Disfigurement, the Body and Dress: A Review of the Literature

Abstract

This article reviews literature on disfigurement, the body and dress in order to better understand the relationship between dress - including mainstream clothing ('fashion'), clinical clothing (such as pressure garments, prescribed glasses and prescribed footwear), and accessories - and its social and symbolic status for individuals living with a visible difference. We assess the state of the field through an interdisciplinary lens, collating literature from disciplines including but not limited to Geography, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, and Health. We review literature pertaining to living with a disfigurement and managing stigma, with an emphasis on dress and the disfigured body. In bringing this scholarship together we speak to the geographies of the body (see Longhurst, 1995; Hubbard, 2002) and literature on the body and dress (Hansen, 2007; Harvey, 2007), considering the dressed body as both subject in, and object of, dress practice (see Hansen, 2004). We suggest that a new substantive focus on disfigurement could help to broaden and invigorate existing fields of inquiry at the intersection of social, health and cultural geographies. In concluding, we highlight thematic directions for future study, including exploring the spaces and places in which decisions relating to disfigurement and dress are made, and the complex processes of negotiating marginalisation by those with a disfigurement.

Introduction

This article reviews literature on disfigurement, the body and dress in order to better understand the relationship between dress - including mainstream clothing ('fashion'), clinical clothing (such as pressure garments, prescribed glasses and prescribed footwear), and accessories – and it's social and symbolic status for individuals living with a visible difference. The fashion industry's rigid

standards of bodily norms (for instance thinness and no deviances) make this an interesting area for exploration (Peters, 2014; Radvan, 2013).

There has been a relatively recent engagement with bodies by geographers, including around gendered (Longurst, 2012), racialised (Tolia-Kelly, 2010), classed (Skeggs, 2005) and 'disabled' bodies (Hansen and Philo, 2007), and also care of the body (Atkinson, Lawson & Wiles, 2011). Much of this research stems from the corporeal turn in social sciences more generally in the 1900s (see Witz, 2000). However, disfigured bodies have not been the focus of geographers' attention. In particular, we consider the topic of disfigurement to interest a wide range of geography scholars; including children's geographers, corporeal geographers and health geographers.

'Disfigurements' result from congenital anomalies, illnesses, injuries or surgical interventions. Examples of disfigurements include burns, scars, birthmarks, spinal curvatures, and amputations. Amongst those who research in the area of disfigurements, much debate has taken place concerning the most appropriate language to describe a visible difference (Rumsey and Harcourt, 2004). Many associated terms carry negative connotations (abnormality, deformity, defect), which is both unhelpful and potentially harmful. In this article, the terms 'visible difference' and 'disfigurement' are used where appropriate, as they have been recognised by academics and charities alike (Rumsey and Harcourt, 2004; Changing Faces, 2016) as being more sensitive than other terms. Changing Faces (2016), a charity which helps people with a disfigurement to live the way they want to live, uses the term 'disfigurement' to describe when someone looks: different or unusual; has scarring; looks asymmetrical; or a part of them does not work in the way it did/should. The term 'disfigurement' is also used in the UK's Equality Act 2010[1] to protect people from discrimination.

It is important also to note that other terms with overlapping meanings appear in the works reviewed herein: clothing, costume, dress, garment, apparel, and fashion. Our decision to use 'dress' in the title of this article is strategic, to be inclusive to accessories and adornments, as well as items of clothing. We thereby follow Eicher and Roach-Higgins (1992, p. 15), who view dress as an "assemblage of body modifications and/or supplements displayed by a person in communicating with other human beings". This includes "the body, all direct modifications of the body itself, and all three-dimensional supplements added to it" (Eicher and Roach-Higgins, 1992, p. 13), and thus is not limited to clothing. That said, throughout this article we continue to use the terms fashion, clothing and dress as they are used by other scholars in the work reviewed, but in the inclusive sense of dress defined above (see also Hansen, 2004). Though appreciating that fashion, as a social phenomenon, is not restricted to the domain of clothing and dress (Aspers and Godart, 2013), it is in this sense that we use it in this article.

