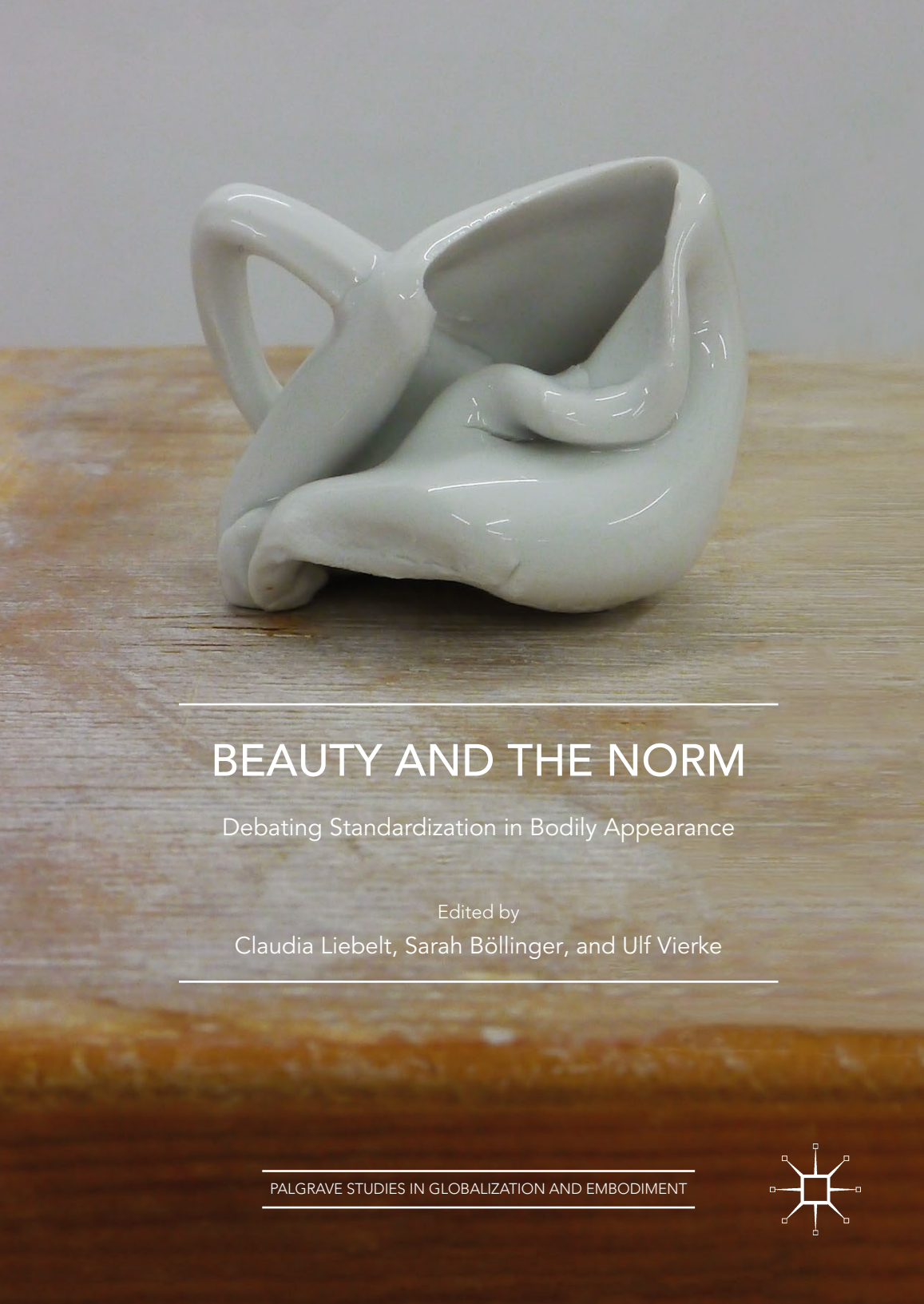

BEAUTY AND THE NORM

Debating Standardization in Bodily Appearance

Edited by

Claudia Liebelt, Sarah Böllinger, and Ulf Vierke

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We dedicate this book to Stella Young (1982–2014)

Preface and Acknowledgements

Edited volumes are markers of the life-cycle of academic discourses. Like testimonies, they look back on lengthy debates: some might be interdisciplinary marriage certificates, while others are more like birth certificates. This volume certainly tends to be more like the latter, not only due to the fact that, during its production, at least five babies were born to its contributors. Bringing together hitherto rather separate debates in critical beauty studies, cultural anthropology, sociology, the history of science and disability studies, we feel that *Beauty and the Norm* has succeeded in mapping out an emerging discursive field.

