

How Shallow Are We?

Amber Fetsch & Jake Jalinsky³

This experiment was performed to determine whether people make decisions about others based on their appearance and/of how interesting they are. To perform this study the researchers first recruited participants from the Lindenwood Participant Pool. For the experiment the researchers showed the participants a slide show with pictures of the models, read a question followed by reading the model's response to the question. The model's response was based on her personality, whether it is interesting or uninteresting. After the slide show was shown to the participants they were handed a survey consisting of two rating scales, one for attractiveness and one for interestingness, an ordered rank scale for whom they would most like to get to know, whether the participants knew any of the models and demographic questions such as age, gender, and class rank. The results showed that the interesting/attractive model was picked first more than any other model and the interesting/unattractive model was picked the second most. All four combinations of models how a positive correlation with unattractive/interesting ($r=.515$) model and uninteresting/unattractive ($r=.775$) model showing the strongest relationship.

First impressions are important. In a few seconds, a person can decide if he/she likes you or not only after seeing you for the first time. This split decision is made based largely on physical appearance. In one study, researchers found that men pick mates that are considered higher in physical attractiveness than themselves (Buunk, Dijkstra, Fetchenhauer, & Kenrich, 2002). Other researchers have found that attractive people who committed crimes not related to their attractiveness were given more lenient sentences than their unattractive counterparts; however, they were given a harsh sentence when the crime was related to their attractiveness

³ Correspondence concerning this paper should be addressed to Amber Fetsch ajf646@lionmail.lindenwood.edu, and Jake Jalinsky jj203@lionmail.lindenwood.edu.

(Sigall & Ostrove, 1975). In a sexual harassment study, a mock trial was made and the participants (the jury) were more favorable to the male defendants when they were attractive, finding most of them not guilty (Wuensch & Moore, 2004). One of the researchers asked his university class why they thought the attractive male defendants were found not guilty. Most of the class agreed that attractive people do not need to resort to sexual harassment because they are attractive and can get men or women easily (Wuensch & Moore, 2004).

Sometimes attractiveness can be based on the symmetry of the face. One study by Rubenstein, Kalakinas, and Langois (1999) manipulated some photographs to make them mathematically symmetrical, these faces were considered average. They asked undergraduate students about their preferences and they seemed to find the average faces attractive. They used the same pictures and showed them to infants and found that the infants looked longer at the average face than the other faces (Rubenstein et al, 1999).

Speed dating is prevalent among our culture. This is where you are assigned a number or spot and you have a short three to five minute date with someone. Because of the speed, you are able to meet a lot of people at once. Whether a person is picked for a second date or not can be determined by several things. Some of these things can include: person's attractiveness, whether a person discloses deep personal information or not, an individual's personal experience with dating, or how a date compares to the other dates (Finkel, Eastwick, & Matthews, 2007).

Another researcher held what they called a computer dance, where they paired dates at random (Walster & Abrahams, 1966). They found that the participants considered their desired partner to be more attractive than themselves and that the participants had expected to dance with someone of lower attractiveness than their desired partner. The participants set their goals lower in order to actually have a dance with someone. They also found that the more attractive people

judged their dates more harshly than the unattractive people (Walster & Abrahams, 1966). Dion, Berscheid, and Walster (1972) wanted to find out if people who were considered physically attractive were more socially desirable than people who are considered unattractive. They found in their experiment that people of higher physical attractiveness were more socially desirable to that of the opposite sex. The subjects in their study also believed that if their spouse were attractive then they would be more competent and have happier marriages (Dion et al., 1972).

The current experiment was designed to tell us if people make decisions about others based on their appearance and/or how interesting they seem. Knowledge will be obtained on what may contribute to a persons' decision making, whether it be interestingness of attractiveness, based upon the individual with whom they are coming into contact with. This could be beneficial when being interviewed, giving presentations and otherwise making a first impression. The researchers asked the question: Is a person's attractiveness going to be a preference for participants, despite whether they are interesting or not?

