

DON'T TRUST YOUR GUT

USING DATA TO GET WHAT
YOU REALLY WANT IN LIFE

SETH STEPHENS-DAVIDOWITZ



DEY ST.

An Imprint of WILLIAM MORROW

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FROM *EVERYBODY LIES* TO *DON'T TRUST YOUR GUT*

Google searches of the form "My penis is ____"

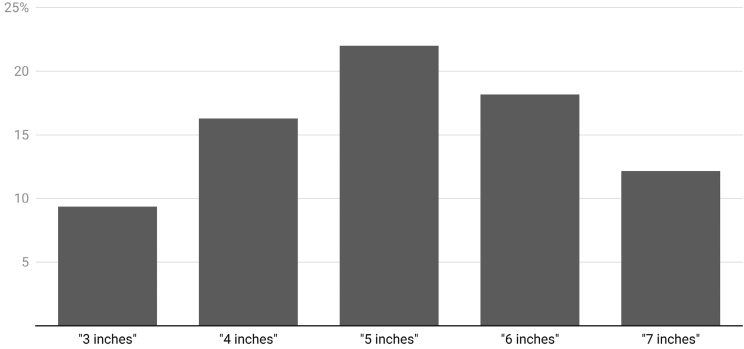
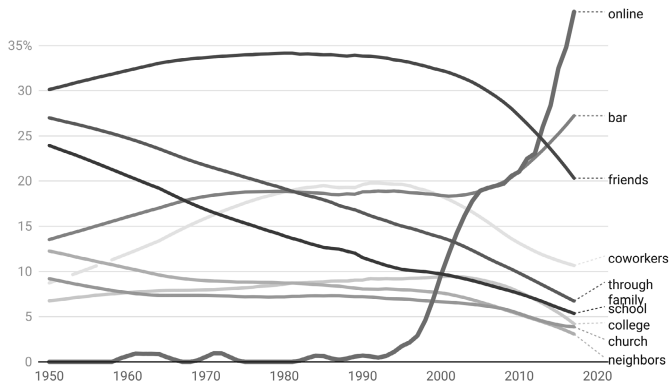


Chart: Don't Trust Your Gut by Seth Stephens-Davidowitz • Source: Google Trends • Created with Datawrapper

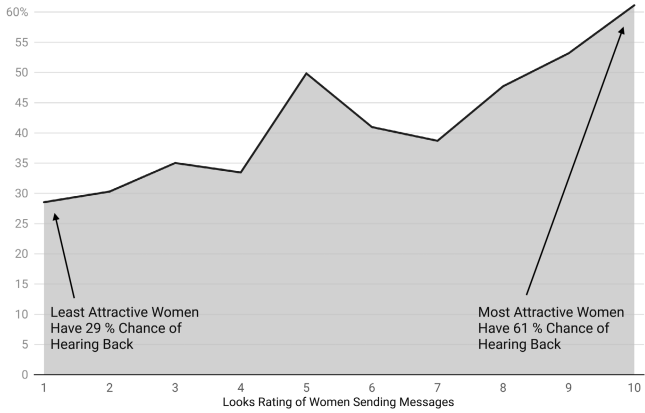
WHAT PEOPLE LOOK FOR IN A PARTNER

How heterosexual couples have met over time



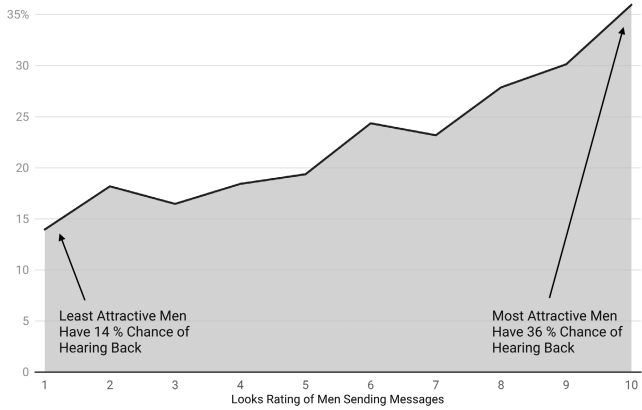
Source: Data provided by Michael Rosenfeld; first published in Rosenfeld, Thomas, & Hausen (2019) • Created with Datawrapper

Probability that the most attractive men respond to a message from women of various looks ratings



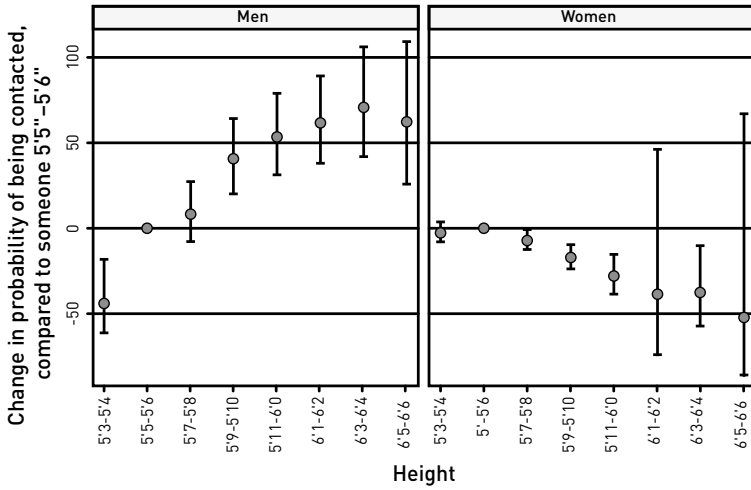
Source: Hitsch, Hortaçsu, and Ariely (2010), Data Provided by Günter Hirsch • Created with Datawrapper

