

Hot Science Cool Talks

UT Environmental Science Institute

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Human Mating Strategies

Dr. David Buss
September 6, 2013

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The Evolution *of* Desire

STRATEGIES OF HUMAN MATING

"A DROP-DEAD SHOCKER."

Washington Post Book World

David M. Buss

REVISED EDITION WITH TWO NEW CHAPTERS BY THE AUTHOR

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University of Texas

HUMAN MATING STRATEGIES

September 6, 2013

PG-13

Talk Outline

- Diverse Mating Strategy Contexts
- What Men Want
- What Women Want
- Etc., Etc.,

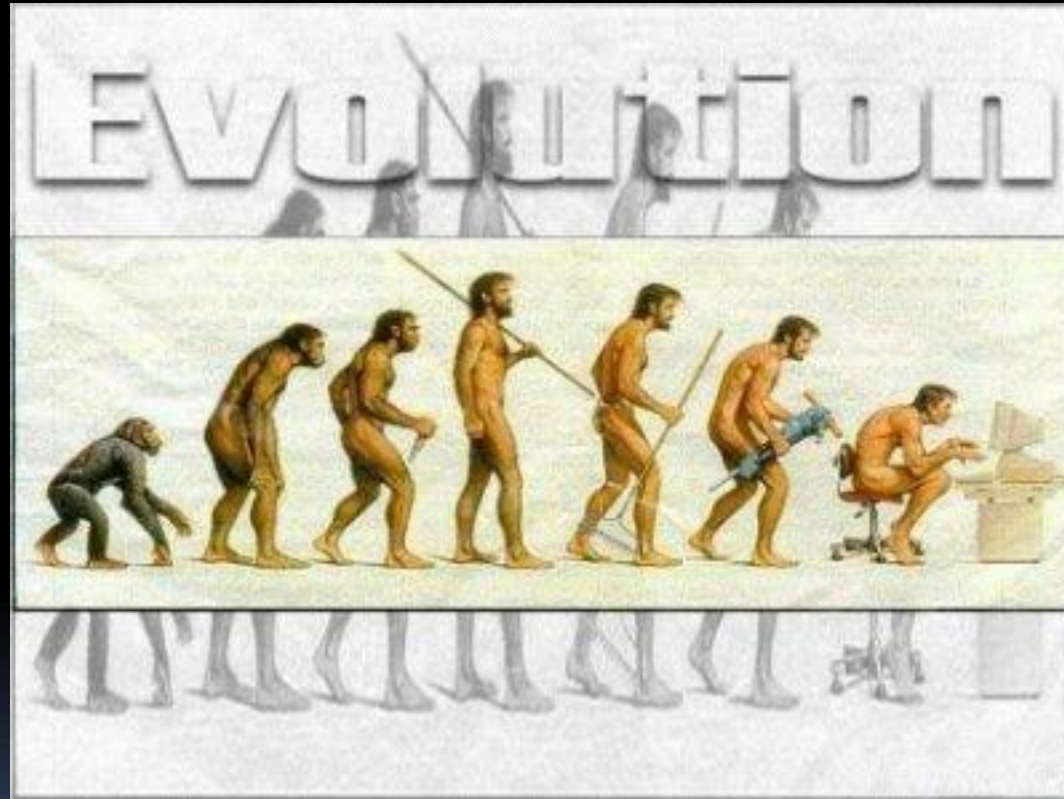
Mating Strategies Have Diverse Contexts

- Different species
- Various Cultures
- Ecologies
- Unique experiences (father absence)
- Surplus of one gender
- Different genders (male, female)
- Different mate values

Windows on Desire



Evolution By Natural Selection



Source: www.puffin.com



Source: noahunt.org

“The sight of the peacock gives
me nightmares”

– Charles Darwin



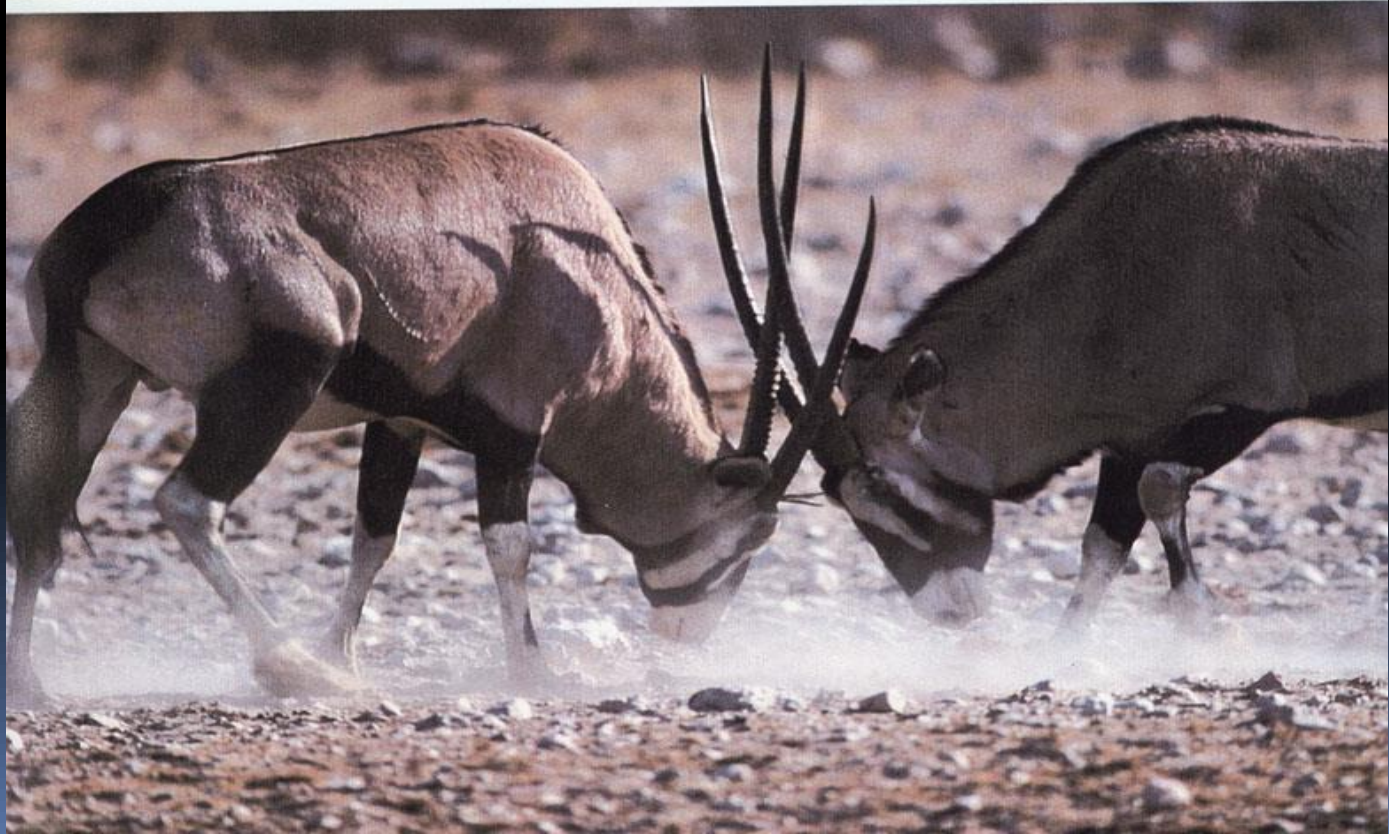
Hamadryas Baboons
Source: www.puffin.com



