

# **Why we swipe right on Tinder to 'like' someone, instead of left**

June 18 2015, by Bob Yirka

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(Medical Xpress)—Anyone who has used the dating app Tinder knows that swiping right on a photo of someone means you would consider meeting them in real life to see if there is some real chemistry—but why does swiping right mean yes, while swiping left means no, instead of the other way around. Jim Davies of the Institute of Cognitive Science in Canada has some ideas—he has [posted them](#) on Nautilus.

Davies thinks it is all based on which language people read and write in—the English language, for example, goes left to right—that makes things like scenes at the theater seem more natural when actors move left to right to indicate something good is happening, and right to give a hint when the opposite is about to occur. Davies notes that movie-makers go left to right during [action sequences](#) too, at least when the hero is winning. He points out how Keanu Reeves' character typically moves the action left to right in the *Matrix*.

This does not seem to be an accident, "good" or positive action in movies, at least those made in the west, typically tends to move left to right. But, Davies claims, it appears to be a learned behavior. He points out that studies have been made that show that no such bias exists for children before they learn to read and write. He also notes that in places where the language in use goes right to left (such as Arabic or Hebrew) things tend to go the other way around. Action movies made in Israel, he notes, move left when the hero is winning.

There are exceptions to the rule, Davies notes, though he is not sure why. Most video games have the action moving left to right, but for some

reason Jungle Hunt does not—it moves from right to left. And prospective daters in Israel using the version of Tinder modified for use there click right just like folks here in the USA to indicate an interest. But that does beg the question of whether doing so feels unnatural to players or users of an app and if that makes for a better or worse experience.

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