We begin by presenting literature on the geographies of fashion and clothing. We then turn to present scholarship of dress and the changing body. When then synthesise discussions surrounding living with a disfigurement with Goffman's (1963; 1975) theory of stigma, then moving on to consider dress and the disfigured body. For the main part of this article, we discuss coping or avoidant strategies presented in the literature for managing stigma. We suggest that a new substantive focus on disfigurement could help to broaden and invigorate existing fields of inquiry at the intersection of social, health and cultural geographies. In the conclusion, we call for Geographers to explore the spaces and places in which decisions related to dress and disfigurements are made, and the complex processes of negotiating marginalisation by those with a disfigurement.

The geographies of fashion and clothing

Many cultural geographers in the 1980s and 90s drew on the Centre of Cultural Studies in Birmingham's work on fashion and youth culture (e.g. McRobbie, 1993; Nayak, 1999). This work was brought together in Resistance through Rituals (Hall and Jefferson, 1993), the starting point of which is that fashion provides youth culture with a form of symbolic resistance, which is valued when young people are less able to challenge their structural subordination. Since then, scholars have acknowledged that fashion is part of human life, transversing genres, geographies, religions, economies, and ways of life (Soares, 2016). The study of fashion by geographers has been broad. For instance, in economic geography, the focus has been on the global production of fashion (Aspers and Godart, 2013), the geographies of retailing (Tokatli, 2007; Tokatli et al. 2008), and consumption (see Crewe, 2001; 2003). There has also been consideration of the social geographies of shopping (Williams et al. 2001), and on dressmaking (Hall and Jayne, 2015). In the more recent geography literature, focus on fashion has predominantly been threefold: religion; gender; and body size. Although there has been a limited but interesting engagement with dress and disability (e.g. Chang, Hodges, and Yurchisin, 2014; Christman and Branson, 1990) and more substantial attention devoted to the wardrobe and wellbeing (e.g. Buse and Twigg, 2014; 2015; 2016; Candy and Goodacre, 2007; Goodacre and Candy, 2011; Clarke *et al*., 2009; Lövgren, 2016; Twigg, 2010; Twigg and Buse, 2013), the relationship between fashion and disfigurement has been neglected in existing literature. However, we can still learn a lot about dress and bodies that are 'different' from the available literature.

A large subsection of research on fashion and religion has explored Islamic headscarves in relation to "new geographies of modernity" (Balasescu 2003, p. 39), and the geographies of veiling in relation to Muslim women in Britain (Dwyer, 2008). Dwyer's (2008) work is interesting in revealing how Muslim girls used hybrid fashions (blending different dress styles, for instance

'English' and 'Asian' clothes) as a way of negotiating hybridised identities. Johnson (2017) discusses the clothing practices of Black Muslim women in Britain and how they 'get comfortable' to feel 'at home'. This research sheds light on the social processes that construct comfort (or discomfort) as individuals move through different spaces. In particular, Johnson's (2017) research is concerned with how racialised bodies use clothing such as the abaya and headscarf across different spaces. The author finds that these clothing practices shift and ipen up the possibility of "wiggling to get 'comfy'" with audiences, where certain performances are not positioned as deviant (Johnson, 2017, p. 285). Discussing religion, secularism, and the body in the production of subjectivity, Gökariksel (2009) approaches veiling as a gendered spatial practice that reveals the intertwined production of bodies and subjectivities. The author argues that veiling has particular significance for cultivating the body according to gendered, religious and social norms and expectations, most importantly for engineering a sense of modesty. In short, religious experience occurs in and through the body. In later work, Gökariksel and Secor (2012) discuss the ethical practice of veiling-fashion in Turkey. The authors find that veiling-fashion is rife with ambivalence; veiling is undertaken in relation to the moral code of Islam but fashion, as consumption, works as part of an ever-shifting economy of taste. This work has signposted the relationship between specific cultural contexts and the importance of daily fashion practices in different spaces and places.

