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# MATE SELECTION COMPARISONS IN HETEROSEXUAL AND HOMOSEXUAL INDIVIDUALS

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MATE SELECTION COMPARISONS IN HETEROSEXUAL  
AND HOMOSEXUAL INDIVIDUALS

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A Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

Experimental Psychology

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by

Daina Lee Wierzbinski

July 2016

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

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## ABSTRACT

### MATE SELECTION COMPARISONS IN HETEROSEXUAL AND HOMOSEXUAL INDIVIDUALS

by

Daina Lee Wierzbinski

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The effects of character traits and socioeconomic status on mate selection for both heterosexual and homosexual individuals was studied. The current study recruited 347 Central Washington University students who ranked the importance of descriptive traits in a potential long-term mate, and also reported how willing they were to date a fictional potential mate in both a short-term and long-term context. Participants also described themselves in a dating profile scenario. The findings support the hypothesis that women are more interested in traits that signal resource acquisition and high socioeconomic status, and also support the hypothesis that men are more interested in traits that signal youth and physical attractiveness.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Mate Selection Theories**

Darwin (1872) was the first to coin the term “natural selection,” yet, as he continued to observe various species, he realized that certain organisms had physical traits that would seem counterproductive to survival, such as the large plumes of peacocks and the heavy antlers of male bucks. Such traits, in theory, would handicap these organisms in survival, yet it seemed that females tended to mate more with the males that had these grandiose traits than with males that did not. Based on these observations, Darwin formed the idea of sexual selection, by which certain traits are selected for through successful mating, and further divided this theory into two entities: Intrasexual competition and intersexual competition. Intrasexual competition refers to members of one sex competing for access to mates of the opposite sex, whereas intersexual competition refers to members of one sex preferring certain traits within members of the opposite sex. Darwin (1872) referred to intersexual competition as female choice, as he witnessed females of many different species more often being the choosier of the sexes.

The theory that females have become more selective over evolutionary history is based on parental investment as proposed by Trivers (1972). Trivers defined parental investment as “any investment by the parent in an individual offspring that increases the offspring’s chance of surviving (and hence reproductive success) at the cost of the parent’s ability to invest in other offspring” (p. 139). This investment occurs first at the cellular level, as in the case of the egg and sperm gametes and how costly these are to produce, and then at the level of parental care, such as feeding, protecting, and rearing. Trivers (1972) described



parental investment in both humans and non-human animals, but many of the same principles applied across species. Women invest more time and energy into their offspring, because carrying the fetus to term, lactation, and caring for newborns after birth takes considerable time and effort. At the minimum, men need only invest their sperm to successfully carry their genes on to the next generation. Thus, women, as the sex that invests more into offspring by nature, should become the choosier sex when it comes to selecting potential mates (Trivers, 1972). Because the theory behind natural selection, and therefore also sexual selection, is the survival of genetic material to the next generation, parental investment explains the mechanism for how parents invest in offspring to ensure their survival. By assisting offspring to survive to the next generation, this helps ensure the survival of the parents' genetic material (Dawkins, 1989). The issue, then, becomes deciphering which traits, behaviors, and qualities both men and women select for in potential mates.

### **Methodological Considerations**

Mate selection research has involved numerous methodologies, such as experimental manipulation, analyses of existing archival material, and questionnaires and self-report. Experimental manipulation has been used to study several facets of mate selection, including a study by Edlund and Sagarin (2010) in which participants created an ideal mate using either an unlimited or a limited, and presumably essential, number of traits. Other studies have manipulated photographs to allow participants to rate physical attractiveness (Gallant, Williams, Fisher, & Cox, 2011), while others have utilized dating profiles to investigate those qualities participants seek from potential mates, and those traits they consider most important about themselves (Gobrogge, Perkins, Baker, Balcer, Breedlove, & Klump, 2007; Kenrick, Sadalla, Groth, & Trost, 1990). A noteworthy study by Ha, Van den Berg, Engels,

and Lichtwarch-Aschoff (2012) manipulated the occupational status of a potential mate, either high or low, that was shown alongside of a photograph of the potential mate.

Experimental manipulation of occupational status has not been used as frequently within studies, but because it is a trait that women tend to focus on in mates, it is one worth exploring further.

Naturalistic studies that have used archival dating profile information have generally reviewed dating profiles from online dating sites in order to assess those traits people use to describe themselves, as well as those traits they seek in others. Most of these studies have evaluated specific traits, such as age (Hayes, 1994; Kaufman & Phua, 2003), while some have collected information on a broad range of traits (Davis, 1990; Witter, Bunting, Katz, & Mannertorp, 2005). The use of questionnaires has also become popular in the study of mate selection, with most self-report studies using a Likert-type scale to examine the importance of certain characteristics in potential mates. Much like the studies that analyze dating profiles, self-report studies tend to focus on the same traits, including age, physical attractiveness, wealth, resource acquisition, status, loyalty, and fidelity (Buss & Shackelford, 2008; Gough, 1973).

Self-report methods of studying mate preference include several risks. Participants may understand the context of the questionnaire and respond in a manner that appeals to their assumptions of what is being tested, or participants may simply lie or falsify answers. Despite these risks, Daly and Wilson (1999) contend that self-report methods are still an important part of human evolutionary psychology research, and they assert that when faced with forced choice questions, participants will generally answer in a straightforward manner (Daly & Wilson, 1999). Nisbett and Wilson (1977) have also suggested that it is unlikely that

most participants will have the introspective access to explain why they answered the way that they did. Most participants will simply answer on impulse, and will not take the time to objectively analyze the reasons they selected a certain trait as more desirable than another.

### **Men's Mate Selection**

As previously stated, the minimum parental investment needed on the male's behalf is his sperm to fertilize the egg of a female mate (Trivers, 1972). Due to this, men have evolved both short-term and long-term mating strategies, each with differing constraints on reproduction. Short-term mate selection has been studied more widely in men than women, mainly due to the benefits that men are able to obtain from it. One of the main benefits from evolutionary history is of being able to produce many offspring with little commitment, with the chance that at least some of the offspring will survive to pass along genetic material (Dawkins, 1989). This theory is supported by evidence that men desire a higher number of sexual partners in their lifetime, approximately 18 lifetime sexual partners compared to only 4.5 sexual partners reported for women (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Li & Kenrick, 2006).

In addition to desiring more sexual partners, men were more likely to report a willingness to relax their standards for certain characteristics in their sexual partners. Overall, men place less emphasis than do women upon the age of a sexual partner as well as characteristics such as intelligence and education. In contrast, men place more emphasis upon traits such as physical attractiveness, the degree of sexual experience, and level of promiscuity in a partner (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Gallant et al. (2011) found that women who included physical descriptors of themselves on online dating advertisements, along with a greater desire for casual sexual encounters, received more responses from men than did women who did not include physical descriptors. Costs to men are generally much milder

than for women in the short-term mating context, despite costs related to sexually transmitted diseases and lower social reputation which may, ultimately, deter long-term mating prospects (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Daly & Wilson, 1988).

Although men are theoretically able to produce more offspring with a short-term mating strategy, long-term mating strategies can provide men with benefits that cannot be obtained through short-term sexual encounters (Alexander & Noonan, 1979), including obtaining a mate of a higher genetic quality, parental certainty, and the increased probability that offspring will survive to their own reproductive age (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Two key traits that are difficult to assess in women are fertility and reproductive value. Fertility refers to reproductive performance as measured by the number of offspring produced in a lifetime, and reproductive value is the number of offspring an individual is likely to have from a given age. Reproductive value peaks for women in the teenage years, whereas fertility tends to peak around their mid-twenties (Fisher, 1930). Because men do not have outward cues to either of these traits in women, it has been proposed that men evolved preferences for secondary qualities that may signal enhanced female fertility and reproductive value, including youth and specific physical features. Outward physical cues such as clear skin and a low waist-to-hip ratio have also been shown to be preferred by men across cultures (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Singh, 1993) and may represent additional signs of fertility and reproductive value.

Because cultural standards of beauty vary, Singh (1993) proposed that studying the waist-to-hip ratio (WHR) in women and its potential correlation with attractiveness ratings by men could represent a method of evaluating the evolutionary adaptation of physical appearance, regardless of cultural norms. Body mass index (BMI) may also provide fertility

cues in women, and is studied in combination WHR (Singh, 1993). Sex hormones play a major part in fat distribution in men and women post-puberty, and estrogen production in women causes fat collection along the hips, thighs, and buttocks (Björntorp, 1988).

Conversely, in men, testosterone results in fat accumulation primarily in the midsection or torso (Rebuffé-Scrive, 1991). Thus, estrogen levels are linked to both body fat and fertility in women, such that men may, in part, utilize BMI as outward physical cues to assess fertility and reproductive value. Specific diseases that may have negative effects on fertility correlate with a high BMI, including diabetes, heart disease, and stroke (Hamilton & Zuk, 1982).

Conversely, a low BMI and high WHR are correlated with menstrual cycle disruptions and, at times, amenorrhea or complete cessation of the menstrual cycle (DeRidder et al., 1980).

Birth complications and low birth weights can occur in women with a low BMI (Supy, Steer, McCusker, Steale, & Jacobs, 1988) as can increased difficulties in becoming and remaining pregnant (Kaye, Folsom, Prineas, Potter, & Gapstur, 1990).

