



Beauty Bias: Discrimination and Social Power

By Bonnie Berry



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Society has always been fixated on looks and celebrities, but how we look has deep ramifications for ordinary people too. In this book, Bonnie Berry explains how social inequality pertains to prejudice and discrimination against people based on their physical appearance. This form of inequality overlaps with other, better-known forms of inequality such as those that result from sexism, racism, ageism, and classism. Social inequality regarding looks is notable in a number of settings: work, medical treatment, romance, and marriage, to mention a few. It is experienced as limitations on access to social power. Berry discusses the pressures to be attractive and the methods by which we strive to alter our appearance through plastic surgery, cosmetics, and the like.

Berry also discusses cultural factors, such as the manner in which globalization of media, advertisements, and movies have trended toward homogenization, whereby we are all encouraged to appear tall, thin, white, and with Northern European features even if we are none of those things. She also analyzes the underlying social forces such as economic incentives that, on the one hand, channel us to be as physically acceptable as possible via the sale of diet pills and skin lighteners, and on the other hand, encourage us to accept ourselves as we are by selling us plus-size clothing. The book concludes with suggestions for equal rights extended to all regardless of appearance. Here, Berry describes budding social movements and grassroots endeavors toward an acceptance of looks diversity.

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Beauty Bias: Discrimination and Social Power By Bonnie Berry Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2402617 in eBooks
- Published on: 2007-07-30
- Released on: 2007-07-30
- Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

Review

"Public and general libraries." - **Choice**

"Sociologist Berry has taught at several American universities....In this text, she tackles social inequality centered on physical appearance skin color, hair texture, height, weight, eye shape, disabilities and deformities, condition of the teeth, evidence of aging, and beauty which, compared to other forms of racism, is still legal and socially acceptable. Berry examines the ways that physical appearance affects health, chances at romance (and marriage and family), and workplace experiences; the activities and procedures people undergo to become more socially desirable via their appearance; how various systems medical and health insurance professions, the legal system, the global and economic community respond to people differently depending on appearance; the issue of choice to engage in appearance enhancement; and movements to promote looks-diversity acceptance." - **Reference & Research Book News**

Review

"Dr. Berry provides a cogent and accessible analysis of the long-standing discrimination the less-than-lovely face daily. Her humanistic and jargon-free coverage of what it is like to be denied access and opportunity and to have your value as a human being called into question simply because you're not tall, slender, and beautiful enough is located both in the worlds of scholarly rigor and experiential closeness. Insightful, provocative, and compelling, this book is a must read for anyone seeking to understand the myriad costs and consequences of fetish-ed beauty in 21st century America." (Stephen L. Muzzatti, Ryerson University, author of *Reflections from the Wrong Side of the Tracks*)

"*Beauty Bias: Discrimination and Social Power* moves the few works we have on appearance to a new level, surpassing even the previous important work by Jean Kilbourne." (Earl Smith, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Wake Forest University)

"*Beauty Bias* is a welcome and necessary text. Berry tackles the complexities of appearance and how it is related to gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability status, and more. This book examines this topic historically, scientifically, psychologically, economically, and most importantly, critically." (Joanne Belknap, Ph.D. Professor, Sociology, University of Colorado, Author, *The Invisible Woman*)

"Berry's treatment of physical appearance in the workplace is especially important." (Rosemary Erickson, President, Athena Research Corporation)

"A fascinating and authoritative account of looks-based judgments and discriminations, *Beauty Bias* should be required reading for everyone who has a stake in how they (and how we) look--that is, for everyone. Berry's book is important both for the sheer amount of research it conveys and for the ways of thinking she models." (Susan Schweik, Associate Professor, University of California at Berkeley)

About the Author

Bonnie Berry is the Director of the Social Problems Research Group in Gig Harbour, Washington, and was formerly university faculty at the University of Miami, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Washington, Indiana University, and Pacific Lutheran University. A sociologist, she is the author of *Social Rage: Emotion and Cultural Conflict* (1999) as well as many journal articles on the topics of social

inequality, criminology, and animal rights.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dolores Young:

Precisely why? Because this Beauty Bias: Discrimination and Social Power is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap this but latter it will surprise you with the secret the idea inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who all write the book in such incredible way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book include such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking means. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

Charlotte Lee:

Your reading 6th sense will not betray you, why because this Beauty Bias: Discrimination and Social Power guide written by well-known writer we are excited for well how to make book that may be understand by anyone who else read the book. Written within good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and writing skill only for eliminate your own personal hunger then you still skepticism Beauty Bias: Discrimination and Social Power as good book not simply by the cover but also with the content. This is one guide that can break don't determine book by its deal with, so do you still needing another sixth sense to pick this specific!? Oh come on your studying sixth sense already alerted you so why you have to listening to another sixth sense.

Mattie Priest:

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