A number of commentators have begun to engage with the symbolic, material, emotional and embodied relationships between fashion and the body. Stanes and Gibson (2017) offer an embodied geography of polyester clothes, drawing on ethnographic 'fashion journeys' with young adults in Sydney, Australia. They follow polyester clothes, geographically and temporally, beyond the spaces of production, to their "everyday use, storage, disinvestment, reuse and recirculation"

(Stanes and Gibson, 2017, p. 27). Bernard (1996) considers the pleasures of feeling clothes on the skin, and Borden (2001) focuses on skateboarders' baggy jeans and hooded tops that allow ease of movement, facilitating a material relationship between their bodies, skateboards and urban infrastructure and the images/identifies they wish to portray. There has also been theorising of emotion as regards sizing and the geographies of women's experiences of clothing consumption (see Colls, 2004), and "bodily bigness" and the experiences of British women shopping for clothes (Colls, 2006, p. 529). Although often side-lined in the fashion literature, Frith and Gleeson (2004) discuss men's presentation of their bodies through clothed displays, and consider the ways in which men's subjective feelings about their bodies influence their clothing practices. They find that men's decisions about revealing or concealing the body are not simple, one-time event choices. Rather, men monitor a range of factors in making such decisions, for instance, depending on whether one is having a "fat day" or a "thin day" (Frith and Gleeson, 2004, p. 44). From this literature, we learn that body image is not a fixed essence, rather it is a matter of negotiation.

Other writing has considered the relationship between fashion production and consumption in specific spaces and places. Considering intergenerational notions of fashion and identity in northern England, Rawlins (2006) finds that mothers play a key role in allowing and restricting certain outfits worn by their daughters in certain spaces outside of the home, with particular distinction being drawn between public and private space. This research appreciates that the practice of adorning the body with clothes "links the biological body to the social being, and public to private" (Wilson, 1985, p. 2). Adopting an assemblages approach, Jayne and Ferenčuhová (2015) discuss comfort, identities and fashion in the post-socialist city. Drawing on empirical research undertaken in Bratislava, Slovakia, the authors unpack a blurring of public and private space, expressed through clothing. They describe the relationship between fashion, identity and

comfort as an everyday 'political' response to state socialism and later the emergence of consumer capitalism.

Following McFarlane (2001), Jayne and Ferenčuhová argue that a focus on fashion and identity through the lens of assemblages, materiality and context enables more complex political, economic, social, cultural and spatial analysis. Specifically, assemblage asks use to consider how critical praxis emerges through the interaction rather than separation of the social and the material. A focus on assemblages of human and non-human actors may be able to "multiply the pathways" along which complicated materialities may be better understood (Latham and McCormack, 2004, p. 703). There is a link to be made here between the value in this approach and a focus on the sensual aspects of clothing in literature noted above, for instance the pleasures of feeling clothing on the skin (Bernard, 1996; Borden, 2001). Taken together, this literature highlights how the way in which the body is clothed varies through space and time and that by choosing a certain outfit one is intentionally sending out a specific message about oneself (see also Breward et al., 2006; Entwistle, 2000). However, as Rawlins (2006) reminds us, the interpretation of these messages is culturally specific and therefore dependent on the readings of others.

As can be seen from the above, while there is diverse writing on the geographies of fashion and clothing, issues of fashion and disfigurement have been neglected. The ways in which dress is used to communicate, reveal and conceal are interesting, particularly in conversation with disfigurement and stigma (Reference removed for anonymity). Interesting insights, however, can be gleaned from an interdisciplinary field, as we unpack below.

