

Chapter 6

Short-Term Sexual Strategies

1. Theories Concerning Males' Behaviors

Economy of S-T Mating

One year of aggressive short-term mating:

Men: Many pregnancies

Women: Only one pregnancy

A man with two children:

One S-T copulation can increase his Reproductive Success
by 50%

Male Reproductive Success increases more by many partners
Rather than many children per partner

Costs of S-T Mating for Men

Disease

Social Reputation reducing ability to find L-T Mate

Survival of Children from lack of **Paternal Investment**

Violence from Jealous Husband

Violence from father or brother of woman

Retaliatory affairs by Woman & Divorce

Adaptive Problems for Men

1. Partner Number

Motivational

Relaxation of Standards

Age

Intelligence

Present Involvement of Woman

Minimal Time Constraints

2. Accessibility – Low demands for Time

Prudishness

Inexperience

Low Sex Drive

Adaptive Problems for Men, cont.

3. Identifying Fertility

Hx:

- Younger Women preferred for L-T Strategy
Greater **Reproductive Value**
- Somewhat older women preferred for S-T Strategy
Greater **Fertility**

4. Avoiding Commitment

Physiological Evidence for S-T Mating

1. Testicular Size – Per Sperm Competition
Implies both sexes engaged in S-T Strategies
2. Variation in Sperm Count:
 - Increase with separation
 - At time of increased chance of presence of competitor's sperm
 - Independent of last ejaculation
 - Sperm count adjusted to replace number lost since last insemination – Maintains constant sperm environment

Physiological Evidence for S-T Mating cont.

3. Baker & Bellis, *Human Sperm Competition*, '95

Cone-headed sperm:

Swim well, Inseminate egg

Coil-tail sperm:

