

Title: Judging the Book by Its Cover: Facial Disfigurement and Discrimination
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“Beauty, as defined by society at large, seemed to be only about who was best at looking like everyone else,” as Lucy Greal, a former patient of jaw cancer, writes in her book, *Autobiography of the Face*. The standard “looking like everyone else” has generated judgements based on one’s facial appearances, a standard that seem to have been encrypted in the veins of men. Because society has formulated its own heartless, systemized way of putting labels on people based on their physical characteristics, people with facial disfigurement are met with discrimination, at a level where their pursuit of happiness is disrupted.

This discrimination is built upon the “disfigured is bad” stereotype, as evidenced by a study named “More Than Skin Deep: Judgments of Individuals with Facial Disfigurement.” Results showing that the individuals pretreatment were seen to have negative attributes, revealing the underlying premise behind the struggles that people with facial disfigurement have in academic, professional and social contexts in the forms of bullying and employment bias.

Although attempts have been made in order to eradicate this discrimination through the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and a plethora of organizations, its flaws remain to strip away the happiness of this group of people. This paper attempts to increase the effectiveness of this eradication by tackling the issue from a different standpoint by highlighting the importance of representation in media; actor versus observer’s view, a bias-related method inspired by Claude Steele’s *Whistling Vivaldi*; and environmental cues, how simple alterations in settings can contribute to overall positivity.

Works Cited

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