

People, Spoons, and Hatred: A Reflection of Modern Times

By Timothy Chee Cheng Lui, 2025/07/17

A message from the author:

Dear reader,

Thank you for embarking on this journey that seeks to find truth, and investigates the complex interrelations between love and hatred, spoons and people. The following pursuit for wisdom stems from the curious diversity and peculiarity of spoons present around us. The existence of the humble eating utensil has been found as early as 1000 BC in Egypt. For how else would one neatly transport fluids from culinary vessels to mouths?

31 non-coerced, willing participants embarked in a questionnaire showing great vulnerability and braverism by sharing their souls with the world. They were asked to rate, on a scale from 0-100, the following 32 spoons:



And now you, extractive readers, get to benefit from the results. We will now present a data science analysis, or as I like to call it, gay-ta science analySIS.

Chapter 1: The Lay of the Spoons

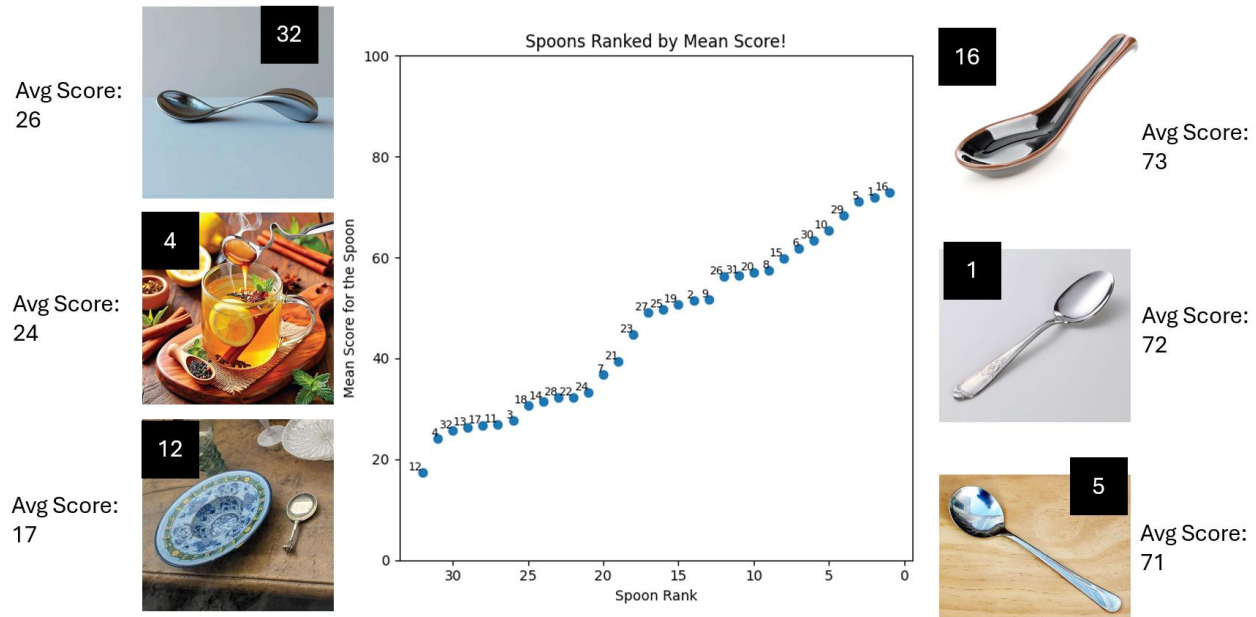


Figure 1: The figure shows the average score (from 0-100) of the spoons, revealing the populace's favorites and least favorite.

- Surprising the head gay-ta scientist, the highest rated spoon was not a traditional metallic spoon. Instead, a sleek Asian spoon, potentially for Miso Soup, enjoyed by many.
- Spoon 1 ranked high, but it was also pseudo-randomly 1st in the survey. Despite being instructed to observe all spoons before commencing the survey, there is a chance that not all spoons were appreciated equally. Its high score could be an outward manifestorium of the early kindness of raters leading to inflated ratings.
- Spoon 12 was abnormally short and came from the medieval ages, reflecting the toxicity of modern beauty standards and revealing the distaste for shorter and older candidates. Thankfully, I'm tall and young.

