

# Study finds women can predict a man's attitude toward casual sexual relationships based on his face

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Credit: *Evolution and Human Behavior* (2021). DOI: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2021.02.001

A pair of researchers at Macquarie University has found that women are

able to accurately gauge a man's interest in casual sexual relationships by noting the shape of his face. In their paper published in the journal *Evolution and Human Behavior*, Joseph Antar and Ian Stephen describe their study, which involved volunteer questionnaires.

The global pandemic has had a tremendous impact on people around the world. This study focuses on the impact the pandemic has had on sociosexuality, which is the degree of openness people have to casual sex. Some research has suggested that women have become far less open to such relationships, while men have remained largely unchanged. The conversation eventually led to whether men and women can tell by looking at someone if they are more or less open to casual sex. Intrigued by the idea, the researchers set up and carried out a study involving volunteers as a way to find out.

The researchers administered a sociosexuality [questionnaire](#) to 103 young people. The questionnaire was designed to measure how open a person is to having a casual sexual relationship (during non-pandemic times). Volunteers were also photographed; the researchers then asked 65 different volunteers to look at the pictures and to make guesses regarding the subject's willingness to engage in a casual sexual relationship.

They found that the [women](#) were able to accurately match the sociosexuality of the males in the pictures to their scores on the questionnaires they had taken. They were able to tell if a man was looking for casual sex rather than a long-term relationship, just by looking at his face. For the men, it was a different story. While most of them thought they would be able to tell, they actually did no better than if had they chosen randomly.

The researchers found patterns in the pictures of the men—those who were more open to a casual sexual [relationship](#) had wider spaces between

their eyes and broader faces in general, along with wider noses, stronger jawlines and thinner lips—traits, the researchers note, that have been attributed to males with higher levels of testosterone.

**More information:** Joseph C. Antar et al, Facial shape provides a valid cue to sociosexuality in men but not women, *Evolution and Human Behavior* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2021.02.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2021.02.001)

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