



## Can Alcohol Make Dating More Difficult?

▢ by G. Bossik on January 18th, 2012 at 7:00 am



If you're a single man, you've probably gone to bars or night clubs. You've probably checked out the women there, too. Maybe you were [nervous](#) and had a few drinks to work up the courage to mingle.

You may even have thought that one particular woman seemed interested in you. When you approached her and introduced yourself, she may have rejected you.

Why the rejection? Well, a new study shows that alcohol can affect a man's perception of what truly constitutes interest from a woman.<sup>1</sup>

The study is entitled, [Alcohol Alters Men's Perceptual and Decisional Processing of Women's Sexual Interest](#).

The authors —Coreen Farris, Teresa A. Treat, and Richard J. Viken —recruited and tested fifty-nine men and found that these male volunteers misinterpreted sexual-interest cues from women after consuming alcohol.

According to the authors, the volunteers were primarily college students who were shown photos of women during two laboratory sessions — one that included the consumption of vodka and one that only included fruit juice consumption.

The men viewed computer-based photos of women and were evaluated through statistical analyses. The published results show that after consuming alcohol, the men were less able to correctly interpret whether the women in the photos were just being friendly or were showing sexual interest.

"Participants also adopted a more lenient threshold for labeling women's positive affect [as] sexual interest after alcohol consumption," say the scientists in their study.

The scientists add that the men who participated were twenty-one-years-old or older and were less likely to misinterpret dating cues based on clothing than on physical cues.

"Participants were better able to distinguish friendliness from sexual interest when target women were dressed provocatively...rather than conservatively..." say the scientists.

Nevertheless, it may be easier for a man to find the right woman *before* having a drink rather than afterwards.

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### Sources:

1. Coreen Farris, Teresa A. Treat, and Richard J. Viken, "[Alcohol Alters Men's Perceptual and Decisional Processing of Women's Sexual Interest](#)," Journal of Abnormal Psychology.

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