Red Fur Seals
Source: www.nhm.org

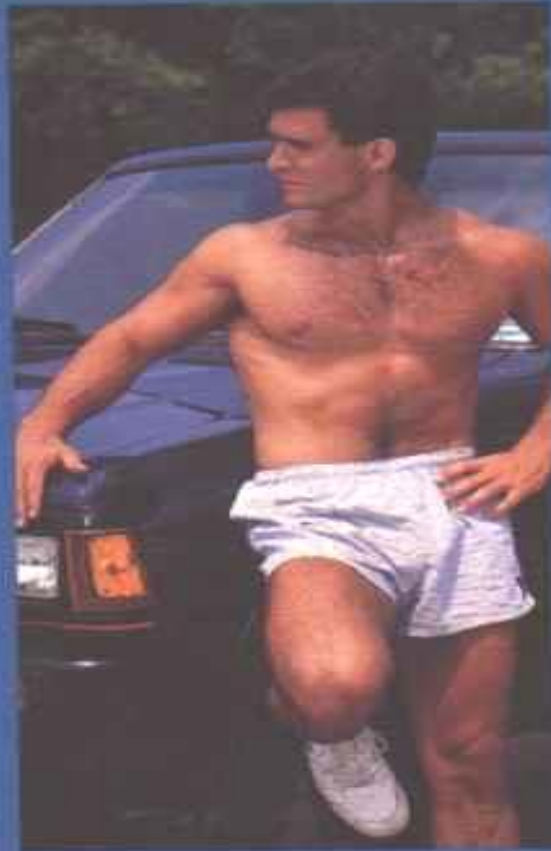
Sexual Selection

- Same-Sex Competition
- Intersexual Selection

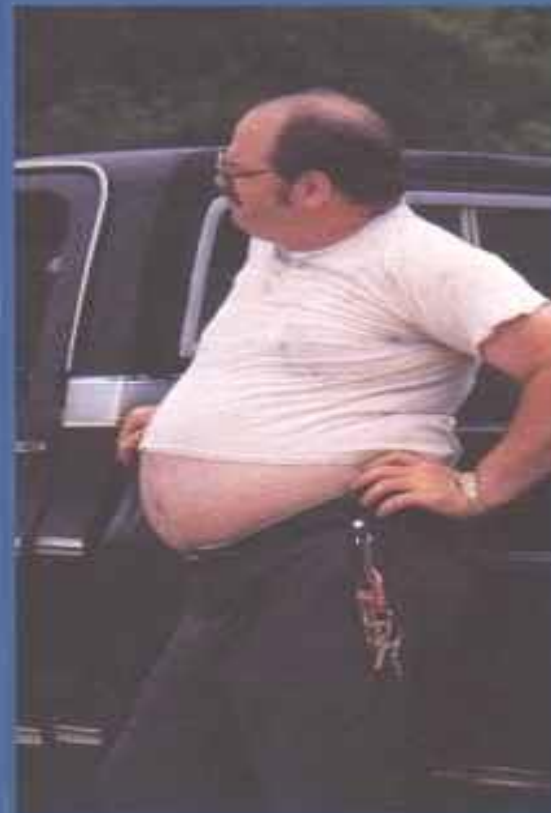


Intersexual Selection: Preferential Mate Choice

What we're looking for...



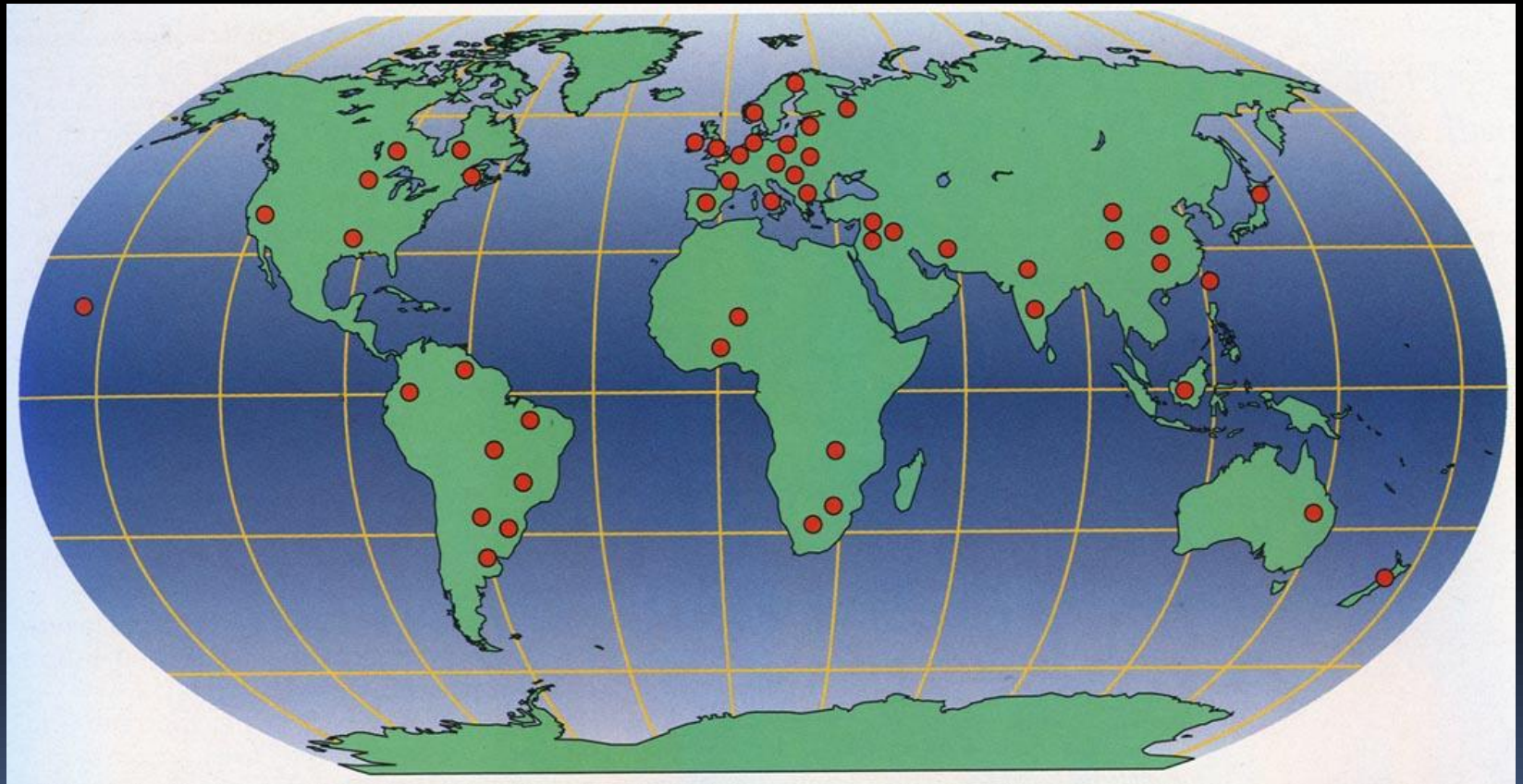
What's looking for us.



