

Trustworthy mating advice deepens bond between straight women and gay men

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Why do straight women and gay men form close relationships with one another? A new psychology study from The University of Texas at Austin suggests the glue that cements these unique relationships is honest, unbiased relationship advice.

The study, published online in the February issue of [Evolutionary Psychology](#), is the first to provide empirical evidence that the emotional closeness shared by straight women and gay men is rooted in the absence of deceptive mating motivations.

"Friendships between straight women and gay men are free of hidden mating agendas," says Eric Russell, lead author of the study and visiting psychology researcher at The University of Texas at Austin. "They may be able to develop a deeper level of honesty because their relationship isn't complicated by sexual attraction or mating competition."

As part of the study, Russell and his colleagues from Texas Christian University presented 88 [heterosexual women](#), and 58 [homosexual men](#) with the Facebook profile of a person named Jordan.

The profiles were identical, except for Jordan's gender and [sexual orientation](#). During the time of the study, the respondents believed the researchers were examining how online profiles influence friendships.

Participants were told to imagine they were at a party with Jordan, and he/she gave them romance-related advice. They then assessed the degree

to which they would trust this advice.

According to the results, straight women perceived advice offered by a gay man to be more trustworthy than advice offered by a heterosexual man or woman.

Similarly, the gay male participants perceived a straight woman's love advice to be more trustworthy than the same advice offered by a homosexual man or woman.

The researchers theorize that women may have conflicts of interests with other women and straight men. Other women are potential competitors, and straight men may discourage relationships with other men and steer women toward themselves. Gay men, however, don't have these conflicts with straight women, so they may be uniquely positioned to provide mating-relevant advice and support that is not tainted with ulterior motives from sexual rivalry or sexual attraction.

Provided by University of Texas at Austin

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