

Comm-100w Sec 17

October 29, 2020

Word Count: 1249

### You are Beautiful

When we hear the word “beautiful” we often associate it with women or feminine attributes. Over time, society has feminized the word “beautiful” and makes us feel as if it is wrong or awkward to call a man beautiful. Many songs, articles, books, magazines, commercials, and the overall media have always differentiated women as beautiful and men as handsome. In the article, “What Makes a Woman Beautiful?”, Amber Parker discusses the qualities and characteristics that make a woman beautiful. Parker states that Mother Teresa was the perfect example of a beautiful woman because she gave so much to the world and gave only what a woman could give as a mother. She goes on to define beauty as “the way a woman treats other people, the way she exhibits joy, and her confidence in the parts of her that make her unique.” (Parker 2019). Parker’s article suggests that she equates the word “beautiful” with women (interpretive claim). However, men can possess all of these beautiful qualities and perform these beautiful actions as well. It is irrational to limit beauty to a gender because beauty is universal. Society teaches us that “beautiful” is an expression that only a woman can possess; however, there should be no constraints to what gender can be considered beautiful because both men and women can exhibit beautiful qualities.

Beauty can range from physical appearance to one’s personality and actions. According to the *Urban Dictionary*, beautiful is defined as “YOU”, with the example of “You are beautiful” (Courtneymaeislove, 2010). This definition is perfect because no matter who is reading it - male, female, or non-binary - anyone can possess beautiful qualities. Every individual is beautiful in

their own unique way, internally, externally, or both. For example, internal beauty is someone doing charity work because they care about the less fortunate. An example of external beauty would be the way someone does their hair, puts on makeup, and the overall way they present themselves. Men are just as capable as women to be portrayed as beautiful through their physical appearances and internal qualities. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines beauty as, “Highly pleasing to the sight; embodying an ideal of physical perfection; possessing exceptional harmony of form or colour” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2020). This definition is based on physical attractiveness, which is common and can apply to all men, women, places, and objects. For example, you could overlook a city and say it’s beautiful, or say the same about a flower in a garden, or look at a man and say he’s beautiful as you would with a woman. We have to be open-minded when it comes to beauty because what someone else thinks is beautiful may not be beautiful to you. However, everyone holds beautiful qualities, including men, but you may just not see it.

Certain words are being associated with certain sexes in society (passive voice). In the article, “Beauty: A Feminine Word”, by Sophie Cochrane, she discusses how associating the word “beautiful” to females has become a social norm in our current society; however, she goes on to say that times have changed and the use of the word “beautiful” should too (Cochrane, 2015). Cochrane talks about how there are many beauty products available to men, but they are never advertised as beauty products due to social norms. If we can make beauty products for men, then we should be able to call men beautiful. In addition, she states there are many men’s magazines, but men are rarely referred to as beautiful in them. In February of 2020, the Men’s Health magazine published the article, “Robert Pattinson Is the Most Beautiful Man in the World, According to This Complex Calculation”, where author Annie Hayes discusses how the

Golden Ratio of Beauty Phi came to a conclusion that Robert Pattison is the most beautiful man in the world due to his facial proportions (Hayes, 2020). As stated previously, everyone interprets beauty differently and this article defined beauty as having a proportional appearance. The use of the word “beautiful” in the title of this article is uncommon, instead you would see a word such as handsome used when talking about a male. Using the word “beautiful” or synonyms such as gorgeous, pretty, elegant, etc., is much more eye-catching and powerful than handsome because we rarely ever see it used when talking about males.

The meaning of the word “beautiful” is up to your own interpretation, but who and what it can be applied to should have no limits. Some may say the word “beautiful” can have a much more powerful meaning than handsome. In the article, “For The Men Who Feel The Pressure To Be Beautiful, Too” by Kathlyn Ursula D'Souza, the author talks about how men are not accustomed to being called beautiful and prefer other words such as handsome, macho, strong, or cool. However, she says it's more of a privilege to be called beautiful (D'Souza, 2014). We have to realize for centuries now, women have always been praised for their smooth curves and soft contours. However, today men are beautiful in their own ways as well through their hard physique and sharp lines. In today's society, calling a man beautiful has a negative connotation because men are taught to protect their masculinity. This is prevalent in today's society because times are changing and people are becoming more open to the fact that gender, race, and sexual orientation are just classifications dividing us into different groups. We have to ponder the fact that there is a new social norm where people are becoming more united and words such as “beautiful” and “handsome” are becoming more universal. Considering that we are all the same, we should not have to limit beauty and decide what usage is right or wrong depending on gender. We have to acknowledge that differentiating between man and woman is something in

the past. This is important to address because there are many generations to come that will continue to feel the way we do about calling men beautiful if we do not begin to take social action.

It is important to educate ourselves on what it means to be beautiful. If we are educated on what true beauty is, we would understand that beauty is not a feminine word, but rather society and the media have feminized it. Additionally, educating ourselves on the meaning of beauty will produce open-minded people, promoting change within our society (value claim). For example, we can start to make it normal to call our male friends beautiful and show them that it's a powerful complement, rather than an insult. Also, men can learn to embrace beauty instead of turning it down. Over several decades of misusing the word "beautiful", every individual of society has to educate themselves on it's true meaning and practice it's correct usage in order to be the solution to our misunderstanding.

Over time, it has become a social norm to associate women with the word "beautiful"; however, we should not limit ourselves to it's usage because both men and women can possess beautiful qualities. Through social changes, people have become more open and have normalized the use of the word "beautiful" towards men. However, many people and the media still try to change our perceptions of the word by continuing to solely associate beauty with women and female attributes. In order to resolve this misrepresentation, we as members society need to realize the true meaning of beauty and that all people possess it, including you.

## Works Cited

- “Beautiful,” Oxford English Dictionary, 2020, *San Jose State University Library*,  
[www-oed-com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/view/Entry/16680?redirectedFrom=beautiful](http://www-oed-com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/view/Entry/16680?redirectedFrom=beautiful).
- Cochrane, Sophie J. “Beauty: A Feminine Word.” *Sophiejcochrane*, 20 Mar. 2015,  
[sophiejcochrane.wordpress.com/](http://sophiejcochrane.wordpress.com/).
- Courtneymaeislove. “Beautiful.” *Urban Dictionary*, 23 Oct. 2010,  
[www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Beautiful](http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Beautiful).
- D'Souza, Kathlyn Ursula. “For The Men Who Feel The Pressure To Be Beautiful, Too.” *Thought Catalog*, 24 July 2014,  
[thoughtcatalog.com/kathlyn-ursula-dsouza/2014/07/for-the-men-who-feel-the-pressure-to-be-beautiful-too/](http://thoughtcatalog.com/kathlyn-ursula-dsouza/2014/07/for-the-men-who-feel-the-pressure-to-be-beautiful-too/).
- Hayes, Annie. “Robert Pattinson Is the Most Beautiful Man in the World, According to This Complex Equation.” *Men's Health*, Men's Health, 6 Feb. 2020,  
[www.menshealth.com/uk/style/a30777450/robert-pattinson-beautiful/](http://www.menshealth.com/uk/style/a30777450/robert-pattinson-beautiful/).
- Parker, Amber. “What Makes A Woman Beautiful?” · *Evie Magazine*, Evie Magazine, 12 Sept. 2020, [www.eviemagazine.com/post/what-makes-a-woman-beautiful/](http://www.eviemagazine.com/post/what-makes-a-woman-beautiful/).