Humans Have a Complex Menu of Mating Strategies

- Long-term committed mating
- Short-term opportunistic mating
- “Cheating”: Extra-pair copulation (EPC)
- Serial mating over time
- Mixed mating strategies

Locations of 37 Cultures in International Mate Selection Project: Total # of People = 10,047

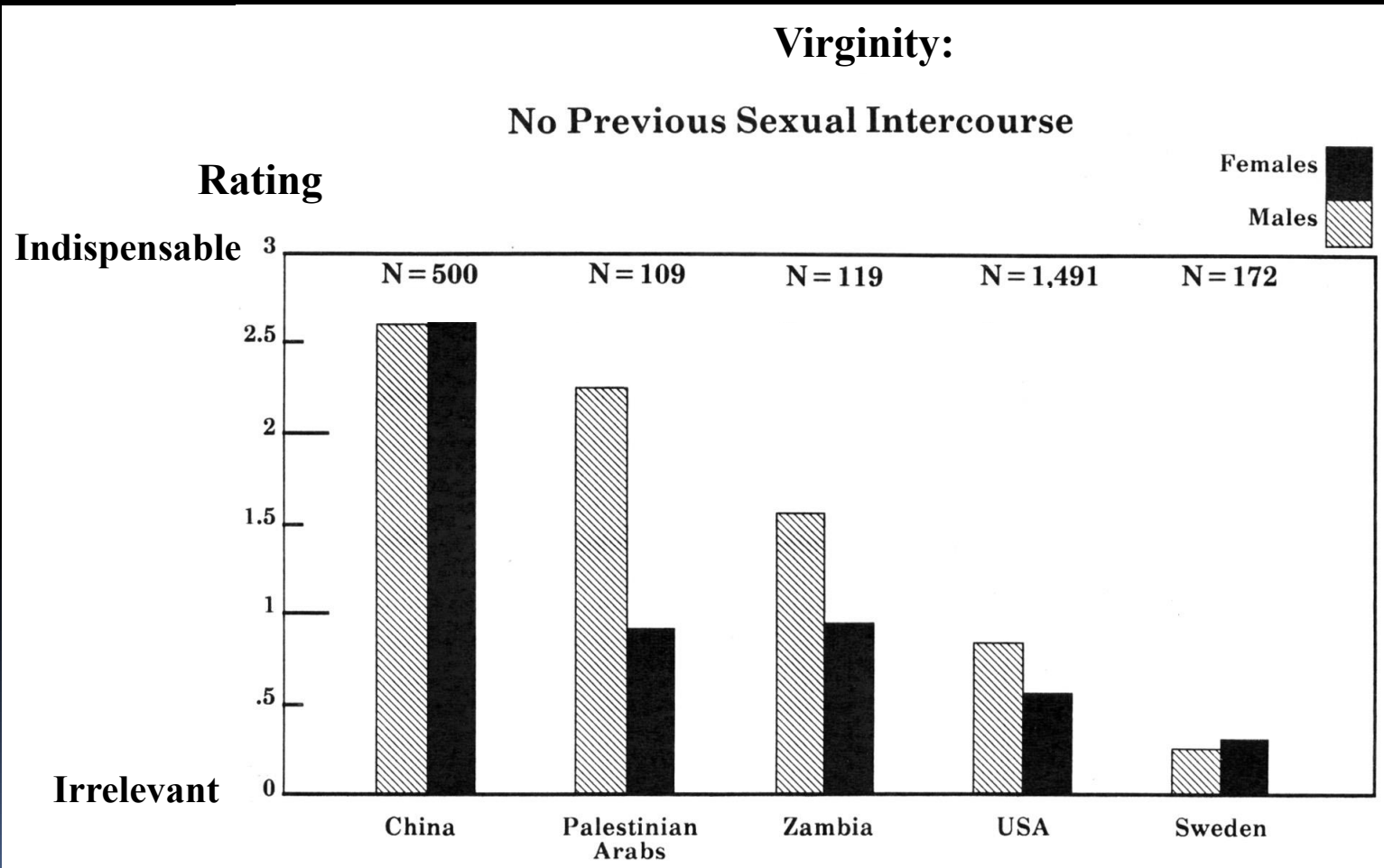


Universal Desires

- Love
- Exciting personality
- Good health
- Kindness
- Intelligence
- Sociable
- Easy going



Culturally Variable Desires



Source: Buss (1989)

