

# X Long-Term Mating Strategies

“...the investing sex – females – determines the direction in which the species will evolve...the ultimate arbiter of when..how often and with whom [she mates.]” Sarah Hrdy, 1981

It *Your* Fault!

# Converging Evidence Across Species

## **African Weaverbird:**

- Males build nest and flap wings & sing to attract Xs
- If multiple rejections, destroys & rebuilds nest

# What Accounts for Sexual Reproduction?

Asexual reproduction:

- Have full genetic complement
- Mating costs avoided

Sexual reproduction:

Genetic diversity

Simultaneous occupancy of diverse niches

Reduced intra-species/sibling competition

Parasite (“Leading”) Theory of Sexual Reproduction:

As parasites adapt to Host, Host changes across generations

Progressive mutual counter adaptations

# Sexual Selection from Differential Parental Investment

Gender defined by relative size of gamete:

Male:

- Small
- Numerous (Men: 12 Million/hour)
- Mobile

Females:

- Large
- Restricted (Women: 400 ova)
- Stationary
- Nutrient (per fruit)

# Females Invest More Control Selection

Pregnancy is Obligatory and Costly/Risky (energy)

Breastfeeding up to four years

Value defined by greater Costs & Investment

Greater Discrimination follows greater Value

Evolution favors greater discrimination in Females

Greater reproductive success

Vs. males who bear little cost for lack of discrimination

Yet could have much success

# Triver's Theory of Parental Investment

- More investing sex is more discriminating
- Less investing sex is more competitive for desirable females
- Long-term mating (marriage)
  - Both sexes investing
  - Both sexes discriminating

# Divergent Validity

Male Mormon cricket produces large, nutrient gametes

Costly to male, desirable to female

- Females compete for males
- Males more discriminating than females

Selected females have 60% more eggs than rejected females

# What do Women Prefer? What Cues do they Use?

What is associated with Resources (across human evolution)?

- Financial prospects
- High Social Status
- Age
- Ambition/Industriousness
- Dependability/Stability
- Athleticism
- Good Health
- Love
- Willingness to Invest in Children



# Preference for Economic Resources

“Perhaps no other topic has received as much research attention in Evolutionary Psychology.”

Since men compete for valuable females

Pressure for co-evolution of these preferred characteristics

# Converging Evidence Across Species

Male Shrikes amass food and nesting materials during mating season

- Females entirely avoid males without resources
- Can alter mating patterns by altering relative cache size

# Evolved Preferences in Women

1. Resources must have been accruable, defensible, & controllable  
Across human history
2. Variability across men in (1) resources, (2) willingness to share
3. Advantages of one male exceeds advantages of multiple partners

Females with preferences for characteristic associated with

(1) Resources (2) Generosity

Must have out re-produced others

Otherwise preferences would not become an Adaptive Strategy

# Monogamy Must Have Resulted in More Resources

Resources unlikely to be acquired from temporary partners:

- Food, shelter, territory
- Tutoring: Hunting, social competence
- Status: Reciprocal alliances

Men invest in women & offspring unlike any other primate  
(Vervets: Matrilineal status)

# What are the Cues to Resources & Sharing?

**Women rate economic resources in mates twice as highly as do men:  
Reflects difference in Inclusive Fitness Needs & Adaptive Strategy**

Consistent across generations & geography (Convergence)

Consistent across situations

- Dating
- Sexual relationship
- Steady Dating
- Marriage

Minimal acceptable earning capacity among college students

- 70 percentile for females
- 40 percentile for males

# Universally Expressed

Women 11x more likely to seek resources in personal ads

Women place 2x importance on financial prospects

Across

- Continents
- Political systems
- Economic systems (Socialism)
- Racial or Religious Groups
- Mating traditions (e.g.: polygyny)

(Buss, 1994; Buss & Schmitt, 1993)

# Social Status as a Cue

- Control of Resources
- Social opportunities for offspring

Across 186 societies (Pygmies to Eskimos)