Participants were shown a slide show depicting four models, each with different level of attractiveness and different personalities. The study will help to determine the how much people rely on physical attractiveness as a factor when making decisions about interacting with people regardless of their personality. In order to depict different personalities the researchers read aloud a question to the participants followed by an answer that depicted different types of personalities, being that of interesting or uninteresting. In this study, the definition of attractiveness was based on cleanliness, whether the model is smiling, and whether her clothing fit right. The researchers hypothesized that the attractive models would be picked over the unattractive models regardless of how interesting they are.

Method

Participants

Four confederate models were recruited by the researchers. They were asked to pose as models for the study and were informed of the intent of the study. The models were all women between the ages of 18 and 27. They were not given any compensation for participating. The researchers recruited our participants using the Lindenwood Participant Pool (LPP). The Lindenwood Participant Pool offers extra credit to students enrolled in psychology 101 at Lindenwood University if they participate in an experiment. Our participants were 12 women and 14 men from Lindenwood University. The majority of our participants were ages 19 to 20 and were sophomores.

Materials

The researchers requested rooms through the LPP that had proper equipment in order to show our slides. Each room we used had about 25 desks in it and a projector to project our slides onto a screen. The researchers made a Microsoft Office PowerPoint slideshow using pictures of four confederate models. There were four different slides made that counterbalanced the order of the models presented using a Latin Square Design. The slides had a title slide that said "Who would you get to know" followed by a slide that had the question on it. Next, was a picture of model A, then model B, then model C, then model D. After all of the pictures were shown, the next question was shown on a slide. All of the slides with the questions on them were in title format and had a white background with black text in Calibri font size 40. The model's pictures covered the entire slide. Their hair was worn down and the attractive models were asked to wear make-up while the unattractive models were asked not to.

Their pictures were taken with a Cannon G9 in a hallway with a lot of lighting. They were all sitting up straight. The researchers asked all the models to smile comfortably. After the slideshow was over we left the creator view, which showed the six first slides on the left hand side of the screen so they could refer back to the models, up so the participants could refer back to the pictures. A script was made for the researcher to read a question that was asked to the models and then read each model's answers (see Appendix A. One of the questions asked was "If you won a million dollars tomorrow what would you do with it?" The answerers were as follows attractive/interesting, "I would throw a giant party for all of my friends."; attractive/uninteresting, "I would put it in the bank towards future opportunities."; unattractive/interesting, "I would travel the world, going to see places like Rome, France, and Barcelona."; unattractive/uninteresting, "I would pay off all my student loans and set some aside for when my kids are in college." As the answers were read the corresponding model's picture was shown. We gave each participant for the study two consent forms (see Appendix B), a survey asking questions about the video (see Appendix C), and a feedback letter (see Appendix D), and tips to look attractive found on www.bukisa.com for any participant who may have felt unattractive (see Appendix E).

Procedure

The researchers used a 2 x 2 design with the variables being the models' interestingness and attractiveness. The PowerPoint slides were shown to one to five participants at a time. Amber Fetsch read each question and answer. Each participant was given a survey after watching the PowerPoint. The researchers asked the participants to rate each model from one to four, one being their first choice and four being their last choice. The surveys answers were compared to see which model was preferred over the others. After the participants completed the

survey they were told to turn them in. Each participant was then debriefed and given a feedback letter, and tips for looking attractive.

Results

The researchers hypothesized that the attractive models would be picked over the unattractive models regardless of how interesting they are. The participants were asked to rate each model on their attractiveness and interestingness. The mean ratings for each of the attractive models were close to seven, while the mean ratings for each of the unattractive models were close to five. The mean ratings for each of the interesting models were also close to seven, while the mean ratings for the uninteresting models were, again, close to five. The researchers asked the participants to rate each model from one to four, one being their first choice and four being their last choice. The frequencies were counted and the model that was interesting and attractive, Model A, was picked first. The model that was picked second most was the interesting and unattractive model, Model C. The model that was picked third was Model A again. The model that was picked fourth the most was the uninteresting and unattractive model, Model D. The uninteresting and attractive model, Model B, was close to being picked second most (Model B: 8, Model C: 9).

An independent samples t-test was done to determine if there was a difference in ratings of the models between the men and women. What was found was that the men and women generally rated each model about the same, however, the women rated the models' attractiveness slightly harsher than the men and the men rated the models' interestingness slightly harsher than the women (see Table 1).