Occlude migration pathway

Increase in proportion when cuckoldry more likely

Reduces subsequent sperm retention

Psychological Evidence for S-T Mating

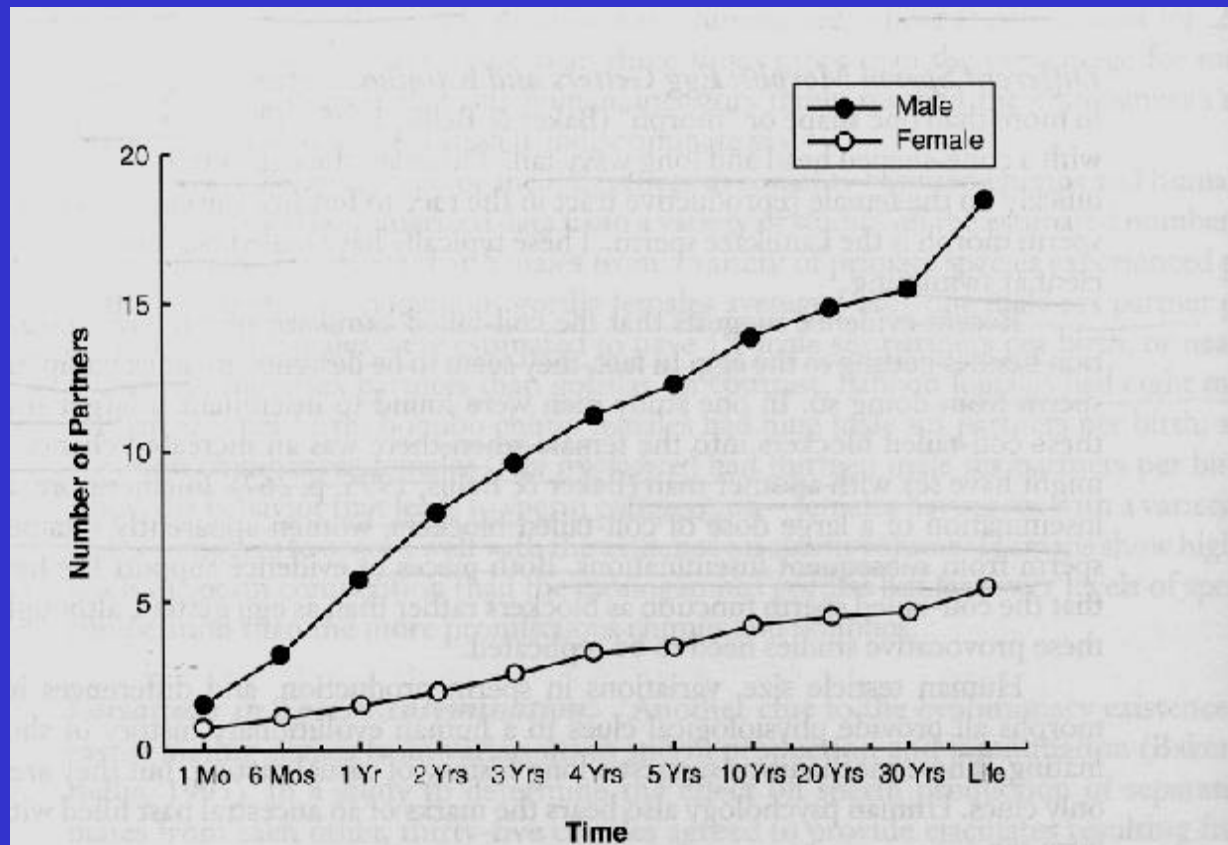
1. **Desire for variety:**

Men desire more partners at every time interval
1mo. To Entire live
Difference increases with interval

2. **Duration of Time Knowing Partner:**

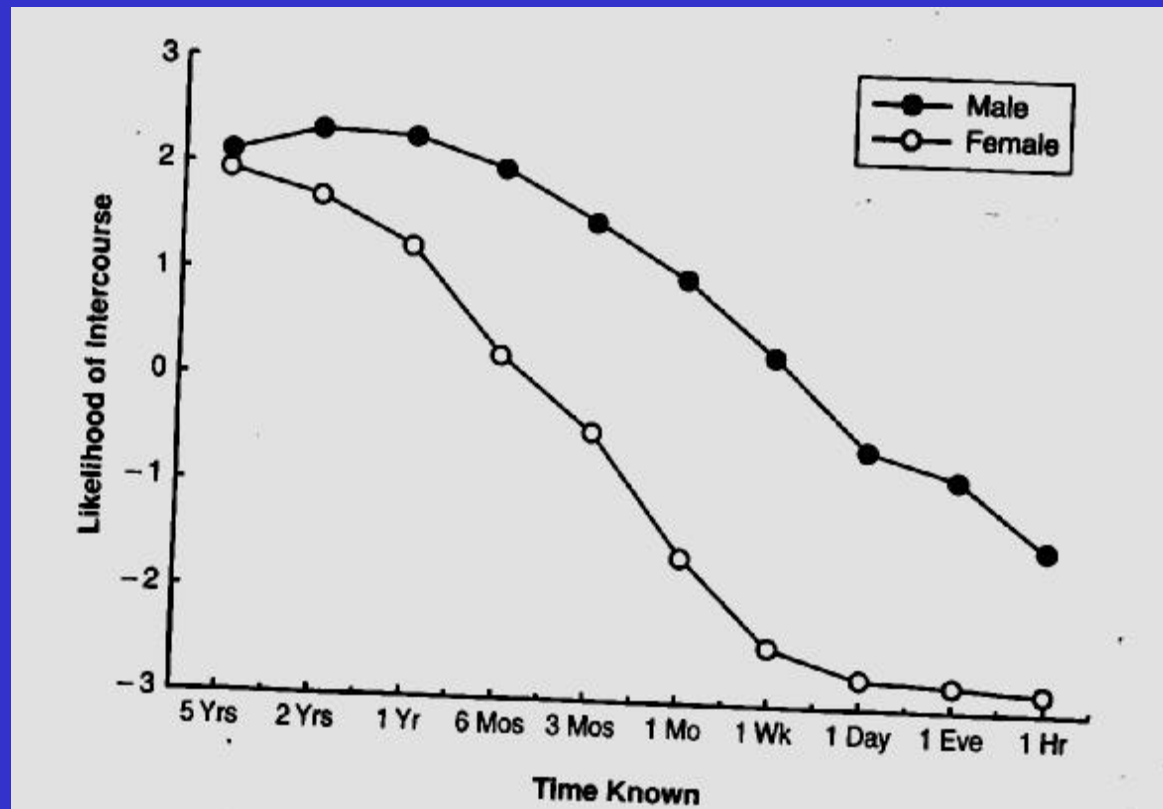
Lower threshold for having sex at every interval
Convergence at 5yrs.

Number of Sexual Partners Desired



Psychological Review, Buss & Schmitt (1993)

Probability of Consenting to Sex



Psychological Review, Buss & Schmitt (1993)

Psychological Evidence for S-T Mating cont.

3. Lowered Standards for S-T Mating:

Increases number of available partners

College Men have 4yr wider window

Men: 16-28yrs (vs. 17-25yrs for committed relationship)

Women: 18-26

Women rate 1/3 of 61 undesirable characteristics more strictly

e.g.: Promiscuity, bisexuality (vs. L-T Mating)

Only 4 rated more harshly by men:

e.g.: Low sex drive, need for commitment, hairiness

The last correlates negatively with fecundity

Psychological Evidence for S-T Mating cont.

