

Viewpoint: Don't expect genetic matchmaking to help you find your Valentine

Genetic matchmaking is entering the mainstream. The prospect of meeting and selecting potential romantic partners based upon purported DNA compatibility ... has increasingly garnered both scientific and commercial attention. Earlier this year, Nozze, a well-established Japanese dating service, [established a DNA Matching Course and hosted a related DNA Matching Party](#), both first-time offerings in that nation.

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The underlying science itself is hardly convincing. ... The possibility that MHC plays a role in human mate selection first arose as a result of a well-known experiment by Swiss biologist Claus Wedekind that is colloquially known as the [sweaty T-shirt study](#). Researchers had men wear T-shirts for extended periods of time before placing the shirts in boxes; then they had women sniff the shirts to rate the former wearer's sexual attractiveness. They found an inverse correlation between MHC similarity and attraction score.

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Genetic matchmaking reflects two concerning trends in modern society. The first is the [pandemic loneliness](#) and search for connection that has arisen in the wake of the breakdown of traditional community structures.

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Genetic matchmaking also manifests the misguided belief that science can solve all of our problems. Unfortunately, we cannot discover, pay or invent our way out of our isolation.

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