A Spearman's r correlation was done for each model for each of their ratings. We expected Models A and D to have a positive relationship between attractiveness and

interestingness and Models B and C to have a negative relationship. Models A and D did have a positive relationship, but so did Models B and C. Models C and D had the strongest relationship of attractiveness and interestingness (see Table 2). We compared their mean rating scores for attractiveness and interestingness.

Discussion

The researchers found that the attractive and interesting models was picked the most, however, the model that was picked second was the unattractive and interesting model. These results could have come from the type of answers the model was giving. For example, the interesting models were given two different personalities. The attractive interesting model had a social personality, often talking about hanging out with her friends or going to parties. Some participants could have seen this negatively if they do not like parties. The unattractive interesting model was given a more adventurous personality. She would talk about backpacking and traveling. The uninteresting and attractive model could have been picked more because our participants liked how adventurous she was. The unattractive interesting model was also the only model that had curly hair. Our participants could have liked curly hair.

The researchers also expected a negative correlation between the attractiveness and interestingness ratings for the attractive and uninteresting model and the unattractive and interesting model, but it was found that they both had a positive correlation. For the attractive and uninteresting model, this could be because people may consider attractive people to be automatically interesting, based on their looks and interestingness. For the unattractive and interesting model this positive correlation could be due to people believing that having an interesting or adventurous personality makes you more attractive.

Some of the other misconceptions could be because the participants did not remember which model said what answer to each of the questions. We had one participant who did not rate the models as we asked and only put their first choice. There was also a participant who rated all of the models attractiveness at seven. Some of the participants may not have taken the survey seriously and just circled numbers. There was also a participant who looked at the researcher who was reading the questions almost during the entire PowerPoint. This would make it hard for the participant to see what each model answered for each question.

The participants could have also put into consideration their own attractiveness. They could have been comparing themselves to the models in order to decide if they were attractive or not. For example, if a person who considers him/herself unattractive, the participants may have thought that all of the models were of higher attractiveness.

All of the models did not have the same color or length of hair. They also did not have the same eye color. The age range was almost ten years apart. These could all be factors that may have persuaded participant's preference.

In the future, the models need to have the same color hair, eyes, and be closer in age. On the surveys there should be a question that asks about the participants view on their own attractiveness. There could also be a question about what the person first notices on a person. The model's answers could also be shown typed under the model, but this could cause the participant to only look at the answer and not the model. It might be better if an actual video is made, where the models are speaking their answers. The basis was to pick out someone you would "get to know" and not a romantic relationship; however, the men may have rated the women this way. Women may also compare themselves to the models when rating them so this may be why the men and women's ratings were different.

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Table 1

Differences between Males and Females Ratings of Each Model's Attractiveness and Interestingness

	Sex of Participants	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Attractive rating of model A	male	14	6.36	1.499	.401
	female	12	7.00	1.206	.348
Attractive rating of model B	male	14	6.93	2.018	.539
	female	12	7.58	.996	.288
Attractive rating of model C	male	14	5.64	1.393	.372
	female	12	4.83	1.946	.562
Attractive rating of model D	male	14	5.07	2.235	.597
	female	12	5.17	1.642	.474
Interesting rating of model A	male	14	6.86	2.033	.543
	female	12	7.75	1.357	.392
Interesting rating of model B	male	14	5.64	2.405	.643
	female	12	5.50	2.714	.783
Interesting rating of model C	male	14	7.43	1.555	.416
	female	12	6.92	2.021	.583
Interesting rating of model D	male	14	5.29	2.054	.549
	female	12	4.67	2.270	.655

Note. Model A: attractive, interesting; Model B: attractive, uninteresting; Model C: unattractive, interesting; Model D: unattractive, uninteresting.