Probability that the most attractive women respond to a message from men of various looks ratings



Source: Hitsch, Hortaçsu, and Ariely (2010), Data Provided by Günter Hirsch • Created with Datawrapper

Effect of height on dating success



Source: Hitsch, Hortaçsu, and Ariely (2010)

Reply rates: female sent initial message to male

	Asian male	Black male	Hispanic male	White male
Asian female	48	55	49	41
Black female	31	37	36	32
Hispanic female	51	46	48	40
White female	48	51	47	41

Source: Data from Christian Rudder OKTrends post: <https://www.gwern.net/docs/psychology/okcupid/howyourraceaffectsthemessagesyouget.html> • Created with Datawrapper

Reply rates: male sent initial message to female

	Asian female	Black female	Hispanic female	White female
Asian male	22	34	22	21
Black male	17	28	19	21
Hispanic male	20	31	24	22
White male	29	38	30	29

Source: Data from Christian Rudder OKTrends post: <https://www.gwern.net/docs/psychology/okcupid/howyourraceaffectsthemessagesyouget.html> • Created with Datawrapper

Here is the list of occupations, ranked from most to least desirable to heterosexual women on online dating sites.

DESIRABILITY OF OCCUPATIONS IN MEN (HOLDING CONSTANT INCOME)

Occupation	Percent Increase in Approaches from Women, Relative to a Student
Legal/attorney	8.6 %
Law enforcement/firefighter	7.7 %
Military	6.7 %
Health professional	5 %
Administrative/clerical/secretarial	4.9 %
Entertainment/broadcasting/film	4.2 %
Executive/managerial	4.0 %
Manufacturing	3.7 %
Financial/accounting	2.4 %
Self-employed	2.2 %
Political/government/civil	1.7 %
Artistic/musical/writer	1.7 %
Sales/marketing	1.4 %
Technical/science/engineering/ research/computers	1.2 %
Transportation	1.0 %
Teacher/educator/professor	1.0 %
Student	0 %
Laborer/construction	-0.3 %
Service/hospitality/food	-3 %

Source: Hitsch, Hortaçsu, and Ariely (2010)

THE EFFECTS OF A NEIGHBORHOOD

Here are the five best metropolitan areas, those that offered, on average, the most improvement to a child.

SUPERMETROS

	Average increase in adult income from growing up here (compared to growing up in an average place)
Seattle, Washington	11.6%
Minneapolis, Minnesota	9.7%
Salt Lake City, Utah	9.2%
Reading, Pennsylvania	9.1%
Madison, Wisconsin	7.4%

Source: Equality of Opportunity Project

The picture that follows shows the expected adult incomes for a male of low-income parents being raised in different neighborhoods in Seattle.

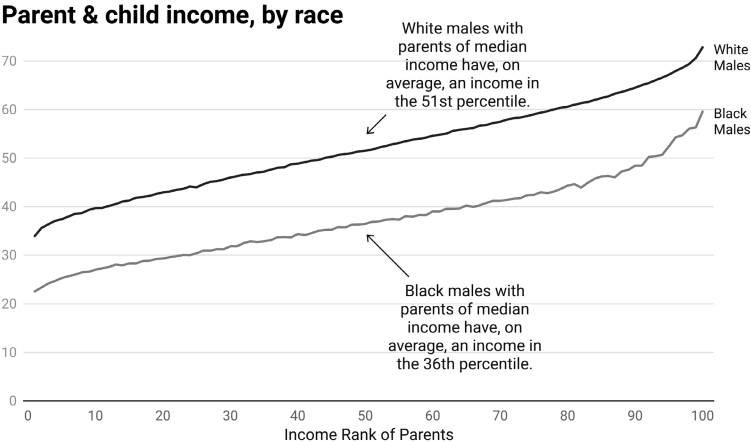
Household Income at Age 35
for Children of Low Income Parents



CASE STUDY # 2: THE POWER OF BLACK MALE ROLE MODELS

A second study by Chetty and coauthors looked at the pre-dictors of Black mobility in the United States. Sadly, in the United States, African-American males are less socially mobile than Caucasian males. The chart on the next page shows that, if a white male and Black male have parents who earn the same income, we can expect the Black male to end up earning substantially less money.

While Black males have low social mobility in just about every neighborhood in the United States, there are some neighborhoods where they do better. Compare, for example, Queens Village, a part of New York City, and West End, a part of Cincinnati. In Queens Village, a Black male born with parents in the 25th percentile of income can expect to end up with income in the 55.4th percentile. In West End, a Black male born with parents in the 25th percentile can expect to end up in the 31.6th percentile.



Source: Opportunity Insights • Created with Datawrapper

FENCE YOUR WAY TO COLLEGE?