4. Closing-Time Phenomenon:

Perception of attractiveness increases as bars close

As availability diminishes

Occurs in both Males and Females

Not an Artifact of alcohol (Confound, Secondary Variable)

5. Sexual Fantasies:

More frequent in Men

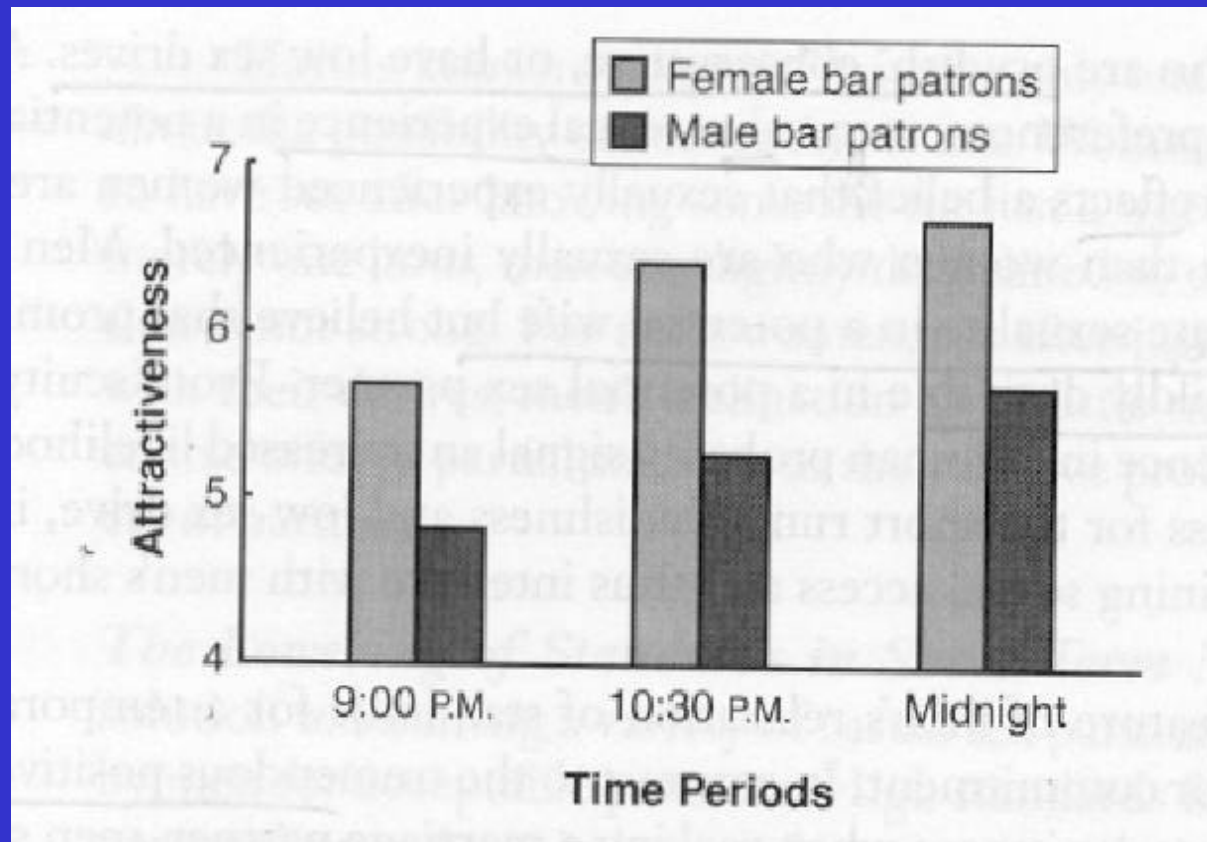
More likely to involve strangers, anonymous, changing, and multiple Partners

Women's focus on emotionality and personal involvement

Reflect L-T Strategy

Closing Time

Females as
the selecting
sex



Those
Being
Rated

Controlling for Number of Drinks

Behavioral Data on S-T Mating Strategies

1. Husbands have more affairs:

Kinsey et al. (1953): 50% vs. 26%

Athanasίου et al. (1970): 40% vs. 36% (N = 8000)

Hite (1987): 75% vs. 70%

Hunt (1974): 41% vs. 18% (N = 982♣ & 1044👉)

Consistency across time (incident & frequency)

High variability in percentages reflect sampling differences

Promiscuity, continued

“There seems to be no question but that the human male would be promiscuous in his choice of sexual partners throughout the whole of his life if there were no social restrictions...The human female is much less interested in a variety of partners.” (Kinsey, et al., 1948)

Do you buy it?

