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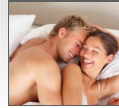
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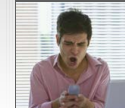
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## PERSONALITY

# What Your Tweets Say About You

by Andrew Katz December 24, 2012, 04:00 am EDT

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"Does this tweet make me look like a dick?"

Remember how you were taught growing up to not judge a book by its cover? Thanks to the Internet, that's over now. A recent study in the *Journal of Research in Personality* found that **your 140-character posts on Twitter could be dead-on personality giveaways.**

Researchers in Singapore asked 142 participants to complete a questionnaire that would allude to which of the Big Five personality dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism) they fell high or low on, then analyzed thousands of the participants' tweets using a software that detects how often users include certain words. At the same time, eight observers parsed through the tweets to rate personalities.

The results: First, the researchers found out that tweets are associated with the self-reported personality of the user who wrote them—for example, people who are more extraverted are more likely to use social words, like "mate," "talk," and "child." But the study also concluded that readers might perceive the user's personality differently: Observers rated users who tweeted more swear words as being more extroverted, but users who reported being more extroverted *didn't* actually use more swear words.

Turns out, of the Big Five traits, the observers were only able to accurately judge two of them by reading tweets: agreeableness and neuroticism, Lin Qiu, Ph.D., an assistant professor of psychology at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, tells MensHealth.com. That's because readers tend to focus on the wrong cues, Qiu says.

Last year, researchers at the University of Maryland, College Park ran a similar

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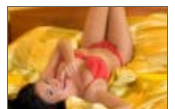
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study and concluded that openness was the easiest personality to be judged from tweets, but neuroticism was the most difficult. In this latest study, Qiu and his team found 26 correlations between the tweets and personalities, suggesting that the words hold linguistic cues that make it possible to determine a user's persona.

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Earlier this week, Twitter announced it now has more than 200 million active monthly users, its largest-ever base—or 200 million people to judge every tweet you write. Here's how Qiu says your words are likely to be perceived.

**The Tweet:** *I can't believe he missed that shot. Every damn time! Sick of saying "there's always next year."*

**How people see you:** As a neurotic, miserable sports fan. When others see a swear word ("damn"), they associate it with low agreeableness.

**Your real personality:** You're not quite as pissed-off (or crazy), but you might be closed minded.

**The Tweet:** *I've got the day off tomorrow. What should I do?*

**How people see you:** As a self-obsessed egomaniac. When your followers see you tweeting fairly frequently about yourself ("I"), they perceive you to be a bit neurotic.

**Your real personality:** You're not as into yourself as your tweets make it seem. (The fix? Balance: For every tweet that contains self-reference, post two that don't.)

**The Tweet:** *Playing catch outside with the little man. He's got quite an arm!*

**How people see you:** An all-around good dad. When you post such positive updates ("He's got quite an arm!"), they categorize you as being highly extraverted.

**Your real personality:** Same thing. Your genuine feelings are shining through. Keep it up.

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1 comment • 36 reactions



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Pedro Sousa • 3 months ago

Dafuq... this is stupid.

Does this comment make me close minded? Think not!

3 □ □ □ Reply Share

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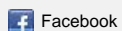
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