ODDS OF GETTING COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FOR MALES FOR DIFFERENT SPORTS

Sport	High School Athletes	College Scholarships Available	Ratio of High School Athletes to College Athletes
Gymnastics	1,995	101	20:1
Fencing	2,189	99	22:1
Ice Hockey	35,393	981	36:1
Football	1,122,024	25,918	43:1
Golf	152,647	2,998	51:1
Skiing—Alpine	5,593	107	52:1
Rifle	2,668	47	57:1
Basketball	541,054	9,504	57:1
Baseball	482,629	8,062	60:1
Soccer	417,419	6,152	68:1
Swimming & diving	138,373	1,994	69:1
Tennis	191,004	2,417	79:1
Lacrosse	106,720	1,251	85:1
Cross country	252,547	2,722	93:1
Track & field	653,971	5,930	110:1
Water polo	21,451	126	170:1
Wrestling	269,514	1,530	176:1
Volleyball	52,149	294	177:1

Source: *ScholarshipStats.com*; Table first created by Jason Notte for Marketplace.

**ODDS OF GETTING COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FOR
FEMALES FOR DIFFERENT SPORTS**

Sport	High School Athletes	College Scholarships Available	Ratio of High School Athletes to College Athletes
Rowing	4,242	2,080	2:1
Equestrian	1,306	390	3:1
Rugby	322	36	9:1
Fencing	1,774	134	13:1
Ice hockey	9,150	612	15:1
Golf	72,172	3,056	24:1
Gymnastics	19,231	810	24:1
Skiing	4,541	133	34:1
Rifle	1,587	46	35:1
Soccer	374,564	9,266	40:1
Basketball	433,344	10,165	43:1
Lacrosse	81,969	1,779	46:1
Swimming & diving	165,779	3,550	47:1
Tennis	215,737	4,480	48:1
Softball	371,891	7,402	50:1
Volleyball	429,634	8,101	53:1
Field hockey	61,471	1,119	55:1
Water polo	18,899	344	55:1
Cross country	218,121	3,817	57:1
Track & field	545,011	8,536	64:1
Bowling	25,751	275	94:1

Source: ScholarshipStats.com; Table first created by Jason Notte for Marketplace.

THE ALMOST NONEXISTENT EQUESTRIAN AND DIVING GENES

GENETICS OF SUCCESS CHART

	Percent of Same-Sex Siblings Who Are Identical Twins (Higher Number Suggests More Reliance on Genetics)
Olympic track-and-field athletes	22.4%
Olympic wrestlers	13.8%
Olympic rowers	12.4%
NBA players	11.5%
Olympic boxers	8.8%
Olympic gymnasts	8.1%
Olympic swimmers	6.5%
Olympic canoers	6.3%
Olympic fencers	4.5%
Olympic cyclists	5.1%
Olympic shooters	3.4%
NFL players	3.2%
MLB players	1.9%
Olympic Alpine skiers	1.7%
Olympic divers	0%
Olympic equestrian riders	0%
Olympic weightlifters	0%

Source: Author's calculations. Data for Olympic athletes was provided by Bill Mallon.

RICH PEOPLE OWN THE RIGHT THING

THE SEXY PATH TO QUICK FAILURE

Field	Median Time a Business in the Field Lasts (For Comparison, the Average Dentist's Business Lasts 19.5 Years)
Record stores	2.5 years
Amusement arcades	3.0
Hobby, toy, and game stores	3.25
Bookstores	3.75
Clothing stores	3.75
Cosmetics and beauty supply stores	4.0

Source: Luo and Stark (2014)

**TOP 5 BUSINESSES WITH THE GREATEST NUMBER OF MILLIONAIRES
(NOTE: THIS IS A MISLEADING CHART FOR PICKING A GREAT BUSINESS)**

Field	Owners in the Top 0.1 %
Lessors of real estate	12,573
Activities related to real estate	10,911
Automobile dealers	5,236
Offices of physicians	4,711
Restaurants	4,471

Source: online appendix of Smith et al. (2019); this only includes data for S Corporations.

Among hundreds of fields that people start businesses in, there were only seven fields that fit both criteria, having both high numbers of rich people as well as a high probability of wealth. Here they are:

Field	Percent of establishments with owner in the top 0.1%
Lessors of real estate	43.2%
Activities related to real estate	25.2%
Automobile dealers	20.8%
Other financial investment activities	18.5%
Independent artists, writers, and performers	12.5%
Other professional, scientific, and technical services	10.6%
Miscellaneous durable goods merchant wholesalers	10.0%

Sources: author's calculations based on data from online appendix of Smith et al. (2019) and the U.S. Census Bureau. These calculations are for S-Corporations.

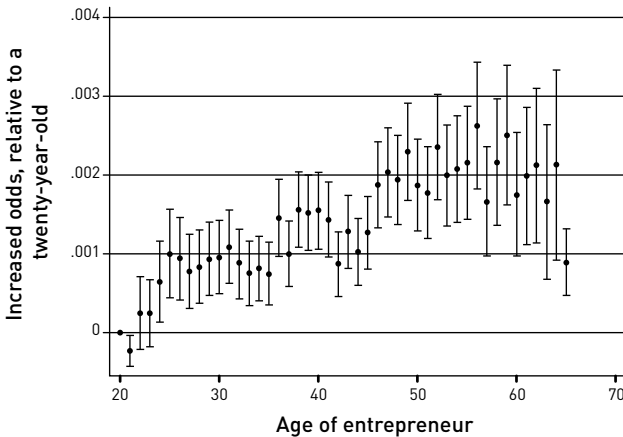
THE ESCAPE FROM GLOBAL BEHEMOTHS

HOW FAR MONOPOLIES REACH

Nowhere	To a Local Market	To a Global Market
You will be stuck in ruthless competition.	You have a decent chance of becoming rich.	You will almost certainly be defeated by a global behemoth.