Table 2

			Attractive Rating of Model	Interesting Rating of Model
Spearman's rho	Attractiveness Rating of Model A	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.373
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.061
		N	26	26
	Interestingness Rating of Model A	Correlation Coefficient	.373	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.061	.
		N	26	26
Spearman's rho	Attractiveness Rating of Model B	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.342
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.087
		N	26	26
	Interestingness Rating of Model B	Correlation Coefficient	.342	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.087	.
		N	26	26
Spearman's rho	Attractiveness Rating of Model C	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.515**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.007
		N	26	26
	Interestingness Rating of Model C	Correlation Coefficient	.515**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.
		N	26	26
Spearman's rho	Attractiveness Rating of Model D	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.775**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	26	26
	Interestingness Rating of Model D	Correlation Coefficient	.775**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	26	26

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Model A: attractive, interesting; Model B: attractive, uninteresting; Model C: unattractive, interesting; Model C: unattractive, uninteresting

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

I, _____ (print name), understand that I will be taking part in a research project that requires me to a) watch a short video of four females answering questions and b) complete a short questionnaire asking about my preference of whom I would like to get to know. I understand that I should be able to complete this project within 15 minutes. I am aware that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or prejudice. I should not incur any penalty or prejudice because I cannot complete the study. I understand that the information obtained from my responses will be analyzed only as part of aggregate data and that all identifying information will be absent from the data in order to ensure anonymity. I am also aware that my responses will be kept confidential and that data obtained from this study will only be available for research and educational purposes. I understand that any questions I may have regarding this study shall be answered by the researcher(s) involved to my satisfaction. Finally, I verify that I am at least 18 years of age and am legally able to give consent or that I am under the age of 18 but have on file with the LPP office, a completed parental consent form that allows me to give consent as a minor.

Date: _____

(Signature of participant)

Date: _____

(Signature of researcher obtaining consent)

Student Researchers' Names and Numbers:

Amber Fetsch 314-853-2802
Jake Jalinsky 618-789-0141

Supervisor : Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair
Course Instructor
(636)-949-4371
mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu

Appendix B

Survey **Video # _____**

- 1) Rank the models based on who you would want to get to know

Model A _____

Model B _____

Model C _____

Model D _____

- 2) Why do you prefer the model you filled in for the first position?

- 3) How attractive do you find the models on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being very attractive and 1 being not attractive?

a. Model A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b. Model B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c. Model C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d. Model D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 4) How interesting do you find the models on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being very interesting and 1 being not interesting?

a. Model A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b. Model B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c. Model C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d. Model D	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 5) Do you know any of the models shown?

a. Yes
b. no

6) Are you MALE FEMALE?

7) How old are you?
_____years

8) What year are you at Lindenwood?
 Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Unknown

Appendix C

Script

1. What would you consider to be an enjoyable night?
 - a. Attractive/ interesting
 - i. Getting dressed up and going out on the town.
 - b. Attractive/ uninteresting
 - i. Sitting around my house and maybe reading a book.
 - c. Unattractive/ interesting
 - i. Going out somewhere fun, like the city museum or a interesting restaurant
 - d. Unattractive/ uninteresting
 - i. nothing
2. If you won a million dollars tomorrow what would you do with it?
 - a. Attractive/ interesting
 - i. I would throw a giant party for all of my friends.
 - b. Attractive/ uninteresting
 - i. I would put it in the bank towards future opportunities.
 - c. Unattractive/ interesting
 - i. I would travel the world, going to see places like Rome, France and Barcelona

- d. Unattractive/ uninteresting
 - i. I would pay off all my student loans and set some aside for when my kids are in college.
3. If a close friend had to describe you in one word what would it be?
- a. Attractive/ interesting
 - i. Vibrant
 - b. Attractive/ uninteresting
 - i. Beautiful
 - c. Unattractive/ interesting
 - i. Energetic
 - d. Unattractive/ uninteresting
 - i. Shy
4. What would you consider your most interesting feature to be?
- a. Attractive/ interesting
 - i. My adventurous style
 - b. Attractive/ uninteresting
 - i. My hair
 - c. Unattractive/ interesting
 - i. My artistic nature
 - d. Unattractive/ uninteresting
 - i. How organized I am
5. Which of the seven dwarfs would you consider yourself most like?
- a. Attractive/ interesting
 - i. Happy, I rarely find anything to be sad or upset about
 - b. Attractive/ uninteresting