Dress and the changing body

Because clothes are so eminently malleable, we shape them to construct our appearance

(Hansen, 2004, p. 373)

There are marked changes in appearance across the adult life span (Tiggemann, 2004). Thus, although there has been relatively scant research attention devoted to dress and disfigurement, there is a lot we can learn from scholarship on ageing and dress (e.g. Holland, 2004; Lövgren, 2016; Macia, Duboz, and Chevé; 2015; Twigg, 2007; Twigg, 2012; Twigg, 2013) and pregnant women and clothing (e.g. Gregson and Beale, 2004; Longhurst, 2005). This research is particularly insightful in revealing how clothing preferences change as the body changes, or is altered (Featherstone, 2000). For instance, Lövgren (2016, p. 372) found that practical and convenient outfits were increasingly important when aging, as were garments that did not "expose the body". For these aging bodies, transitions in their style of dress had been gradual, slowly adapting to changes in everyday life as well as in their bodies. Some women in Lövgren's (2016) study on older women and dress adapted small details of their dress to physical changes. For instance, several of them no longer tucked in their T-shirts but wore them above the waistline to cover their stomachs. Another participant wore "a little bolero or a thin sweater" to cover sagging skin on her arms, other women no longer wore high heels "due to poor balance and aching feet" (Lövgren, 2016, p. 378). Clarke, Griffin, and Maliha (2009, p. 709) discuss the use of clothing to strategically mask or compensate for bodily transgressions such as 'flabby' arms and necks (referred to respectively as 'bat wings' and 'turkey wattles') of older women. Of further interest is that the women in Clarke, Griffin and Maliha's (2009) study spoke of how they consciously chose their clothing styles (for instance avoiding revealing or overly suggestive clothing) to compensate for age-related health issues and/or to present a competent healthy self to others.

In a study of the wardrobe and wellbeing with women with Rheumatoid Arthritis[2] (RA),Candy and Goodacre (2007) noted that some women find existing adaptive clothing solutions unacceptable in catering to their bodies and have developed their own subtle style strategies in order to maintain self-esteem and avoid feeling stigmatised. Of particular importance were shoes, which were perceived not only as functional but also as items imbued with socially defined meanings with the potential to compromise codes of dress if worn inappropriately. Regarding first-time pregnant women, Longhurst (2005) finds that the transition to motherhood can be a complex act, and what women wear during their pregnancy reveals insights into their subjectivities; that is what they reveal, what they conceal, what images they create, for whom and where. For instance, one participant, Carla, purchased a 'belly belt', which delayed her being marked as pregnant, as she was able to wear her 'normal' clothes for longer. This research interestingly reveals how clothing is used by a range of people with changing bodies. However, there is a notable gap in the literature for research which focuses on bodies classified as disfigured, and particularly in relation to children and young people's bodies.

Living with a disfigurement

Whether present at birth or acquired later in life, a disfigurement can have a profound effect on the individual concerned. Difficulties include adverse effects on body image, quality of life, and self-esteem (Rumsey and Harcourt, 2004). People with a disfigurement report being confronted with frequent staring, audible comments about their appearance, unsolicited questions about the cause of their disfigurement, and other avoidant and stigmatising behaviours (Rumsey and Hartcourt, 2004). Springgay (2003, p. 3) argue that this is because, as representations of the "inappropriate other, abnormal bodies challenge and resist normativity". Scholars have also reported profound effects on the family of a child with a disfigurement (Hearst, 2007; Johansson and Ringsberg,

2003), such as anxiety, confusion, grief, and depression, predominantly over concerns for how their child will 'fit in'.

A number of studies have engaged with people living with a visible difference, in relation to the process of acceptance (Morse and Carter, 1996), adjustment (Moss and Carr, 2004) and 'dealing with' being visibly different (Thompson and Kent, 2001). As Goffman (1963) argues in his discussion of stigma, people with 'spoiled identities' may be stared at in public, questioned about their impairment and made conscious that their body does not fit normative ideals. Writing later, Goffman (1975) describes stigma as an attribute that casts deep discredit on the person who possesses it, and identifies three types: abominations of the body (various physical disfigurements), blemishes of individual character (alcoholism, fascism etc.) and tribal stigma (nationality, religion etc.). This article is concerned with the first of these types of stigma.

