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The Effects of Personality, Conformity, and Online Dating Platforms on the Perceptions of Sexual Attraction Amongst Young Adults

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Introduction

- Young adults are exposed to a different dating environment than 25 years ago
- Previous typical male/female preferred traits
- Now a shift in societal attitudes
- Increase in online dating
- Why 1995?
 - Generational transition
 - Advancements in computer technology

Thesis

Amongst young adults today, the factors that determine perceptions of sexual attraction differ significantly from just 25 years ago, largely due to a shift in personality preferences away from evolutionary characteristics, a decrease in conformity, and the rise of online dating platforms

Methodology of Research

Literature Compilation Summary

First Keyword	Second Keyword(s)			
Sexual attraction	Conformity	Compromise	Evolutionary traits	Personality traits
Evolutionary	Attraction Characteristics	Pheromone	Decrease	
Personality	Increase	Factors		
Online dating	Factors of attraction	Increase	Platforms	

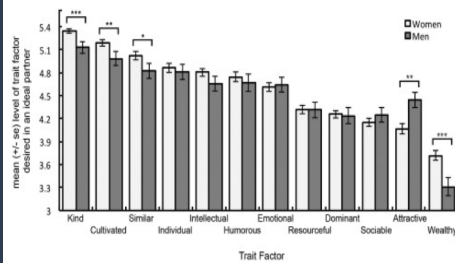
Before and After 1995: Evolutionary Traits

Before 1995... Curran and Johnson, 1974

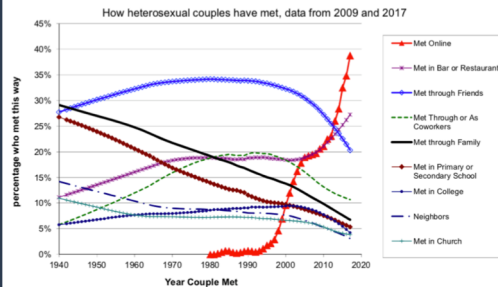
Factors	Correlation between male attraction and female sten level	Correlation between female attraction and male sten level
Sweetheart	.31***	.17*
Dominance	-.34***	.25**
Farmia	-.19*	.33***
Autia	.01	.23**
Shrewdness	.16	-.19*
Guilt proneness	-.02	-.23**

* → p < 0.05 ** → p < 0.01 *** → p < 0.001

After 1995... Williams and Sulikowski, 2020



Rise of Online Platforms



Rosenfield, 2019

Before and After 1995: Conformity

Before 1995... Richard Udry, 1965

Trait Attributed	Male Unengaged	Female Unengaged
A Outgoing	2.07*	1.98 ^a
B Intelligent	1.37	1.41
C Mature	2.08*	1.65 ^a
E Dominant	1.99 ^a	2.24*
F Enthusiastic	2.39*	1.79 ^a
G Conscientious	2.27*	1.66 ^a
H Adventurous	2.50*	1.93 ^a
I Sensitive	1.71 ^a	2.02*

* → p < 0.05 a → p < 0.1

After 1995... Williams and Sulikowski, 2020

Sex	Men			Women		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Mate value						
Kind & understanding	0.22	0.50 ^a	0.23	0.88 ^b	0.65 ^b	0.74 ^b
Sociable	-0.04	0.13	0.45 ^a	0.32 ^a	0.18	0.39 ^a
Wealthy	-0.11	-0.74	-0.25	0.25 ^a	0.02	0.29 ^a
Intellectual	0.01	-0.18	-0.16	0.28	0.25 ^a	0.43 ^b
Physically attractive	0.17	-0.27	0.03	-0.18	0.16	-0.02
Humorous	0.25	0.30	0.58 ^b	0.54 ^b	0.08	0.29 ^a
Cultivated	0.29	0.16	-0.04	0.56 ^b	0.38 ^b	0.38 ^b
Similar	0.57 ^b	0.56 ^b	0.70 ^b	0.99 ^b	0.63 ^b	0.61 ^b
Dominant	-0.15	0.21	0.13	0.00	-0.21	0.12
Emotional	0.03	0.40	0.20	0.41 ^a	0.70 ^b	0.70 ^b
Resourceful	-0.14	0.09	0.29	0.20	0.01	-0.03
Individual	-0.08	0.13	-0.06	0.29 ^a	0.21	0.15

Covariate	Men's whole-profile attractiveness	Women's whole-profile attractiveness
Photo attr.	.72 (.11) ***	.87 (.10) ***
Free-text attr.	.23 (.13) †	.22 (.10) *
Fixed-choice attr.	.09 (.11)	-.05 (.10)
Adjusted R ²	.82	.77

*** p < .001 ** p < .01 * p < .05 † p < .1

Fiore et al., 2008

Discussion

- Decreased importance of evolutionary characteristics
 - Not necessary for survival
 - Shift away from gender roles
- Decrease in conformity when selecting for sexually attractive character traits
 - More selectivity
- Increase in online dating changes perceptions of what is seen as attractive
 - Favor of physical traits
 - Lingers with in-person dating
- Limitations
 - Online dating for different reasons than in-person dating
- Advice for young adults
 - Don't worry about gender roles
 - Finding people will be harder

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