Singh (1993) demonstrated the effect of WHR and BMI on attractiveness ratings by using line drawings to represent theoretical body types. Figure drawings that had the highest attractiveness ratings were those that had a BMI that fell within the normal range, and a WHR around 0.7, which is cited as being a universally attractive range for WHR (Lanska, Lanska, Hartz, & Rimm, 1985). Overweight BMI and WHR were consistently rated as unattractive. Singh (1993) replicated the study with a population of older men and found similar results. Although both of the aforementioned studies support the theory that men have an evolved preference for certain body types, most studies have focused predominantly on Caucasian, Western populations and have not thoroughly investigated cultures that may have a different standard of beauty. Singh (2004) addressed this issue by replicating the

methodology of Singh (1993) in both Guinea-Bissau, a Portuguese colony located in West Africa, and the Azores Islands, which are inhabited largely by those of European descent; both areas had limited access to advertising and popular culture of Western societies. The results were similar with Singh (1993) with men preferring figures with a normal weight BMI and WHR (Singh, 2004). Thus, data collected across ages and cultures suggest a male preference for specific physical traits that may signal female fertility.

Other areas of study on the importance of physical attractiveness in mate selection include facial attractiveness, focusing on skin quality and feminine features which have a biological basis in predicting certain measures of health and fertility. Skin quality such as lesions, skin growths, acne, or cysts can provide information on underlying health conditions (Abramson & Pinker, 1995). In addition to skin clarity, slightly reddish or pink skin tone may signal proper blood circulation, which is important in supplying organs with necessary oxygen (Morris, 1967). In fact, it has been proposed that women wear makeup to enhance indicators of health, such as using blush to mimic flushed cheeks (Abramson & Pinker, 1995). Alternatively, Fink, Grammer, and Thornhill (2001) have suggested that a flushed complexion may signal emotional arousal or sexual excitement, to which men would be intrinsically drawn. However, in certain regions of Africa, underlying yellow skin pigmentation is found to be more attractive than one with red or pink undertones (Coetzee, Faerber, Greeff, Lefevre, Re, & Perrett, 2012). Thus, the data are currently inconclusive as to effects of complexion in mate selection.

Men consistently rate traits that indirectly signal fertility and reproductive value as important to them in a long-term mate, with physical attractiveness being one of the most widely researched traits. In a study in which participants were asked to both create an ideal

mate from an unlimited number of listed characteristics and to select the three traits that were most important to them in a potential mate, men selected physical attractiveness more often than did women in both conditions. Men also rated physical attractiveness as a minimum required trait in their potential mates (Edlund & Sagarin, 2010). Consistent with these results, Kaufman and Phua (2003) reviewed Yahoo.com personal advertisements and reported that men were more likely than women to include the physical characteristics they desired in a potential mate in their advertisement, as well as their own age and the preferred age of their partner. Other analyses of online dating sites, such as Lavalife.com and ConnectingSingles.com, found that men were not only more likely to list their own physical characteristics on their profiles, but were also more likely to request information on physical characteristics or photos from women if none were listed on a woman's profile (Gallant et al., 2011; Morgan, Richards, & VanNess, 2010). In a content analysis of personal dating advertisements in Canadian newspapers, men emphasized descriptors in their potential partner that related to physical appearance but did not link to employment or intellect (Davis, 1990). Although reviews of personal dating advertisements may not be representative of the entire male population, results from these studies consistently indicate that men emphasize physical appearance in a potential mate.

In addition to physical attractiveness and youth, men report desiring certain personality characteristics in long-term mates. Loyalty is a common trait men report seeking in women across cultures, particularly for long-term as compared to short-term relationships (Buss, 1989). Men may place greater importance on loyalty in a partner to ensure that any potential offspring are genetically related to them. Females of all sexually reproducing species know that any offspring are biologically related to them; however, males may not be

certain of their parentage because females cannot be guarded constantly to ensure their faithfulness. In human women, such a possibility is heightened because cues to ovulation are all internal or masked (Trivers, 1972). Thus, in long-term mating conditions, men may have evolved a preference for women who have personality traits that relate to loyalty, chastity, and commitment (Buss & Barnes, 1986), thereby minimizing the risk of supporting other men's offspring.

Knowledge of prior infidelity can affect the level of attractiveness that men and women feel towards a potential mate. Hanko, Master, and Sabini (2004) presented participants with images of potential mates, along with short biographies on their sexual history that described the person in the image as being "exclusive and faithful," as having "cheated and left their partner," or as having "cheated and stayed with their partner." The two images associated with infidelity were rated as less desirable and as less attractive by both men and women than was the image depicted as faithful. Cramer, Lipinski, Meteer, and Houska (2008) compared the effects of perceived sexual and emotional infidelity by having participants imagine their current or former partner as being either sexually or emotionally interested in a third party. Men rated sexual infidelity as more distressing than did women whereas women rated emotional infidelity as more distressing (Cramer, Lipinski, Meteer, & Houska, 2008). Such findings are consistent with theories regarding avoidance of parental uncertainty in men and suggest that such emotional responses to infidelity and mate preference for loyalty may prevent men from engaging in potentially costly relationships.

### **Women's Mate Selection**

Unlike men, women may derive fewer benefits and more costs from short-term mating. For women, benefits from short-term mating may include the acquisition of



resources (Symons, 1979), enhancing social status due to association with a high status man (Smith, 1984), and obtaining better genetics for potential offspring (Fisher, 1930). In fact, women tend to value physical attractiveness in men in the context of short-term liaisons (Fisher, 1930), perhaps reflecting the fact that very attractive men can and will more often engage in short-term mating although evidence for this theory is inconclusive. The potential costs to women who engage in short-term mating, however, are much more detrimental. Women may earn a bad reputation that damages their prospects of obtaining a long-term mate because, as noted earlier, chastity is a quality men look for in long-term contexts. Though men also have the risk of a lowered social reputation, the damage done to a woman's reputation is generally more severe (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Women also risk having offspring with a man who is not willing to invest in them (Daly & Wilson, 1988), and women are more limited than men in the number of sex gametes they can produce in their lifetime (Dawkins, 1989). Therefore, on average, women are more likely to engage in long-term mating strategies.

In humans, sexual selection focuses on the theory that women are the "choosier" sex, in that they are the sex that invests more care into offspring and, therefore, risks incurring a greater cost if they select the wrong mate (Trivers, 1972). In mammals, both fertilization of the egg and the gestational period occur within the female. Non-human females and women are also generally the primary source of nutrition after birth and provide the most postnatal care when raising offspring. Humans, however, are unique compared to other primates in the prolonged time offspring spend in the juvenile stage of development (Geary, 1998), maturing physically and mentally as well as acquiring knowledge and gaining skills necessary for survival, such as obtaining an education, getting a well-paying occupation, and learning how

to form and maintain social relationships (Bjorklund & Shackelford, 1999). As this stage of development is unusually long in humans, much more investment is needed to ensure that offspring will be able to successfully survive and reproduce later on in life to continue to pass along genetic material.

Perhaps the most well researched area of women's long-term mating strategies is parental investment, which provides an explanation for women's emphasis upon resources and signs of wealth and social status in potential mates. A good income should allow parents to provide their offspring with a good education, healthy food, safe living areas, and enriched learning environment (Ellis, 1992). In homes without a source of stable income, evidence suggests that offspring may be negatively affected both emotionally and cognitively (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997). Without monetary resources, parents may be unable to supply offspring with healthy food, access to proper health care, and quality education (Becker & Thomes, 1986; Mayer, 1997) and may experience higher levels of stress (Mayer, 1997) potentially leading to negative psychological and physical health and detrimental parenting practices (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997). Children in unstable home environments with highly stressed parents also suffer a higher level of stress themselves (Conger, Conger, Elder, Lorenz, Simons, & Whitbeck, 1992; Conger, Patterson, & Ge, 1995) that may influence offspring development and mate choices later in life. As the burden of caring for offspring and providing enough income for survival can become entirely a woman's responsibility (Cramer et al., 2008), evolutionary psychologists argue that women evolved preferences for mates with access to resources and wealth to ensure that any potential offspring would not only be provided with their basic needs but to ensure their ability to pass along genetic material.

The use of personal advertisements is one methodology researchers have employed to evaluate the criteria women seek in long-term relationships. Wiederman (1993) analyzed personal advertisements and found that women were eleven times more likely to list wealth or resources as desirable in a potential mate than were men. Similarly, in another review of pre-existing personal ads in a local Canadian newspaper, Davis (1990) found that advertisements placed by women seeking men listed words that corresponded to the man's respective employment, financial status, and intelligence, such as holding a steady job or income, being financially secure, and being a college graduate. In fact, 42 percent of the personal advertisements placed by women contained such descriptors, whereas only 8 percent of men reported seeking these qualities in a woman (Davis, 1990).

Women also appear to seek commitment in their mates, perhaps given the corollary of committing resources to the union. Valuing of commitment in a potential mate is often measured through studies of fidelity and loyalty. In a previously detailed study, women reported a low desire for potential mates who were described as having been unfaithful in a previous relationship, and also rated them as less attractive than men who were described as being faithful in their relationship (Hanko et al., 2004). In a study of personal advertisements, Baize and Schroeder (1995) found that women were more likely to respond to advertisements placed by older men, and also to advertisements by men that listed qualities such as commitment, love, and a desire for children. In contrast, women were less likely to respond to men's advertisements that did not contain such information. Thus, it appears that women seek traits that have the potential of ensuring that a man is able to provide and will continue to provide and invest in his offspring.