MYTH: THE ADVANTAGE OF YOUTH

Probability of entrepreneur creating a 1-in-1000 business, by age



Source: Azoulay et al. (2020)

MYTH: THE OUTSIDER'S EDGE

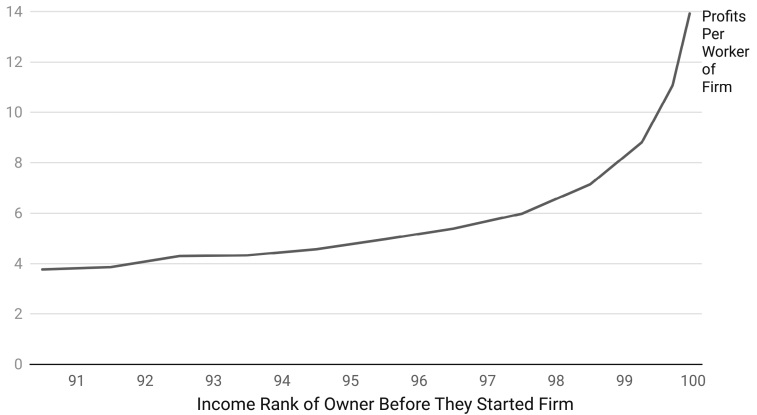
THE INSIDER'S EDGE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Work Experience of the Founder	Probability Business Will Be a 1-in-1,000 Success
No experience in field	0.11%
Experience in same broad field—but not narrow field	0.22%
Experience in same narrow field	0.26%

Source: Azoulay et al. (2020)

THE COUNTER-COUNTERINTUITIVE IDEA

The most successful employees found the most successful firms.



Source: Smith et. al. (2019); data provided by Eric Zwick • Created with Datawrapper

SPRINGSTEEN'S RULE: TRAVEL WIDELY TO FIND YOUR BREAK

To see the difference between the two categories, here are examples of the exhibition schedules of one artist in each. First, this was the exhibition schedule of a Category 1 artist, an outsider who never fully broke through.

SCHEDULE OF A CATEGORY 1 ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

Date of Exhibition	City	Country	Institution
2004-02-13	Waitakere City	New Zealand	Corban Estate Arts Centre (CEAC)
2005-02-15	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2006-03-14	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2007-04-17	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2007-10-02	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2008-04-15	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2008-07-05	Lower Hutt	New Zealand	The Dowse Art Museum
2008-09-09	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2009-02-11	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2009-08-29	Christchurch	New Zealand	Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu
2009-10-21	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2010-11-24	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2010-11-30	Wellington	New Zealand	Bartley and Company Art
2011-01-26	Herne Bay	New Zealand	Melanie Roger Gallery
2011-10-04	Wellington	New Zealand	Bartley and Company Art

Note that the Category 1 artist presented his art repeatedly in the same places in his home country.

Next, here is the exhibition schedule of a Category 2 artist, the German artist David Ostrowski, who did break through:

SCHEDULE OF A CATEGORY 2 ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

Date of Exhibition	City	Country	Institution
2005-10-19	Cologne	Germany	Raum für Kunst und Musik e.V.
2005-11-13	Eupen	Belgium	IKOB—Museum für Zeitgenössische Kunst Eupen
2006-10-20	Culver City	United States	Fette's Gallery
2006-10-25	Cologne	Germany	Raum für Kunst und Musik e.V.
2007-09-03	Düsseldorf	Germany	ARTLEIB
2007-12-07	Cologne	Germany	Raum für Kunst und Musik e.V.
2008-09-07	Düsseldorf	Germany	First Floor Contemporary
2008-10-11	Taipei	Taiwan	Aki Gallery
2010-06-26	Düsseldorf	Germany	PARKHAUS im Malkastenpark
2010-07-03	Helsingør	Denmark	Kulturhuset Toldkammeret
2010-11-13	Vancouver	Canada	304 days Gallery
2011-02-25	Munich	Germany	Tanzschule Projects
2011-03-06	The Hague	Netherlands	Nest
2011-06-23	Cologne	Germany	Philipp von Rosen Galerie
2011-07-01	Berlin	Germany	Autocenter
2011-11-18	Hamburg	Germany	salondergegenwart
2011-12-02	Cologne	Germany	Mike Potter Projects
2011-12-03	Amsterdam	Netherlands	Arti et Amicitiae
2012-01-28	Cologne	Germany	Berthold Pott
2012-02-25	Zurich	Switzerland	BolteLang
2012-03-02	Cologne	Germany	Philipp von Rosen Galerie