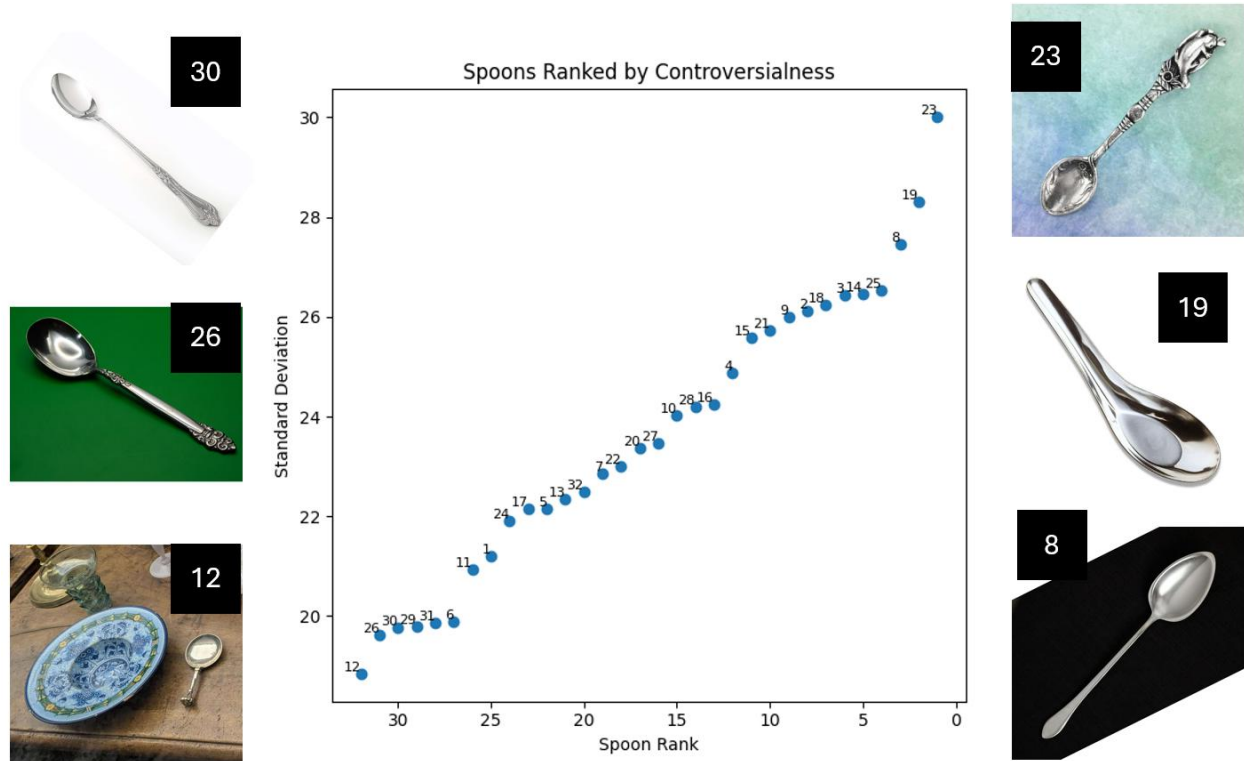


Figure 2: The figure shows the standard deviation in scores received, functioning as a proxy for how controversial each spoon was.

- Hatred brings people together, and unity in the masses is formed through the collective hate for spoon 12.
- Spoon 23 is an ornate, Australian, metal spoon depicting a platypus. The source of its controversy... complex. Do people hate it because it is an egg laying mammal? Or do they hate it because of its beaver tail and its bill?

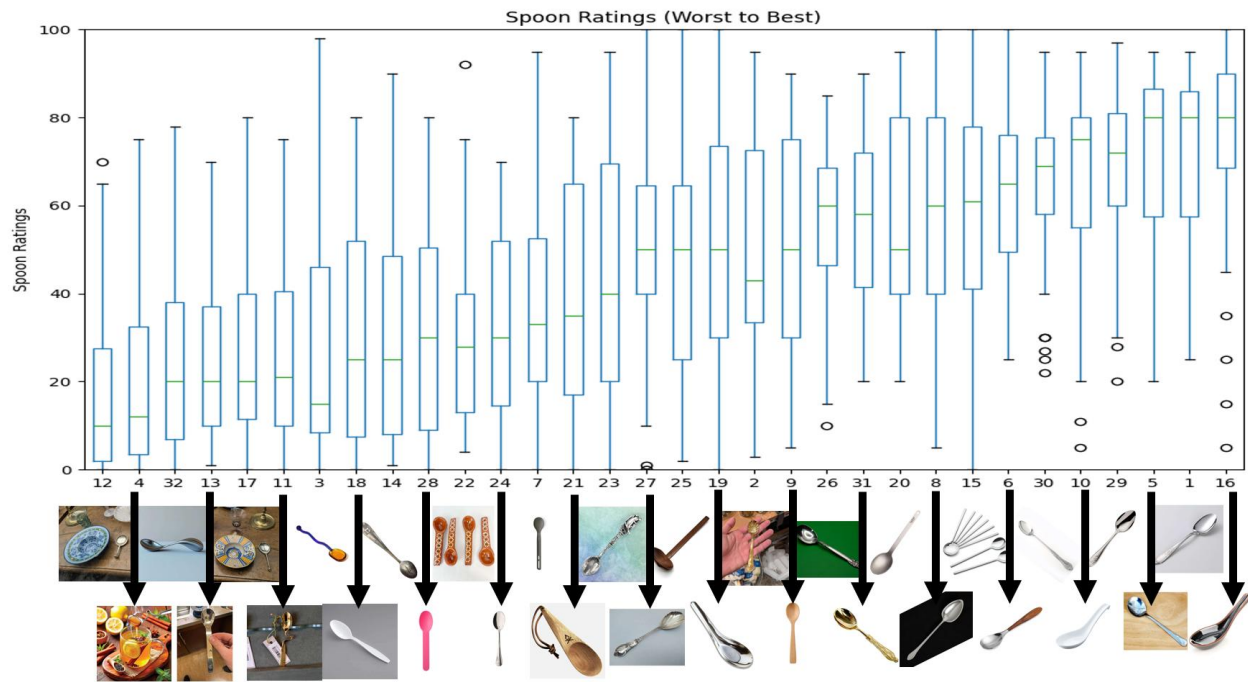


Figure 3: All spoons ordered by ascending mean. Green lines indicate the median, the box indicates the quartiles, and the whiskers indicate the max and min. Outliers are depicted with circles.

