Ovulating Women Primed with Aggression Prefer Less Masculine Men Than Non-Ovulating Women

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Introduction

- Ovulating women prefer more masculine men than non-ovulating women (e.g., Gangestad et al., 2007; Little, Jones, & Burris, 2007; Perrett et al., 1996).
- Ovulating women are more sensitive to sexually coercive threats than non-ovulating women (e.g., Garver-Apgar, Gangestad, & Simpson, 2007).
- Masculinity may signal a likelihood of aggression (Stillman, Maner, & Baumeister, 2010).

HYPOTHESIS:

Women primed with aggression will be less attracted to high masculinity as they approach peak fertility. Women in control condition will be more attracted to high masculinity as they approach peak fertility.

Study 1 Method

PARTICIPANTS

- 111 women from mTurk

- Naturally cycling
  - E.g., not on hormonal birth control

- Heterosexual

- Ages 20-40

MATERIALS & PROCEDURES

- Prime: vignette about woman who was followed to her car (Petralia & Apgar, 2002)
  - Aggression: followed by man at night
  - Control: followed by squirrel during day

- Rated Male Bodies: 10 images of male bodies that varied in masculinity
  - “How physically attractive is this image?”

Fertility: Reported first day of last menses. Counted forward to study date for estimate of conception likelihood (Wilcox et al., 2001)

Study 1 Results

PRIME x FERTILITY x MUSCLE INTERACTION

Interaction between Prime and Fertility on Level-10 Muscle

Study 2 Method

PARTICIPANTS

- 78 female TTU students

- Naturally cycling
  - E.g., not on hormonal birth control
  - Heterosexual
  - Ages 20-40

MATERIALS & PROCEDURES

- Prime: 5 photographs, 3 times (Li et al., 2014)
  - Aggression: man-on-woman violence
  - Control: no depictions of violence

- Selected Male Face: 1 masculinized face and 1 feminized face (Perrett et al., 1998)
  - “Select the face that you find most attractive as a short-term mate”

- Fertility: Reported first day of last menses. Counted forward to study date for estimate of conception likelihood (Wilcox et al., 2001)

Study 2 Results

PRIME x FERTILITY INTERACTION

Interaction between Prime and Fertility on Preference for Masculinized Face

General Discussion

- Women’s fertility-enhanced attraction to masculinity is context sensitive.
  - Aggression Prime: Ovulating women were less attracted to masculinity than non-ovulating women (Studies 1 & 2)
  - Control Prime: Ovulating women were more attracted to masculinity than non-ovulating women (Study 1)

- Environmental cues interact with women’s ovulatory cycle to enhance women’s ability to choose male mates

REFERENCES


References for AFF: 0033-0108

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CONTRIBUTIONS

- All authors contributed to the writing of the paper.
- All authors contributed to the design of the study.
- All authors contributed to the analysis of the data.
- All authors contributed to the interpretation of the results.

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Closing Thoughts

- We hope that our research will contribute to a better understanding of how women’s attraction to masculinity is influenced by their reproductive status.
- We believe that our findings have implications for understanding the evolution of human reproductive strategies and the role of sexuality in human social behavior.

Further Research

- Future research could explore the role of other reproductive hormones, such as androgens, in shaping women’s attraction to masculinity.
- Future research could also investigate the role of cultural and social factors in shaping women’s attraction to masculinity.
- Future research could also explore how women’s attraction to masculinity interacts with other factors, such as social status or personality traits, to influence their reproductive success.

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Future Directions

- Future research could explore the role of individual differences, such as personality traits or social dominance, in shaping women’s attraction to masculinity.
- Future research could also investigate how women’s attraction to masculinity interacts with other factors, such as social status or personality traits, to influence their reproductive success.
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