Being positioned in different departments and disciplines at the University of Bayreuth, we were fascinated by how much we shared in our thinking about the body as praxis and its relation to both aesthetics and norms. The story of this book thus began with questions over cups of coffee such as, "What do you make of Stella Young's notion of 'Inspiration Porn'?" or "Have your read Garland-Thomson's book on staring?" The list could be continued, but the reader will find many of the works we found so inspiring for our debates in the lists of references in this volume. The discursive field we were targeting had just a few well-established authors, and it was a great pleasure to discover, while organizing a conference on the topic, the large number of young scholars from different disciplines and area studies who were enthusiastic about our project. Some of them went on to contribute to the present volume.

This collection thus builds on an international conference that took place at Iwalewahaus, University of Bayreuth, from 6 to 8 April 2016. Over the course of three days, scholars and artists from the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Israel, Kenya, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States presented their current research on body aesthetics, representation, and gendered and racialized norms. Even though one might doubt whether "inspiration porn" qualifies as a solid analytical term, we feel that Stella Young, who passed away in 2014, would have loved to be part of our conference, not least because it was academia at its best, bringing together not just scholars in the strict sense of the term, but intellectuals in a broader sense, including artists and activists. We experienced the warm, friendly, yet intellectually sharp atmosphere as something unique. Presentations without the usual posturing, full of thorough and inspiring thoughts—we learned a lot, were moved, and continued to discuss and laugh together afterwards. Some of this spirit we feel has clearly made it into the present volume.

We would like to thank everyone who made this work possible. Claudia Liebelt is grateful to Erdmute Alber, who, on a train ride to Berlin, triggered the idea for this project by suggesting that greater attention should be paid to the generative operations of human standardization and normative looks. Liebelt would also like to thank the extraordinary support of the staff at the Chair for Social Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth for their remarkable editorial assistance, most importantly Severin Penger, Nadja Bscherer and Korbinian Baumer. With his rigorous and immensely quick language editing, Robert Parkin not only saved us from numerous mistakes, but also spotted errors as only a superb scholar can. Sarah Böllinger would like to thank Katharina Fink, who believed in the idea of artwork as disabled bodies and promoted this project with her all-embracing positive energy, as well as Sigrid-Horsch-Albert and Katharina Greven for their insights into the Ulli Beier heritage and for supporting the ideal of "Iwalewa" (Yoruba for "Character is Beauty").

Most of all, we are indebted to the contributors to this volume. We all profited from the insightful comments we provided to each other and the debates we had. This edited volume is a truly collaborative work. As mentioned above, it builds on a conference we co-organized in 2016 at Iwalewahaus in cooperation with the Chair for Social Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth. The conference was

supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies and the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS). Our keynote speakers, Ann M. Fox and Maxine L. Craig, were the best speakers we could have hoped for: as our multiple references to their work throughout this volume testify, they were crucial for our thinking on *Beauty and the Norm*. While unfortunately she could not contribute to our volume or make it to the conference, we drew much intellectual inspiration from Rosemarie Garland-Thomson and would like to offer our thanks to her for her interest in and support of our book project. We also thank Anne-Christina Thiel for her outstanding organizational skills and Katharina Greven for her supportive design work for our cover. Indispensable was the support of the (former) staff of Bayreuth's Iwalewahaus and the Chair for Social Anthropology, especially Talea Schütte, Anisha H. Soff, Tamara Fick, Shirin Dünkel, Lena Naumann, Siegrun Salmanian, Gloria Igabe and Miroslav Martinka.

Bayreuth, Germany

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practice to narrate stories and activate objects, exploring cultural identities, and linking them to issues of loss, memory, race and gender. Her work has been shown in museums in Belgium, Finland, Kenya, Mali, the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Zimbabwe, France, South Africa and the US.