Cultural Change in China: Importance of Virginity

Gender	1983	2009
Male	2.54	1.70
Female	2.61	1.36

0 = irrelevant

3 = indispensable

Meta-Theory of Sex Differences

Adaptive pressures dictate similarities and differences between men and women

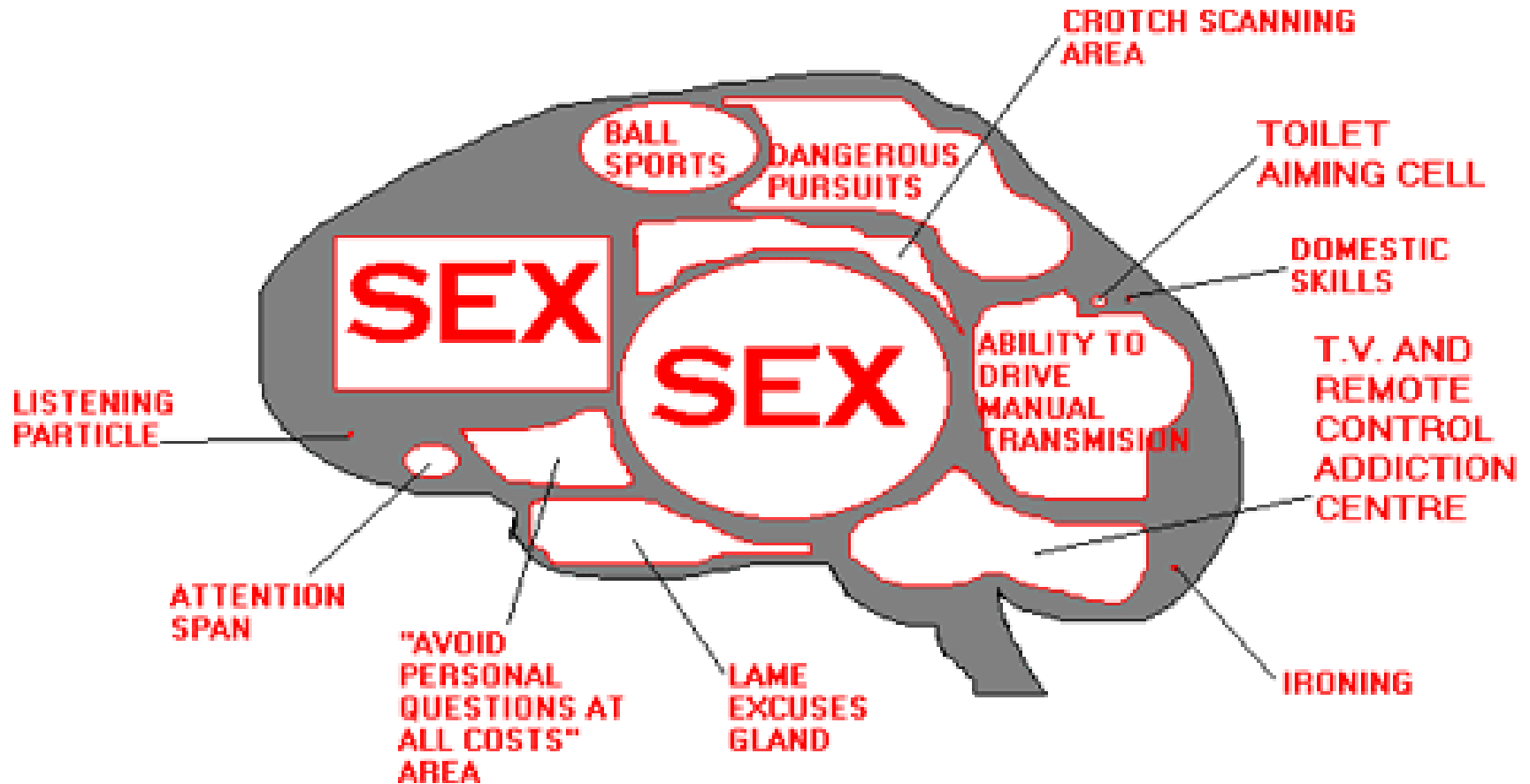
Recurrently Different Adaptive Problems of the Sexes

- Internal female fertilization
- Paternity uncertainty
- Parental investment (men vs. women)
- Misdirected parental investment
- Breast feeding
- Concealed ovulation
- Cyclic ovulation

Have Humans Evolved Psychological Adaptations to Sex-Linked Adaptive Problems?

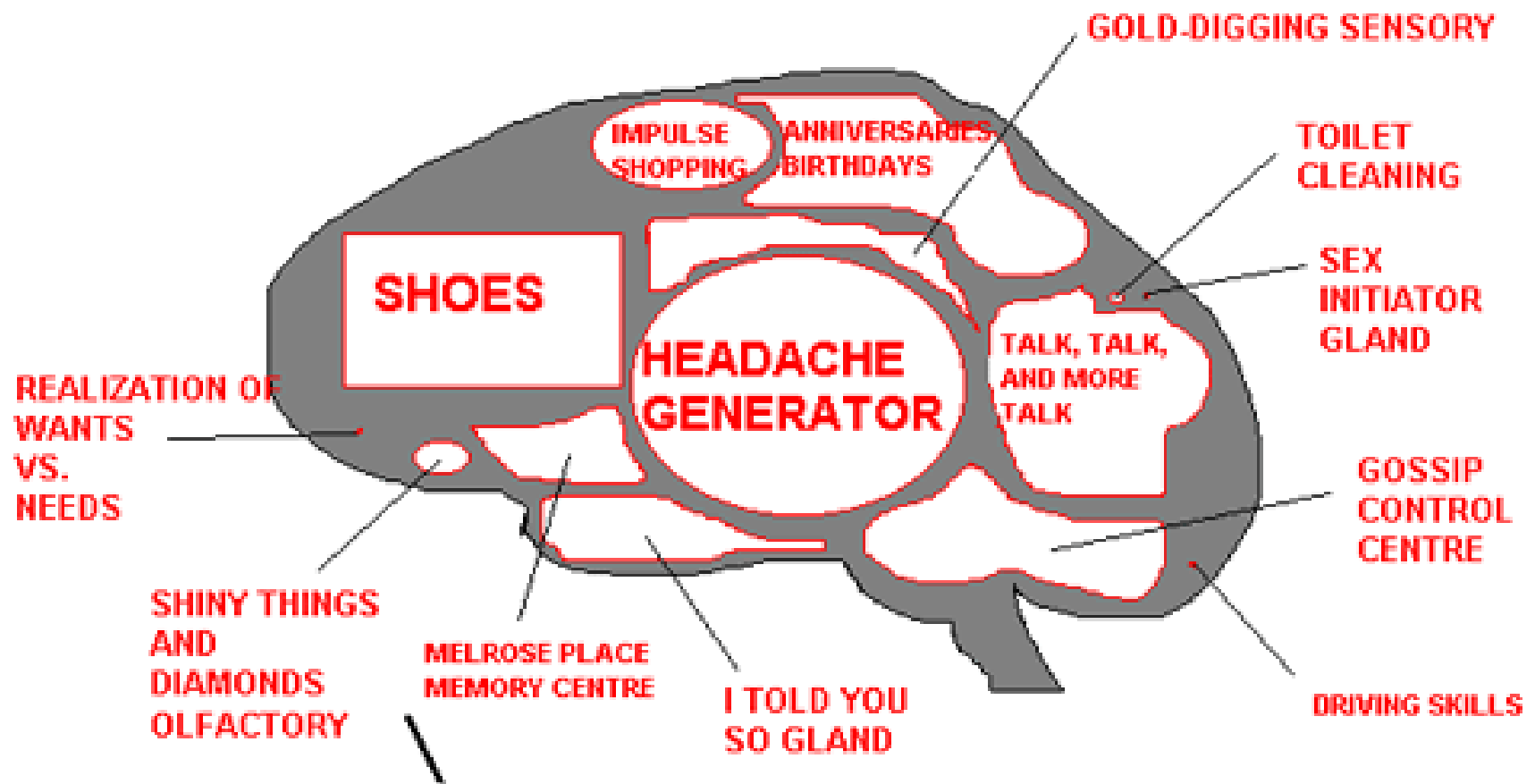
- What is the empirical evidence?