Status associated with:

- Resources
  - Better nourishment for offspring
  - More wives
  - Better quality mates
- (Betzig, 1986)

# Social Status, continued

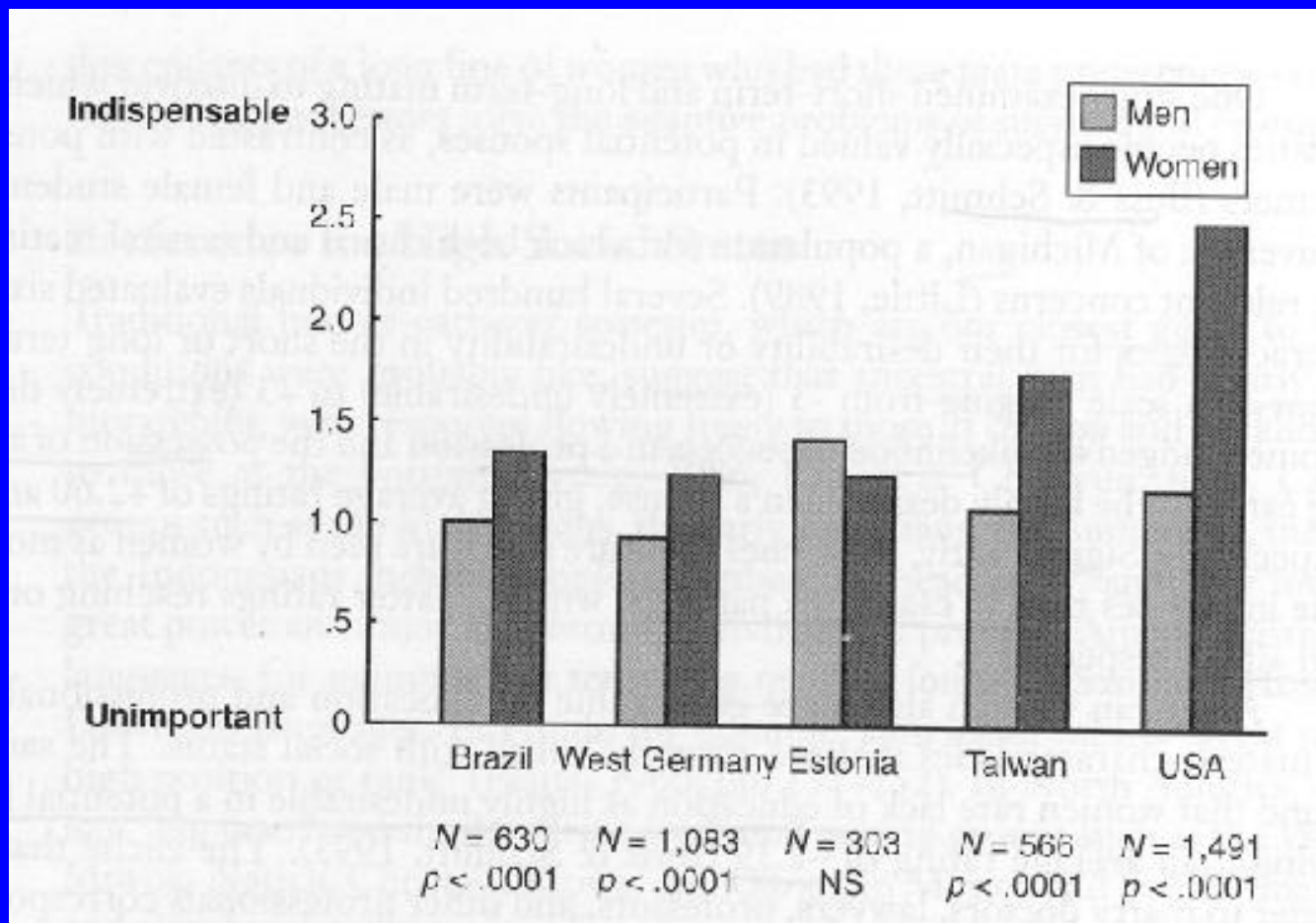
- U.S. women rate status almost as highly as financial prospects
  - Men did not rate status highly
  - Similar in vast majority of 37 cultures
  - Across ethnicity, economic structure, religion, region
- Professional success and promise rated highly
  - But much less so for casual sex partners
- Lack of education rated highly undesirable