Claudia Liebelt (Ph.D. Halle, 2010) is an assistant professor in Social Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth. Her current primary research interest and teaching pertains to the gendered notions of beauty and aesthetic body modification in Turkey, extending to questions of normativity, intimate labor, class, embodiment and Islam in its lived and embodied aspects. She authored *Caring for the 'Holy Land': Filipina Domestic Workers in Israel* (Berghahn, 2011) and has published in the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, Ethnos, South East Asia Research, Diaspora, Critical Asian Studies, Feminist Review* and *Contemporary Levant*. Her current book project is entitled *Istanbul Appearances: Beauty and the Making of Middle Class Femininities in Urban Turkey.*

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and The Nation: Race, Gender and Culture (2015), *Skin Bleaching in Black Atlantic Zones: Shade Shifters* (2015). Her co-written book is *Caribbean Racisms: Connections and Complexities in the Racialization of the Caribbean Region* (2015 with Ian Law), and her co-edited book *Creolizing Europe: Legacies and Transformations* (2015 with Encarnacíon Gutíerrez Rodríguez).

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CHAPTER 1

Beauty and the Norm: An Introduction

Claudia Liebelt

Recent decades have seen the rise of a global beauty boom, with profound effects on people's bodies worldwide. The global beauty and fashion industries seem to disseminate mass-mediated images of men and women whose bodies have startling similarities, despite their differences in shade and attire. Against this background, some scholars have warned against an increasing regularization of the human body, indeed, of a 'pervasive smoothing out of human complexity and variation' (Garland-Thomson 2009, 30). On the other hand, an emerging literature on beauty practices and images worldwide has demonstrated that, in their quest for beauty, modernity or enhancement, bodies are shaped by particular, yet transnational body politics (Elias et al. 2017; Jarrín 2017; Nguyen 2011) and are embedded in culturally specific, collective fantasies that are neither exclusively local nor global, but may be both (cf. Jafar and Casanova 2013; Jha 2016). While certain hegemonic beauty norms and images are becoming increasingly prominent globally, the present volume argues that, for a nuanced reading of their diverse meanings and effects on and for bodies, we need to pay careful attention to the various ways in which normative beauty is manufactured in different contexts and across national boundaries. Techniques for measuring or weighing the body, lightening

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or tanning the skin, processing hair and altering eyelids, female breasts or noses may travel transnationally, but to understand their relationship to normative regimes of representation, it is crucial to analyse their multiple and changing meanings in specific locations.

Beauty and the Norm contains chapters based on empirical research across a wide range of geographical locations and cultural contexts, as well as shorter conversations between scholars that also include more personal reflections on scholarly debates, artistic representations and everyday experiences. Rather than engaging in the certainly futile attempt to provide a complete review of the literature on the relationship between the beautified/beautiful body and norms of appearance, in this introductory chapter, we seek to provide a framework that ties the various chapters together. In its attempt to expose the generative operations of human standardization and normative looks in everyday life to more systematic analysis this edited volume contributes to a debate that we feel is only just emerging. Not least, it brings together hitherto rather separate debates in critical beauty studies, cultural anthropology, sociology, the history of science and disability studies on the gendered, classed, (dis)abled and racialized body, normative regimes of representation and the global beauty economy. Before introducing the contributions to this volume, we begin with a brief history of the notion of the norm and of the closely related debates on standardization and normalization as well as a discussion of the global economy of gendered and racialized bodies.

Debating Norms, Standardization and Normalization

In their attempt to delineate a sociology of standards and standardization, Timmermans and Epstein (2010, 71) remark that standardization has a negative ring to it as it is perceived to create worldwide homogenization. While we may tolerate or even invite the standardization of consumer goods, bureaucratic policies, technical codes and even research methods as processes that make 'things work together over distance' (ibid.), the notion of a standard human is rather troubling and may trigger dystopian fears of enforced homogenization, designer babies and cloning. Far from being entirely dystopian, or utopian, for that matter, the notion of a standard human has in some domains long been an everyday reality. To Epstein, '[a]ttempts to construct a standard human are unavoidable, in part because other standards have spillover effects' (ibid., 36).

