



Looks: Why They Matter More Than You Ever Imagined

By Gordon Patzer Ph.D.



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We all know one hard and undeniable truth: "looks matter" -- physical good looks, whether female or male, comes with tremendous power and tremendous benefits. Well-researched consequences of "physical attractiveness phenomenon" reveal that those who possess good looks are generally luckier in love, more likely to be popular, and more apt to get better grades in school. But very few of us realize just how much physical looks, whether good looks or not so good looks, affect every aspect of our lives. One example, published research document that people blessed with good looks earn about 10 per cent more than their average-looking colleagues do. They are also more likely to be promoted at work as well as get hired.

What exactly is this "physical attractiveness phenomenon" and how does it affect each and every one of us? Dr. Gordon L. Patzer has devoted more than 30 years investigating this unsettling, often discomforting, reality for both women and men, girls and boys, and how it touches every part of our lives. In "*Looks*", he reveals not only its impact on romance, but also on family dynamics, performance in school, career, courtroom proceedings, politics and government. "*Looks*" is the first book to explore how the power of beauty affects both sexes and how the rise of reality TV shows, cosmetic surgery, and celebrity culture have contributed to our culture's overall obsession with being good looking.

Unflinching and topical, "*Looks*" uncovers the sometimes ugly truth about beauty and its profound effects on all our lives.

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The simple truth about beauty is this: Since antiquity, women and men have primped and preened, buffed up, trimmed down, and generally worried themselves sick about their looks. The more insidious, less acknowledged truth is that physical attractiveness can be a powerful force that brings success at every step—from our role within the family to our rank in the classroom to our salary on the job—as well as a burden that fuels our obsessions and drives us to damaging decisions.

Looks lifts the veil from some ugly truths about beauty as it details a wide body of evidence pointing to its pervasive, sometimes detrimental, effect on our lives. Drawing from sources as diverse as fairy tales and biblical stories, historical cases and contemporary research, consumer advertising and reality TV, *Looks* exposes some of the unsettling facts about the attractiveness phenomenon:

Neonatal nurses prefer healthy infants with normal birth weights and devote less attention to babies with low Apgar scores.

Mothers offer more and better attention to their most attractive children, who may then even exhibit better traits and more socialized behavior than their less attractive siblings.

Teachers actually expect better-looking children to perform well, leading to more attention, less punishment, and higher grades.

Employers consistently hire and promote the best-looking candidates in a pool of equally qualified applicants.

All of this has an uglier side, too, even for those with looks to spare. *Looks* explores the rise of unhealthy body obsessions and provides sound advice for keeping a sane perspective in a superficial, celebrity-obsessed society. For both women and men, *Looks* provides an unflinching exposé of the powerful, sometimes damaging effects of beauty—profound knowledge that can change the way you live, work, or parent your children.

Gordon L. Patzer, Ph.D., is the director and founder of the Appearance Phenomenon Institute. A former dean at Roosevelt University in Chicago, California State University honored his service with their lifetime title of Professor Emeritus. Dr. Patzer has investigated "lookism" and the physical attractiveness phenomenon for more than thirty years. He has been featured in publications such as the *Los Angeles Times*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Mademoiselle*, *Elle*, *Self*, and *Cosmopolitan*, as well as on Dateline NBC, The Today Show, and The O'Reilly Factor. He lives in Chicago.

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