

In a society that uses logic and reason behind most of its actions, it's so interesting that a lot of our actions are driven by beauty – something that is usually unrelated to the action that we're taking. For example, when looking for a job in investment banking, you will rarely see an overweight or short candidate get picked for the job, no matter how academically qualified and talented he or she is. For some reason, the best singers in the world happen to also be the prettiest. So much so that when someone like Susan Boyle comes around, people have forgotten that ugly people can sing too!

Many people have tried to define beauty and our motivations for achieving it. To be frank, we are in a society where looks matter. Although a prettier person may not be showered with money and an academic diploma just for being pretty, they definitely receive more social opportunities on average, which leads to more opportunities in other areas. Sometimes, our motivations behind beauty don't really make any sense – humans will go through so much pain just to be skinny or pretty – to have a symmetrical face or to have painfully high heels. If aliens were to visit our world, they'd think it's so strange of us – or maybe not. Every society needs to keep reproducing, and one key to finding a suitable mate is finding a mate that's healthy – not too obese, has normal skin, etc – someone who looks like they won't pass down “unfavorable” genes. And thus, we spend billions on acne medicine and gym memberships.

People in different cultures have their own definition of beauty, and thus do different things to obtain their ideal image – from tanning to bleaching to binding feet to enlarging eyes. Like our class, many people have body features that they're happy about and body features that they wish they could improve.

We pierce our ears – the needle really hurt me, to the point where I couldn't talk or eat because moving my jaw was super painful and sent a painful throbbing pulse into my brain. However, if my ears ever closed up, I'd get them pierced again. It makes no sense given the pain I went through for two holes in my lobes, but I get a strange feeling of satisfaction when I put in my earring every morning – being able to have jewelry on that part of my body makes me happy, as it's not nearly as annoying as having a bracelet or necklace.

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