## **Homosexual Mate Selection**

While the range of studies examining the various aspects of heterosexual mate selection is large and varied, the same cannot be said of research conducted on homosexual men and women. For the purposes of the current study, mate selection studies in homosexual men and women will also be referred to as men seeking men and women seeking women. Due to prior restrictions on same-sex marriage in the United States, data for marriage in same-sex couples are limited. Cross-cultural data are also lacking due to similar bans on same-sex marriage or to cultural norms that may result in individuals concealing their sexual orientation. Despite these limitations, the use of personal advertisements has allowed for some research examining dating preferences in self-identified homosexual individuals. The advent of online dating sites has also increased the scope of available potential mates and has created an easier way for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community to interact. Therefore, the use of online dating profiles permits researchers to sample a wider range of people that they may be able to access in person.

Unfortunately, many studies that have contributed to the literature on potential similarities and differences among heterosexual and homosexual mate selection have focused more heavily upon men-seeking-men (MSM) and lack information on mate preference in women-seeking-women (WSW). However, of the research that has been performed, some insight has been shown as to what qualities and traits are most important to MSM and WSW in a potential mate, specifically age, physical attractiveness, and wealth/status.

### **Men-Seeking-Men**

Much of the research on MSM has focused on age, and age preferences in mate selection in MSM compared to that of heterosexual males and females. Bailey, Gaulin,

Agyei, & Gladue (1994) utilized five different self-report scales to assess areas of mate selection that included interest in uncommitted sex, sexual stimuli, partner's age, partner's status, and physical attractiveness. Bailey et al. (1994) found that MSM did not rate a partner's age as being as important to them as did heterosexual men. Studies from dating advertisements and profiles have yielded similar results.

Hayes (1994) analyzed personal advertisements that appeared in various print sources across the United States to compare the differences in age preference between heterosexual men and MSM. Hayes (1994) found that both heterosexual men and MSM preferred for the age of a potential mate to be younger in comparison to their own stated age, although Hayes did not report the specific averages of how much younger the two groups wanted their partners to be. Hayes (1994) did suggest that such age preferences might apply more to younger than older MSM because older MSM were exposed to a social environment that was much less accepting of homosexuality and, therefore, older MSM may be less comfortable sharing mate preference information. In contrast, Kaufman and Phua (2003) reviewed personal advertisements of heterosexual men and MSM on Yahoo.com for specific age preferences and found that, compared to heterosexual men, MSM were not only more likely to request the age of a potential partner, but to also prefer an older partner. The authors suggested that MSM may not be under the same gender role pressure as heterosexual men and, therefore, they could have more flexible age preferences (Kaufman & Phua, 2003).

Another common finding in research examining mate selection in MSM concerns physical attractiveness and openness to sexual activity. In a study comparing MSM and WSW, men were more self-objectifying within their personal advertisements than were women, included more sexually explicit content, and were also more likely to include their

age and physical description (Thorne & Coupland, 1998). Similarly, Hatala and Prehodka (1996) reviewed online dating profiles and found that MSM, compared to WSW, were more likely to list physical descriptions about their physique, state an interest in casual sexual encounters, and request this information from potential partners. Also, MSM were more likely to include an age preference on their profile. Witter et al. (2005) reported similar findings in their analysis of personal advertisements, with dating preferences of MSM advertisements congruent to those of heterosexual men in that both disclosed their preferences for sex in their personal advertisements and listed attractiveness as an important quality in a potential mate. However, compared to MSM advertisements, heterosexual men more often revealed information about their income, perhaps because women search for income information for potential mates whereas MSM may not find it as important (Witter et al., 2005).

### **Women-Seeking-Women**

Other traits have received attention from researchers in the context of same-sex mate selection. Because resource acquisition and status are important to heterosexual women seeking long-term mates, Ha et al. (2012) examined the effects of resources and status on the self-reported attractiveness of potential partners in heterosexual women and men and in MSM and WSW. In that study, participants rated the importance of 21 character traits in a potential mate, on a scale from 1 (*not at all important*) to 10 (*very important*). Along with the questionnaire, participants viewed 10 different photographs of potential mates along with profiles that indicated the person was of high or low occupation status, and then rated their willingness to date the person depicted in the photo. WSW rated the importance of character traits associated with physical attractiveness lower than did MSM, heterosexual men, and

heterosexual women. In comparison, heterosexual women rated the images associated with high occupational and social status the highest out of the four groups (Ha et al., 2012). The low importance placed on attractiveness by WSW may be due to that group placing less importance on casual sexual encounters when compared to other groups, and therefore may explain the lowered interest in physical attractiveness in potential mates compared to other groups (Diamond, 2003). While MSM and heterosexual men show similar preferences in mate selection, WSW and heterosexual women seem to show differences in their mate preferences. In fact, in the studies to date, WSW show unique ratings for mate preferences compared to other groups. However, the limited research on mate selection in LGBT individuals, to date, indicates that further research on this topic is warranted

### **Purpose of the Present Study**

The current study examined how self-identified heterosexual, homosexual, transgender, and bisexual men and women rated the importance of different traits and characteristics in mate attractiveness, including traits such as physical attractiveness, wealth/resource acquisition, and commitment, which have been shown to be large factors in male and female mate selection strategies (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Buss, 1989; Lippa, 2007; Shackelford, Schmitt, & Buss, 2005). The primary goal was to compare heterosexual men and women to WSW and MSM to determine if sexual orientation was associated with differences in mate preference. In addition to examining trait preferences, the current study manipulated occupational status on a fictitious dating profile, because occupational status has not received as much attention as age and physical attractiveness in the literature particularly for WSW (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Davis, 1990; Symons, 1989). The current study explored the effect of different occupational statuses on attractiveness ratings of potential mates in

self-identified heterosexual, homosexual, transgender, and bisexual men and women. Effects on the self-reported desire to date the potential mate in the short-term or long-term were also evaluated.



## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

#### **Participants**

The current study consisted of students enrolled in psychology courses at Central Washington University recruited through an online survey system through the Department of Psychology. Participant age ranged from 18 to 69 years ( $M = 22.97$ ,  $SD = 7.61$ ). A total of 363 participants were recruited. Fourteen of these participants were excluded from data analysis due to incompleteness of survey responses, and two were removed as they did not specify their gender identity. From the remaining 347 participants, 268 self-identified as female, 74 as male, and five as transgendered. The majority of participants identified as being heterosexual. Eight participants identified as being a woman attracted to other women (i.e., homosexual), 24 identified as being women attracted to other women and men (i.e., bisexual), six identified as being a man attracted to other men, and two identified as being a man attracted to other men and women. The majority of the sample self-identified as Caucasian. Women reported having longer relationships ( $M = 34.67$  months,  $SD = 50.30$ ) than did men ( $M = 30.26$  months,  $SD = 72.49$ ), whereas men reported more sexual encounters within the last year ( $M = 6.64$ ,  $SD = 25.57$ ) than did women ( $M = 5.41$ ,  $SD = 19.89$ ). The majority of the sample reported themselves as single ( $n=168$ ) or in a relationship ( $n=142$ ).

#### **Materials**

**Marital Preference Questionnaire (MPQ).** The Marital Preference Questionnaire (MPQ), developed by Gough (1973), is a 76-item measure that was originally developed in order to investigate family planning, and determine those characteristics that individuals find

most attractive when it comes to a long-term mate. For the purpose of the current study, a modified version of the MPQ was used that contained only 45 items that represented three specific areas of interest that have been studied prominently in both heterosexual and homosexual populations in the literature (Thorne & Coupland, 1998; Gobrogge et al., 2007; Ha et al., 2012): Physical attractiveness, commitment, and resource acquisition. The MPQ was originally modified by Buss and Barnes (1986), which utilized a factor analysis to determine which traits correlated together best. Of those traits, 45 were selected to be shown to participants. These were determined due to their high loading on nine separate factors. Items on the MPQ focus on personality and trait characteristics that are used to describe qualities in a potential mate. Also, Shackelford et al. (2005) reported the test-retest reliability of mate preferences and traits over a period of three years was an average of 0.51 for men and 0.54 for women.

For each trait, a 6-point Likert scale was used to assess how important the trait was to the respondent in a potential mate. Responses ranged from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*). See Appendix B for a full copy of the MPQ. Previous studies have also used Likert scales, ranging from seven-point scales (Buss & Schackelford, 2008) to ten-point scales (Chick, Yarnal, & Purrington, 2012). For the purpose of the current study, a six-point scale was used in order to remove any neutral choices in order to force participants have to decide whether the trait was desirable or undesirable.

**Dating Profiles.** Dating profiles were used in order to examine the effect of occupational status on attractiveness ratings of a theoretical potential mate. Dating profiles have been analyzed in the literature for both heterosexual and homosexual groups, and have been used as a method of assessing what traits people look for in others, as well as list about

themselves (Thorne & Coupland, 1998; Kaufman & Phua, 2003; Hayes, 1994; Davis, 1990). A standard male and female dating profile were constructed by the author of the current study and varied across three levels of occupational status: High, medium, and low. To control for possible bias in the occupational statuses, the levels were generalized to encompass a broad field of an occupation. High occupational status was described on the dating profile as a career in the field of medicine. Medium occupational status was described as a career in the education field. Low occupational status was described as a career in the food service industry. These occupational fields were obtained from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, which contains an average national yearly income for each occupation. Food service employees earn an average of \$18,000 per year; education employees earn an average of \$50,000 per year; medical employees earn an average of \$100,000 per year (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Therefore, these general occupational fields are representative of high, medium, and low income ranges and socioeconomic status. All other variables on the dating profiles, such as height, body type, birth month, and interests, remained constant. See Appendix B for examples of the dating profiles.