Do male homosexuals reflect the unfettered male propensity?

What about lesbians?

- Less promiscuity?
- If so, does this reflect an evolved difference in propensity?

Prostitution?

Males the overwhelming consumer in all cultures studied

Kinsey:

69% of American Males, 15% regularly (sampling?)

Female percentage too low to report

Women's Short-Term Mating Strategy

A man with 2 children can increase his reproductive success with
A single casual encounter

A woman cannot increase her reproductive success by dozens of
Casual affairs (assuming her husband is O.K.)

Yet every affair requires an equal number of males & females:

- If males have a greater propensity, some females must be highly promiscuous (V.A. data)
- What are the benefits to females?

Data on S-T Mating Behavior

- Time of extra-marital copulation:
 - Tends to coincide with ovulation (N = 3679)
 - Confound: Women's libido increases at ovulation
 - What is increase relative to increased activity with husband?
 - What does being on the pill do to such timing?
- 20%-50% across studies
- Exists in all but most restrictive societies
- Exists in all tribal societies
- Sperm volume in primates (indexed by size of testes) correlates with Promiscuity of females (large in human males)
- Orgasms promote sperm retention from 65% to 70%

What are Hypothesized Benefits?

1. Resources:
 - Economic
 - Protection
 - Status elevation
2. Genetics
 - Diverse Genes
 - Sexy Sons
3. Mate Switching
 - Expulsion
 - Replacement
 - Backup
4. Mate Skill Acquisition (learning Techniques & Male Preferences)
5. Mate manipulation (Increasing Commitment; Revenge)

1. Resources

Does obscuring paternity lead to increased resources from more than one male?

- Primary male may not be around when protection is needed
- Elevated importance of immediate resources in S-T relationships in women

But finding a more desirable partner (L-T?) ranked only 4th

Sexual gratification ranked highest benefit (Not central to any hypothesis)

Common Context of affair:

Better financial prospects of new male

Husband who could not hold down a job

(S-T or L-T strategy?)

2. Genetic Benefits

- Enhanced Fertility, relative to L-T mate?
- Mating with high-status (sexy male) producing sexy male offspring?
Enhanced mate prospects
- Genetic diversity of offspring prepares for altering environmental contingencies?

How do you test these hypotheses?

No empirical support

3. Mate Switching

Since males tend to divorce cheating mates:

- Tactic to expel & replace mate
- As he declines in **Mate Value** per resource procurement

Data:

Women ranked perceived likely benefits of extra-pair mating:

- Easier to break up 6/28
- Increases likelihood of obtaining more desirable mate 4/28
(Sexual gratification 1st, but not central to any theory)

4. Mate Skill Acquisition

- Acquisition Skills
- Data Acquisition vis-à-vis what make for a good mate
Determining what she wants in a male

Short-term mating strategy correlates +0.50 with perceived enhancement of mate attraction skills
(Sexuality Orientation Inventory; SOI)

5. Mate Manipulation

1. Revenge for infidelity
2. Keeping Mate in line
 - Rated unlikely to be successful
 - Leading cause of divorce across cultures

Within Gender Variance

Women pursuing S-T Strategy perceive benefits more highly

Resources:

Sexual Experimentation	r=0.51
Orgasm success	r=0.47
More attractive partner	r=0.39
Career advancement	r=0.40
Material acquisition	r=0.45 -- r=0.35
Partner Value	r=0.29 (fired); r=0.25 (income); r=0.24 (ill)
Attraction Skills:	r=0.50

Such women perceive costs as less:

Reputation	r=-0.47
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S-T Strategy & Context Variance

1. Life Transition

Data collection vis-à-vis:

Own mate value

Effective strategies

Practicing skills

Determining preferences

- Adolescence -- Occurs in many cultures, sometimes encouraged
- Post-divorce – Re-Asses one's mate value (effect of children?)
- Status Elevation – Enhanced mate value

Context, continued

2. Sex Ratio

Relatively fewer men (e.g. war; differential remarriage with age):

Males shift to S-T Strategy per many available women

E.G. Highly Promiscuous Ache males (50% more women)

When males become surplus:

- Both sexes shift toward L-T Strategies
- Stable marriages
- Fewer divorces

Context, continued

3. Self-perceptions

High Mate-Value Men:

Earlier intercourse

More partners since puberty

More partners per year

Receive more solicitations

More frequent

Less propensity for attachment to partner

Higher SOI scores => Greater S-T orientation

No correlations with mate-value among women!

Same behaviors correlate with Low Self-Esteem

(Wouldn't Self-Esteem be correlated with perceived Mate-Value?)