The question is not **IF**, but **WHY**

- **Universality** indicates an evolved psychological adaptation
  - Not cultural learning
- **Sex Differences** indicates different adaptive needs



# Preference for Social Status In Marriage Partner



# Age as Cue

Across all 37 cultures

Women prefer older men by an average of 3.5 yrs

Worldwide difference in age at marriage 3yrs

Tiwi of Australia

Age thirty before first wife

Age Forty before supplemental wives

H1: Preference linked to physical strength

Peaks in mid-twenties

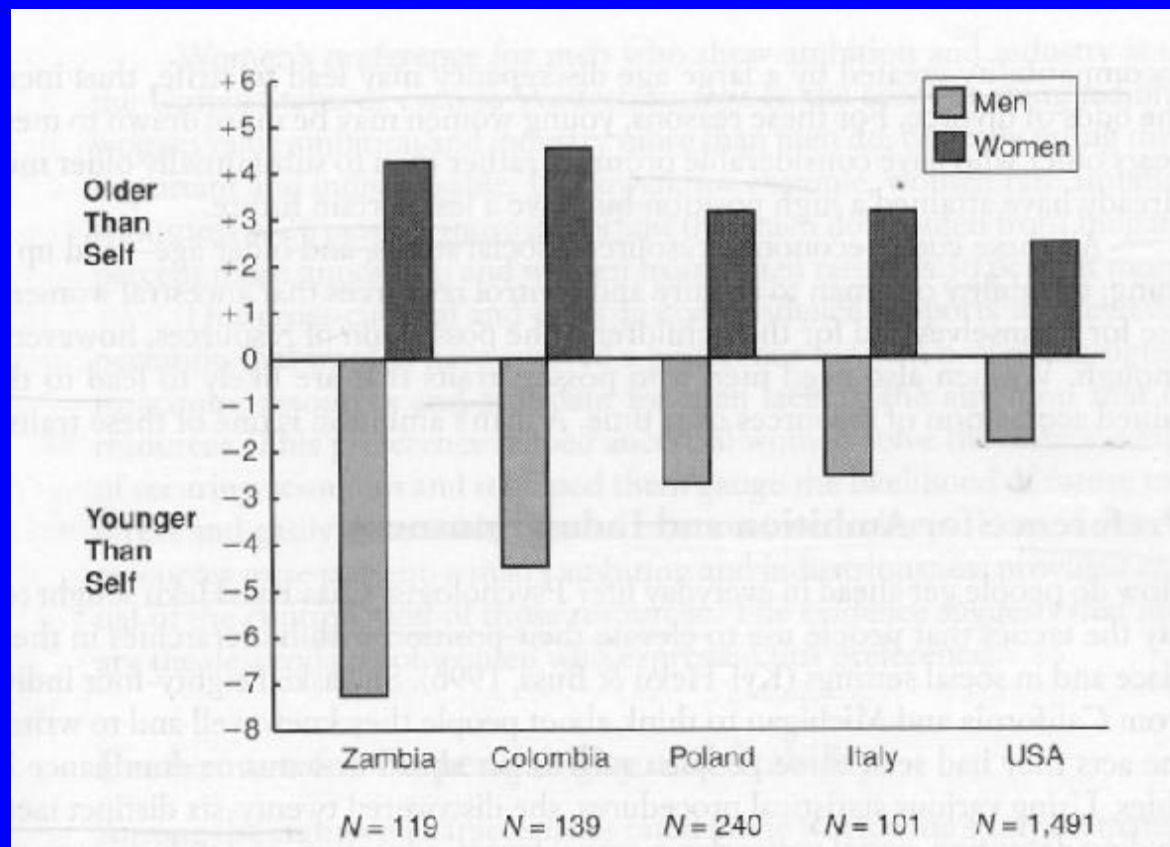
H2: Preference linked to hunting skills

Peaks in mid-thirties

Decline offset compensated by experience

Interest in older men may be limited by increased mortality

# Age Preference in Mates



# Ambition & Industriousness as Cues

Cues to **Sustained** resources over time

Hard work is best predictor of past & future income/promotions

Correlates with educational attainment, annual salaries,  
and occupational status

Mate preference across 5,000 undergraduates, 👍 > ❌:

- Enjoy their work
- Career orientation
- Demonstrate industry
- Display ambition

# Ambition & Industriousness as Cues, continued

Married & unmarried U.S. Women unanimous:

Rate ambition & industriousness as important or indispensable

Women regard lack of ambition as extremely undesirable

In both short-term & long-term relationships

Men view absence in wife as neither desirable nor undesirable

Not a question of “IF,” but “WHY?”

Cognitive (conscious) decision or Innate Propensity?

# Differential Need for Dependability & Stability

- Worldwide, Dependability & Emotional Stability rank 1 & 2 Following Love
- 21/37 cultures: 🚫 & 👍 rate Dependability equally  
In 15/16 cultures where ratings are differential, 👍 > 🚫
- 14/37 cultures: 🚫 & 👍 rate Stability equally  
In cultures where ratings are differential, all (23) 👍 > 🚫

# Emotional Instability in Men

- Monopolize resources
- Verbally & physically abusive
- More affairs (diverting resources)

As characterized by themselves (!), spouse, & interviewer

# Athleticism as a Cue to Resources & Protection?

Male gladiator frogs: Build & defend nest