2012-03-03	Amsterdam	Netherlands	Amstel 41
2012-03-09	Cologne	Germany	Koelnberg Kunstverein e.V.
2012-03-22	London	United Kingdom	Rod Barton
2012-03-24	Cologne	Germany	Jagla Ausstellungsraum
2012-04-16	Cologne	Germany	Kunstgruppe
2012-04-19	Cologne	Germany	Philipp von Rosen Galerie
2012-04-26	Berlin	Germany	September
2012-04-28	Leipzig	Germany	Spinnerei
2012-07-10	New York	United States	Shoot the Lobster
2012-07-21	Düsseldorf	Germany	Philara-Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst
2012-10-18	Los Angeles	United States	ltd los angeles
2012-11-03	Zurich	Switzerland	BolteLang
2013-01-15	Milan	Italy	Brand New Gallery
2013-03-01	Berlin	Germany	Peres Projects
2013-03-07	Cologne	Germany	Kölnisches Stadtmuseum
2013-04-01	Brussels	Belgium	Middlemarch
2013-04-03	São Paulo	Brazil	White Cube

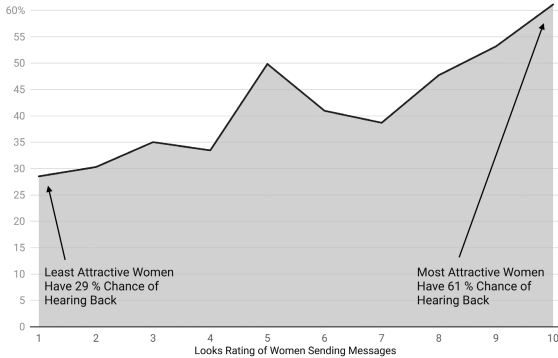
PICASSO DYNAMICS IN DATING

In Chapter 1, we discussed the overwhelming evidence that certain people are more desired in dating.

You may recall one of the “no-duh” findings from that chapter: beautiful people are more likely to get responses ~~to~~ their messages; and people are less likely to get responses when they message beautiful people.

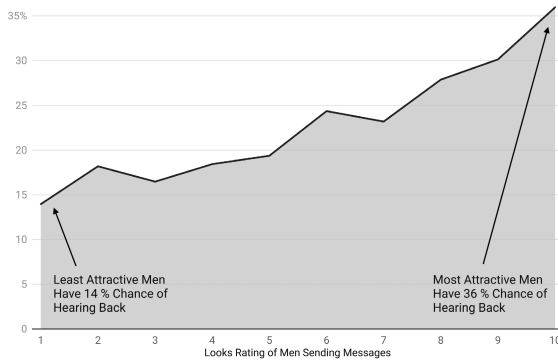
Here are those charts—the data on superficiality—to refresh your memory.

Probability that the most attractive men respond to a message from women of various looks ratings



Source: Hitsch, Hortacsu, and Ariely (2010); Data Provided by Günter Hirsch • Created with Datawrapper

Probability that the most attractive women respond to a message from men of various looks ratings



Source: Hitsch, Hortacsu, and Ariely (2010); Data Provided by Günter Hirsch • Created with Datawrapper

Again, no huge surprise there. Beauty matters, the data says, in dating.

YOUR APPEARANCE: IT MATTERS

Of the two people shown below, who do you think looks more competent?



All politician photos are from FiscalNote/Congress at Your Fingertips. They are used with permission.

Ready to play along some more with the researchers' experiment? Look at the two pairs of faces on the following page. For each, determine which of the two people next to each other strikes you as more competent.

Once again, I have a guess for your answers. I guess that,



vs.



vs.



among the two gentlemen on top, you chose the man on the right as looking more competent. Among the lady and gentleman on the bottom, I guess you chose the man on the left as looking more competent.

If those were your choices, you agree with most people.

Researchers were interested in seeing what best predicted which West Point cadets had the most career success. The re-searchers created a database that included the rank each cadet had reached twenty years after graduation along with various attributes of the cadets in school.

They collected data on how wealthy the cadets were when they were growing up, how they performed on various academic tests in schools, and how they performed in various athletic endeavors. Finally, the researchers collected the graduation picture of each cadet and asked people to rate how they came across.

The researchers found that one fact above all predicted how far a cadet rose in his career. It wasn't how distinguished their family was, how smart they were, or how fast they ran. In fact, each of these traits only weakly predicted cadets' career performance.

The biggest predictor of cadets' career success was how dominant their faces appeared. Having a face that people judged as looking dominant increased the odds of a colonel becoming a brigadier general, a brigadier general becoming a major general, and a major general becoming a lieutenant general.



A Face of Dominance



A Face Lacking Dominance

Among people good enough to get into West Point, in other words, those who look dominant tend to be allowed to dominate.

YOUR APPEARANCE: IT VARIES

Trustworthiness



Pictures are from the FERET database and used with permission. They originally appeared in P. J. Phillips, Hyeonjoon Moon, S. A. Rizvi and P. J. Rauss, "The FERET evaluation methodology for face-recognition algorithms," in *IEEE Transactions on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence*, vol. 22, no. 10, pp. 1090–1104, Oct. 2000, doi: 10.1109/34.879790.

THE THREE-STEP PLAN TO LEARN WHAT MAKES YOU MOST ATTRACTIVE WITHOUT LOGGING OFF YOUR COMPUTER

Step 1 (Artificial Intelligence): I downloaded FaceApp, an app that uses artificial intelligence to alter a picture. If you don't know FaceApp, here's how it works. You upload a picture and then can change the settings to alter the picture in shock-ingly realistic ways. You can adjust your hairstyle, hair color, facial hair, glasses, and smile.



Different (AI-Generated) Versions of Me

I created more than one hundred different versions of my face. Above are some of the looks that I ended up with.