- Spoon 16 was rated highest despite having 4 big haters. Impressively, ignoring the 4 haters, it had a high floor and the minimum score was around 50.
- It is insane that spoon 6 is so high, that thing is nasty, the wooden handle disgusts me. I am the bottom whisker having rated it around 30.

Chapter 2: The Raters Behind the Scores

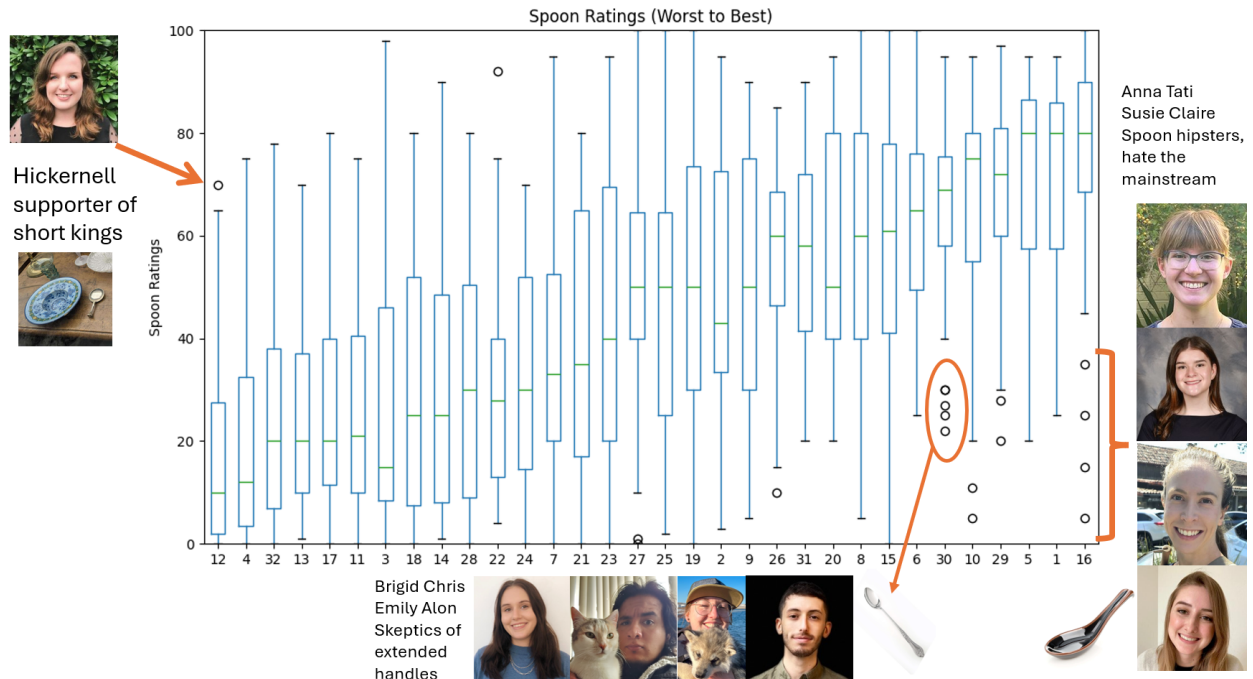


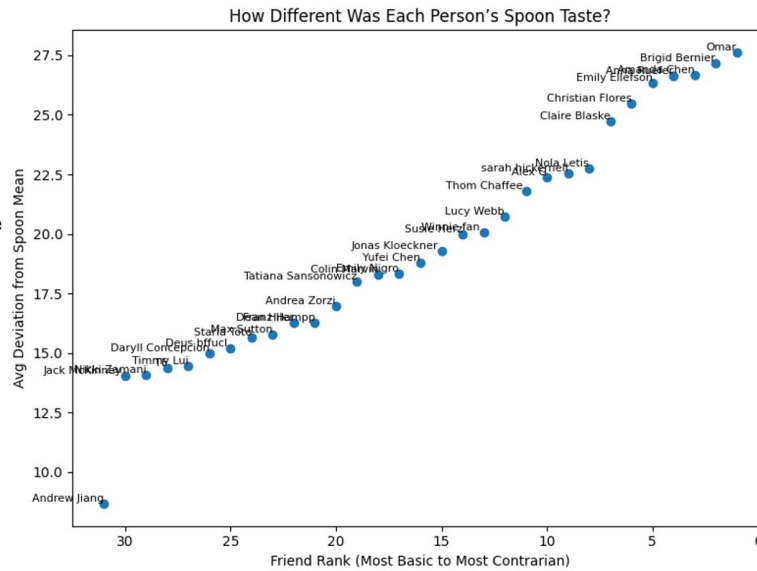
Figure 4: Spoon ratings with annotated comments on specific anomalous individuals.

