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Fashioning Fat: Inside Plus-Size Modeling



Synopsis

For two and a half years, Amanda Czerniawski was a sociologist turned plus-size model. Journeying into a world where, as a size 10, she was not considered an average body type, but rather, for the fashion industry, "plus-sized," Czerniawski studied the standards of work and image production in the plus-sized model industry. *Fashioning Fat* takes us through a model's day-to-day activities, first at open calls at modeling agencies and then through the fashion shows and photo shoots. Czerniawski also interviewed 35 plus-size models about their lives in the world of fashion, bringing to life the strange contradictions of being an object of non-idealized beauty. *Fashioning Fat* shows us that the mission of many of these models is to challenge our standards of beauty that privilege the thin body; they show us that fat can be sexy. Many plus-size models do often succeed in overcoming years of self-loathing and shame over their bodies, yet, as Czerniawski shows, these women are not the ones in charge of beauty's construction or dissemination. At the corporate level, the fashion industry perpetuates their objectification. Plus-size models must conform to an image created by fashion's tastemakers, as their bodies must fit within narrowly defined parameters of size and shape—an experience not too different from that of straight-sized models. Ultimately, plus-size models find that they are still molding their bodies to fit an image instead of molding an image of beauty to fit their bodies. A much-needed behind-the-scenes look at this growing industry, *Fashioning Fat* is a fascinating, unique, and important contribution to our understanding of beauty.

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Customer Reviews

Dr. Amanda Czerniawski does a great job of giving us a clear vision into the life of modeling, specifically, plus size modeling. As a secondary educator, I feel this is a great book to help girls interested in modeling see exactly what they are getting themselves into, good and bad. For all who work with teens and young adults, it's a great tool to help them and their mentees understand how culture influences self image. Amanda interweaves an interesting narrative of the science of her experience along with the personal reflections from her point of view and also that of models which was very interesting to me. I especially appreciated her honesty in the vulnerability she had to face as she stepped into a unique world of plus size modeling. Her story is real and well researched.

Excellent

read about a quarter of the book and then skimmed to the end. Found it hard to read. Writer appeared to feel superior and I didn't like her tone.

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