

LOVE BUZZ

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What's Your...DNA?

Genetic matching meets online dating for the next generation of compatibility.

by Julie D. Andrews

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Can DNA predict that elusive quality in the love equation known as "spark"? According to Tamara Brown, founder of the website GenePartner.com, it can, reports Sally McGrane for *Time* magazine. The Switzerland-based company makes love **connections** based on genes, or one particular family of genes known as human leukocyte antigens (HLAs).

Launched last summer, GenePartner is built on the idea that "opposites attract". According to the GenePartner website, a study by a University of Bern

professor named Wedekind inspired the company's founders.

When female study participants were asked to take a whiff of smelly T-shirts worn by various men for three days straight and select the most attractive, Wedekind found that the part of DNA that codes for HLA molecules was chosen from men whose HLAs differed from the women's own. That is to say, people with one set of genes are attracted to those with a different set of genes.

The company based its formula for genetic **compatibility** on the questionnaire results of 270 long-term couples who had contributed genetic data to GenePartner, reports McGrane. The company is offering the biological piece of the **matchmaking** puzzle to matchmakers and **websites** already established in pairing up singles using other non-biological factors (location, hobbies). Already, one Internet dating site has hopped on board. [Sense2Love.com](#) plans to include genetic matching by summer's end.

What about those in the "opposites *don't* attract" camp? One such non-believer cited in the article remains unconvinced that the **chemistry** enigma has been solved. He adds that HLA's role in mate selection is not yet fully known or understood. 📖 [Matchmaking 2.0](#)

Curious? For \$99, anyone can order a **GenePartner test**. Use it to take a saliva sample and then mail it overseas. Wait two weeks for your GenePartner ID—and voila—the GenePartner database is your oyster. The company hopes that, in time, **singles** may be able to tote their DNA profiles with them as they flit from one **online dating** site to the next. This will take online **dating** to an entirely new level. If the concept takes off, that is. Can eHarmony compete? We're thinking we may be in for a whole new set of lovey-dovey TV commercials very soon.

Lindsay's love life

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