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The Beauty Bias: How Attraction Provides Higher Salaries and More Benefits for More Beautiful People

In 1875, philosopher Edmund Burke wrote, "We must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies, acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses." Beauty can be found all around us. It's in our art, our opinions, and our culture. But when it comes down to finding physical beauty in one another, doing so is ~~often~~ ~~done~~often done swiftly and subconsciously. What kind of an impact does this have? Researchers at the University of Western Australia have scientifically proven that a more beautiful person will attract more attention from both genders. Beauty implies health, which signals to natural instincts that the person will survive and be genetically fit (Lie). ~~But~~ According to the Boston Globe, studies have also shown that more attractive people earn higher salaries, are more likely to be considered for loans, and are less likely to be convicted of crimes. This happens because beautiful people are oftentimes assumed to be perfect people therefor influencing a person's opinion. In the article Who Will Fight the Beauty Bias, Graham states that ~~C~~citizens vote for more attractive candidates, students prefer more attractive professors while professors prefer more attractive students, and even mothers tend to choose their favorite child, all based on

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~~looks pamper their better-looking children (Graham).~~ What creates this bias towards beauty and what can be done to make conditions more just?

Comment [p2]: I don't believe this sentence is really needed, but you do need a sentence that will allow you to jump to the background.

What Creates this Bias: The Science of Facial Symmetry

Comment [p3]: By adding that you allow the heading to let the reader know what is coming up.

According to an article published by The Economist, facial symmetry is one important aspect of beauty. Biologists have concluded that according to evolution, ~~unfit individuals are less likely than fitter folk to be able to maintain the symmetrical development of their bodies when exposed to stress and disease.~~ In other words, asymmetry implies that something has gone wrong with an individual's development, and thus ~~less mates~~ fewer people would be attracted for fear that a lineage would be unfit to survive. Researchers at the National Institute of Health claim that facial features that are positioned in the golden ratio, a perfect mathematical ratio found in nature, are the most appealing. In one experiment, computer modeling was used to simulate a face with these "perfect" measurements and the resulting face was placed alongside similar faces with very minute differences in spacing. When asked to identify the most attractive face, participants in the study were drawn towards the one featuring the golden ratio during every trial ("Health indicators"). ~~Facial symmetry and its effects on attraction can be studied across multiple species.~~ Biologically, individuals are more attracted to members who appear more genetically perfect and would be able to produce healthy offspring. In this way, physical symmetry is naturally selected for (Lie). Anthony Little of the University of Stirling in Scotland and Annika Paukner of the National Institutes of Health in America conducted a study to show an observable connection between health and facial symmetry. 93 macaque monkeys who had been raised in captivity and were between the ages of 5 and 20 were gathered and photographed head-on. Then, the distances between facial features were measured and each monkey was given a score based on his or her overall symmetry, with perfect symmetry corresponding to a score of 0. Another

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score was calculated based on the quality of health of each macaque monkey. Variables included the shine of their coats, levels of fat and muscle, weight gain, and general health. When the symmetry score and health score were compared, it was concluded that high levels of facial symmetry did in fact correspond with higher levels of health (“Health indicators”). Although this is true for macaque monkeys, it can only be assumed from this study that the same applies to humans since facial symmetry and its effects on attraction can be studied across multiple species.

Benefits of Beauty: The injustice casted upon others

The problem with our natural tendency to favor the attractive is that it is unfair to those who m, by chance, are not as symmetrical. Such injustice is a topic of discussion amongst scholars as discussed in The Boston Globe (Graham). In recent years, Deborah L. Rhode, a Stanford law professor, wrote the book The Beauty Bias in which she revealed "the injustice of appearance in life and law." In 2011, Daniel Hamermesh, an economist at the University of Texas at Austin, noted the financial benefits of beauty as well as the surprising difference in lifetime salary between someone considered to be attractive and someone considered to be less so in his book Beauty Pays (Beauty). Although both books successfully shared and spread the idea of a beauty bias, scholars have yet to come anywhere near to a plausible solution for it.

Overcoming the Bias

It is near impossible to lobby for the rights of people excluded by the beauty bias because doing so would require people to be categorized as “unattractive.” Other proposals have included government compensation for people who are cosmetically disfigured as well as using computers or robots to replace people in their jobs where prejudice could be a factor (Graham). The problem with these suggestions is that they aren’t really getting rid of the beauty bias, just

Comment [p6]: Give some examples that might be in the research text followed by where you stand, based off your thesis.

covering it up. Given that we are naturally biased towards more beautiful people, the science of attraction results in discrepancies in income, prosecution, and allotment. In the future, could there be a way to eliminate this prejudice?

Does amount of prejudice vary from person to person? If so, can measures be taken to make children less biased as adults? And finally, is the beauty bias really a negative thing? Could our species benefit from it in any way?

Comment [p7]: Same questions you started with, is there a way to find solutions and evolve them into paragraphs of their own?

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Comments

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You have many sentences that are too short and I feel that you are cutting them off before they can develop to an awesome sentence. Your information is great and I can tell you put a lot of time into the research but I feel that it is mostly facts in some of the paragraphs and no opinion of where you stand is present. Your last section Overcoming the Bias is well made, gives a piece of information and then your opinions are stated.

It is unclear where you stand on the whole beauty bias, until the very end where you start stating solutions but instead are left with some of the same questions you began with. If you could not find any during your research what are some solutions you why try and implement.

If people tend to be attracted to attractive people the most, wouldn't you say that as time goes by and only the attractive people mate that the "gene" which allows beauty would be present in more people, making it technically fair since more people are pretty therefor eliminating the injustice?

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