Participants rated their likelihood of going on a single date, forming a long-term relationship, and how likely others would be to go on a date with the person in the profile with response options ranging from 1 (*Not Very Likely*) to 6 (*Very Likely*). Participants were also asked to estimate the annual salary and age of the individual in the profile as well as provide an age that they would prefer the individual to be. Although reliability and validity data are not available for these profiles, the currently utilized dating profiles were modeled after dating profiles on internet dating sites, such as Tinder and LavaLife.com, to enhance reality (see Appendix C).

## **Procedure**

All procedures were approved by the Human Subject Research Council of Central Washington University. Information for the study was available through the online psychology department research recruitment board. The respondents were directed to the web site where the survey was hosted if they decided to participate. Participants were provided with an online information page. After agreeing to take part in the study, participants were asked to complete a standard demographics page. All participants viewed the MPQ and one of the dating profiles, in counterbalanced order. The dating profile that the participant viewed corresponded to the gender that they reported being romantically interested in, and after reviewing the information presented in the mock profile, they were asked how likely they would be to go on a single date with this person, how likely they would be to form a long-term relationship with this person, and how likely they think other people would be to ask this person on a date. Participants were also asked to report how much income they believed the person in the dating profile made per year, as well as how old they estimated the person in the profile was and how old they would like the individual in the profile to be. At the end of the study, following the demographics, MPQ, and profile ratings, participants were asked to list three characteristics about themselves that they would include on a theoretical dating profile and three characteristics they would list as being important in a potential date.

## **Data Analyses**

The following data were collected from each participant: 1) demographic data including age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and/or ethnicity, length of longest previous relationship, and number of casual sexual encounters within the past year; 2) ratings of the importance of each of the individually-listed 45 traits in a potential mate on the MPQ;

3) ratings of appeal of the individual in the dating profile, including how likely the participant was to date the person in the short-term context, how likely they were to go on multiple dates with the person in the profile, how likely they were to date the person in the long-term context, and how likely they thought others were to date this person; 4) open-response estimates of the age and average yearly income of person in the dating profile as well as the age they would prefer the person in the profile to be; and 5) an open-response list of the three traits that each participant would include in their own dating profile and three traits that they would look for when looking at dating profiles.

After data collection was complete, further inspection revealed an uneven number of participants in the heterosexual and LGBT groups, limiting the ability to directly compare heterosexual and LGBT individuals via inferential statistics. Buss and Barnes (1986) used a factorial analysis on the modified MPQ, which resulted in nine separate factor loadings. Separate ANOVAs were utilized in the current study due to the uneven sample sizes, which would have potentially led to disproportionate factor loadings and a problematic interpretations of the data. As well, because many of the traits on the MPQ were unique and did not represent similar constructs or themes, for the purpose of hypothesis testing, separate analyses of variance (ANOVA) comparing heterosexual men and women were conducted for each trait on the MPQ.

Separate 2 (Participant Gender: Man, Woman) x 3 (Occupational Status: High, Medium, Low) ANOVAs were used to evaluate the hypothesis that women would prefer dating profiles where the description indicated a high occupational status via ratings of the four questions pertaining to the individual in the profile, but that men would have little to no preference for a potential mate with a high occupational status. In particular, separate

ANOVAs were used to examine participant gender and occupational status effects on: 1) Reported willingness to date in a short-term context; 2) willingness to go on multiple dates with them; 3) willingness to form a long-term relationship with them; and 4) the likelihood that others would be willing to date the individual in the dating profile. Effects of sexual orientation (i.e., comparisons among heterosexual and LGBT participants) could not be examined due to a small LGBT sample size, so visual inspection and casual comparisons between groups was utilized.

Three of the open-response items, estimated age and income of the individual in the profiles as well as preferred age of the individual in the profile, requested that participants provide estimates on a linear scale and, therefore, did not require recoding. Data on estimated age, preferred age, and income were analyzed by separate 2 (Gender Identity: Man, Woman) x 3 (Occupational Status: High, Medium, Low) ANOVAs while data on theme classification was formatted in a descriptive (i.e., frequency) form. Analysis of data on estimated income was designed to primarily be used as a manipulation check to determine if the dating profiles were interpreted by participants as reflecting differences in occupational and/or socioeconomic status.

For the open-response item regarding the three most pertinent traits to include in a dating profile and the three most important traits they would list in a potential date, frequency counts were taken for all responses, and grouped among both the participant's gender identity and gender they were attracted to. These traits were gathered for visual inspection and casual comparisons between groups.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### **Data Screening**

Of the initial 363 participants, 11 were removed for not completing any of the surveys, three were removed who completed less than half of the MPQ, and two who did not reveal their gender identity were removed from further analysis, resulting in data from 347 participants. There were 302 heterosexual participants, 14 homosexual participants, 26 bisexual participants, and 5 transgender participants. Due to the vastly unequal group sizes between heterosexual and LGBT participants, data from heterosexual men and women were separately analyzed using inferential statistics to examine the effect of participant gender on trait ratings on the MPQ as well as the impact of economic position on self-reported willingness to date the profiled individuals. For participants who identified as LGBT, sample sizes within each group were too small to allow for meaningful inferential statistical analyses; therefore, visual inspection of group means and standard deviations yielded descriptive statistical information.

#### **Marital Preference Questionnaire**

Between-group ANOVAs for the factor of participant gender (Man, Woman) were used to identify gender differences in rating the importance of each personality or physical trait on the MPQ. Of the 45 traits presented in the MPQ, 15 revealed significant main effects of participant gender: Devoted,  $F(1, 300) = 7.25, p < 0.05$ ; Witty,  $F(1, 298) = 4.34, p < 0.05$ ; Understanding,  $F(1, 298) = 7.15, p < 0.05$ ; Introverted,  $F(1, 299) = 4.40, p < 0.05$ ; Considerate,  $F(1, 299) = 8.77, p < 0.05$ ; Ambitious,  $F(1, 298) = 5.35, p < 0.05$ ; Young,  $F(1, 300) = 6.37, p < 0.05$ ; Responsible,  $F(1, 298) = 8.56, p < 0.05$ ; Submissive,  $F(1, 300) = 7.76,$

$p < 0.05$ ; Older,  $F(1, 300) = 51.65, p < 0.05$ ; Well-liked by Others,  $F(1, 299) = 5.82, p < 0.05$ ; Dominant,  $F(1, 298) = 29.04, p < 0.05$ ; Feminine,  $F(1, 298) = 321.51, p < 0.05$ ; Masculine,  $F(1, 299) = 417.95, p < 0.05$ ; and Goal Driven,  $F(1, 300) = 3.97, p < 0.05$ . Women rated as more important in potential partners the traits of Devoted, Responsible, Witty, Understanding, Considerate, Well-Liked by Others, Ambitious, Goal Driven, Dominant, and Old. In contrast, men had a higher preference for potential partners who were Introverted, Submissive, Feminine, and Young. See Table 1 for details.

Due to the unequal group sizes for male and female participants, Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was conducted following each significant ANOVA. For all significant ANOVAs except for that assessing the Submission trait, Levene's was non-significant, indicating homogeneity of variance for data in the male and female groups. However, for the Submissive trait, Levene's revealed heterogeneity of variance,  $F = 11.33, p < 0.001$ . In order to compensate for the resulting heterogeneity of variance, the alpha level for the ANOVA evaluating the Submissive trait was made more conservative ( $\alpha = 0.025$ ). Under this more stringent criteria, the  $p$  value associated with the Submission trait ( $p = 0.01$ ) was still significant.

Visual inspection of the data for participants who identified as homosexual revealed similar group means and standard deviations for the majority of traits on the MPQ. Notable differences from heterosexual-identified participants' data were found on 8 of the 45 traits. See Table 2 for specifics. When comparing ratings by heterosexual and homosexual participants, heterosexual women had higher scores for Wealthy, Masculine, and Older when compared to heterosexual men, and higher scores for Well-Liked by Others, Frugal, and Masculine when compared to homosexual women. Homosexual women, however, ranked



Table 1

*MPQ Trait Descriptive Statistics for Heterosexual Participants (M ± SD)*

	Heterosexual	
	Women <i>n</i> = 234 – 236	Men <i>n</i> = 65 – 66
Devoted	5.4 ± 0.9	5.1 ± 0.9
Responsible	5.5 ± 0.7	5.2 ± 1.0
Witty	4.6 ± 1.1	4.2 ± 1.2
Understanding	5.4 ± 0.9	5.0 ± 0.9
Considerate	5.4 ± 0.8	5.0 ± 0.9
Introverted	2.7 ± 1.3	3.1 ± 1.4
Well Liked By Others	4.7 ± 1.1	4.3 ± 1.2
Ambitious	5.0 ± 0.9	4.7 ± 1.0
Goal Driven	5.2 ± 0.9	4.9 ± 0.9
Submissive	2.5 ± 1.3	3.1 ± 1.4
Dominant	4.0 ± 1.4	3.0 ± 1.3
Masculine	4.9 ± 1.0	2.0 ± 1.0
Feminine	2.1 ± 1.0	4.6 ± 0.9
Young	3.3 ± 1.4	3.8 ± 1.4
Older	4.1 ± 1.4	2.7 ± 1.2

traits such as College Graduate and Feminine as more important in a mate when compared to heterosexual women. Heterosexual men were more interested in the Feminine trait compared

to heterosexual women, and Emotionally Stable and Feminine when compared to homosexual men. Homosexual men were more interested in mates who had traits pertaining to being Wealthy, Masculine, and Older when compared to scores for heterosexual men.

