

Better dancers get more desirable mates

December 22 2005

Dance is recognized as a courting signal in many animal species, including humans, and now Rutgers scientists have linked dancing ability to mate quality. The study, for the first time, links dancing ability to established measures of mate quality in humans.

Rutgers anthropologists collaborating with University of Washington computer scientists created computer-animated figures that duplicated the movements of 183 Jamaican teenagers dancing to popular music. The researchers then asked the dancers' peers to evaluate the dancing ability of the animated figures.

"At least since Darwin, scientists have suspected that dance so often plays a role in courtship because dance quality tracks with mate quality," said Lee Cronk, associate professor of anthropology. "But this has been hard to study because of the difficulty of isolating dance movements from variables, such as attractiveness, clothing and body features.

"By using motion-capture technology ... we can confidently peg dancing ability to desirability," he said.

Cronk and postdoctoral research fellow William Brown also found symmetric males received better dance scores than symmetric females and female evaluators rated symmetric men higher than did male evaluators.

The study appears in the British journal Nature.

Copyright 2005 by United Press International

Citation: Better dancers get more desirable mates (2005, December 22) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-12-dancers-desirable.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.