Men’s Long-Term Mating Strategy

What are the Adaptive Advantages?

In conflict with S-T Adaptive Strategy
A general Rule

Must Interact with Female L-T Adaptive Strategies
Symbiosis
What are Benefits to Men of L-T Strategy

1. **Conforms to L-T Strategy of Women**

   Failure to demonstrate commitment may fail to attract women “Tuning”

   An exclusive S-T strategy must be costly

   Relative benefits of L-T Strategy must outweigh the costs of Commitment
2. **Increases Quality and Range of Women they attract**
   Per Female Mating Strategies
   Especially of Highly Desirable Women
   Trading S-T Strategy for More Desirable Women

3. **Increasing odds of paternity**
   Repeated Access and Exclusivity
   Per investment of resources in one’s own genes

4. **Increasing Survival of Offspring (Genes)**
   Result of greater resource investment
   Hence, propensity for L-T Strategies is transmitted to children
Benefits of L-T Strategy cont.

Surviving offspring inherit:
  Competence of Father (non-genetic transmittal)
  Political Alliances
  E.G.: Arranged Marriages
Assessing Fertility & Reproductive Value

**Non-Human Primates:**
- Can assess ovulation (Swelling of genitals and olfactory cues)
- Mate at ovulation

**Humans:**
- Cannot detect ovulation (?)
- Mate around cycle without bias
- Assess capability of conceiving
  Rather than ovulation
Reproductive Value:
Number of children likely to have in future (Potential)

Fertility:
Number of Viable offspring produced (Performance)
Peaks in mid-twenties

Youth and Health may correlate with Reproductive Value
Men’s Mate Preference

Many similarities to women’s Mate Preference
   Intelligence
   Kindness
   Understanding
   Health

Prefer Shared Characteristics (as do Women)
   Values
   Attitudes
   Personality
   Religious Beliefs
Men’s Mate Preferences cont.

Adaptive Mating Problems different for Ancestral Men and Women

Predicts diverging mate preferences in Contemporary Men and Women
Preference for Youth

• Cue to Reproductive value
• Universal among American Men
• College Students prefer women 2&1/2yrs younger (Buss & Others) 1939-1988
  Across entire country
• Yanomamo Indians: Postpubescent but nulliparous

• Universal across 37 societies (Buss, ‘89)
  • Average preference for women 2&1/2yrs younger
  • Correlates with female preference for older men
    • Symbiosis
Preference for Youth cont.

Scandinavians: 1-2yrs younger
Nigerians and Zambians: 61/2-7yrs younger

Polygyny (Not Polygamy)
Requires more resources, hence age
Women with high Reproductive Value become
Progressively younger relative to the man’s age

Personal Ads:
Age sought after by men
Age gap widens with age of man

Youth is not the Goal
Indirect Index of Reproductive Value or Fertility
Preference for Youth cont.

**Hypothesis:** Teen Males should prefer Older women

**Subjects:** 103 males, 106 females; 12-19yrs of age

**Manipulation:** Imagine a date
   Assume she is interested in you
   Parental permission and Money not a factor

**Data:** Would you date someone your own age? –1, -2yrs, etc.
   +1, +2yrs, etc.
Maximal acceptable age?
Ideal Age of most attractive person?
Preference for Youth cont.

**Outcome:**
1. More willing to accept dates with older women
2. Most attractive age was several years older
3. Occurs in Absence of Older women expressing Any interest in dating younger males
Preference for Youth cont.

Alternative explanations for desiring younger women less plausible

1. Easier to control and less dominant:
   Would expect teenage males to prefer younger females

2. Classical Learning Theory:
   Women prefer older men
   Older men frequently rewarded for seeking younger women

   Teenage males not rewarded by older females
Standards of Physical Beauty

Evolved as **Cues** to health and Reproductive Value

Standards for attractive landscapes are cues for water, game, and refuge.

Evidence of Reproductive Value: Cues for **Youth** and **Health**

Absence of Calendars makes age problematical

1. **Physical Appearance**
   - Full lips
   - Clear, smooth skin
   - Clear eyes
   - Lustrous hair
   - Muscle Tone
   - Fat distribution

2. **Behavior**
   - Bouncy Gait
   - Animated Expression
   - High Energy
Frank Beach (Ford & Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior*, ’52):
Universal cues of **Youth**:
  - Clear, smooth skin
Universal cues of **Health**
  - Absence of sores and lesions
  - Cleanliness suggests freedom from disease

Facial Attractiveness Ratings decline with age of woman
Regardless of Age or Sex of judge
More so for Male raters
Emergence of Beauty Standards

Assumption: Learned gradually through cultural transmission

Early Data: Emergence at 3-4 years, or later

Langlois, et al., ’90:

- 2mo. Old Infants stair longer at more attractive of pair of faces
- 12mo. Old react to strangers with attractive (vs. unattractive) mask
  - Greater observable pleasure
  - More play involvement
  - Less Distress
  - Less withdrawal

Played longer with facially attractive dolls
Universality of Beauty Standards

Cunningham, et al., ’95:
All races judging women of all races, r=0.93
Independent of exposure to Western media
Similar studies, r=0.91, r=0.94
Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright

• Computer composites of human faces judged more attractive than Any of the individual faces.
• Attractiveness increases with number of faces in the composite 32>16>8
• Averaging
  • Eliminates irregularities
  • Increases facial symmetry

• Environmental Insults produce facial and bodily asymmetries
  • Cues to
    • poor health
    • parasitic infestations
    • stressors during development
Tiger cont.