- While the spoons' ratings reflect on the spoons themselves, they also serve as mirrors to the individuals who rated them.
- Hater squad, Anna Tati Susie and Claire, tried to bring the Asian glazed ceramic soup spoon down, but were still unable to out power the united voices of Asian food lovers.
- Brigid Chris Emily and Alon have never been fans of the ice cream sundaes that come in tall skinny glasses, and find the inclusion of this spoon in the spoon survey disgustifying.
- Hickernell supports short kings like Tom Holland, Bruno Mars, and Danny Devito, and will stand for them just as she stands in defense for Spoon 12, the most hated spoon.

Volleybuds Squad:
Jack Nikki Tom Timmy.
All in harmony with the
collective spoon soul



Andrew, anomalously in tune with the masses



They're not like other
girls,
Omar Brigid Amanda
and Anna,
Most unique taste in
spoons

Figure 5: Each rater was ranked by how different their personal score was to the average score of the group.

- Andrew's score was always less than 9 rating away from the average score of the spoon. Is he a spoon trendsetter? Or just a blind sheep following the norm?
- The Volleybud Squad, a group of 4 friends from Toronto, were the 4 next raters who were aligned with the average. Perhaps harmonious spoon taste implies good teamwork, communication, and volleyball skill?
- Omar Brigid Amanda and Anna were the most contrarian, often being 25 points away from average. For Omar and Anna... that's for different reasons, as seen in the next figure

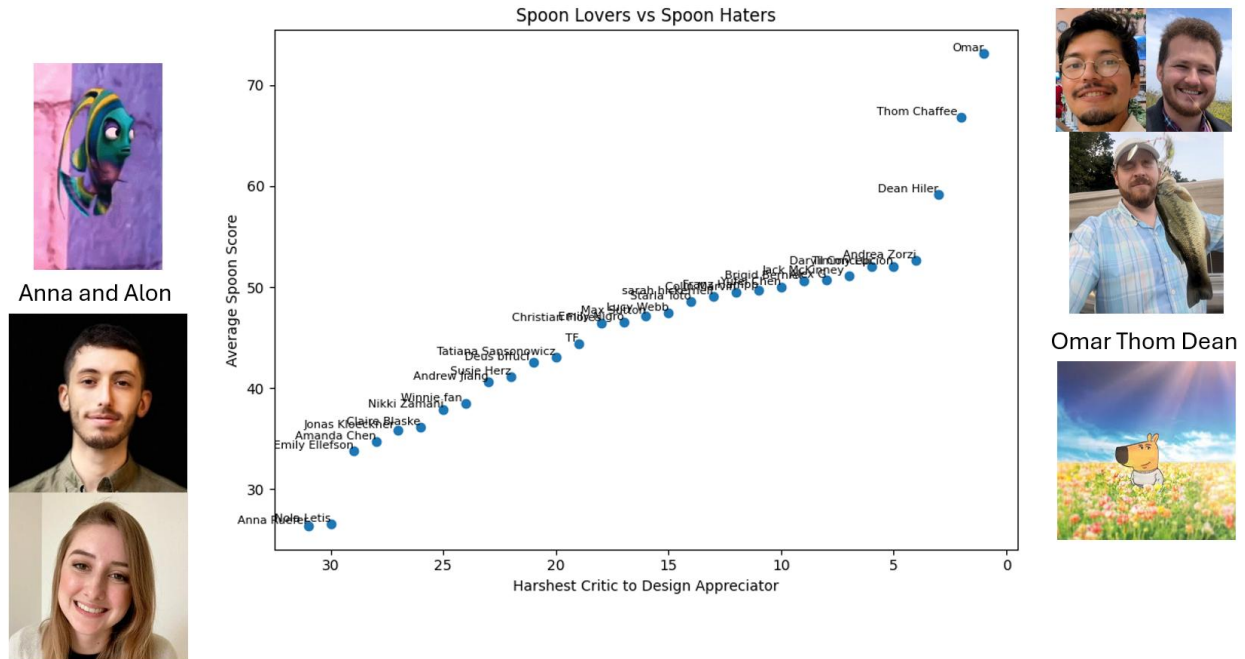


Figure 6: Spoon raters ranked by the average spoon score they gave in the survey.

- Omar and Anna’s uniqueness from the average represent the two wolves inside everyone. One wolf loves and appreciates many diverse spoons. The other hates many spoons, saving their love of spoons for a select few.

Chapter 3: The Principal Components of Preference

The following chapter shows the results of a principal component analysis (PCA) applied on the dataset. If you're familiar with PCAs skip ahead to the graph.

PCA is a data science tool used to express highly dimensional datasets in lower dimensions which can aid in visualization of trends and truths in these hard-to-visualize datasets. The algorithm uses linear combinations to transform the data into axes that optimize for variance maximization. Basically, PC1, one of the axes in the transformed dataset, is supposed to represent the most variance and hence explains the biggest trends underlying the dataset. PC2 is the 2nd axes, and will be the 2nd best explainer of why raters rated the way they did.

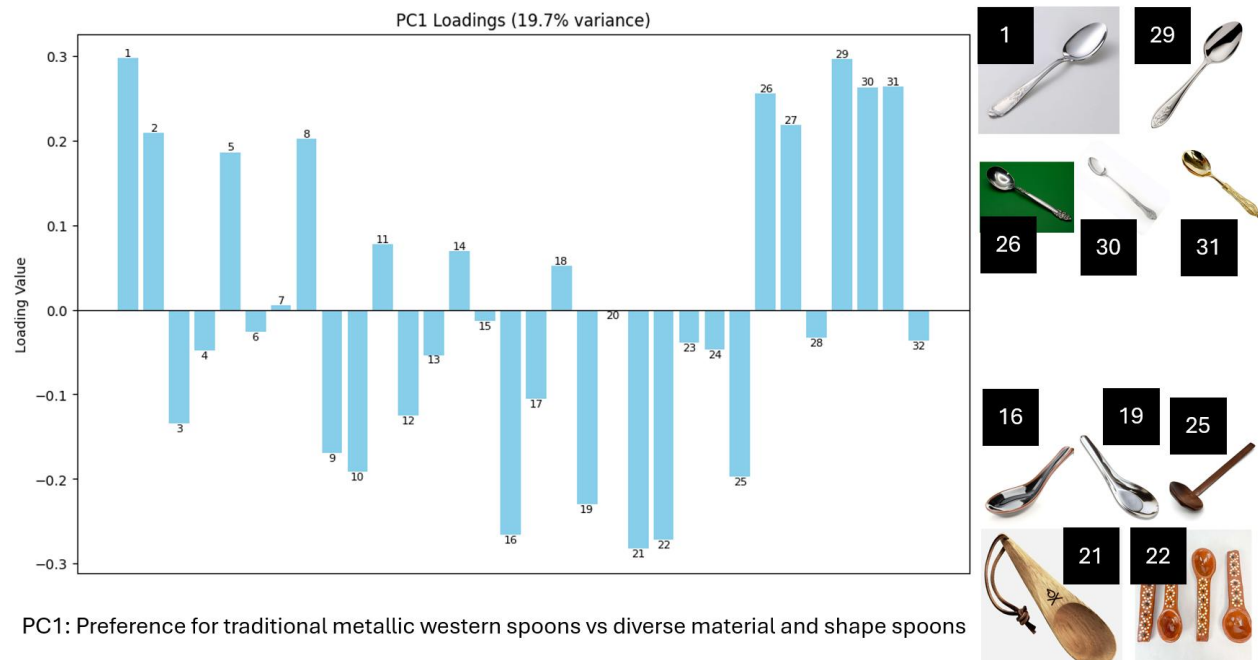


Figure 7: Loadings plot for PC1. Loading values reflect how much a given spoon influences the PC1 score.

- PC1 can ultimately reflect a rater's tendency to prefer traditional metallic western spoons, versus their openness to spoons that are diverse in material and shape.
- In the dataset, people who tended to rate spoon 1 highly, also tended to rate spoons 29, 26, 30, and 31 highly. In contrast, they tended to rate spoons 21, 22, 16, 19, and 25 lowly.
- This dichotomy explains the biggest trend, and the most variance in the dataset. If one were to be asked, "What do you think are the qualities that best predict if someone will like or dislike a spoon?", I do think many of us would expect traditional-metal-spoon-ness is a key predictor of if a spoon will be liked or not.

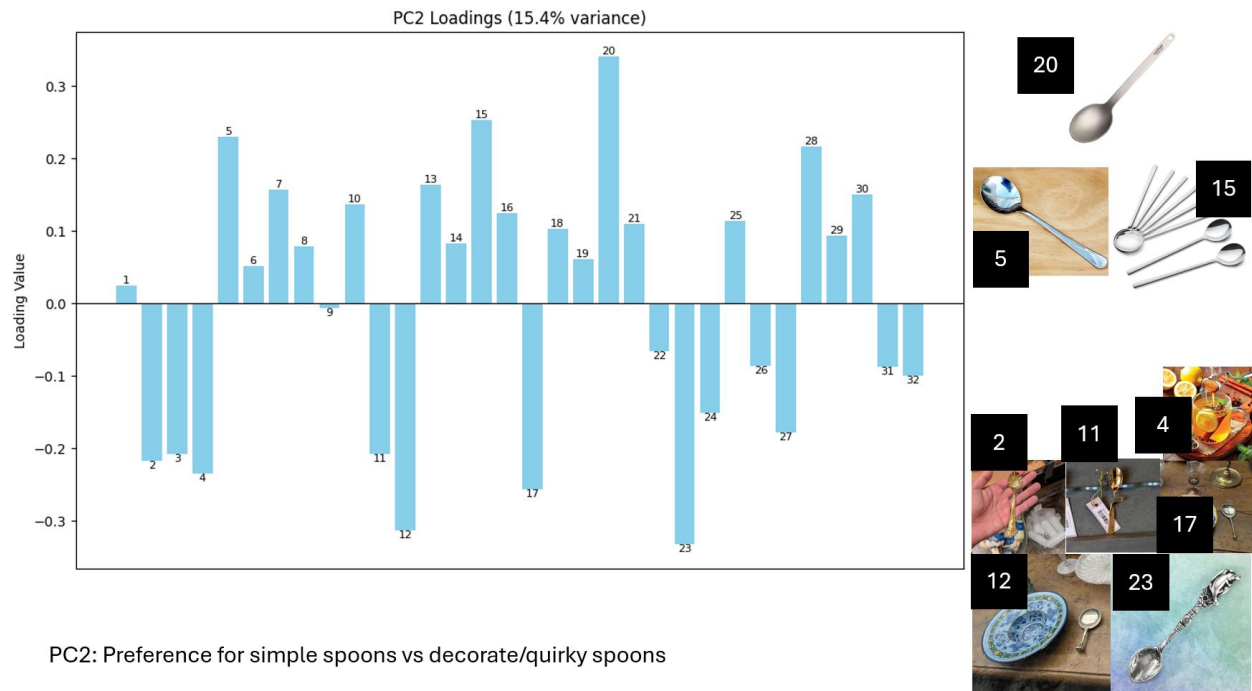


Figure 8. Loadings plot for PC2.

- PC2 now seems to reflect a preference for simpler spoons versus decorate and quirky spoons.
- 20, 15, and 5, the spoons with highest positive loadings for PC2 are all simple with non-decorate handles.
- Whereas spoons [23, 12, 17, 2, 11, 4], despite all being metallic just like [20, 15, 5], are distinct to the traditional spoon. They might be decorated with a platypus like 23, carved like a shell like 2, twisted with a wiggle like 11 and 4, or medieval and unique like 12 and 17.

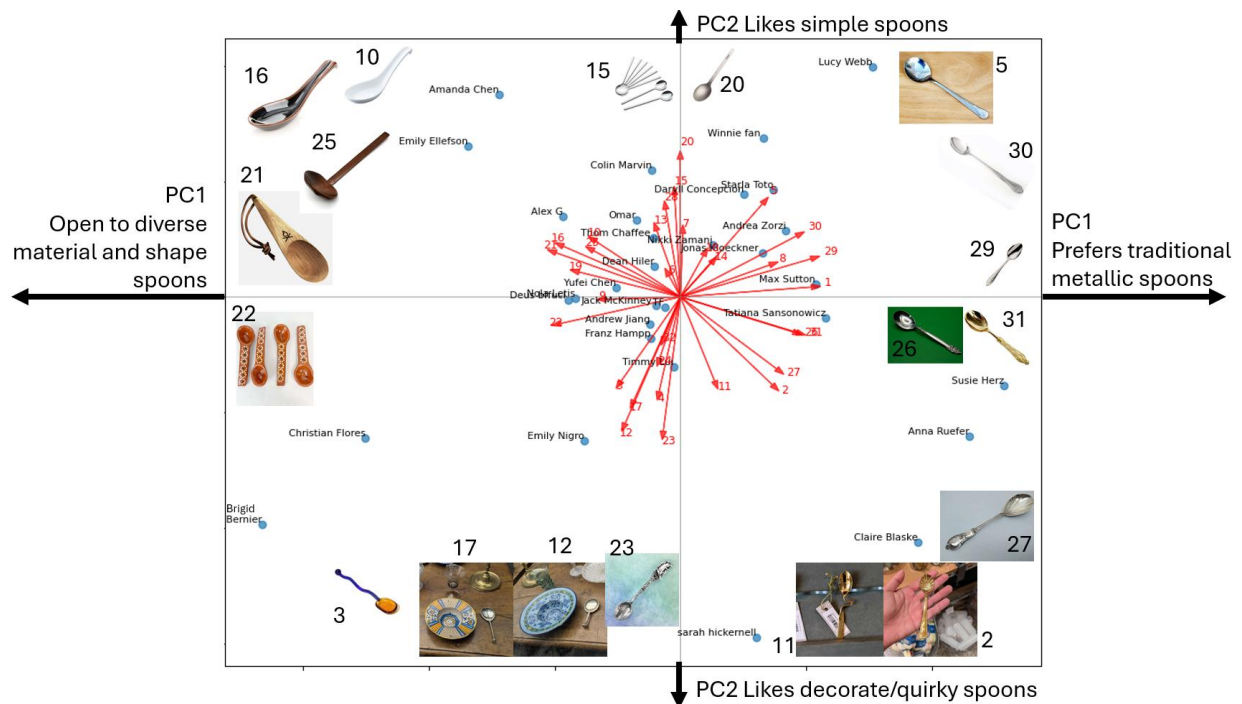


Figure 9. Biplot showing PC1 and PC2. Arrows represent spoons, blue dots represent raters.