By citing the example of a new policy announcement by Southwest Airlines in 2002 that overweight passengers would be forced to purchase two adjoining seats and the controversy this triggered, Epstein explains that '[t]o standardize consumer goods is inevitably to standardize those who consume them; to standardize consumer goods is inevitably to standardize those administered by them' (ibid.).

From the perspective of disability studies, the insight that standardized material objects contribute to the construction of bodies as non-standard, extraordinary and indeed 'disabled' is hardly new (cf. Garland-Thomson 1997). Within disability studies, the notion of a 'disabling society' (Swain et al. 2003) has come to stand for both the analysis and the critique of the conceptual and material barriers that contribute to the impairment and exclusion of some members of society while they serve others. From such a perspective, the history of bodily standardization is intricately tied to that of the norm, the normal (and abnormal), normalcy, normality and the average—all notions, as Lennard Davis (1995, 24) suggests, that entered the English language rather late, in the mid-nineteenth century.

The history of human standardization is commonly traced back to the emergence of statistics in the mid-nineteenth century, and especially the works of Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874), who developed the still powerful concepts of the average man and the body mass index. As ideological tools, these standards of somatic normalcy continue not only to describe, but also to prescribe human bodies today. With their help, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson remarks (2009, 28), generations of women, people of colour, the so-called handicapped and the poor have been measured, observed and evaluated, almost always being 'found wanting.' Up until the nineteenth century, when for Quetelet, as well as for artists like the Prussian sculptor Gottfried Schadow (cf. Döring 2011), the standardized or average human male came to signify beauty and vice versa, bodily beauty had been discussed in relation to the concept of the 'ideal' rather than the norm (Davis 1995, 24).

As Davis reminds us, in societies with bodily beauty ideals (rather than beauty *norms*), 'all members of the population are below the ideal. … By definition, one can never have an ideal body. There is in such societies no demand that populations have bodies that conform to the ideal' (1995, 25). To illustrate his point, Davis (ibid.) recounts the story of the Greek artist Zeuxis lining up all the beautiful women in the town of Crotona to create the ideal figure of Aphrodite by combining their most

beautiful body parts as individuals. While Zeuxis' creation of Aphrodite may sound not too far-fetched in an age when digital post-processing or 'image cosmetics' are routinely applied to the mass-mediated bodies and images of advertisement beauties and fashion models, there is nevertheless a great difference between his approach and ours: in contrast to Zeuxis' society, which idealized beauty as an unattainable ideal for any actual living body, in contemporary societies that measure and quantify beauty as a norm, each individual body is readily scrutinized in relation to others, whether in terms of its height, weight or complexion, or more generally its attractiveness.

The conceptualization of beauty as a norm has thus effected various forms of exclusion for those who fall short of, exceed or violate the normative parameters or else escape the pressure to 'correct' those aspects of their body that defy the norm. In his profound cultural history of aesthetic plastic surgery, Sander Gilman (1999, xvii) describes the basic motivation for aesthetic surgery as the desire to correct such 'deformations,' in the language of medical experts, and to 'pass' visibly. The idea of the averaged human being as physically attractive continues to be advocated by some evolutionary psychologists and neuroscientists, who, often on the basis of rather limited samples, claim to be able to measure physical attractiveness, linking it with averaged facial and bodily features (Pallet et al. 2010; Quinn et al. 2008; Rikowski and Grammer 1999), as well as reproductive strategies, fertility and, ultimately, evolutionary success (Buss 2003; Etcoff 1999).[1]

As outlined by Davis (1995), the rise of the concepts of the norm, the normal, the average man and normality is also bound up with the rise of eugenics and of larger processes of ordering bodies into clear-cut, typically binary categories such as able and disabled, male and female, black and white, rich and poor, and, often resulting from these, the beautiful and the ugly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Based on an 'ideology of containment and a politics of power and fear' (ibid., 4), eugenicists like the English Victorian Sir Francis Galton (1822–1911) conceptualized society as an organic body in need of perfection. In his work on cosmetic surgery in Brazil, Jarrín (2017, 28–53) speaks of the 'eugenesis' of beauty, showing how eugenic thought 'produced the backbone of the aesthetic hierarchy present to this day in Brazil' (ibid., 30). Social institutions such as hospitals, schools, prisons, barracks etc. became crucial in the process of creating ideal citizens and, indeed, of their normalization, which has been studied so prominently by Michel

