags, and strong verbs? Does it adhere to MLA format and citation standards and contain few, if any, grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors?