

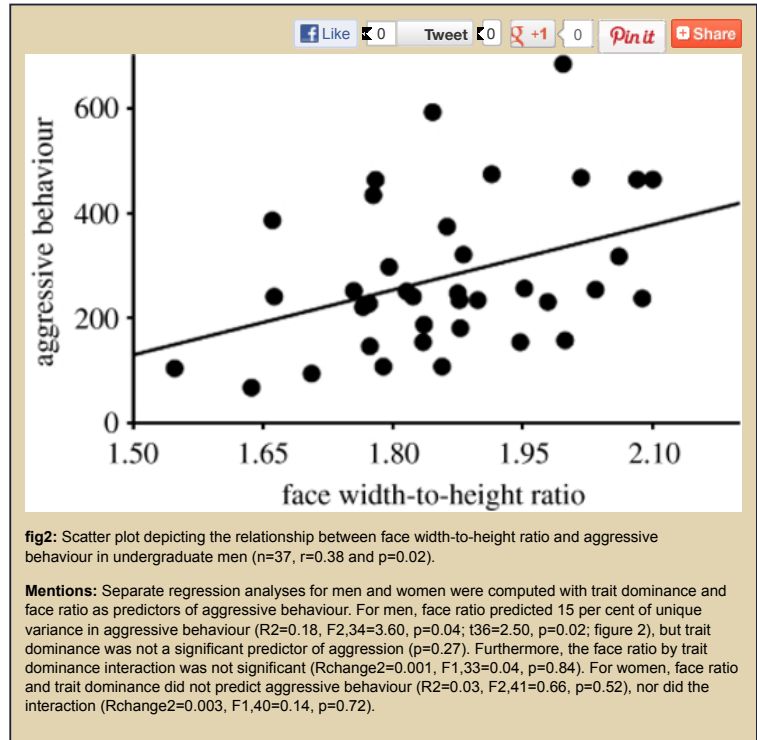
## In your face: facial metrics predict aggressive behaviour in the laboratory and in varsity and professional hockey players

Carré JM, McCormick CM - *Proc. Biol. Sci.* (2008)

**Bottom Line:** Based on a recent finding of a sexual dimorphism in facial metrics that is independent of body size, we conducted three studies to examine the extent to which individual differences in the facial width-to-height ratio were associated with trait dominance (using a questionnaire) and aggression during a behavioural task and in a naturalistic setting (varsity and professional ice hockey). Individual differences in the facial width-to-height ratio predicted reactive aggression in men, but not in women (predicted 15% of variance). Together, these findings suggest that the sexually dimorphic facial width-to-height ratio may be an 'honest signal' of propensity for aggressive behaviour.

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**Abstract:** Facial characteristics are an important basis for judgements about gender, emotion, personality, motivational states and behavioural dispositions. Based on a recent finding of a sexual dimorphism in facial metrics that is independent of body size, we conducted three studies to examine the extent to which individual differences in the facial width-to-height ratio were associated with trait dominance (using a questionnaire) and aggression during a behavioural task and in a naturalistic setting (varsity and professional ice hockey). In study 1, men had a larger facial width-to-height ratio, higher scores of trait dominance, and were more reactively aggressive compared with women. Individual differences in the facial width-to-height ratio predicted reactive aggression in men, but not in women (predicted 15% of variance). In studies 2 (male varsity hockey players) and 3 (male professional hockey players), individual differences in the facial width-to-height ratio were positively related to aggressive behaviour as measured by the number of penalty minutes per game obtained over a season (predicted 29 and 9% of the variance, respectively). Together, these findings suggest that the sexually dimorphic facial width-to-height ratio may be an 'honest signal' of propensity for aggressive behaviour.



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