Stigmatisation can occur at several levels, depending on the degree to which the body is blemished or disfigured, and the character of the person discredited (Goffman, 1963). Goffman (1963) notes that many 'blemished' individuals suffer devaluation because of their reduced participation in the 'normal' world, and their own reflections on a poor body image. Stigmatised individuals tend to hold the same ideas about identity as non-stigmatised individuals; as such, they tend to downplay the 'visibility' of their stigma (Goffman, 1963, p. 4). Chrisler (2010, p. 202) writes on stigma and women's bodies, with a consideration of "leaks, lumps, and lines", and suggests ways of resisting, reframing and coping with stigma. However, there has been research revealing that camouflage can bring its own problems in relation to issues of identity; for instance, 'are people responding to the real me?', over-reliance on the camouflaged image in social interaction, and fears that the "truth" will be discovered (see Coughlan and Clarke, 2002).

One useful unpacking of stigma comes from Scambler and Hopkins (1986), who differentiate between 'enacted' and 'felt' stigma. 'Enacted' stigma refers to instances of discrimination on the grounds of an individual's perceived unacceptability or inferiority, whereas 'felt' stigma refers to the fear of enacted stigma, whilst also encompassing a feeling of shame associated with living with a spoiled identity. Scambler (2004, p. 29) argues that conceptions of stigma fail to adequately attend to social structures and "axes of power". Writing later, Scambler (2009) extends the discussion of stigma to consider health-related stigma specifically. The author argues for a re-framing of notions of relations to stigma, signalling shame, and relation of deviance, signalling blame. This framework, Scambler (2009) argues, is always embedded in social structures of class, command, gender, ethnicity and other variables. Despite critique, Goffman's (1963) representation of the social difficulties faced by persons with stigmatic qualities is still considered highly valid (Carnevale, 2007) and is used as a theoretical framework in much research into living with difference (see Jacoby, 2002; Susman, 1994). Importantly, although some geographers have begun to work with Goffman in various ways (e.g. Laurier and Philo, 2006 on gestures and Slater and Anderson, 2012 on territorial stigma) no geographers have engaged with discussions of stigma around the topic of disfigured bodies. We now turn to uncover some of the coping strategies presented in the literature related to the body and dress.

Managing stigma: Dress and the disfigured body

> Self-fashioning, after all, is always about performance and persuasion, compromise and artifice. It necessarily involves a kind of 'wizardry' (Biernoff, 2011, p. 680-681).

The prominence of the body in popular culture has prompted intense academic interest (Reisher and Koo, 2004). From an anthropological perspective, Reisher and Koo (2004) argue that adornment is a central and essential feature of our humanity, whilst writing with a philosophical

purview, Hanson (1990) argues that attention to dress is inseparable from attention to the body. This is because fashion calls attention to the physicality of the body, as well as the culturally evolving discourse around it (Venkatesh et al., 2010). Importantly, too, dress can be used to divert attention away from the body (Frith and Gleeson, 2004). Researchers have discussed the embodied nature of clothing (Adam and Galinsky, 2012; Entwistle, 2000; Hansen, 2004), suggesting that wearing clothes causes people to "embody" the clothing and its symbolic meaning. Recent debates suggest that clothing practices can convey "socially sanctioned" body management techniques (Johnson, 2017, p. 280). This suggests how the body affects, and is affected through, the social processes that construct one's surroundings (Johnson, 2017). Put differently, typically, when we dress we do so to make our bodies acceptable to a social situation (Entwistle, 2000). Making decisions about how to dress draws on personal creativity, but also on social constraint (Candy and Goodacre, 2007). Moreover, clothing's semiotic and sensual material propensities embody conventions about propriety, gender, ways of moving, and encode social relationships, status, biographies and identities (Candy and Goodacre, 2007). Clothes, then, are central to the performance, or "curation", of our identities (Buse and Twigg, 2015, p. 1). Further, clothing has been identified as a sensual mediator between personal and social worlds, with the potential to provide insights into wearers' feelings; how they express identity, comprehend social mores and prepare for social interaction (Candy and Goodacre, 2007).