THE MALE BRAIN



FOOTNOTE: the "Listening to children cry in the middle of the night" gland is not shown due to its small and underdeveloped nature. Best viewed under a microscope.

THE FEMALE BRAIN



FOOTNOTE: The "Put Oil into the Car" and "Be Quite During the Game" glands are active only when the "SHINY THINGS AND DIAMONDS" OLFACTORY has been satisfied or when there is a shoe sale.

So What Do Men Want?

Ideal Number of Sex Partners Desired

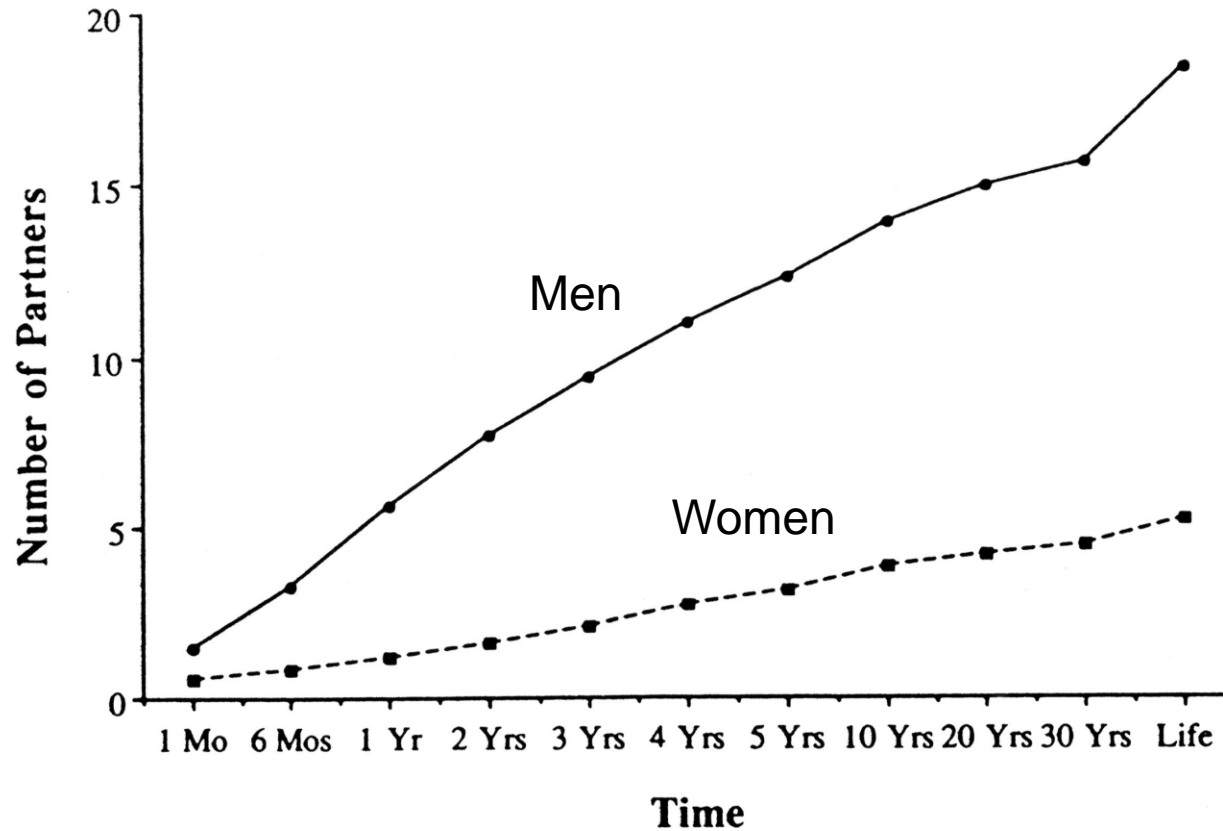
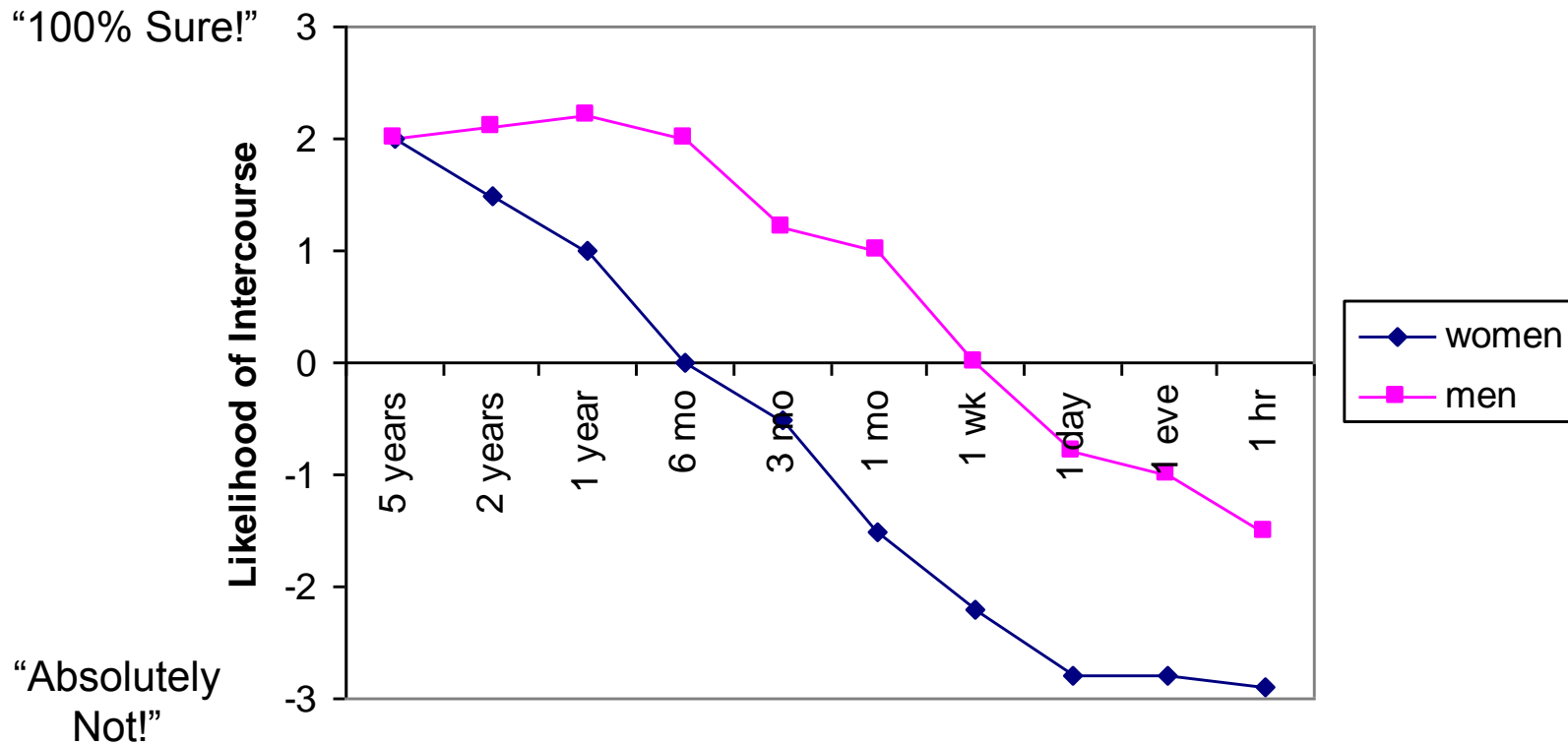


