Most of us would agree that it is unjust to treat people differently based on physical appearance, but almost no one follows that egalitarian principle when it comes to dating. Is it unjust to allow physical appearance to affect one's dating decisions? Defend your answer.

Fair or Unfair? Cherry Picking Dating Partners by Appearance

Is it unjust to allow physical appearance to affect one's dating decisions? I would argue that it is not. It is rational to allow physical appearance to affect one's dating decisions. As mentioned in the question, "most of us would agree that it is unjust to treat people differently based on physical appearance". Although I concur with the majority, when it comes to dating, I believe that choosing people based on physical appearance is reasonable and acceptable. In the following paragraphs, I will elaborate on my reasoning and defend my argument.

To begin with, let us delve into the meaning of justice and injustice. According to Aristotle, "Justice consists in what is lawful and fair, with fairness involving equitable distributions and the correction of what is equitable."[1] Thus, the basic definition of fairness is to treat different individuals with the same criteria. In accordance with this definition, it may appear unfair to select a dating partner based on their appearance, as it implies differential treatment of individuals. However, it is important to note that this description of justice is only a general rule to provide an overarching principle that guides our actions, and this high-level definition is usually applied to social systems, laws, regulations, and policies to ensure that a fair system is established.

When we deal with personal choices under particular circumstances, justice needs to take on precise and context-dependent considerations.

Now, I would like to discuss the concept of justice by exploring more considerations. Every human being possesses unique characteristics that manifest in diverse ways, such as appearance, physique, age, gender, and intelligence. When faced with a specific situation that requires selecting among individuals, it is essential to promote fairness by excluding irrelevant attributes from the selection criteria. For example, in the hiring process for an IT position, it would be unjust to treat job applicants differently based on their gender, as gender is irrelevant to the qualifications for the job. Similarly, if a restaurant is hiring waitresses, age should not be a factor, as age does not impact the level of service provided. Like highlighted in the two examples above, taking irrelevant factors, such as gender or age, into selection consideration is unjust and can lead to discrimination. On the other hand, when a particular skill is required for a position, then the distinction based on that special skill will be justified. For instance, in the recruitment of a computer network security engineer, you must consider how qualified they are for the position. Hence, it is acceptable to differentiate between applicants by their related experience, giving preference to the candidates with more network security experience. Therefore, justice should be examined by taking the specific circumstances at hand into account.

Let's take a closer look at the dating situation. The essence of dating is for individuals to find another person that they like, and the dating process is a much more complex process than recruiting employees. It involves assessing various aspects of the potential partner as a whole, such as their personality, achievements,

knowledge, and physical appearance, all of which together form a complete individual. As discussed earlier, if a position requires a certain skill, it is fair to consider this qualification in the selection criteria. Likewise, in the realm of relationships, choosing a partner involves considering all "qualifications" of the person including physical appearance which is a property of a person that can influence your decision whether you like that person or not. Therefore, considering physical appearance is justified when it comes to dating. Moreover, it is human nature to be drawn to aesthetically pleasing things. Just as we select clothes, shoes, or purses based on their appearance when shopping, the same inclination applies to choosing a partner, and it is understandable that physical appearance sparks the initial attraction when selecting a dating partner. Therefore, as a component of an individual, physical appearance holds a legitimate place as an evaluative factor in the context of dating. In addition, the way attractiveness is judged varies from person to person, and everyone has different preferences for physical appearance - some may prefer skinnier partners and others may prefer curvier ones. As previously mentioned, dating is comparable to a shopping process, and both of them are personal choices. Everyone has the right to choose what they like and that won't affect the justice of our society.

If we base our partner selection on physical appearance, would individuals with "imperfect" looks suffer? Do those who do not possess a very outstanding physical appearance face greater challenges in the realm of dating compared to others? The answers to these questions are not as straightforward as a simple yes or no. Without a deeper reflection, one might believe that individuals with less favorable physical appearances will face greater challenges in finding a significant other. In fact, there

are many factors coming into play. First of all, those with below-average appearances may have relatively fewer chances to date, but the rate of success may be even greater than those with striking appearances. Appearance is not the sole determining factor in forming a romantic relationship. Although initial impressions may be affected by appearances, inner qualities will soon replace appearances and play a prominent role in connecting the two individuals together. Personalities, temperaments, hobbies, and values become the key factors that ultimately determine whether the relationship will be successful in the end. People who initially rely on one's attractive looks to initiate a relationship may unintentionally neglect factors crucial for a successful romantic bond. This approach might lead to conflicts later in the marriage, possibly resulting in a breakup. Furthermore, individuals who are not naturally blessed with exceptional looks may pay greater attention to building their inner qualities and improving their overall capabilities due to experiencing less fondness or discrimination. This dedication to personal growth can contribute to finding a significant other and ending up in a happy marriage. From this point of view, those with ordinary appearances might have a higher chance of attaining a successful relationship and life. Additionally, every coin has two sides. While a person with a perfect physical appearance may attract more potential partners, this could also increase the likelihood of encountering individuals with harmful intentions, creating various risks.

Finally, let us take a step back and think about Nature. Is Nature always fair? It endows everyone with different attributes and talents. Some people have outstanding looks, while some have different exceptional intelligence. It may appear uneven and unjust, but it is precisely because of this that we have a colorful and

diverse human society. Each person gets their unique talent and gift, which might not be physical appearance, but everyone can achieve happiness no matter what their gifts are. From this point of view, Nature is just and fair.

Let us finalize our discussion regarding fairness in dating. Initially, one might perceive choosing a partner based on physical appearance as unfair. However, as discussed earlier, this approach can be justified once we carefully consider all aspects. Individuals have the right to choose their partner, and they may give preference to a partner due to any trait they exhibit, including physical appearance. This choice will not impact the fairness of our social system. Meanwhile, a superior appearance has little to do with a successful marriage and a happy life, as every person has a unique way to achieve happiness in their life, just in different ways.

Work Cited

1. Pomerleau , W. P. (n.d.). Western Theories of Justice. Internet encyclopedia of philosophy. https://iep.utm.edu/justwest/#:~:text=Aristotle%20says%20justice%20consists%20in,correction%20of%20what%20is%20inequitable.