Table 2

*MPQ Trait Descriptive Statistics for Heterosexual and Homosexual Participants (M ± SD)*

	Heterosexual		Homosexual	
	Women <i>n</i> = 234-236	Men <i>n</i> = 65-66	Women <i>n</i> = 7-8	Men <i>n</i> = 6
College Graduate	4.1 ± 1.5	4.2 ± 1.4	5.1 ± 1.1	4.3 ± 1.6
Emotionally Stable	5.0 ± 1.0	5.1 ± 0.9	5.0 ± 0.8	4.3 ± 0.8
Well Liked By Others	4.7 ± 1.1	4.3 ± 1.2	3.9 ± 1.2	4.2 ± 1.9
Wealthy	3.1 ± 1.4	2.9 ± 1.3	3.0 ± 1.7	3.5 ± 1.5
Frugal	3.6 ± 1.4	3.5 ± 1.6	2.6 ± 1.7	3.8 ± 1.5
Masculine	4.9 ± 1.0	2.0 ± 1.0	2.5 ± 1.6	3.0 ± 1.5
Feminine	2.1 ± 1.0	4.6 ± 0.9	4.5 ± 1.2	2.0 ± 2.0
Older	4.1 ± 1.4	2.7 ± 1.2	4.1 ± 1.5	3.5 ± 1.4

Visual comparisons of data from transgender and bisexual individuals with those of heterosexual participants suggest differences in 14 of the 45 traits. See Table 3 for details. Transgender men had high preferences for a partner who was Kind, Warm, Responsible, Idealistic, Plans Ahead, and had Sex Appeal. Conversely, transgender women had high preferences for partners who were Goal Driven and Masculine. Bisexual women had a higher preference for partners who were Kind, Warm, Idealistic, Extroverted, Well-Liked by Others,

Ambitious, Career Oriented, Goal Driven, and Plans Ahead when compared to bisexual men, who had higher scores for partners who were Young.

Table 3

*MPQ Trait Descriptive Statistics for Transgendered and Bisexual Participants (M ± SD)*

	Transgender		Bisexual		Bisexual and Transgender
	Women <i>n</i> = 3	Men <i>n</i> = 2	Women <i>n</i> = 23-24	Men <i>n</i> = 2	Man <i>n</i> = 1
Kind	5.0 ± 0.0	6.0 ± 0.0	5.6 ± 0.7	3.0 ± 2.8	4.0
Warm	3.7 ± 1.5	5.0 ± 0.0	5.1 ± 1.0	3.0 ± 1.4	4.0
Responsible	3.7 ± 1.5	5.0 ± 1.4	5.7 ± 0.7	5.0 ± 1.4	4.0
Idealistic	3.7 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.7	4.3 ± 1.2	2.5 ± 0.7	5.0
Extroverted	3.7 ± 1.5	5.0 ± 0.0	3.6 ± 1.3	2.0 ± 0.0	5.0
Well Liked By Others	4.7 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.7	4.8 ± 1.0	2.0 ± 0.0	2.0
Ambitious	4.7 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.7	4.8 ± 1.2	2.0 ± 0.0	4.0
Career Oriented	4.3 ± 1.2	4.5 ± 0.7	5.0 ± 1.0	3.5 ± 0.7	5.0
Goal Driven	4.0 ± 1.0	3.5 ± 2.1	5.1 ± 0.9	3.0 ± 2.8	5.0
Plans Ahead	3.7 ± 1.5	4.5 ± 0.7	4.7 ± 0.9	2.5 ± 2.1	5.0
Masculine	4.7 ± 0.6	1.5 ± 0.7	3.6 ± 1.6	3.5 ± 2.1	5.0
Sex Appeal	4.0 ± 0.0	5.5 ± 0.7	4.7 ± 1.2	4.5 ± 0.7	5.0
Young	3.7 ± 0.6	3.5 ± 2.1	2.7 ± 1.3	5.0 ± 0.0	2.0

## Dating Profiles

As previously noted, willingness-to-date the individual in the profile was measured via responses on four proposed situations: 1) a single date, 2) multiple dates, 3) a long-term relationship, and 4) how likely others would be to date the person in the profile. Data from a total of 302 participants were retained for analysis. For each of the four proposed situations, separate 2 (Participant Gender: Man, Woman) x 3 (Economic Group: Low, Medium, High) between-groups ANOVAs were used to examine the impact of participant gender identity in heterosexual participants and the economic level of the individual in the profile on ratings on willingness-to-date the individuals in theoretical dating profiles. As in the analyses of the MPQ items, Levene's test were conducted following significant main effects or interactions and, when heterogeneity of samples was revealed, alpha levels were reset at a 0.025 threshold. Only significant effects under these more stringent conditions are presented here.

For heterosexual participants, main effects of economic group were found for each of the four situations that assessed willingness-to-date, including willingness to go on a single date,  $F(2, 295) = 2.92, p < 0.05$ , willingness to go on multiple dates with the person in the profile,  $F(2, 294) = 3.93, p < 0.05$ , willingness to consider a long-term dating context,  $F(2, 293) = 3.22, p < 0.05$ ; and how likely others would be to date the person in the profile,  $F(2, 293) = 3.68, p < 0.05$ . For each main effect, a follow-up post-hoc analysis revealed that participants preferred individuals in the high economic status profile more so than individuals in the medium and low economic statuses ( $ps < 0.05$ ) except for ratings of how likely others would be to date the person in the profile, in which high economic status profiles were rated more highly than only the low economic status profile ( $p < 0.05$ ). The medium and low status

profiles were not significant different from one another on any rating. See Table 4 for means and standard deviations for each condition for heterosexual participants.

Table 4

*Dating Profile Descriptive Statistics for Heterosexual Participants (M ± SD)*

	Heterosexual	
	Women	Men
Low SES	<i>n</i> = 73-74	<i>n</i> = 23-25
Single Date	3.9 ± 1.2	4.3 ± 1.5
Multiple Dates	3.4 ± 1.3	3.9 ± 1.3
Long-term Relationship	3.1 ± 1.3	3.4 ± 1.4
Others	4.1 ± 1.0	4.2 ± 1.5
Age Want (years)	23.8 ± 5.3	21.4 ± 2.3
Age Is (years)	24.6 ± 6.3	24.3 ± 5.4
Money	\$25,851 ± 13,302	\$28,583 ± 17,639
Middle SES	<i>n</i> = 85	<i>n</i> = 16-17
Single Date	4.1 ± 1.2	4.0 ± 1.1
Multiple Dates	3.8 ± 1.1	3.6 ± 1.1
Long-term Relationship	3.4 ± 1.3	3.5 ± 1.3
Others	4.4 ± 1.1	4.4 ± 0.7
Age Want (years)	25.4 ± 7.3	21.9 ± 3.3
Age Is (years)	25.4 ± 5.3	28.4 ± 7.7
Money	\$29,542 ± 17,433	\$34,118 ± 16,722

Table 4 (Continued)

	Heterosexual	
	Women	Men
High SES	<i>n</i> = 77	<i>n</i> = 23
Single Date	4.7 ± 1.0	4.3 ± 1.3
Multiple Dates	4.3 ± 1.1	4.0 ± 1.3
Long-term Relationship	4.0 ± 1.3	3.7 ± 1.2
Others	4.9 ± 1.0	4.4 ± 1.0
Age Want (years)	25.1 ± 5.8	22.8 ± 4.2
Age Is (years)	29.7 ± 5.6	27.7 ± 6.4
Money	\$75,110 ± 39,308	\$52,565 ± 19,390

Participants were also asked questions pertaining to how much money they thought the individual in the dating profile made per year, how old they were, and how old they would like the person to be. Separate 2 (Gender Identity: Man, Woman) x 3 (Economic Status: Low, Medium, High) between-groups ANOVAs revealed a main effect of economic group on estimated annual income,  $F(2, 294) = 46.36, p < 0.05$ , as well as a gender x economic group interaction,  $F(2, 294) = 6.53, p < 0.05$ . Post-hoc analysis showed that both women and men estimated higher annual incomes for the high economic status profile than for either the low and medium economic status profiles ( $ps < 0.05$ ) and that, only for the high economic status profile, women had a higher estimated annual income than did men ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Economic status of the profile also influenced how old the participants estimated the individuals were,  $F(2, 293) = 9.77, p < 0.01$ . Post-hoc analysis revealed that individuals in the high economic status profile had a significantly higher estimated age when compared to individuals in the low and medium economic status profiles ( $ps < 0.05$ ). Analysis of the desired age of the individual in the profile revealed a main effect of gender identity,  $F(2, 293) = 11.00, p < 0.01$ , with women wanting the individuals in the dating profiles to be older than did men.

As noted previously, visual inspection of the data was used for participants who identified as homosexual, transgender, or bisexual due to small sample sizes. Similar ratings were observed, in general, for heterosexual and homosexual men and women, but there were some noteworthy differences. For the ratings of profiles in the low economic group, homosexual women were less likely to want to go on multiple dates with the individual in the profile than were heterosexual women, homosexual women reported wanting a younger age for the individual in the profile ( $M = 20$  years) than did heterosexual women ( $M = 23.8$  years,  $SD = 5.3$ ), and homosexual women also estimated the age of the individual in the profile as younger ( $M = 19$  years) and less affluent based on annual salary ( $M = \$15,000$ ) than did heterosexual women. For ratings of the individual in the high economic profile, homosexual women were less likely to report that they'd be willing to go on a single date ( $M = 2.8, SD = 2.4$ ) than were heterosexual women ( $M = 4.7, SD = 1.0$ ), less likely to go on multiple dates ( $M = 2.5, SD = 2.4$ ) than were heterosexual women ( $M = 4.3, SD = 1.1$ ), and also less likely to form a long-term relationship ( $M = 2.5, SD = 2.4$ ) with the individual in the profile than were heterosexual women ( $M = 4.0, SD = 1.3$ ). See Table 5 for details.

