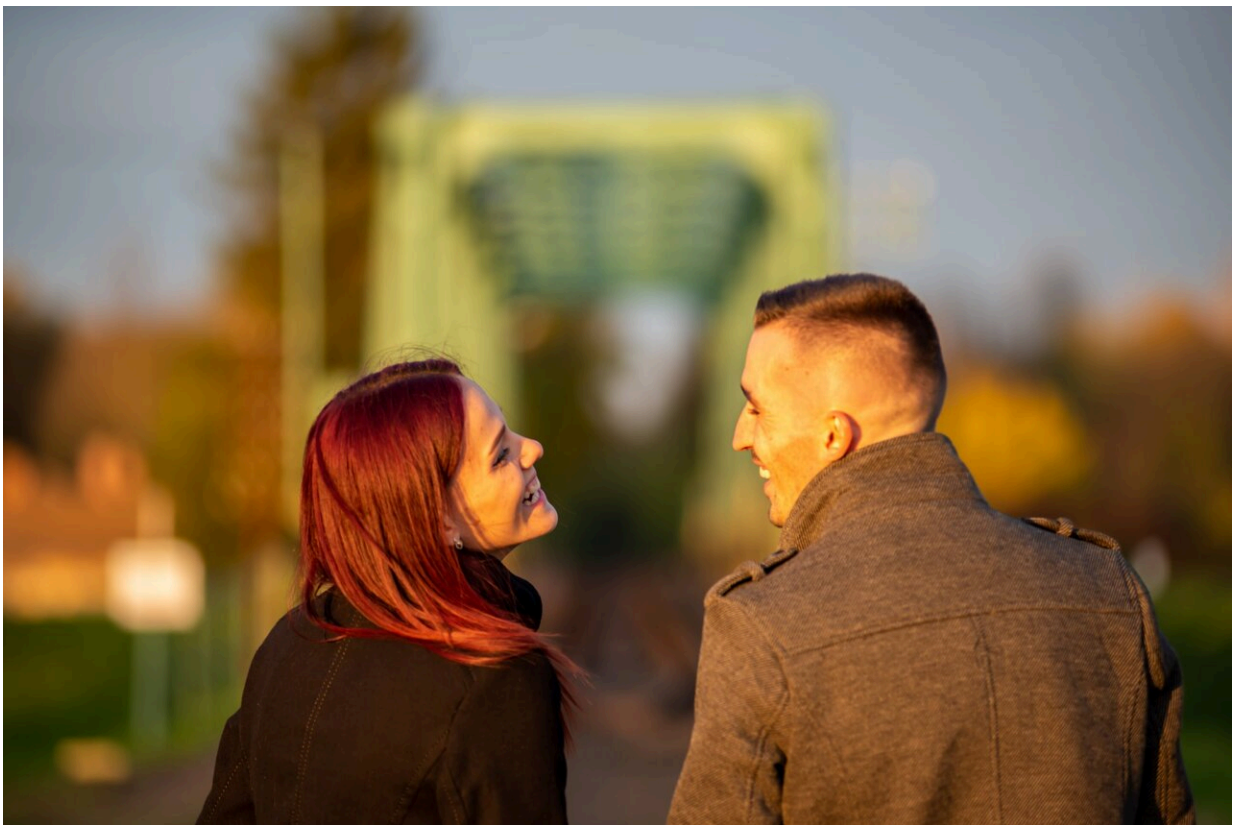


Speed dating experiment suggests people are attracted to potential partners who look like them

July 5 2023, by Bob Yirka



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A team of human behavioralists at the University of Queensland, in Australia, working with a colleague from the University of Stirling, in

the U.K., has found via experimentation that people tend to be more attracted to potential partners that look like them. In their study, reported in the journal *Evolution and Human Behavior*, the group designed and conducted an experiment involving speed-dating volunteers.

An old adage suggests that "opposites attract," but it might be referring more to [personality](#) than looks, as the Australian team found evidence suggesting that people prefer to match with someone whose face resembles their own.

To learn more about what people are looking for in a potential mate, the researchers enlisted the assistance of 682 adult, male and female heterosexual volunteers to assist in an experiment. The experiment ran much like a real speed-dating event—volunteers were paired up by gender for three minutes, during which they interacted as they would under a normal speed-dating encounter.

The difference here was that following each interaction, both participants filled out a short form regarding their attraction to the person they had just spent a few minutes getting to know. In all, 1,188 interactions between people of the same [ethnicity](#) were recorded along with 1,097 interactions between people of different ethnicities. The research team also took photos of each volunteer to assess how much alike they looked.

The researchers found that face similarity between couples played a role in how attractive they found each other—the more alike they looked, the more attractive they found the other person. The volunteers tended to find those of the same ethnicity more attractive than people of other ethnicities. And the researchers found that the volunteers tended to rate the other person as more understanding and more trustworthy the more they looked like them. The researchers also found that women tended to rate men as more attractive based on how masculine they looked and

women as less attractive the more masculine they looked.

More information: Amy A.Z. Zhao et al, Objectively measured facial traits predict in-person evaluations of facial attractiveness and prosociality in speed-dating partners, *Evolution and Human Behavior* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2023.05.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2023.05.001)

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