Anti-atheist prejudice stems largely from distrust and moral suspicion. We explored intuitive trust judgments of atheists in the absence of cues to actual behavior. Participants intuitively viewed untrustworthy-looking faces as more representative of atheists than theists. These results suggest that there is a physical component to atheist stereotypes. A follow-up study explored possible valence confounds.

**Study 2**

- **Procedure**
  - The same procedure as in Study 1 was used, with two additional morphed faces.
  - For simplicity, the Christian condition was dropped, leaving a 2 x 2.
  - Fully between-subjects
    - Target Trait (Trust vs. Competence) x Trait Valence (Negative vs. Positive)

**Participants**

- Students (Tablet) - N = 131 (who didn’t fail attention check; 250 collected)

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**Discussion & Conclusions**

The current studies indicate that a physical representation of atheism may exist, though the exact nature is not yet clear. Study 1 provides support that untrustworthy faces are more representative of atheists than trustworthy faces, but Study 2 failed to illustrate that this effect is driven by the specific trait of trust rather than a general association with negative traits, including incompetence. Study 2 did have lower power, but follow-up studies are needed before conclusive results can be drawn. Replication of the original finding is also needed before the original effect can be confirmed.

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**References**


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