Heterosexual and homosexual men visually differed in their estimates of annual salary for the individual in the low SES profile, with homosexual men estimating lower incomes. Homosexual men also reported high economic status individuals as making substantially more money ( $M = \$145,000$ ,  $SD = 63,640$ ) than did heterosexual men ( $M = \$52,565$ ,  $SD = 19,390$ ). For ratings of the individual in the middle economic profile, heterosexual men reported that they were less likely to go on multiple dates with the individual ( $M = 3.6$ ,  $SD = 1.1$ ) than did homosexual men ( $M = 4.5$ ,  $SD = 0.7$ ), and also reported that they were less likely to form a long-term relationship with the individual than did homosexual men ( $M = 4.5$ ,  $SD = 0.7$ ).

Table 5

*Dating Profile Descriptive Data for Heterosexual and Homosexual Participants ( $M \pm SD$ )*

	Heterosexual		Homosexual	
	Women	Men	Woman	Men
Low SES	$n = 73-74$	$n = 23-25$	$n = 1$	$n = 2$
Single Date	$3.9 \pm 1.2$	$4.3 \pm 1.5$	3.0	$5.0 \pm 1.4$
Multiple Dates	$3.4 \pm 1.3$	$3.9 \pm 1.3$	2.0	$4.0 \pm 0.0$
Long-term Relationship	$3.1 \pm 1.3$	$3.4 \pm 1.4$	2.0	$3.0 \pm 0.0$
Others	$4.1 \pm 1.0$	$4.2 \pm 1.5$	4.0	$5.0 \pm 0.0$
Age Want (years)	$23.8 \pm 5.3$	$21.4 \pm 2.3$	20	$19.0 \pm 1.4$
Age Is (years)	$24.6 \pm 6.3$	$24.3 \pm 5.4$	19	$23.5 \pm 2.1$
Money	$\$25,851 \pm 13,302$	$\$28,583 \pm 17,639$	\$15,000	$\$19,000 \pm 1,414$



Table 5 (Continued)

	Heterosexual		Homosexual	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Middle SES	<i>n</i> = 85	<i>n</i> = 16-17	<i>n</i> = 3	<i>n</i> = 2
Single Date	4.1 ± 1.2	4.0 ± 1.1	3.7 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.7
Multiple Dates	3.8 ± 1.1	3.6 ± 1.1	3.3 ± 1.1	4.5 ± 0.7
Long-term Relationship	3.4 ± 1.3	3.5 ± 1.3	3.3 ± 2.1	4.5 ± 0.7
Others	4.4 ± 1.1	4.4 ± 0.7	4.7 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.7
Age Want (years)	25.4 ± 7.3	21.9 ± 3.3	23.3 ± 3.1	20.5 ± 0.7
Age Is (years)	25.4 ± 5.3	28.4 ± 7.7	24.0 ± 2.0	28.5 ± 0.7
Money	\$29,542 ± 17,433	\$34,118 ± 16,722	\$30,000 ± 28,284	\$47,500 ± 3,535
High SES	<i>n</i> = 77	<i>n</i> = 23	<i>n</i> = 4	<i>n</i> = 2
Single Date	4.7 ± 1.0	4.3 ± 1.3	2.8 ± 2.4	4.5 ± 0.7
Multiple Dates	4.3 ± 1.1	4.0 ± 1.3	2.5 ± 2.4	4.0 ± 0.0
Long-term Relationship	4.0 ± 1.3	3.7 ± 1.2	2.5 ± 2.4	4.0 ± 0.0
Others	4.9 ± 1.0	4.4 ± 1.0	3.8 ± 2.1	5.0 ± 0.0
Age Want (years)	25.1 ± 5.8	22.8 ± 4.2	24.5 ± 7.1	24.0 ± 1.4
Age Is (years)	29.7 ± 5.6	27.7 ± 6.4	29.3 ± 7.2	28.5 ± 2.1
Money	\$75,110 ± 39,308	\$52,565 ± 19,390	\$58,750 ± 37,500	\$145,000 ± 63,640

Data for transgender individuals and bisexual men and women revealed some similarities within gender groups, but also differences. In the middle socioeconomic group, transgender women were less likely to go on multiple dates with the individual ( $M = 3.5$ ,  $SD = 2.1$ ) than were bisexual women ( $M = 4.7$ ,  $SD = 1.4$ ) and preferred older individuals than did bisexual women ( $M = 33.5$  years,  $SD = 16.3$ ). Transgender women reported the individual as making more money ( $M = \$252,500$ ,  $SD = 350,017$ ) than did bisexual women. For those in the high socioeconomic profile, the single transgender woman reported more interest in a long-term relationship ( $M = 5.0$ ) than did bisexual women. She also reported wanting a substantially younger mate than did bisexual women ( $M = 18$  years) and thought the individual was older than the age they desired ( $M = 45$  years). See Table 6 for details.

Table 6

*Dating Profile Descriptive Statistics for Transgender and Bisexual Participants ( $M \pm SD$ )*

	Transgender		Bisexual		Bisexual and Transgender
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Low SES		$n = 2$	$n = 10-11$		
Single Date		$4.0 \pm 0.0$	$4.2 \pm 1.3$		
Multiple Dates		$4.0 \pm 0.0$	$3.8 \pm 1.2$		
Long-term		$4.5 \pm 0.7$	$3.5 \pm 1.4$		
Others		$4.5 \pm 0.7$	$4.0 \pm 0.9$		
Age Want (years)		$22.5 \pm 0.7$	$23.3 \pm 2.8$		
Age Is (years)		$25.0 \pm 0.0$	$25.0 \pm 6.3$		
Money		$\$40,000 \pm$ $14,142$	$\$34,300 \pm$ $26,529$		

Table 6 (Continued)

	Transgender		Bisexual		Bisexual and Transgender
	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Middle SES	<i>n</i> = 2		<i>n</i> = 6	<i>n</i> = 1	<i>n</i> = 1
Single Date	4.5 ± 0.7		4.8 ± 1.5	5.0	5.0
Multiple Dates	3.5 ± 2.1		4.7 ± 1.4	5.0	2.0
Long-term	5.0 ± 0.0		4.3 ± 1.2	4.0	1.0
Others	3.0 ± 1.4		4.5 ± 1.2	5.0	3.0
Age Want (years)	33.5 ± 16.3		26.0 ± 5.6	40.0	21.0
Age Is (years)	27.5 ± 3.5		26.3 ± 5.1	45.0	25.0
Money	\$252,500 ± 350,017		\$31,200 ± 25,635	\$40,000	\$34,000
High SES	<i>n</i> = 1		<i>n</i> = 7	<i>n</i> = 1	
Single Date	5.0		4.3 ± 0.8	4.0	
Multiple Dates	5.0		4.0 ± 1.0	3.0	
Long-term	5.0		3.9 ± 0.9	2.0	
Others	6.0		4.4 ± 1.0	4.0	
Age Want (years)	18		29.1 ± 8.5	32.0	
Age Is (years)	45		30.1 ± 3.5	28.0	
Money	\$300,000		\$136,429 ± 165,296	\$30,000	

## **Self-Created Dating Profiles**

Participants created dating profiles that allowed them to list three traits they would use to describe themselves and three traits that they desired in a potential partner. Frequency counts were taken for all groups, and compared visually for similarities and differences. Heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender women described themselves with traits pertaining to loyalty, honesty, kindness, being fun, and being outgoing. They also described what they wanted in others in ways very similar to how they described themselves: Loyalty, honesty, kind, caring, funny, and loving. Transgender women also included traits pertaining to acceptance. Heterosexual and homosexual men described themselves as being funny, loyal, caring, and athletic, and wanted potential partners to be pretty, sexy, cute, and attractive. The one bisexual man in the sample was also interested in potential mates who were attractive, but described themselves as being intelligent and honest. See Tables 7 through 10 for a full list of traits.

