

A tilt of the head can lure a mate

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(PhysOrg.com) -- The angle we tilt our head can play a significant role in how attractive we are to the opposite sex, according to latest research.

The findings, published in the latest edition of [Evolutionary Psychology](#), are the result of joint research by a husband-and-wife team at the University of Newcastle and Macquarie University that investigated whether differences in visual perspective can alter the face's appeal and attractiveness.

“Human facial attractiveness from an evolutionary perspective has been extensively studied, and the influence of feminine and masculine facial

features on attractiveness is relatively well known,” said lead researcher, Dr. Darren Burke, who is a senior psychology lecturer at the University of Newcastle Central Coast campus.

“A gap in our knowledge, however, is the evolutionary origin of what is considered masculine and feminine about facial features. Our research investigated if looking at the face from different perspectives as a result of the height differential between men and women influenced perceived masculinity or femininity. The research found the way we angle our [faces](#) affects our attractiveness to the opposite sex.”

Men, typically taller than women, view a woman’s face from above; and women view men’s faces from below. Through a series of simulations, the research tested whether the angle of view was an important determinant of masculinity/femininity and attractiveness.

The research found that female faces are judged to be more feminine and more [attractive](#) when tilted forwards (simulating viewing from above), and less feminine when tilted backwards (simulating viewing from below). Conversely, male faces are judged more masculine when tilted backwards and less masculine when tilted forwards.

“From a scientific perspective, these findings contribute enormously to our understanding of the role of facial attractiveness in evolution,” said Dr. Danielle Sulikowski, who is jointly affiliated with both Macquarie University and the University of Newcastle.

“While the research provides important information about our evolution, the findings also offer some clues to help unravel the mysteries of mateship rituals in the 21st century. The next step is to determine if people use this effect in real-world mate-attraction scenarios.”

The research used computer-generated, three-dimensional models of

male and female faces. Participants rated attractiveness and masculinity and femininity of the faces in five positions: ranging from tilted up to tilted down.

More information: *Evolutionary Psychology* is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes writings across a range of the biological and human sciences. A link to the article is available at www.epjournal.net/filestore/EP08573585.pdf

Provided by Macquarie University

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