- This biplot shows the main axes that explain raters' spoon preferences, and can divide the spectrum of opinions into quadrants.
- [Explanation on biplot, ignore if expert]. The biplot shows PC1 on the x-axis, and PC2 on the y-axis. Blue dots denote each rater and their position on both these axes. Red arrows represent each spoon, and their association to each PC. Arrows that group together mean the spoons tended to be rated similarly. Arrows that point opposite each other mean that if you liked one spoon, you disliked the other.
- I find it fascinating that despite both PCs having been interpreted in 1 dimension, putting 2 PCs together does seem to show spectrum in the spoon. Starting in the top left. Spoons 10, 16, 25... despite being unique material and shape, they are still relatively simple just like 5 and 30. As we move clockwise to the right, we can see that we get more metallic yet still simple spoons, and at the top right we get our most common and classically accepted spoons. Then as we go down, we see more decorate and quirky spoons, with 29 26 and 31 having pretty minimal decorateness (just some etching on the handles), until 27 and 2 with seashell texture. Moving left we start becoming more diverse and less traditional, and designs start to include wigglyness, platypuses, and even being made of glass. Finally we end the cycle by going back up to simpler spoons despite being unique material, showing how spoons exist in some sort of a continuum. And I think it's beautiful that the data was able to reflect continuum to some degree.
- With this we can now see what quadrants people belong to. Brigid Chris and Emily are the monarchs of diverse material, decorate spoons. Claire Anna and Susie enjoy quirky metallic spoons, while Lucy and Winnie prefer their metal spoons simple. Amanda and Emily are open to more diverse materials, as long as they're simple.

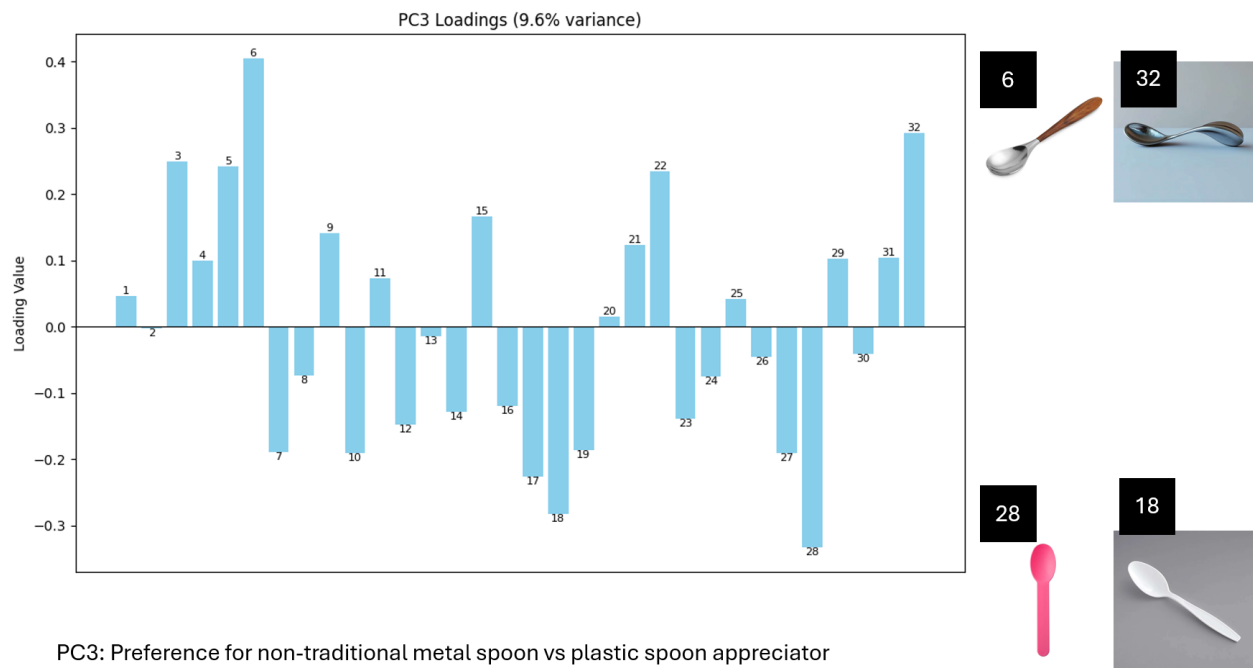


Figure 10. Loadings plot for PC3.

- We can explore more PCs, but as we do, the variance explained by the PC decreases and we are getting into nicher and harder to interpret territory. Thankfully PC3 still shows some amount of meaning, being anchored by 6 and 32 vs 28 and 18.
- PC3 hence seems to show, in the realm of non-traditionally metallic spoon, are you likelier to support a weird metal spoon (like ones with a disgusting, nasty wooden handle) or plastic spoons?