Gangestad, Thornhill, & Yeo, ’94:  
Less symmetrical people considered less attractive  
  Foot breadth  
  Hand breadth  
  Ear length  
  Ear Breadth  
  
Faces become asymmetrical with age  
  Asymmetry as cue to youth  
  
Symmetry linked to both Physiological & Psychological health  
Shackelford & Larsen, ‘97
“Averageness” of face linked to attractiveness after controlling for symmetry (Langlois, et al., ’94)

A learned response, per familiarity?
Culturally sensitive, per recognition of sub-regions?
Tiger Cub

Johnston & Franklin, ’93:
Subjects morphed female faces until maximally beautiful
Averages computed for:
• 40 such Morphed faces
• 20 faces of females averaging 20 yrs of age

Morphed Average:
• Shorter distance between lips and bottom of chin
• Smaller mouth with fuller lips (peaks at age 14)

Both linked with youth
Tiger Cub cont.

Japanese and English participants rate composites higher with:

- Large eyes relative to face
- Thinner jaws
- Shorter distance between mouth and chin

All indexes of youth
Morphing controls for other factors (Internal Validity)

Across five differing cultures/races:

- Women with these characteristics (younger than actual age)
  - Judged more beautiful
  - Relative to women with proportion corresponding to actual age
Girth vs. Ratio

Buss: Girth is most culturally variable standard of beauty
  • Can signal
    • Cultural status – e.g., wealth
    • Adequate nutrition
      Under circumstances of famine, privation

American women: Selected image **slimmer** than average
  As personal ideal
  As men’s ideal female figure

American Men: Selected **average** female figure as Ideal
  Who is responsible for female eating pathologies?
Girth vs. Ratio

Waist-to-Hip Ratio (WHR) similar before puberty (0.85-0.95):
  Males lose fat from buttocks and hips
  Estrogen causes fat deposit in hips and upper thighs
    40% greater in Women
  WHR shifts to 0.67-0.8
WHR is an accurate indicator of:
  • Reproductive status:
    Early puberty – Even lower WHR
    Greater difficulty getting pregnant
    Pregnancies occur later
  • Long-term Health Status:
    Distribution, not amount, affected by: Diabetes, Hypertension, Gallbladder disorders
Girth vs. Ratio cont.

Loss of Body Fat:
  Ammenorhia
  Silent Anovulatory Syndrome

Singh & Luis, ’95:
  12 studies across ethnicities
  Men prefer WHR of 0.7, regardless of total body fat
  Playboy centerfolds and U.S. beauty contest winners:
    Across 30 years:
      • Became slimmer
      • WHR remained exactly at 0.70
Gender Differences

Men rated attractiveness more important than did women

• Across six decades in the United States (1939-1996)
  Importance increased for both Men and Women

• Across 37 cultures
Preference for Ovulating Females

Non-Ovulating female chimps ignored

Ovulating Women:
  Decreased WHR
  Vascularized skin: reddening of cheeks
  Lightening of skin
    47/51 societies prefer lighter shades of native skin

Touched more in bars
  Show more skin
  Shorter, tighter skirts
  Direction of Causation?

Increased libido
Hi, You’re my Dad

**Hx:** Occult ovulation → Women became attractive around cycle

**Problem:** Occult ovulation requires around-the-month
  Mate Guarding
  Conflicts with other Adaptive Strategies

**Solution:** Marriage
  Repeated mating around cycle increases odds of Paternity
  Fidelity increases Paternity certainty
  Offsets cost of foregoing S-T Mating Strategy

Paternity: Origins of Sexual Jealousy
Paternity Qualities

1. Premarital Chastity: Cue to likely fidelity
2. Post-Marital fidelity

Across 7 decades, Men value virgin mate more than do Women
Decreasing with advent of birth-control

62% of cultures have significant sex differences in value of virginity
In ALL of which Men>Women

Where women (1) benefit from marriage and (2) men are scarce
Premarital sex declines (Competition for men)
Virginity not valued in Sweden
Premarital Sex predicts Extramarital Sex

American men prefer spouse with a lack of experience

- Promiscuity especially undesirable: -2.07 (-3 to +3)
- Sexual Loyalty most desired (+2.85)
- Unfaithfulness least desirable (-2.93)
  - High cross-cultural concordance
  - Not most salient for women -- Paternity not an issue
Context 1: Male’s Power

Men with Status & Wealth marry younger brides
  • Across Time & Culture
  • Seek younger women per dating services
    Linear relationship between income & preference

Men with Status & Wealth marry more physically attractive women
  S & W: Best predictor of bride’s attractiveness!
Context 2: Context

Viewing attractive women reduces:

• Self-perceptions of:
  Commitment
  Satisfaction
  Seriousness
  Closeness

• Perceptions of partners attractiveness
Actual Behavior

Younger women receive more responses to personal adds
Reference to physical attractiveness enhances response rate More in ♀
(Or maybe women just assume he’s lying)

References to Sexual attractiveness:
↑ ⋆ response rate, but ↓ ⋆ response rate
What is the differential issue?
Interactions are the most interesting/important for theorizing

American grooms older by 3, 5, 8yrs with each successive marriage
Common across time, place, & practice (e.g., polygyny)
How do Women Respond to Male Propensities?

1. Attraction:
   • Dieting
   • Cosmetics
     Judged more effective for women than men
   Why is rouge used?

2. Deception of Appearance (e.g., color contact lenses):
   Judged more effective for females

3. Derogation of competitor Evolved without knowing issue?
   • Physical appearance
   • Sexual promiscuity
     Both judged more effective for females
     Both more frequent in females (self report)