Foucault (1990, 1995). Normalization, according to Foucault (1990), involves disciplinary power and social control rather than direct force. It is a process enforced by various authorities based on the concept of the normal 'as a principle of coercion' (1995, 184), eventually creating 'docile bodies' that self-monitor their compliance with the normative order. In an age of neoliberalism and humanitarian imperialism, Mimi Thi Nguyen (2011) argues, beauty is recruited as a part of imperial statecraft, a form of biopower that produces particular ways of managing the body, regulating not just appearances, for example of veiled women in Afghanistan, but moral character and feeling. As recent works that think beauty through affect theory have shown, it is not simply a disciplinary process, but an affective force that may also function to displace or disturb existing power hierarchies. For example, Rebecca Coleman and Mónica Moreno Figueroa (2010) conceptualize beauty as an affective aesthetic feeling that is intricately tied to the future 'as a more hopeful temporality' (ibid., 361). By looking at the resulting shifts and challenges, a field of paradoxes and contestations comes into view that speaks of the affective politics of beauty within a gendered and racialized global economy.

A Global Economy of Beauty

The global beauty market is often described as dominated by Western or Caucasian ideals of beauty promulgated by the mass media and multinational players. From such a perspective, beauty practices such as skin bleaching or toning, hair straightening or surgery such as the so-called 'correction of the negroid nose' (cf. Edmonds 2010, 145) or 'double eyelid surgery' in Asia and among Asian Americans are attempts to mimic Western or Caucasian beauty ideals (Jha 2016). While hegemonic beauty norms and images, for example, in respect of body weight and skin colour, clearly exist globally, the present volume argues for a nuanced reading of their diverse meanings and effects on and for bodies across the globe. In doing so, our volume contributes to an emerging debate in recent studies on the local ramifications and biopolitics of the global beauty boom as a transnational phenomenon.

For example, in her ethnography of Taiwanese bridal photography, Bonnie Adrian (2003) interprets the photographic staging of the bride as a 'Western baby doll' as creative response to a transnational visual imagery, which in this context is dominated by American representations

of female beauty. Alex Edmonds (2007, 2010) studies the localized form of a beauty industry in Brazil that developed in the encounter 'between global media and medicine and a distinctive logic of aesthetics and race in Brazil' (2007, 374), speaking of it as a form of indigenization (ibid.). While Laura Miller (2006) describes Japan's beauty culture as 'unique,' drawing on Appadurai's (1990) notion of global flows and 'scapes', she also sees it as functioning in a global arena of transnational body aesthetics and practices in that Japanese women's beauty concerns 'are no different from the defects women all over the world are taught through global advertising and imagery to hide or correct' (Miller 2006, 5). Along these lines, in their multi-sited research on cosmetic surgery tourism, Holliday et al. (2015) speak of 'beautyscapes,' analyzing the assemblages that emerge in 'a particular form of coming-together' (ibid., n.p.) between surgeons, patients and their companions, different types of training and surgery sites, technologies, media and body images, as well as cash flows. To understand beauty practices and ideals in relation to normative regimes of representation, it is thus crucial to analyse their multiple and changing meanings in specific locations. Accordingly, all the contributors to our volume are part of an emerging debate among scholars on the representation of gendered and racialized bodies, as well as transnational beauty cultures and practices in an increasingly global market.

Not least, these chapters contribute to a debate on beautification as a tool for social positioning and upward mobility, especially for women, with standards for bodily appearance continually on the rise. Thus, physical beauty carries within it an affective force and a promise of social mobility that may be seen as challenging established power hierarchies. With the aid of aesthetic techniques, and speaking subjectively, aesthetic surgery *aficionados*, trans-people and those labelled as deviating from bodily norms—indeed, anyone who is ready to subject themselves to the demands of the market—may strive to become not ordinary, but outstanding, even spectacular. As Edmonds (2007, 2010) notes, for many Brazilian women cosmetic surgery and the beauty industry promise upward mobility and have become almost a prerequisite for finding a job in Rio de Janeiro's highly competitive service sector. Jarrín (2017, 16) emphasizes the affective quality of beauty as capital in Brazil, where 'both money and beauty are essential aspects of having worth in society, and they are understood as buttressing each other in fundamental ways.' In her study of cosmetic surgery in China, Wen Hua (2013)

