Sidney Katz, *The Importance of Being Beautiful*

This article introduces the topic of stratification and applies it to physical appearance. Think about the following questions and points as you read this article.

1. In your opinion, name the single determinate for success.

2. What is social stratification? What does beauty have to do with it?

3. True or false, according to this article, “success depends on talent, intelligence, and hard work.”

4. What are some physical characteristics that the author notes as desirable? Do you agree that these characteristics are desirable?

5. Is one’s position in physical stratification achieved or ascribed?

6. What is the “halo & horns” affect? How can halos and horns become a “self-fulfilling prophecy”?

7. Is IQ an inherited “natural” trait? What effect could beauty have on IQ? In other words, could something as external as beauty influences a person’s mental aptitude? How?

8. You should understand how the halo and horn are applied in early life, at school, in college, career, and when we are old. In other words what are the consequences of being judged by the halo/horns criteria in each stage of life?

9. Of all the studies reported in this article, what common element did their methodology share?

10. When have you observed physical evaluation determining a person’s worthiness? What can reality shows like *the Swan* and *Extreme Makeover* add to the worth of Katz argument?