

Lois Lane would identify Clark Kent as Superman by his body language

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Credit: University of Aberdeen

Researchers from the University of Aberdeen have found evidence that

suggests that superheroes would be identifiable as their alter-ego personalities due to their unique body movements.

The study published in the journal *Visual Cognition*, investigated how we are able to identify our peers, and found that when facial information is not available we can use [body motion](#) instead.

The study was the first of its kind to use life-like avatars to get to the bottom of how we are so good at recognising each other.

Dr Karin Pilz, from the School of Psychology at the University of Aberdeen said: "The current perception is that identity recognition is usually done on faces alone but obviously body motion is also important because we usually see people as whole bodies!

"Even in difficult conditions, we are really good at person recognition and so, I think it's important to understand that we're using information other than faces so we can get an insight into how we achieve this unique skill.

"Our results show that we are able to use body motion when other cues are ambiguous or unavailable—so we basically assume that we can use body motion as a reliable cue to identity when other information is less available or reliable such as when a person is far away or when they're in bad lighting conditions.

"I've always questioned why Lois Lane doesn't recognise Clark Kent or why Bruce Wayne has never been identified as Batman—now we know that they should be recognised based on their body motion!"

More information: Karin S. Pilz et al. Idiosyncratic body motion influences person recognition, *Visual Cognition* (2016). [DOI: 10.1080/13506285.2016.1232327](https://doi.org/10.1080/13506285.2016.1232327)

Provided by University of Aberdeen

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