likewise analyses 'beauty capital' as being of great concern to young Chinese, who 'regard an attractive appearance obtained from cosmetic surgery as a form of capital that can give them an edge in the job market' (ibid., 80). In Venezuela, a nation that has repeatedly won the international Miss World beauty contest, beauty, glamour and what Ochoa (2014) calls 'spectacular femininities' are part of the political economy. For women entering the large beauty and entertainment employment sector, aesthetic body modifications are 'to a certain degree expected' (ibid., 194). In a recent volume on beauty politics in neoliberal times, Elias et al. (2017) argue that, by accumulating aesthetic capital, women are expected to become 'aesthetic entrepreneurs,' ever-vigilant about their outward appearance.

Are the fantasies and desires of beauty that accompany the normalization of 'corrective' measures thus part of a pervasive 'beauty myth,' as claimed by critical feminists, who argue that women's increased spending on their bodily appearance supports, rather than challenges, their subordinate position in patriarchal societies (cf. Wolf 1991; Jeffreys 2005)? Or rather, are they indeed effective, in that they function to disturb normative regimes of representation, if not by 'queering' (the look of) everyday life, then perhaps through the affective power of the sublime? While these questions cannot be completely resolved in the present volume, its various contributions all engage with this important debate by providing ethnographic and conceptual food for thought.

What is perhaps most important to argue in this regard is that hegemonic beauty and appearance norms affect people in different ways depending on their situated-ness within a gendered and racialized global economy. Norms of beauty and appearance affect both men and women, but not for nothing has there been a focus on femininity in the social science literature on beauty. While statistics suggest that men are also indulging in cosmetic surgery and spending on beauty products and services in growing numbers (Jones 2010, 294, 335), women continue to be its main consumers and make up the majority of cosmetic surgery patients. As the work of Judith Butler shows (1990, 1993), gender is produced in a process that is never completed or finished, but requires the constant performance and reiteration of gendered norms. For those who wish to be recognized as 'women,' norms of outer appearance and standards of feminine beauty play a crucial role in accomplishing this task. Much has been written on beauty as an external symbol of femininity that is intricately linked to female identity and the self, typically from

a critical feminist perspective. In one of the foundational feminist works on beauty, Sandra Lee Bartky (1990) warns of the existentiality of the link between women's bodily appearance and femininity that the feminist critique of beauty norms calls into question:

> … any political project that aims to dismantle the machinery that turns a female body into a feminine one may well be apprehended by a woman as something that threatens her with desexualisation, if not outright annihilation. (ibid., 105)

It is therefore hardly surprising that our call for the relationship between beauty and the norms of bodily appearance be debated almost exclusively attracted research on femininity, which also makes itself felt in the focus of the present volume.

The notion that beauty entails the promise of redemption, wealth and happiness for women is a kind of folk wisdom that provides the stuff fairy tales are made of, among them *Beauty and the Beast*, the French fairy tale first recorded in the eighteenth century that inspired our title. As Hamburger points out (2015), the story of *Beauty and the Beast* draws on a much older motif of 'beautiful girls and wild guys,' teaching its audience that beauty is essential for women, while for men lack of it may be transcended by wealth, charm and intelligence. In its history of oral, literary and visual transmission, the beast was often embodied by those who, due to their bodily otherness, were commonly presented as fairground 'freaks' throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Examples include the 'ugly dwarf,' the syphilitic, with their typical facial deformations, or persons diagnosed with hypertrichosis, that is, an abnormal growth of hair on the face and body (Hamburger 2015).