- i. Dopey, he's just soooooo cute
 - c. Unattractive/ interesting
 - i. Doc, I like to be in charge of things. Whenever my friends and I plan a backpacking trip, I make all of the plans.
 - d. Unattractive/ uninteresting
 - i. Sleepy
- 6. If your boss gave you a surprise day off what would you do?
 - a. Attractive/interesting
 - i. Go out for a picnic in the park, maybe even to the zoo.
 - b. Attractive/ uninteresting
 - i. Go home and start some laundry and clean the house
 - c. Unattractive/ interesting
 - i. Go on a long scenic bike ride.
 - d. Unattractive/ Uninteresting
 - i. Do some homework and watch television.

Appendix D

Feedback Letter

Thank you for participating in our study. The questionnaire was used in order to determine people's beliefs about which girl you would rather get to know.

Please note that we are not interested in your individual results; rather, we are only interested in the results of a large group of consumers, of which you are now a part of. No identifying information about you will be associated with any of the findings.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any portion of this study, please do not hesitate to bring them up now or in the future. Our contact information is found at the bottom of this letter. If you are interested in obtaining a summary of the findings of this study at a later date, please contact us and we will make it available to you at the completion of this project.

Thank you again for your valuable contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Principal Investigators:

Amber Fetsch 314-853-2802

Jake Jalinsky 618-789-0141

Supervisor:

Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair

636-949-4371

(mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu)

Appendix E

10 Useful Tips to Looking Attractive

The **secret** of looking young and attractive has been a sought after issue since centuries. Many experiments have been conducted to find out the ways for slowing down the aging process. Some of the techniques have been implemented for this purpose but the most important thing that we can do to preserve our youth is to implement a healthy lifestyle and eating habits.

We may not be able to go against nature and stop the aging process but we can still look younger if we work hard in slowing down the natural process of aging. Given below are 10 useful tips that you can implement to look much younger than your present age.

Food: Our body can look slim, fit and much younger if we eat nutritious and healthy food everyday. Try to emphasize more on consuming fresh fruits, green leafy vegetables, nuts, Soya beans and supplements. Avoid the consumption of tea, coffee and other beverages which contain caffeine.

Sleep: Taking enough sleep at night for at least seven hours will make your **skin** healthier. Having a good sleep is also important because growth hormone is working during that time. Old cells of the body including the skin cells get renewed during sleep. A sound sleep will make our skin look much more fresh and younger.

Detox: For getting rid of the harmful toxins present in our body it is necessary to start detoxification. This is handled by the body's own natural defense mechanism. The easy ways to detoxify our body is by consuming fruits and vegetables or by observing a fast.

Relaxation: Our face will look much younger if we try to relax as much as possible. Stress and tensions appear on our face. We can look much more healthy and energetic if we try to manage our stress and anxiety effectively.

Exercise: A daily exercise schedule helps to make you feel more happy, confident and healthy. Exercise also builds up the muscles and increases bone density which can make our body look 15-20 years younger. All types of exercises such as walking, swimming and aerobics are helpful for this purpose.

A positive attitude: It is very important to have an optimistic attitude in life as it can save you from much of the stress and worries. A negative mindset tends to bring failure and makes you look older and unattractive. Meditation is one of the ways to invoke positive thoughts.

Social Life: Along with our professional life, it is also necessary to make our social life happy and peaceful. One of the ways to achieve this is by increasing communication with our friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, and others which can bring in peace and happiness.

Medical Check-up: Our body also requires **personal care** and attention just like a vehicle to maintain a good working condition. Doing routine medical checkups during our free time is important to recognize if there is anything wrong going inside our body.

Active Life: It is equally essential to remain active in our day to day life which in turn can have a positive impact on our health and increase our memory even if we are of an elder age.

Performance: Performance pays a lot and it is important to start looking at our performance. Is our body weight ideal for us? If not, try to fix that to the best ideal weight. Also look to the skin, hair, nail and teeth. Those are important as they will show our age. Looking and feeling good and healthy will go a long way in increasing our **performance**.

Read more: http://www.bukisa.com/articles/155045_10-useful-tips-to-looking-young-and-attractive#ixzz0zQwsaHWT