Dress issues related to stigma and social participation form another theoretical intersection (Dimka, Kabel, and McBee-Black, 2017). This line of research accepts that selves can be enhanced, modified or constructed anew with the help of clothing, which supports the outward, social appearance of the person (Paju, 2017). Research (e.g. Ittyerah and Kumar, 2007) shows that improving a physical trait - perhaps through surgery, makeup or enhancement technologies (see

Hogle, 2005) - positively affects attitude, personality, interpersonal interactions and self-esteem. For those people with a disfigurement, dress can be seen as a coping strategy; what Goffman (1963, p. 92) terms "passing". Passing calls for an erasure of one's true self in the presence of others, and so is perceived as a performance (Kaur, 2017). This "passing" enables individuals to protect themselves and their senses of self from detection by 'normal' others and to avoid the full weight of stigma (Goffman, 1963). Where dress features within this coping strategy is a significant area for future research, particularly considering the polarity between clinical clothing (e.g. pressure garments, prescribed glasses, prescribed footwear) and mainstream clothing (Goodacre and Candy, 2011), for instance in terms of design, shape, fabric/material, cut and pattern. In this regard, dress can be considered as a way to disguise physical defects, in which dressing becomes an "act of deception" (Woodward, 2007, p. 125). However, as Harvey (2007) reminds us, although clothes conceal, they may also emphasise what they conceal. For instance, dark glasses worn by those with sight difficulties can draw attention to the visual impairment, while at the same time concealing the difference (Biernoff, 2011). Vainshtein (2012, p. 146) defends this, stating that once a medical device becomes an accessory, "fashion imposes its own visual regime", maintaining that accessories *should* attract attention. This can perhaps be seen through fashionable oversized glasses and sunglasses, and non-prescription contact lenses.

Other research exploring coping and avoidant strategies by those with physical disfigurements includes a study of the experiences of stigma over the lifetime of people with xeroderma pigmentosum (Anderson, Walburn and Morgan, 2017). The authors find that some participants use clothing, makeup or specialist camouflage to cover skin damage. Some of these participants state that concealing their difference was a necessity. Researching into living with vitiligo, a disease that causes progressive and permanent depigmentation of the skin, Thompson, Kent and Smith

(2002) find that many people with vitiligo use concealment of the skin, either by wearing specific types of clothing to cover their skin, or by applying cosmetic creams to camouflage their patches. One particular in this study, Joanne, tells how she cannot wear shorts, because if she does people will look and stare at her. Participants with visible scarring after severe burns talk about how they hide their scars under clothing and use closed posture to avoid people seeing their scars (see Martin, Byrnes and McCarry, Rea and Wood, 2017).

In a study concerned with a range of different 'differences', Klepp and Rysst (2017) write on deviant bodies and suitable clothes. For Klepp and Rysst (2017, p. 79), suitable clothes are "clothes that make the body socially accepted". The authors conducted interviews with Norwegian men and women with bodies considered to deviate from the present Western bodily ideals of thinness, fitness and those with no deviances. This focus is interesting when considering Klepp and Rysst's (2017) argument that people with an appearance that deviates from the existing bodily ideals have bodies that are difficult to dress. Participants in Klepp and Rysst's (2017) study had disfigurements, including: a harelip, a deformed leg, a prosthetic leg, and one participant, named Storm, who has burns. We learn that Storm does not use clothing to hide his scars on his arms, legs and neck. This may be read as a strategy to ignore his scars and view himself as "normal" (Klepp and Rystt, 2017, p. 88).