Table 7

*Traits Used in Self-Created Dating Profiles in Heterosexual and Homosexual Women (%)*

Rank	Heterosexual Women (n = 234-236)		Homosexual Women (n = 7-8)	
	Describing Themselves	Describing Others	Describing Themselves	Describing Others
1	Honest (15.2%)	Honest (14.8%)	Loyal (20%)	Loyal (18.2%)
2	Outgoing (14%)	Funny (14.1%)	Outgoing (13.3%)	Compassionate (9.1%)
3	Loyal (13.2%)	Loyal (14.1%)	Kind (13.3%)	Considerate (9.1%)
4	Fun (11.2%)	Kind (13.7%)	Easy (13.3%)	Humor (9.1%)
5	Caring (9.6%)	Care (10.1%)	Educated (6.7%)	Honesty (9.1%)
6	Kind (8.8%)	Humor (7.2%)	Understanding (6.7%)	Fun (9.1%)
7	Loving (7.6%)	Love (6.7%)	Fun (6.7%)	Kind (9.1%)
8	Adventurous (6.8%)	Honesty (6.7%)	Bubbly (6.7%)	Patience (9.1%)
9	Good (6.8%)	Fun (6.7%)	Open (6.7%)	Smart (9.1%)
10	Funny (6.8%)	Good (5.4%)	Positive (6.7%)	Self-Supported (9.1%)

Table 8

*Traits Used in Self-Created Dating Profiles in Bisexual and Transgender Women (%)*

Rank	Bisexual Women (n = 23-24)		Transgender Women (n = 3)	
	Describing Themselves	Describing Others	Describing Themselves	Describing Others
1	Loyal (18.4%)	Honest (21.2%)	Love (20%)	Outgoing (16.7%)
2	Care (15.8%)	Intelligent (15.2%)	Fun (20%)	Family (16.7%)
3	Love (13.2%)	Loyal (15.2%)	Shy (20%)	Adventurous (16.7%)
4	Honest (10.5%)	Love (12.1%)	Sarcastic (20%)	Honest (16.7%)
5	Giving (7.9%)	Kind (12.1%)	Unique (20%)	Fun (16.7%)
6	Adventure (7.9%)	Attractive (9.1%)		Kind (16.7%)
7	Understanding (7.9%)	Care (9.1%)		
8	Intelligent (7.9%)	Activity (6.1%)		
9	Important (5.3%)	Respectful (6.1%)		
10	Outgoing (5.3%)	Humorous (3%)		

Table 9

*Traits Used in Self-Created Dating Profiles in Heterosexual and Homosexual Men (%)*

Rank	Heterosexual Men (n = 65-66)		Homosexual Men (n = 6)	
	Describing Themselves	Describing Others	Describing Themselves	Describing Others
1	Honest (20%)	Loyal (17.5%)	Loyal (20%)	Funny (16.7%)
2	Funny (12.9%)	Honest (13.6%)	Funny (10%)	Outgoing (16.7%)
3	Loyal (11.4%)	Attractive (12.5%)	Energetic (10%)	Pretty (16.7%)
4	Kind (11.4%)	Smart (10%)	Care (10%)	Humor (16.7%)
5	Caring (10%)	Funny (10%)	Motivated (10%)	Sexy (16.7%)
6	Intelligent (8.6%)	Love (8.6%)	Thoughtful (10%)	Cute (16.7%)
7	Understanding (7.1%)	Physical (8.6%)	Outgoing (10%)	
8	Athletic (7.1%)	Outgoing (6.3%)	Artistic (10%)	
9	Fun (5.7%)	Active (6.3%)	Athletic (10%)	
10	Active (5.7%)	Intelligent (6.3%)		

Table 10

*Traits Used in Self-Created Dating Profiles in Bisexual and Transgender Men (%)*

Rank	Bisexual Men (n=2)		Transgender Man (n=1)	
	Describing Themselves	Describing Others	Describing Themselves	Describing Others
1	Intelligent (20%)	Intelligent (25%)	Transgendered (33.3%)	Open Minded (33.3%)
2	Honest (10%)	Tolerant (12.5%)	LGBT Activist (33.3%)	Caring (33.3%)
3	Attractive (10%)	Compatible (12.5%)	Queer (33.3%)	Enjoys Company (33.3%)
4	Emotional (10%)	Outlook (12.5%)		
5	Stable (10%)	Honest (12.5%)		
6		Interesting (12.5%)		
7		Attractive (12.5%)		



## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

The current findings provide some support for the proposed hypotheses on mate selection in heterosexual men and women as well as for members of the LGBT community. Consistent with results of previous studies, preferences for traits of youth, femininity, and submissive nature were found in heterosexual men in the current study, whereas women showed a greater preference for mates who were older, dominant, masculine, goal driven, and responsible. Trait preferences for mates in homosexual men and women revealed similarities to those of heterosexual men and women, yet also showed differences when it came to traits such as wealth, age, being a college graduate, and masculinity/femininity. Analysis of the dating profiles revealed that having a high socioeconomic status was more desirable in a mate for both heterosexual men and women, albeit more so for women. Overall, LGBT individuals also seemed to prefer a higher socioeconomic status individual.

Overall, heterosexual men reported having more sexual partners within the past year than did women, a finding that corresponds with the literature on men's desire for a greater number of sexual partners (Li & Kenrick, 2006). This preference for more sexual partners is theoretically based on short-term mating principals, in that men should seek quantity over quality when the relationship is casual and not long-term. A higher number of sexual partners would correspond to more chances that the encounter results in offspring, and passing along more genetic material as a consequence (Dawkins, 1989). Compared to men, women reported having fewer sexual partners within the past year, yet the number of partners reported in the current study was higher than has been previously reported in the literature. Women in the current study reported an average of five sexual partners in the last year

whereas women in previous studies reported an average of only 4.5 sexual partners over the course of a lifetime (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Li & Kenrick, 2006). This may be due in part to generational differences in attitudes towards sex, and could be examined further in future studies to determine if such trends persist across other populations.

Traits preferred on the MPQ, which test for qualities individuals seek in a long-term relationship, also demonstrated differences between heterosexual men and women. Specifically, compared to women, men showed higher ratings for the importance of youth, femininity, being emotionally stable, being submissive, and also being a college graduate. Traits such as youth and femininity have been shown throughout the literature as being cues to a woman's reproductive capability, since humans do not possess an obvious outward cue to their reproductive ability (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). However, as fertility peaks for women in their mid-twenties, men should seek long-term partners who tend to be younger than they are (Fisher, 1930), which was evident within the trait selections by men in the current study. Femininity is a sign of good health and, therefore, is likely a sign of good genetics as well as physical attractiveness (Abramson & Pinker, 1995). Being emotionally stable may signal the ability to care for potential offspring (Buss & Barnes, 1986), as would cues that the woman will be faithful (Cramer et al., 2008). A faithful partner has been previously documented as important to men due to parental certainty, and the less likely a woman is to cheat the more desirable they become (Buss & Barnes, 1986). Lastly, being a college graduate has not been shown in previous literature to be an important quality to men, yet as the current sample was derived from college students, this may be an important quality to men already pursuing a degree.

Among heterosexual women, findings from the MPQ revealed a desire for a mate who was older, dominant, masculine, goal-driven, and responsible. As noted previously, having traditionally masculine features is a signal for good genetics, which women tend to show a preference for in a long-term mate (Abramson & Pinker, 1995). Because women invest a greater amount in offspring than men do prenatally and after birth, women tend to have a strong preference for men who can provide for the offspring. This has been shown throughout the literature as a preference for traits that signal resource acquisition and wealth (Davis, 1990; Wiederman, 1993). Since the women in the current study had a strong preference for men who were goal-driven and responsible, the current findings align with those of previous studies. A desire for older men is also associated with resource acquisition, as older men tend to already have established careers and, therefore, the ability to care for potential offspring (Cramer et al., 2008).

As previously noted, direct analysis of participants who identified as homosexual, bisexual, or transgender was not possible, so visual comparisons were made among LGBT and heterosexual men and women. Homosexual women were more likely than heterosexual women to prefer a mate who was a college graduate, perhaps because homosexual relationships rely less on one partner earning more than the other and the partners are more equal within the relationship (Ha et al., 2012). Homosexual women more strongly preferred a mate who was feminine when compared to heterosexual women, which is likely explained by the fact that homosexual women are attracted to the same gender. However, previous studies have found that physical attractiveness is not an important factor to homosexual women and, therefore, the current findings suggest that it is possible that homosexual women may desire feminine traits that men do not traditionally have (Ha et al., 2012).

In the current study, the largest difference observed between homosexual and heterosexual men was in the ratings of the traits of wealth and being older. Homosexual men appeared to have a larger interest in mates who were older than themselves, whereas heterosexual men preferred mates who were younger. This may be, at least in part, linked to fertility cues, in that heterosexual men may select younger female mates due to their higher reproductive value (Trivers, 1972). Since issues related to age and reproduction are not as problematic or age-limiting among homosexual men, age may not be as important a factor for them when evaluating potential mates; a finding consistent with a prior study in homosexual men (Bailey et al., 1994). In addition, homosexual men showed a preference for mates who had wealth when compared to ratings in heterosexual men. Heterosexual men are generally seen as the providers in the context of mate selection, but very little information has been found in past studies concerning homosexual men and resource acquisition. Thus, the current findings may potentially indicate that, in homosexual relationships, both partners are expected to contribute monetarily.

There is very little research on mate selection in transgender men and women in the literature, but visual inspection of the data in the current study reveals many similarities between transgender and heterosexual men, as well as transgender and heterosexual women. For example, femininity, physically attractive, and youth are all traits that transgender and heterosexual men reportedly strongly desire in a potential mate. Transgender and heterosexual women, likewise, place emphases on traits in their mates such as masculinity, being older, and being career-oriented and goal-driven. These gender-based differences in mate selection are all commonly found within the research on mate selection in heterosexual men and women. Therefore, the very preliminary results in the current study indicate that

transgender individuals show similarities in mate selection that align with their identified gender. Such findings are, obviously, speculative and more research is clearly necessary to determine consistent patterns of mate selection.

The fictional dating profiles included in the current study were used to assess the effect of an individual's socioeconomic status on how attractive they would be to potential partners. Using a dating profile was designed to heighten ecological validity, allowing participants to feel as if they were interacting on a dating site; a methodology which has not been utilized in the existing research. Most studies analyze pre-existing dating profiles for similarities, but creating profiles more easily allowed for the manipulation of a single variable in the current study. Since the economic statuses in the dating profiles were based on BLS statistics, and occupations were kept gender neutral to negate any stereotype effects, this added strength to any significant findings. Also, asking participants how much the individual made annually was another strength, as this was able to be compared to what the BLS states as an average salary for each socioeconomic status.