Step 2 (Rapid Market Research): I conducted rapid market research on different versions of my face. For this, I used GuidedTrack and Positly, two programs created by my friend Spencer Greenberg to allow anybody to quickly and cheaply perform survey research. For each picture, I asked people to judge how competent the person in the picture looked on a scale of 1 to 10. (You can also use the site Photofeeler.com to rate different photos.)

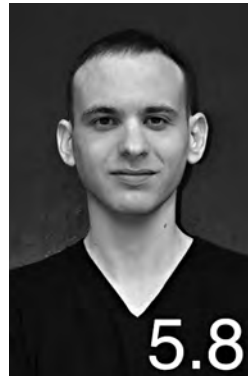
I discovered that there were massive differences in how people ranked me in the different FaceApp photos. For exam-

ple, in the picture directly to the right, I ranked 5.8/10 in competence, among the lowest scores of those I tested.

In the picture directly below it, I ranked 7.8/10 in competence, the highest score that I received.

Just as Todorov and Porter had discovered and just as *Seinfeld* had pointed out, I can be perceived very differently.

Step 3 (Statistical Analysis): I used R, a statistical programming language, to recognize patterns in how different styling decisions I make affect how I am perceived. This allowed me to figure out which aspects of me have the most impact on how I am perceived.



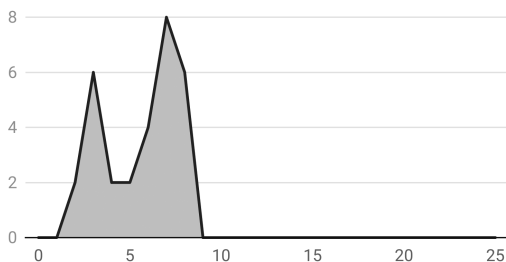
MISPERCEPTIONS OF WHAT MADE US HAPPY

Strange quiz. Two people—call them Patient A and Patient B—are both getting a colonoscopy. During the colonoscopy, they are asked to record, every sixty seconds, just how much pain they are in—on a scale of 0 to 10. (This is called moment utility.) At minute zero, they are asked, 0 to 10, how bad is it? At minute 1, they are asked the same. And so on. Until the colonoscopy is done.

When the colonoscopy is finished, we now have a pain chart for both patients, which allows us to see how much pain each was in for every minute of their colonoscopy. The pain charts are shown on the following page.

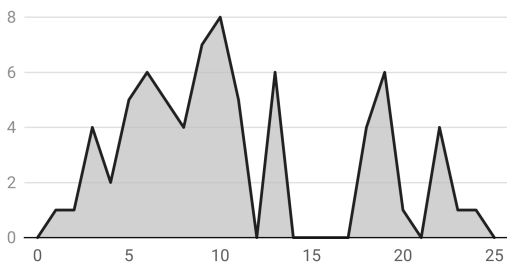
Patient A, as you can see in their chart, had a pain level that fluctuated between 0 and 8 for roughly 8 minutes. Patient B, as you can see in their chart, had a pain level that fluctuated between 0 and 8 for more than 20 minutes.

Patient A's pain intensity



Source: Redelmeier and Kahneman (1996) • Created with Datawrapper

Patient B's pain intensity



Source: Redelmeier and Kahneman (1996) • Created with Datawrapper

Now, the strange quiz question: who experienced more total pain during their colonoscopy, Patient A or Patient B?

See the charts? Got your answer?

This isn't a trick question. The answer is obvious: Patient B experienced more pain. Patient B was in roughly as much pain as Patient A for the first 8 minutes and then experienced 17 minutes of additional pain on top of all that. By any metric, Patient B had the more painful colonoscopy. If you chose Patient B, you scored an A+ on this strange quiz. Good job!

THE FULL LIST OF HAPPINESS- PRODUCING ACTIVITIES

Here are the rest of the results on how happy various activities make people—all from the Mappiness data analyzed by Bryson and MacKerron. Afterward, we will discuss the implications of the findings.

