

Women prefer prestige over dominance in mates

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A new study in the journal *Personal Relationships* reveals that women prefer mates who are recognized by their peers for their skills, abilities, and achievements, while not preferring men who use coercive tactics to subordinate their rivals. Indeed, women found dominance strategies of the latter type to be attractive primarily when men used them in the context of male-male athletic competitions.

Jeffrey K. Snyder, Lee A. Kirkpatrick, and H. Clark Barrett conducted three studies with college women at two U.S. universities. Participants evaluated hypothetical potential mates described in written vignettes. The studies were designed to examine the respective effects of men's dominance and prestige on women's assessments of men.

Women are sensitive to the context in which men display domineering behaviors when they evaluate men as potential mates. For example, the traits and behaviors that women found attractive in athletic competitions were unattractive to women when men displayed the same traits and behaviors in interpersonal contexts. Notably, when considering prospective partners for long-term relationships, women's preferences for dominance decrease, and their preferences for prestige increase.

Source: Wiley

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