Whither the Face?
Impact of Menopause on Facial Attractiveness
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Research Questions
- Does menopause affect women’s facial appearance?
- Does the drop of reproductive hormones (e.g., estradiol) during menopause affect women’s attractiveness?

Introduction
- There is accumulating evidence suggesting an association between levels of reproductive hormones (especially E) and a woman’s attractiveness (1).
- Hormone markers such as full lips, small chin and meek facial bones are an honest signal to fertility and health (2).
- A dramatic change in endogenous hormone levels occurs during menopause when production of estradiol and progesterone falls to a very low level.

Methods
Stimuli
Portraits of 16 women (8 pre-menopausal, 8 post-menopausal).
No exogenous hormones (e.g., hormonal contraception, HRT). All women provided saliva samples from which we assessed E, P, T, and Cort.

Pre-menopausal prototype: 8 women, mean age 48.5; SD = 2.11
Post-menopausal prototype: 8 women, mean age 51.6; SD = 0.91
20 new faces (3) (mean age 50.3; SD = 2.94) were shape-transformed in 50% steps towards each prototype.

Results
One-sample T-Tests against chance level (0.5):
Whole sample (N = 20): t = 1.942, p = .067 (two-sided)
Men with post-menopausal partner (N = 10): t = 1.942, p = .067 (two-sided)
Men without post-menopausal partner (N = 10): t = 0.037, p = .971 (two-sided)

Hormone Assays


Discussion
- Men found pre-menopausal versions of women’s faces more attractive than their post-menopausal counterparts.
- Interestingly, we found a significant preference for pre-menopausal faces particularly for men who have partners who already went through menopause.
- Men with pre-menopausal partners showed no preference for either face.
  - Experience with facial changes during menopause is necessary to detect these changes.
- What makes post-menopausal faces less attractive? Hormonal changes? Age confound?

References