Other research has focussed on compensatory clothing practices by those with a disfigurement. Researching into coping with the physical disfigurement of mastectomy amongst breast cancer survivors, Clark (2017) found that women had reconstructive surgeries and/or wore prosthetic inserts in their bras, in a bid to disguise their difference. While having surgery/wearing prostheses might have helped the women feel less publicly visible or more 'normal', Clark (2017) finds that the women still struggled with their disfigurement resulting from their surgery. In order to

overcome this, many women in Clark's (2017, p. 38) study practiced "compensatory femininity", devoting special attention to their physical appearance, typically dressing up more for support group meetings and displaying carefully applied makeup and neatly styled hair (or wigs and scarves). Doing so helped the women cope with the insecurity and embarrassment they felt about their appearance, and therefore can be considered an act of passing (Goffman, 1963). Saradjian, Thompson and Datta (2008) discuss positive coping and minimising 'feeling different' in relation to the experience of men using an upper limb prosthesis following amputation. The authors find that participants in their study were highly invested in portraying a 'normal' appearance that served to maintain a 'normal' identity and off-set a self-image as disfigured and disabled. Findings revealed that prostheses played an integral role in this process through facilitating participants' form, function and body image.

Concluding remarks

This paper has reviewed the literature pertaining to the geographies of fashion and clothing, living with a disfigurement, and dress and the changing body. It has united literature from disciplines ranging from Geography to Health. In bringing this scholarship together, we have spoken to the geographies of the body (see Longhurst, 1995; Hubbard, 2002) and literature on the body and dress (Hansen, 2007; Harvey, 2007). What is evidently missing from this cogent literature is a focus on disfigurement and dress.

Though geographers have begun to engage with and produce a varied literature on bodies, stemming from the corporeal turn in the 1990s (see Witz, 2000), with this paper we argue that a new substantive focus on disfigurement could help to broaden and invigorate existing fields of inquiry at the intersection of social, health and cultural geographies. Work by geographers reviewed in this paper might add usefully to the studies of disfigurement reviewed. For instance,

current concerns with materiality and assemblage in geography (e.g. Jayne and Ferenčuhová, 2005) might supplement the work on textures and senses (Bernard, 1996; Borden, 2001). Further, a focus on disfigurement could add to existing geographical research in related areas; for instance disabilities studies, health and medical geography.

Work by geographers on a variety of settings including therapeutic landscapes, the clinic, schools, and on bodily performance in the workplace or the home, might add to how we make sense of the relationships between disfigurement and dress. This could include exploring the spaces and places in which decisions related to disfigurements and dress are made, uncovering the public/private binary. An important focus here might also explore the ways in which disfigured bodies are spatially contingent, and the ways in which dress is used as disfigured bodies shift in, and across, space and time. Future research could also address how everyday inequalities are experienced by people with a disfigurement. Such work may seek to explore the processes of exclusion and motivations for marginalisation, and the pressure to stigmatise particular groups in different places and times (see Horton's 2008 call in relation to body size). Research here could study the complex processes of negotiating marginalisation by those with a disfigurement. Such a perspective would allow a better understanding of social processes at play in the defining of identities, and in the development and practice of representations (Aspers and Godart, 2013).

It is also important for health care professionals (including nurses, doctors, surgeons and occupational therapists), clothing designers and manufacturers, researchers and policymakers, to be aware of the varied ways that dress-related issues can affect people living with a disfigurement (see Dimka et al., 2017). We therefore encourage interdisciplinary debates on this topic – both in academia and in practice, drawing on fields including, but by no means limited to: Psychology; Sociology; Anthropology; Fashion and Geography. Importantly, researchers should recognise the

pivotal role that clothing can play in revealing and concealing bodily imperfections, and thereby negotiating the associated stigma of a 'blemished' identity.

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