HAPPINESS ACTIVITY CHART

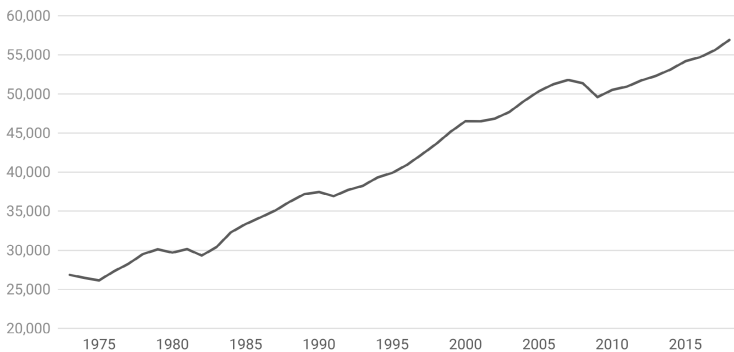
Activity Rank	Activity	Gain in Happiness Relative to Not Doing Activity
1.	Intimacy/Making Love	14.2
2.	Theater/Dance/Concert	9.29
3.	Exhibition/Museum/Library	8.77
4.	Sports/Running/Exercise	8.12
5.	Gardening	7.83
6.	Singing/Performing	6.95
7.	Talking/Chatting/Socializing	6.38
8.	Birdwatching/Nature Watching	6.28
9.	Walking/Hiking	6.18
10.	Hunting/Fishing	5.82
11.	Drinking Alcohol	5.73
12.	Hobbies/Arts/Crafts	5.53
13.	Meditating/Religious Activities	4.95
14.	Match/Sporting Event	4.39
15.	Childcare/Playing with Children	4.1
16.	Pet Care/Playing with Pets	3.63
17.	Listening to Music	3.56
18.	Other Games/Puzzles	3.07
19.	Shopping/Errands	2.74
20.	Gambling/Betting	2.62
21.	Watching TV/Film	2.55
22.	Computer Games/iPhone Games	2.39
23.	Eating/Snacking	2.38
24.	Cooking/Preparing Food	2.14
25.	Drinking Tea/Coffee	1.83
26.	Reading	1.47
27.	Listening to Speech/Podcast	1.41
28.	Washing/Dressing/Grooming	1.18
29.	Sleeping/Resting/Relaxing	1.08
30.	Smoking	0.69
31.	Browsing the Internet	0.59
32.	Texting/Email/Social media	0.56
33.	Housework/Chores/DIY	-0.65
34.	Traveling/Commuting	-1.47
35.	In a Meeting, Seminar, Class	-1.5
36.	Admin/Finances/Organizing	-2.45
37.	Waiting/Queueing	-3.51
38.	Care or Help for Adults	-4.3
39.	Working/Studying	-5.43
40.	Sick in Bed	-20.4

THE MISERY- INDUCING TRAPS OF MODERN LIFE

Search	Date, Time
looking for a room to rent	March 2, 14:27:12
i need a job	March 2, 15:02:10
seniors	March 2, 23:26:45
www.plentyoffish.com	March 3, 11:18:33
i need a job	March 3, 17:32:00
marriage	March 3, 17:32:31
depression	March 3, 17:33:39
at 60 is life worth living	March 4, 16:43:55
i am being evicted	March 4, 16:57:49
cheap apartment wanted	March 4, 17:00:44
where is the cheapest place to live	March 4, 17:06:32
www.nyclottery.gov	March 5, 16:11:19
poor seniors	March 6, 15:49:04
www.plentyoffish.com	March 6, 20:50:39
www.plentyoffish.com	March 6, 20:51:02
www.plentyoffish.com	March 7, 10:10:53
www.plentyoffish.com	March 7, 10:11:03
christianmingle	March 7, 10:14:00
suicide	March 7, 10:20:36
drugs	March 7, 10:26:27
how to commit suicide	March 7, 10:34:34

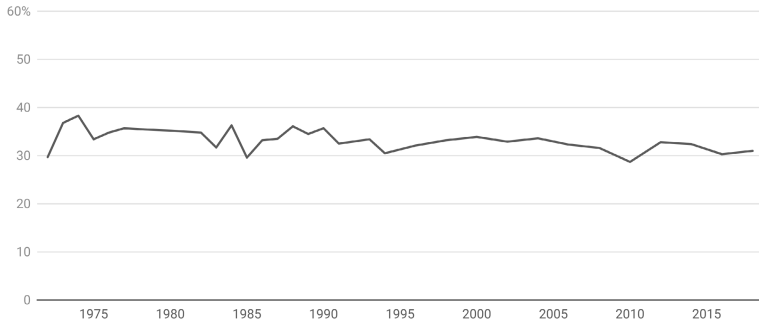
Search	Date, Time
i can't stand the neck and back pain	April 21, 23:40:05
how can one live with back pain all their lives	April 21, 23:51:45
so depressed because i feel like i have fibromyalgia	May 8, 0:58:43
please help me—i have fibromyalgia	May 11, 1:04:03
is there any hope for fibromyalgia	May 15, 0:57:50
suicide and fibromyalgia	May 15, 0:47:48
i hurt so much from arthritis and tmj	May 18, 13:30:21
pain at bottom of neck and top of back	May 19, 22:24:21
help with pain from arthritis and fibromyalgia	May 19, 0:26:51
back neck hurts	May 20, 11:17:58
miserable from neck pain back pain and tmj	May 20, 0:18:02
suicide	May 23, 12:13:05

**Everything is amazing:
Real GDP per capita in United States, 1972-2018**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis • Created with Datawrapper

**People aren't happier:
% of Americans who reported they were "very happy," 1972-2018**



Source: General Social Survey • Created with Datawrapper

AVERAGE HOURS SPENT PER DAY

	Least Happy Activities (e.g., Working/ Housework)	Medium Happy Activities (e.g., Eating/Childcare)	Happiest Activities (e.g., Socializing/ Theater)
2003	16.71	5.22	2.07
2019	16.72	5.42	1.86

THE WORK TRAP

THE WORKINGMAN'S BLUES (OR LIGHT BLUES)

Working (Base Case)	-5.43
Working at Home	+3.59
Working While Listening to Music	+3.94
Working with Your Friends	+6.25

Source: Author's calculations from Bryson and MacKerron (2017)