Figure 4. Number of sexual partners desired. (Subjects recorded in blank spaces provided how many sexual partners they would ideally like to have for each specified time interval.)

Source: Buss & Schmidt (1993)

Likelihood of Agreeing to Have Sex With Someone You Find Attractive as a Function of Time Known



Source: Buss & Schmidt (1993)

Florida Study: Clarke & Hatfield (1989)

- Informal re-enactmen on UT's Campus:
“Want to go back to my place?”

Guy propositions a Girl:



“No”

Girl propositions a Guy:



“YES” and a High-Five!!!!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkkQxv9m0R8>

More Psychological Evidence for Short-Term Mating

The “closing time phenomenon”



Source: Pennebaker (1989)

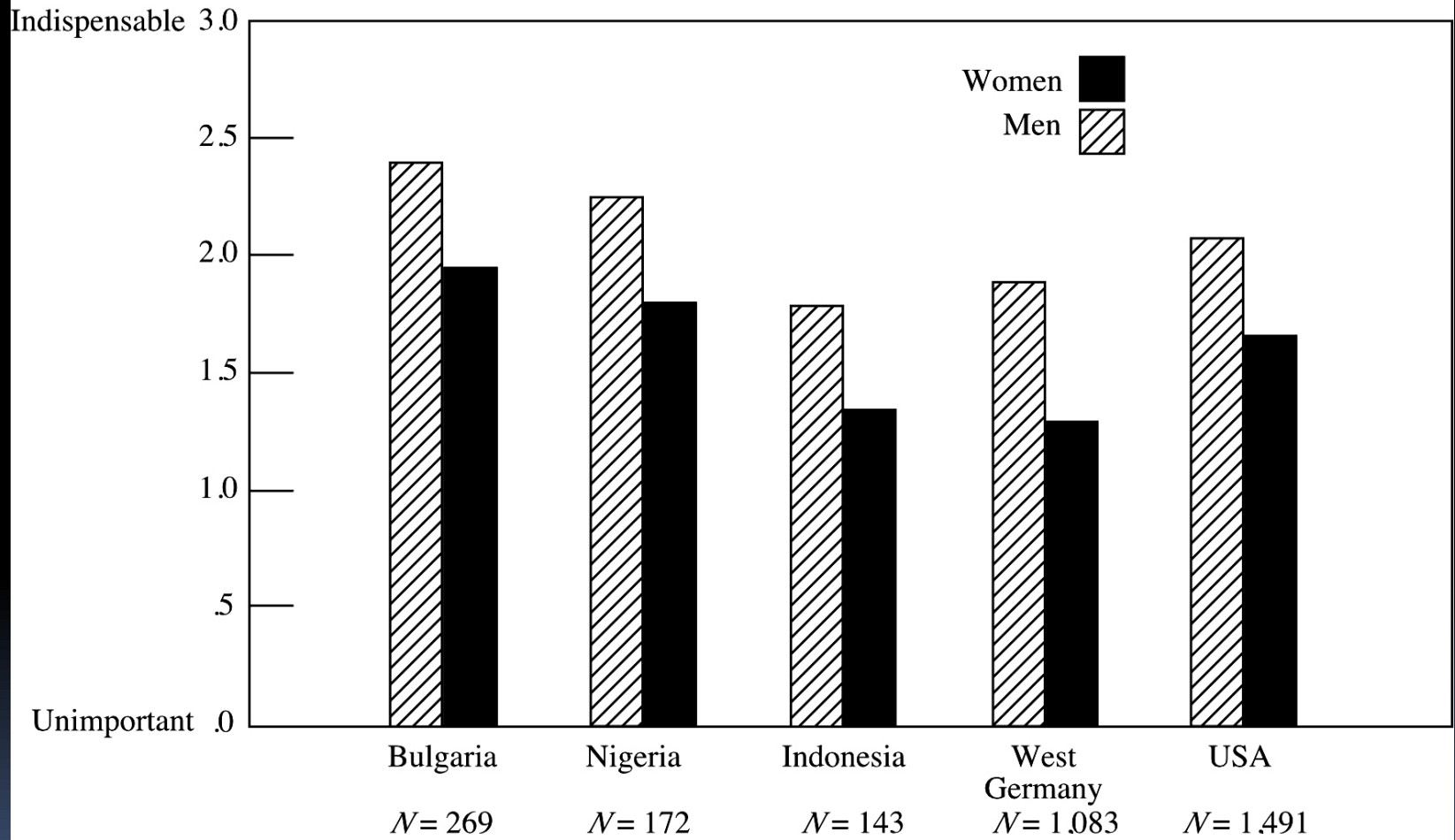
The Assessment Problem



Logic of the Evolution of Standards of Attractiveness



Physical Attractiveness



Source: Buss (1989)