Chapter 4: Spoonmates (Spoon + Soulmates)

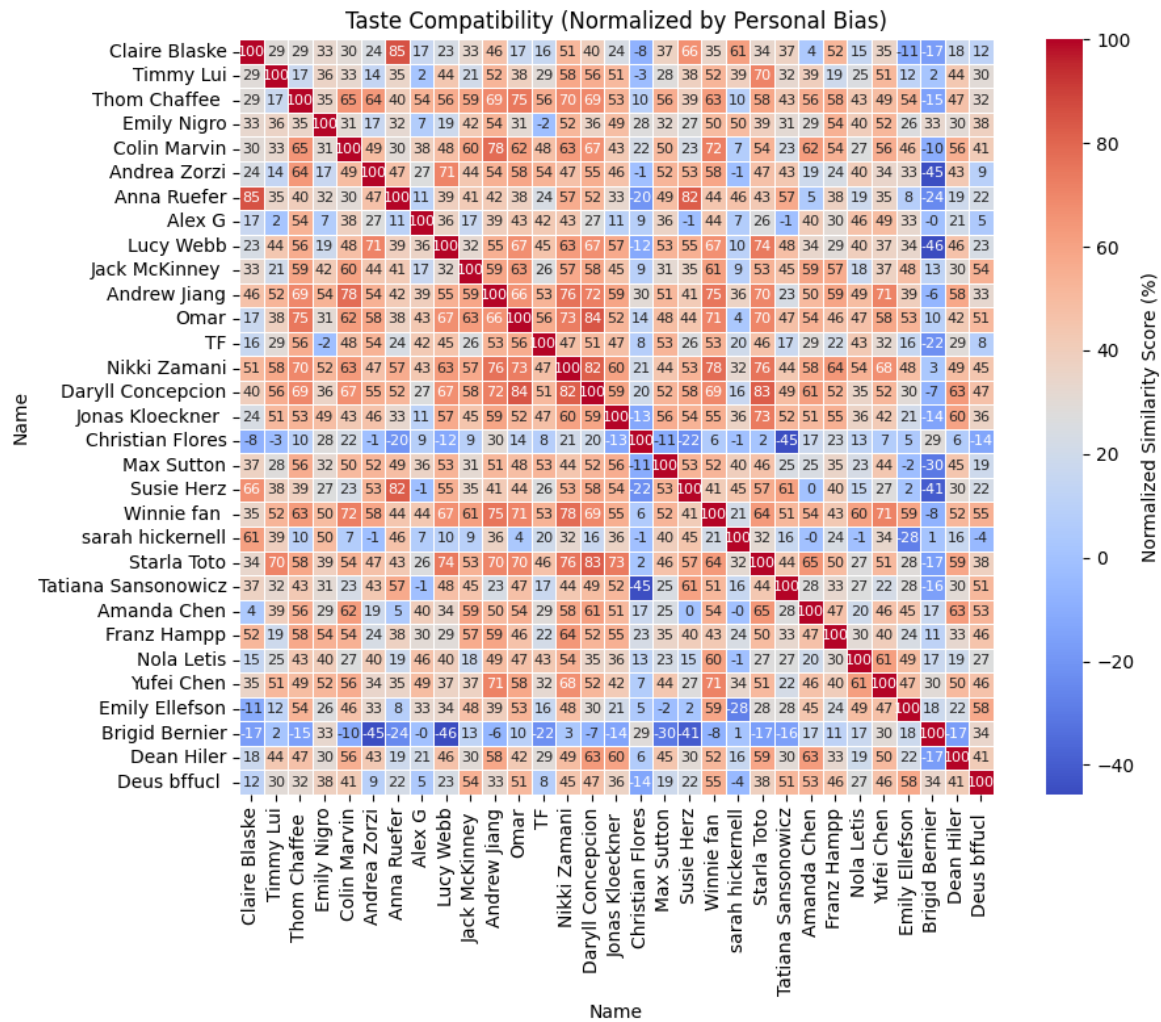


Figure 11. Pairwise compatibility matrix after Gaussian normalization for each rater.

- In order to assess who you are most spoon compatible too, we can assess the distance between pairs of people, aka, how different 2 people's responses were for every spoon. However, this would mean spoon lovers are in general closer to spoon lovers (people who on average tend to rate high), and spoon haters to spoon haters. Hence, we normalize each person so that all their scores have a mean of zero and stdev of 1, and then we calculate the score distances.

Top 7 Most Compatible Pairs		
Claire Blaske	Anna Ruefer	0.85
Omar	Daryll Concepcion	0.84
Daryll Concepcion	Starla Toto	0.83
Anna Ruefer	Susie Herz	0.82
Nikki Zamani	Daryll Concepcion	0.82
Colin Marvin	Andrew Jiang	0.78
Nikki Zamani	Winnie Fan	0.78

Bottom 7 Least Compatible Pairs		
Lucy Webb	Brigid Bernier	-0.46
Andrea Zorzi	Brigid Bernier	-0.45
Christian Flores	Tatiana Sansonowicz	-0.45
Susie Herz	Brigid Bernier	-0.41
Max Sutton	Brigid Bernier	-0.30
Sarah Hickernell	Emily Ellefson	-0.28
Anna Ruefer	Brigid Bernier	-0.24