To disentangle the multiple meanings of this fairy tale and its repercussions in contemporary media productions and urban legends all over the world, much more is needed than a simplistic notion of beauty as a form of power *or* a powerful myth. It requires, we argue, an understanding of beauty and the norm in their interrelatedness as a historical process of ordering and categorizing bodies into binary categories. However, as argued by Maxine Leeds Craig (2006) in an influential article, feminist work on the subject of beauty has often been limited by its use of 'individualist frameworks', as well as by a neglect of the (local) ramifications of race and class. Discussing the works of Sandra Lee Bartky (1988) and Iris Marion Young (1980) in particular, Craig

shows that these started out from the position of a generalized woman 'that [is] racially unmarked, implicitly heterosexual [and] of unspecified class' (2006, 162). As Craig notes, '[t]he feelings of inadequacy produced by the presence of beauty standards in women's lives are, arguably, among the most personal manifestations of gender inequality in our lives' (ibid.). Following up on this, we argue that the study of (normative) beauty begins with the acknowledgement and analysis of inequality within the larger societal context. Such a perspective unavoidably leads us towards a notion of beauty as contested and paves the way for looking at the challenges and resistances of hegemonic norms, as well as at the 'multiple standards of beauty in circulation' (Craig 2006, 160).

As several contributions to this volume illustrate, while there are hegemonic beauty norms on an increasingly global scale, these are not at all going unchallenged, and their representation is far from monolithic. Instead, often as the result of political struggles, representations of beauty have come to include an increasing number of images of so-called 'alternative beauty' (cf. Tate 2009). Models may now include persons with albinism or of a darker complexion, or they may showcase specific subcultures or 'disability chic' (see Fox, Krings and Vierke in this volume). While the multiplicity of ways to be publicly recognized as beautiful may produce a more inclusive, affective belonging in the social and political spheres, we remain sceptical regarding the extent to which these representations are actually managing to reconfigure the dominant norms.

To sum up, standards of beauty, even when they become increasingly global, do not lead to a bodily standardization worldwide. As struggles against them change not only the standard itself, but the social, political and economic premises on which they are based, new standards emerge in what is an ongoing and contested process within an increasingly global economy.

Scope and Outline

As Timmermans and Epstein have noted (2010, 74), few scholars have analyzed specific (bodily) standards directly. Thus, this volume starts off with two contributions on the historical emergence and, indeed, the manufacturing of bodily standards in two particular contexts, namely masculine hairiness in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Prague (Herza), and body weight around the same time in the

Netherlands (Huistra). In his contribution to this volume, Filip Herza examines turn-of-the-century freak shows to consider the broader field of performing the masculine body. He shows that such shows were important sites for the negotiation and reproduction of gendered norms, as well as of bodily ab/normality. Against the background of an emerging professional dermatology and a growing cosmetic market, spectators of the so-called hairy wonders of early twentieth-century Prague freak shows 'learned' to think about the beautiful, clean and respectable masculine body in terms of criteria of normality and abnormality. Moreover, by staring, they could both distance themselves from the figure of the freak and self-identify as 'normal,' and feel threatened by the uncertainty of gender performances and the imminent sanctions tied to any transgression of the associated norms.

In her contribution to this volume, Hieke Huistra analyses the creation of what is arguably the most powerful standard of beauty today, namely body weight. As Huistra shows, body weight was not always relevant even where and when ideals of slimness were (already) in place. She also shows that, while body size, as in fatness or slimness, and body weight are commonly conflated, they are not the same. There is a paradox implied in the contemporary focus on body weight that is not easily apparent because weight as a beauty standard, according to Huistra, has become 'naturalized'. Thus, Huistra points out that body weight is not directly visible (and indeed, is commonly hidden), which prompts her to ask 'why do so many of us expect to be admired for something other people cannot see?' Analyzing late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Dutch newspaper reports on fairs, beauty manuals and advertisements for slimming products, she describes the shift in the approach to body weight from a bodily curiosity on Dutch fairgrounds to a 'securely established … beauty standard' in the Netherlands around 1930.

By doing so, she also describes a moral economy of beauty standards. As Jacqueline Urla and Jennifer Terry noted (1995, 1), the idea 'that moral character is rooted in the body' is ingrained 'in Western scientific and popular thought.' This becomes especially clear in light of the recent global campaign by the World Health Organization (WHO) to tackle the so-called global obesity epidemic. Huistra's contribution underlines the fact that the bodily standards that continue to inform, guide and indeed haunt biopolitics globally today are far from 'natural' or self-evident, but emerged as a historical process and under very specific circumstances.