Standards Of Beauty Are Consistent Across Cultures



Source: TBD

Ecological Diversity

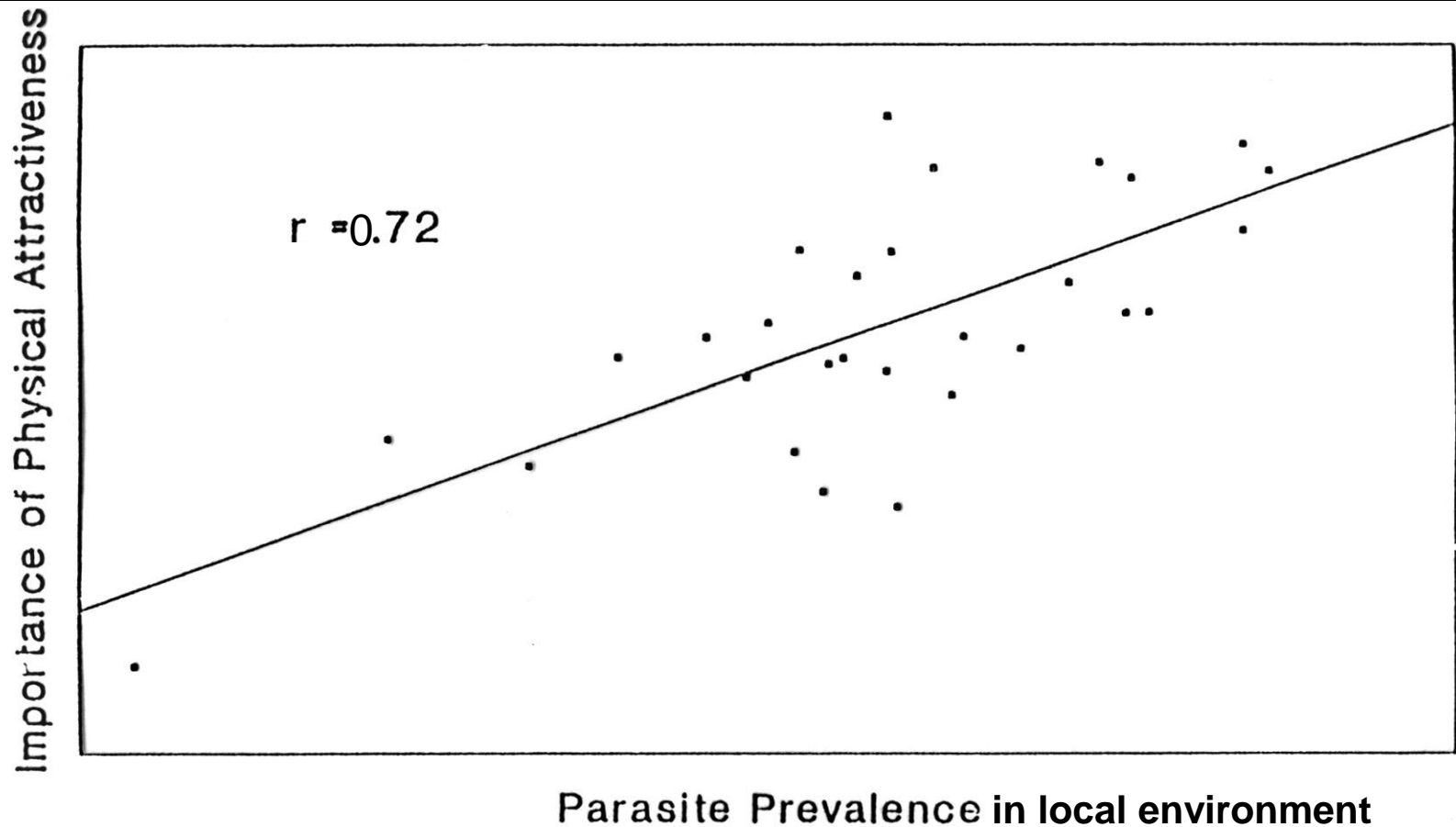
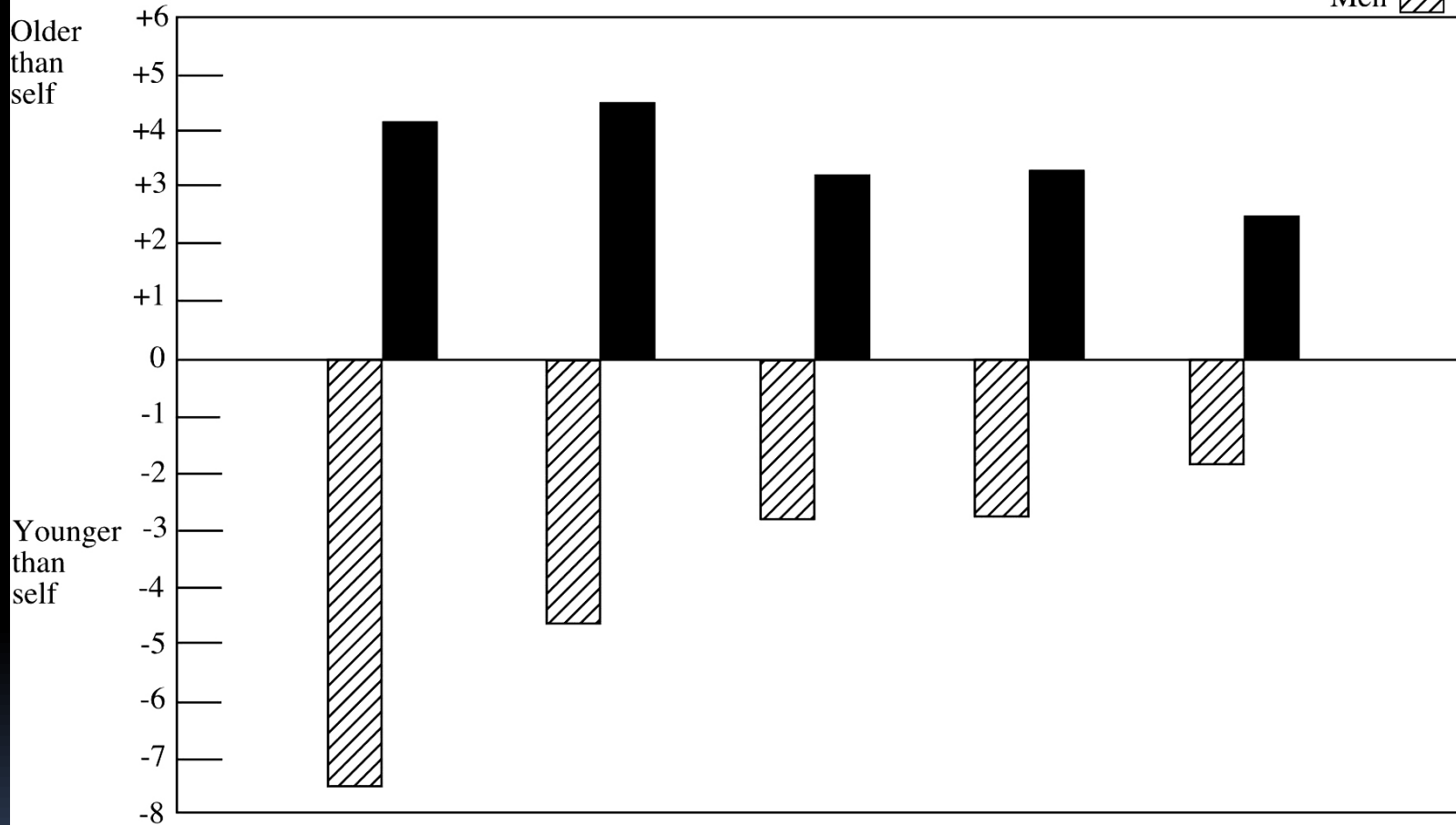


