

Statistics Project—Gaydar Accuracy

Background: Gaydar (a fusion of gay and radar) is the intuitive ability to determine whether another person is gay (homosexual), or straight (heterosexual). The function of "gaydar" relies on non-verbal sensory information and intuitions. These include the sensitivity to social behavior and mannerisms: for example, a sensitivity to flamboyant or overt rejection of traditional gender roles (including occupation and grooming habits).

Gaydar Question: Do gays have a stronger/more accurate Gaydar sense than straight people? What is the distribution of Gaydar accuracies? Are some gays stronger message senders in the sense that they are more accurately identified as gay?

Sensitivity: Issues involving sexual preferences are particularly sensitive. You will need to be especially careful to avoid accusations of discriminatory/biased behavior. One possibility is to present your experimental plan to the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) on campus to get their endorsement. You should be careful not to let GSA opinion unduly influence your plan nor should you commit to censoring the results.

Test Plan: Design a test to compare the ability of gays vs straight to identify sexual preferences in strangers. You will need a sampling plan for your detectors and a set of people with known sexual preferences to serve as detectees. Determine the circumstances of the interaction of detectors and detectees. Survey your detectors as to their self-assessed Gaydar powers. Decide on the responses allowed for detectors (degree of certainty). Decide how many detectors and detectees to have. Decide how you will record your data.

Getting Started: Try the test plan with people of your group serving as detectors. Fix any obvious problems with your test design.

First Meeting: Prior to the meeting do the test planning and "Getting Started" exercises above. Discuss your study proposal and any questions you have with your instructor. Your instructor will provide you with clarifying directions. Write a summary of this meeting and turn it in to the instructor.

Formal Procedures Statement: Write down the procedures for your study and have your instructor critique these procedures. Your procedures statement should include: population, sampling technique, basic test instructions, data recording forms, etc.

Collect Data and Compute Statistics: Recruit Detectors and detectees. Run your tests and gather the Gaydar responses. Organize your data into tables and graphs. Compute the relevant statistical test on this data. Specify your conclusions.

Penultimate Meeting: Present your results. If there are problems with the testing procedures resolve them and run the tests again. Discuss what conclusions are justified. Discuss every section of the project report and what your report should have for each section.

Write Project Report Draft: Write your report based on the discussions with your instructor.

Final Meeting: Present your draft report to the instructor. Use your instructor's critique to write the final report.

Write the Project Report.

Additional Project Guidelines:

Due Dates

[Report Format](#)

[Report Writing Cautions.](#)