Following this first set of chapters on the manufacturing of beauty norms is a closely connected second group on the representation of extraordinary bodies as 'alternative' forms of beauty. Christopher Hohl and Matthias Krings (this volume) look at the representation of the albinotic body from a social constructivist and comparative perspective. More particularly, they analyse three different forms of 'framing' the albinotic body to illustrate how these go hand in hand with either its spectacularization or normalization. In the first framing, that of nineteenth-century freak shows, albinotic bodies, like the hairy wonders described by Herza, function to transform the viewer into an 'undifferentiated mass of onlookers, bestowed with normality by the figure of the freak on stage.' Reacting to a process of medicalization and the pathologizing of the albinotic body in the early twentieth century, in the second frame, in the 1990s fashion photographers, with Rick Guidotti leading the way, attempted to redefine persons diagnosed with albinism as beautiful. And finally, in contemporary fashion modelling, the albinotic body is recoded as a valuable aesthetic quality to be celebrated for its glamorous and extraordinary beauty. Models diagnosed with albinism like Shaun Ross are now framed within a success story of overcoming stigmatization in a way that also constitutes an opportunity for the fashion-beauty industry, 'whose body politics are frequently subjected to heavy criticism.' While art photography and fashion modelling have indeed reduced the stigma of albinism by representing it as 'alternative beauty,' the authors point out that, as glamorous fashion models, albinotic bodies are once again represented as detached from ordinary everyday life, and like other bodies on the walkways of the global fashion scene, they leave their viewers feeling incomplete and insufficient.

Sarah Böllinger, in this volume, likewise focuses on the representation of bodies defined as disabled, namely in contemporary African art. Drawing on the concept of disability aesthetics (Siebers 2010), her chapter looks closely at the depiction of disabled human bodies by two African artists, namely the Kenyan painter Hezbon Owiti and the Moroccan sculptor, painter and performance artist Yassine Balbzioui, whose broken porcelain cups—one of which can be seen on the cover of this volume—speak of metaphorical disability. Böllinger discusses the 'disability gain' (Garland-Thomson 2015) that one may experience by analyzing artworks related to disability, and she shows how, by contesting established conceptions of the disabled body, anthropology, art and visual cultural studies can contribute to our understanding of the complex relationship between beauty and bodily norms.

Coined in an attempt to reframe disability as a source of gain rather than loss, the notion of 'disability gain' also constitutes the starting point of the conversation following Böllinger's chapter between Ann Fox, Matthias Krings and Ulf Vierke. As becomes clear, the notion of 'disability gain' raises a number of questions, including that of what happens when disabled bodies are commodified in an attempt to represent 'alternative beauty.' While some of these representations certainly do contain inclusionary moments, among them an appreciation of bodily difference as a source of beauty (Fox), others may be based on what Krings calls a beauty 'in spite of' disability, or which may even constitute 'inspiration porn' (Vierke). The conversation shows that, while the stakes for the fashion-beauty industry in extending aesthetic norms, pluralizing beauty and mainstreaming diversity are high, it manoeuvres within the economic logics of a capitalist market that, in its celebration of 'difference,' often reproduces forms of Othering. Finally, the figure of the cyborg, which has experienced a comeback in the recent debates over human enhancement, is discussed as a dystopian model for our bodies, which, from this perspective, are all in need of (aesthetic) enhancement through technology.

Indeed, cosmetic surgery, as Liebelt shows in her contribution on reshaping 'Turkish' female breasts and noses in Turkey, is now commonly conceptualized as a form of aesthetic enhancement, especially when it comes to the 'needs' of racialized and gendered bodies for what surgeons commonly term 'ethnic plastic surgery.' In Turkey, aesthetic body modification and surgery have become ever more normalized forms of consumption, and women may engage in surgery in an attempt to enhance and indeed 'normalize' their bodies. Given the common construal of large female breasts and noses as national defects linked to rural backwardness, this rings especially true for breast reduction and nose surgery. Finally, female breasts and noses are scrutinized by a patriarchal society that seeks control over the sexual female body; by altering them, women hope to reduce dominating stares at their bodies. This contribution illustrates that, when ideals of beauty travel transnationally, they are imbued with changing and varied meanings in different locations.

In the following contribution, which is also on the self-fashioning and beauty practices of young Muslim women in part three of this volume, Arzu Ünal shows how, in wearing the pious *Tesettür* style, the young daughters of Turkish immigrants to the Netherlands carefully manage their outer appearance to conform to both Turkish-Muslim gender