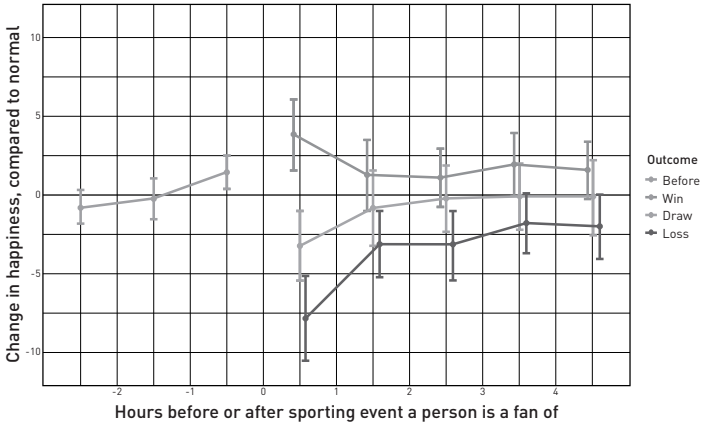
THE “NOT SPENDING ENOUGH TIME WITH FRIENDS AND ROMANTIC PARTNER” TRAP

HAPPINESS PEOPLE CHART

Person	Gain in happiness from being with them, relative to being alone
Romantic partner	4.51
Friends	4.38
Other family members	0.75
Clients, customers	0.43
Children	0.27
Colleagues, classmates	-0.29
Other people participant knows	-0.83

Source: MacKerron and Mourato (2013)

THE SPORTS TRAP



The Sports Fan Trap: The Contentment of Victory, the Agony of Defeat

MacKerron kindly sent figures and charts from this working paper.

	Team Was Expected to Win	Team Was Expected to Lose
Average Happiness Change After a Win	+3.1	+7.0
Average Happiness Change After a Loss	-10.0	-6.3

THE BOOZE TRAP

WHAT PEOPLE ARE DOING WHEN THEY DRINK

Talking/Chatting/Socializing	49.2%
Watching TV/Film	31.2%
Eating/Snacking	27.9%
Listening to Music	10.4%
Sleeping/Resting/Relaxing	7.4%

Source: Geiger and MacKerron (2016)

Biggest Booze Boost (People Are MUCH Happier Doing These Tipsy Than Sober)	Smallest Booze Boost (People Are Roughly as Happy Doing These Tipsy as Sober)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traveling/Commuting • Waiting/Queueing • Sleeping/Resting/Relaxing • Smoking • Washing/Dressing/Grooming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimacy/Making Love • Theater/Dance/Concert • Talking/Chatting/Socializing • Watching TV/Film • Reading

Source: Geiger and MacKerron (2016)

THE NOT-SPENDING-ENOUGH-TIME-IN-NATURE TRAP

HAPPINESS GEOGRAPHY CHART

Land Cover	Happiness Gain (compared to being in an urban environment)
Marine and coastal margins	6.02
Mountains, moors, and heathland	2.71
Woodland	2.12
Semi-natural grasslands	2.04
Enclosed farmland	2.03
Freshwater, wetlands, and floodplains	1.8
Suburban/rural developed	0.88
Inland bare ground	0.37

Source: MacKerron and Mourato (2013)

HAPPINESS WEATHER CHART

Weather	Happiness Effect When Participant Is Outdoors
Snow	1.02
Sun	0.46
Fog	-1.35
Rain	-1.37
0-8 degrees C	-0.51
8-16 degrees C	0.29
16-24 degrees C	0.99
24+ degrees C	5.13

Source: MacKerron and Mourato (2013)

APPENDIX

The chart that follows compares the predicted happiness of activities, according to the survey conducted by Spencer Greenberg and me, to the actual rank of activities, as found by Bryson and MacKerron. Activities that have a positive Difference, such as “Exhibition/Museum/Library,” tend to give people more happiness than people expect. Activities that have a negative Difference, such as “Sleeping/Resting/Relaxing,” tend to give people less happiness than people expect.

Activity	Predicted Happiness Rank of Activity	Actual Happiness Rank of Activity	Difference
Intimacy/Making Love	1	1	0
Pet Care/Playing with Pets	2	15	-13
Hobbies/Arts/Crafts	3	11	-8
Talking/Chatting/Socializing	4	7	-3
Theater/Dance/Concert	5	2	3
Singing/Performing	6	6	0
Sleeping/Resting/Relaxing	7	27	-20
Match/Sporting Event	8	13	-5
Computer Games/iPhone Games	9	20	-11
Watching TV/Film	10	19	-9
Birdwatching/Nature Watching	11	8	3
Eating/Snacking	12	21	-9
Other Games/Puzzles	13	16	-3
Hunting/Fishing	14	9	5
Gardening	15	5	10
Sports/Running/Exercise	16	4	12
Childcare/Playing with Children	17	14	3
Meditating/Religious Activities	18	12	6
Reading	19	24	-5
Exhibition/Museum/Library	20	3	17
Drinking Tea/Coffee	21	23	-2
Browsing the Internet	22	29	-7
Drinking Alcohol	23	10	13
Cooking/Preparing Food	24	22	2
Texting/Email/Social Media	25	30	-5
Listening to Speech/Podcast	26	25	1
Gambling/Betting	27	18	9
Traveling/Commuting	28	32	-4
Shopping/Errands	29	17	12
Care or Help for Adults	30	36	-6
Washing/Dressing/Grooming	31	26	5
Smoking	32	28	4
Working/Studying	33	37	-4
In a Meeting, Seminar, Class	34	33	1
Admin/Finances/Organizing	35	34	1
Housework/Chores/DIY	36	31	5
Waiting/Queueing	37	35	2
Sick in Bed	38	38	0

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