Females do the courting by trying to knock down male

Mating decision based upon fortitude of male

Baboons: Preferential sexual access to ♂ protecting 👍 & offspring

Women:

- Prefer stronger men (cue) for both short-term & L-T relationships  
1.50 vs. 0.87 (-3 - +3 scale)
- Prefer taller men for S-T & L-T relationships  
80% of personal ads mentioning height --  $\geq 6''$   
Ads by taller men get more responses  
Taller men date more often, have more selection  
Mehinaku (Amazon) 👍 go by wrestling skills for love & marriage



# Health as a Cue

Poor health signals:

Debilitation

Death

Communicable disease

Less hearty genes

**Costly** displays signal health

Peacock plumage negatively correlated with parasite load

Facial & bodily symmetry signal good health, per:

Genetic, *in utero*, & *post partum* stressors (developmental stability)

Future resilience to infection & other illnesses

(Resources, Infection transmission, Strong genes)

# Is this Cues Accurate?

Facial symmetry positively correlated with:

- Physiological, Psychological, & Emotional Health  
(Actual, not perceived)  
(Shackelford & Larsen, 1997)
- Physical Attractiveness in both sexes
- Males:
  - Earlier intercourse
  - More Sexual partners
  - More extra-pair copulation

# Love: A Recent, “Western,” Cultural Development?

- A cue to resource commitment and fidelity?  
Commitment associated with love by both men & women
- Highest ordinal rating across cultures for both sexes
- Necessary when all other requirements met
  - 89% of American women
  - 82% of Japanese women (arranged marriages?)
  - 59% of Russian women

Methodology: How is Love defined across cultures?

Pavlov?

Is there a difference between Men & Women?

# Cues for Child Investment

Issue for women: Investment in another woman's child  
Emotional Fidelity

Issue for men: Investment in another man's child  
Sexual Fidelity

Women rate men as more attractive when posed attending to child  
Used in female oriented advertising

Methodology:

- Same male in all photos

- Other domestic activities rated (vacuuming)

Men's ratings indifferent to identical poses

- What are men looking for?

- Interactions among variables the most informative