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<td>Chong, Trinetta Chiao Sing</td>
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THE ROLE OF SCENT IN FACE RECOGNITION

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
Past research on face recognition has generally focused on manipulating individual characteristics (age, gender, race etc.) but few have taken its interaction with other stimuli into account. This study attempts to bridge this gap by investigating the effects of scent on face recognition, focusing on the facial symmetry in particular. The Theory of Odor-Associative Learning proposes that an odor is inherently meaningless to an individual prior to exposure. However, once the individual experiences the odor, the context (place, situation, person or event) in which he or she perceives it and its emotional value becomes attached to that aroma. In light of this, we expect that by pairing a distinctive scent with a particular face, an individual exposed to these two stimuli (scent and face) would thereafter associate the unique scent with that particular face.

FACTORS WHICH AFFECT FACE RECOGNITION
- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Physical Attractiveness
- Symmetry
- Averageness
- Perceived health

SCENTS & MEMORY RETRIEVAL
Research has found that the presence of a scent can both trigger emotions and help retrieve stored memories. This is because scent information is relayed from the olfactory bulbs directly to the limbic system, a set of brain structures highly linked to memory and emotions.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE
Participants are exposed to a series of faces, with each successive face randomly fulfilling one of these 6 conditions:

1. Symmetrical face accompanied with scent
2. Symmetrical face not accompanied with scent
3. Moderately symmetrical face accompanied with scent
4. Moderately symmetrical face not accompanied with scent
5. Asymmetrical face accompanied with scent
6. Asymmetrical face not accompanied with scent

Participants are then tested on their ability to recognize each of these faces. Concurrently, perceived characteristics pertaining to each face are also measured during the experiment.

PROJECT TITLE: The Role of Scent In Facial Recognition
Supervisor: Assoc Prof May Oo Lwin

In light of growing research, scents may perhaps be used in the future by retailers and service providers worldwide to establish long-term relationship with individual customers. In the long run, the act of retaining customers may prove more cost-effective for companies than acquiring new ones, especially in the luxury industry.