

Wide-faced men are wealthier, more powerful and aggressive - and fertile women find them more attractive (but don't want to marry them), study reveals

- Studies have found men with wider faces are deemed fitter and stronger
- Women are attracted to them because they are dominant and powerful
- But they are also more likely to be aggressive and violent
- Scientists believed this made them attractive as short term but not long term partners
- They tested theory by analysing speed daters

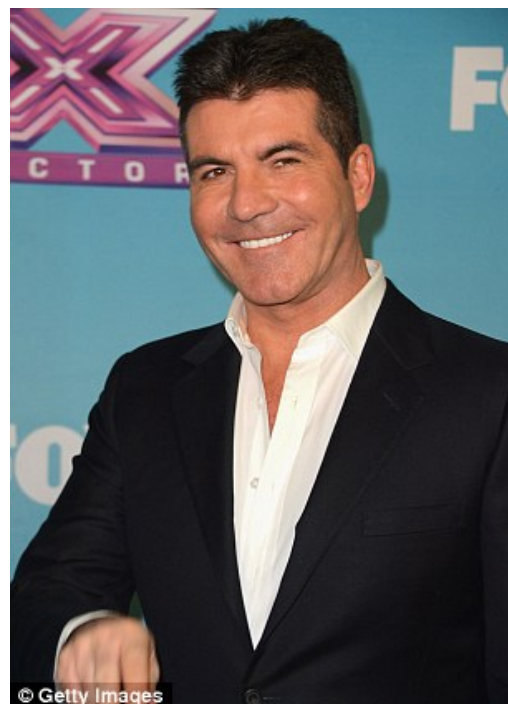
By Lucy Waterlow

PUBLISHED: 16:35 GMT, 13 November 2013 | **UPDATED:** 18:40 GMT, 13 November 2013

If you're looking for your perfect partner, then you should judge a man by his face, according to a new study.

Researchers at Singapore Management University have found that facial shape influences whether women view a man as a potential short or long term partner.

The scientists were expanding on previous studies that have found men with wide faces - like The X Factor's Simon Cowell and actor Colin Firth - have higher testosterone and are wealthier, powerful and more aggressive.



In the face: Studies have found men with wider facial bone structure like Colin Firth, left, and Simon Cowell, are more likely to be wealthy and powerful

Previous studies have found that due to evolution, this makes them more attractive to fertile women who are looking for a partner who is fit, strong and dominant.

But the Singapore researchers, led by Katherine A. Valentine and Norman P. Li, wanted to prove if this was true by putting it to the test in a dating environment.

They believed the evidence shows men with wider faces are attractive for one night stands and flings - but were not marriage material.

They write: 'Although men with higher higher facial width-to-height ratios (fWHRs) may be healthier, more formidable, and are poised to achieve high status, there are downsides to choosing such men as mates.

'FWHR has been linked to aggressiveness in various contexts (Carré & McCormick, 2008; Carré, McCormick, & Mondloch, 2009). Moreover, men with high fWHRs are more deceptive (Haselhuhn & Wong, 2012) and less trustworthy (Stirrat & Perrett, 2010). Furthermore, dominant men are perceived as less faithful, and less investing as fathers (Johnston, Hagel, Franklin, Fink, & Grammer, 2001).

'Thus, it makes adaptive sense for women to extract genetic qualities from such men through short-term relationships, rather than entering long-term relationships, where aggression and defection costs are more relevant.

'Additionally, direct benefits of dominance like the provision of physical protection might outweigh low prospects of long-term investment sometimes, again supporting female mate choice for dominance in short-term relationships.'



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One night only: Women are attracted to men with wider faces - but not for a long term relationship (posed by models)



Publication: Daily Mail

Date: 13 November 2013

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To put their theory to the test, the scientists analysed 77 men and 81 women during seven speed-dating events. The men were aged 20-32 and the women 18-30, all were single and looking for love.

The men's facial width was calculated based on their bone structure, not on their weight, to ensure the width of their face was dependent on their genes and not their eating habits.

The speed-dates took place in semi-private booths, where the women remained seated and the men rotated every three minutes.

After each date, the individuals recorded whether or not they wanted to go on another date with the person they had just seen and how interested they were on a scale of one to five in a potential short-term relationship, long-term relationship or friendship.

Independent raters (11 male, 44 female aged 19-25 years) also rated each of the speed dating male's facial photo for dominance on a seven-point scale while another group rated how 'aggressive would this person be if provoked?'

The results confirmed that men with wider faces were deemed to be more dominant and aggressive. These men were the ones when speed dating that women would consider for a short-term relationship but not a long-term future.

The researchers concluded: 'Women perceived men with wide faces as dominant and were attracted to them for short-term relationships. The results complement and extend the large body of work on facial metrics and attraction, as well as recent work on mate choice in live-interactive mate selection contexts, and highlight the importance of deducing why dominant men are alluring to women.'