Overall, the findings from the dating profiles revealed that dating profiles for individuals with a high socioeconomic status were desired by heterosexual participants more often than dating profiles for individuals with a middle or low socioeconomic status. This finding supports to the idea that having wealth is attractive to prospective partners, most often women (Ellis, 1992; Davis, 1990; Wiederman, 1993). Heterosexual women also estimated that the prospective partners in the high socioeconomic status profiles would make more money per year and were older than did heterosexual men. Because resource acquisition has been noted as more important to women than men, this finding adds to the

pre-existing literature on female mate selection, and lends support to the hypothesis that women will desire resources and wealth more than men when selecting a potential partner.

As noted, conclusions regarding the responses of LGBT participants to the socioeconomically different profiles were limited due to the small sample size. Unlike heterosexual women, homosexual women did not appear very interested in high socioeconomic status partners, yet appeared to have more willingness to date those in the middle socioeconomic group. Homosexual women also had lower estimates of earnings for those in the high socioeconomic profile compared to the other groups of participants. As stated previously, homosexual women may not place a great importance upon wealth and resource acquisition in mate selection; a finding already noted in the literature (Ha et al., 2012). Homosexual men, on the other hand, estimated that those in the high socioeconomic group made nearly twice as much as was estimated by heterosexual male participants. This could be due to the fact that men, on average, earn more monetarily than women do, and this may be simply based off of a greater earning power of men. As well, bisexual women reported a preference for individuals in the high socioeconomic group. This may be due to their attraction to both men and women, and may have preferences that align more with heterosexual women than homosexual women. A notable difference was that transgender women reported a much higher age estimate for individuals in the high socioeconomic profile. This also may be due to a similar preference for older mates like that of heterosexual women, which future research should explore.

The self-created dating profiles revealed some notable findings that support certain aspects of men and women's mate selection. Heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual men all listed that they would desire a mate who was attractive, which has been well documented

within the literature (Singh, 1993). These findings also support the hypothesis that men value traits that deal mainly with physical attractiveness. Heterosexual men ranked certain physical characteristics on the MPQ as desirable, therefore it makes sense that they would also list these traits in their own dating profile. However, they did not list traits about themselves that would signal to potential mates their ability to accrue resources. This was especially true with heterosexual males, even though it has been previously documented that men describe themselves on dating sites as having wealth or the ability to gain resources in the future (Wiederman, 1993).

Heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual women also had similarities within the traits they listed about themselves. Most of the traits centered on being honest, loyal, kind, and fun. These traits deal with fidelity and the idea that men have a certain degree of parental uncertainty, and therefore having a partner who is honest is desirable (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). For homosexual women, these findings reflect an importance placed on trust and the desire for a partner who is supportive, and further research should seek insight on their unique mate selection processes. Overall, across all participants, many of the same traits were observed: Loyalty, honesty, kindness, and humor. The prominence placed on these traits in the current study deviated somewhat from the major findings in the literature, as most women's dating profiles focus on wanting a mate who will be able to provide monetarily (Davis, 1990; Wiederman, 1993). However, men have been reported as wanting a mate who is loyal, and therefore the current findings do align with prior research in that respect (Buss, 1989). They also align with research conducted on how much homosexual women desire resource acquisition traits in a partner, which tends to be on the lower end of the spectrum (Ha et al., 2012).

There were several limitations in the current research. The first limitation was low LGBT participation rates, resulting in an inability to statistically analyze differences among heterosexual and LGBT respondents. Statistical conclusions could only be drawn among heterosexual respondents with visual comparisons made for LGBT respondents, restricting between-groups comparisons. Also, as bisexual participants are attracted to both genders, future studies should ask questions to determine if the answers on the MPQ pertain to men or women. This will allow researchers to group their responses more easily.

Being able to utilize participants from areas other than a college campus may help to diversify the responses for ethnicity as well as improve LGBT response rates.

Another limitation was the Type I error rate inflation during statistical analysis of the MPQ responses due to the 45 ANOVA tests comparing each of the trait responses between heterosexual men and women. However, since the results of the current study show that women have a stronger preference for traits that signal the ability to acquire resources and men have a stronger preference for physical traits, which match findings in the literature, the results are unlikely due to an error. In addition, male respondents were lower in number than female respondents, resulting in unequal group sizes and violation of the heterogeneity of variance assumption on some of the analyses. In part, problems with assumption violation were addressed by instituting a stricter alpha level, but having equal male and female respondent levels would have improved the overall generalizability of results. Comparisons between groups that had only one or two participants, such as transgender participants, may not be representative of the group as whole but merely individual differences. Lastly, future studies should consider an additional question to participants regarding the desire to have



children. This may have an effect for individuals, perhaps LGBT individuals in particular, and should be considered for further research.

The results found in this study confirm those in the existing literature on mate selection. Heterosexual women preferred traits in men that signal resource acquisition such as career- and goal-focuses, and heterosexual men preferred traits that describe a partner's femininity and emotional stability. These traits have been well documented in the literature as important in selection of a future mate (Ellis, 1992; Trivers, 1972; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Abramson & Pinker, 1995). When provided with profiles of potential partners, both heterosexual men and women reported that they were more likely to date those partners of high socioeconomic value, which conveys a preference for mates of good socioeconomic standing and an increased ability to provide resources. This finding corresponds with the current literature on women's long-term mate selection. Future studies should expand upon the populations that have not been as widely studied, specifically homosexual, bisexual, and transgender men and women. By understanding the mechanisms underlying mate selection in more than heterosexual populations, this will make for a more rounded insight on the subject.

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## APPENDIX A

### Demographic Information

***Please take a few moments to tell us about yourself. Your answers will not be linked to your name.***

How did you hear about this study?

- Department of Psychology SONA website
- Saw a flier on campus
- Heard about it from a friend
- Other source (please indicate below)

What is your age?

\_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe your ethnic background?

- White/Caucasian (non-Hispanic)
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Multiracial
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

What gender do you most identify as?

- Male
- Female

Do you identify as transgendered?

- No
- Yes

What gender are you most attracted to sexually?

- Male
- Female
- Both

What is your relationship or marital status?

- Single, never married
- In a relationship, never married
- Married or domestic partner

- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other

Please enter the length of your longest romantic relationship in months (1 year = 12 months, 2 years = 24 months, etc.)

---

Please enter the number of casual sexual encounters you have had within the last year.

---

## APPENDIX B

### Marital Preference Questionnaire

*Below is a list of traits that can be used to describe characteristics about a potential romantic partner. Please select how much you agree or disagree that these characteristics are important to you in a potential romantic partner.*

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Kind	1	2	3	4	5	6
Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6
Physically Attractive	1	2	3	4	5	6
Witty	1	2	3	4	5	6
Charming	1	2	3	4	5	6
Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frugal	1	2	3	4	5	6
Stylish	1	2	3	4	5	6
Introverted	1	2	3	4	5	6
Considerate	1	2	3	4	5	6
Exciting Personality	1	2	3	4	5	6
Extroverted	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6
Easy Going	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lazy	1	2	3	4	5	6
Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Career Oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sexually Active	1	2	3	4	5	6
Interesting	1	2	3	4	5	6
Creative	1	2	3	4	5	6
Arrogant	1	2	3	4	5	6
Young	1	2	3	4	5	6
Healthy	1	2	3	4	5	6
Responsible	1	2	3	4	5	6
Submissive	1	2	3	4	5	6
Idealistic	1	2	3	4	5	6
Older	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sex Appeal	1	2	3	4	5	6
Understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6
Wealthy	1	2	3	4	5	6
Good Looking	1	2	3	4	5	6
College Graduate	1	2	3	4	5	6
Masculine	1	2	3	4	5	6
Adaptable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Plans Ahead	1	2	3	4	5	6
Goal Driven	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feminine	1	2	3	4	5	6
Devoted	1	2	3	4	5	6
Physically Fit	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emotionally Stable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Honest	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sociable	1	2	3	4	5	6

## APPENDIX C

### Dating Profiles and Questions

*Below is a dating profile from a potential romantic partner.  
Please read the description and answer the following questions.*

#### Female Profile

**Tag Line:** “Life is a never ending adventure.”

**Gender:** Female

**Date of Birth:** March 27

**Zodiac Sign:** Aries

**Relationship Status:** Single, Looking.

**Occupation:** Medicine / Education / Food Service

**Body Type:** Average

**Height:** 5’5”

**Interests:** Movies, spending time with friends and family, meeting new people.

---

#### Male Profile

**Tag Line:** “Life is a never ending adventure.”

**Gender:** Male

**Date of Birth:** March 27

**Zodiac Sign:** Aries

**Relationship Status:** Single, Looking.

**Occupation:** { Medicine / Education / Food Service }

**Body Type:** Average

**Height:** 5’10”

**Interests:** Movies, spending time with friends and family, meeting new people.

---

*Please answer the following questions that pertain to the dating profile you just read.*

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
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1. How likely are you to go on a single date with this person?
2. How likely are you to go on multiple dates with this person?
3. How likely are you to form a long-term serious relationship with this person?
4. How likely do you think other people would be to date this person?
  - *How old would you like this person to be?* \_\_\_\_\_
  - *How much money do you think this person makes (per year)?*  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D

### Self-Created Dating Profiles

*Imagine that you are creating a dating profile for yourself. Below, please list the three most important characteristics about yourself that you would include to describe yourself to potential romantic partners.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

*Please list the three most important characteristics about your potential romantic partners that you would include to describe them in your dating profile.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_