Figure 4. Importance of attractiveness as a function of parasite prevalence across 29 countries. Residual scores; latitude, geographical area, and mean income are partialled out. (from Gangestad and Buss, 1993)

Age Difference Preferred Between Self and Spouse

Women 
Men 



Zambia
N = 119

Colombia
N = 139

Poland
N = 240

Italy
N = 101

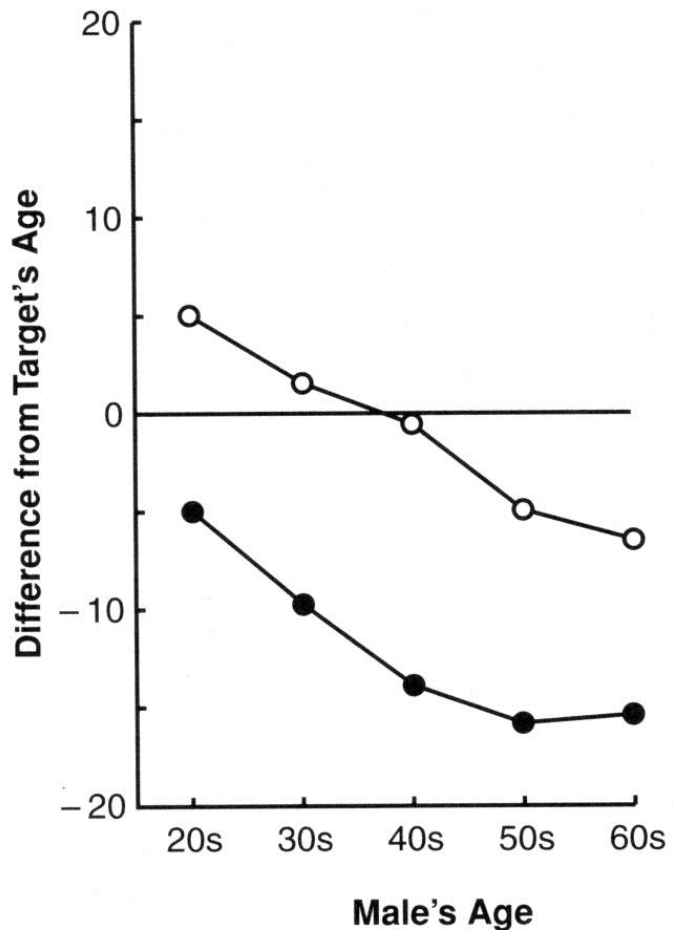
USA
N = 1,491

Source: Buss (1989)

Men's Age Preferences As They Get Older

● Oldest preferred
○ Youngest preferred

Photo: blogs.lowellsun.com



Body Shape: Waist-to-Hip Ratio

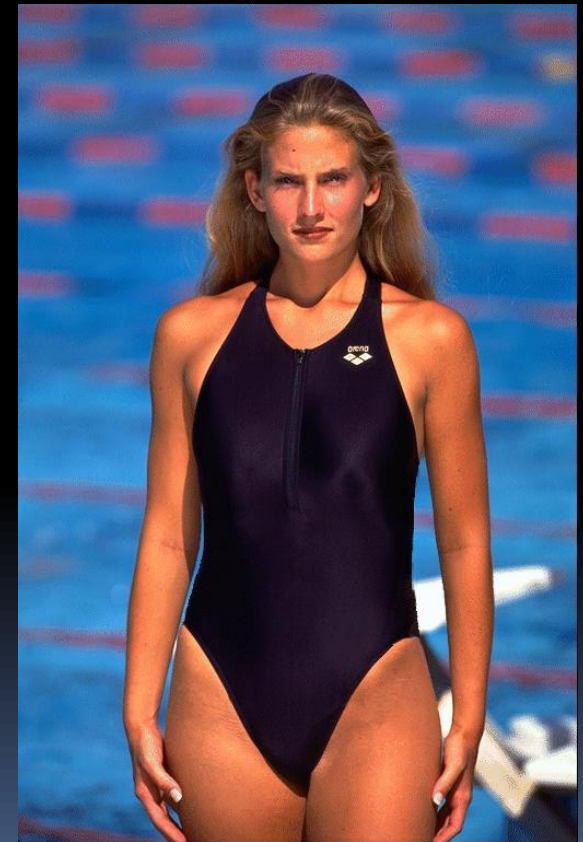
Cue to: youth, health, fertility,
and non-pregnancy [$\sim .70$ = ideal]



.70



TBD



TBD

So What Do Women Want?

Mate Preferences

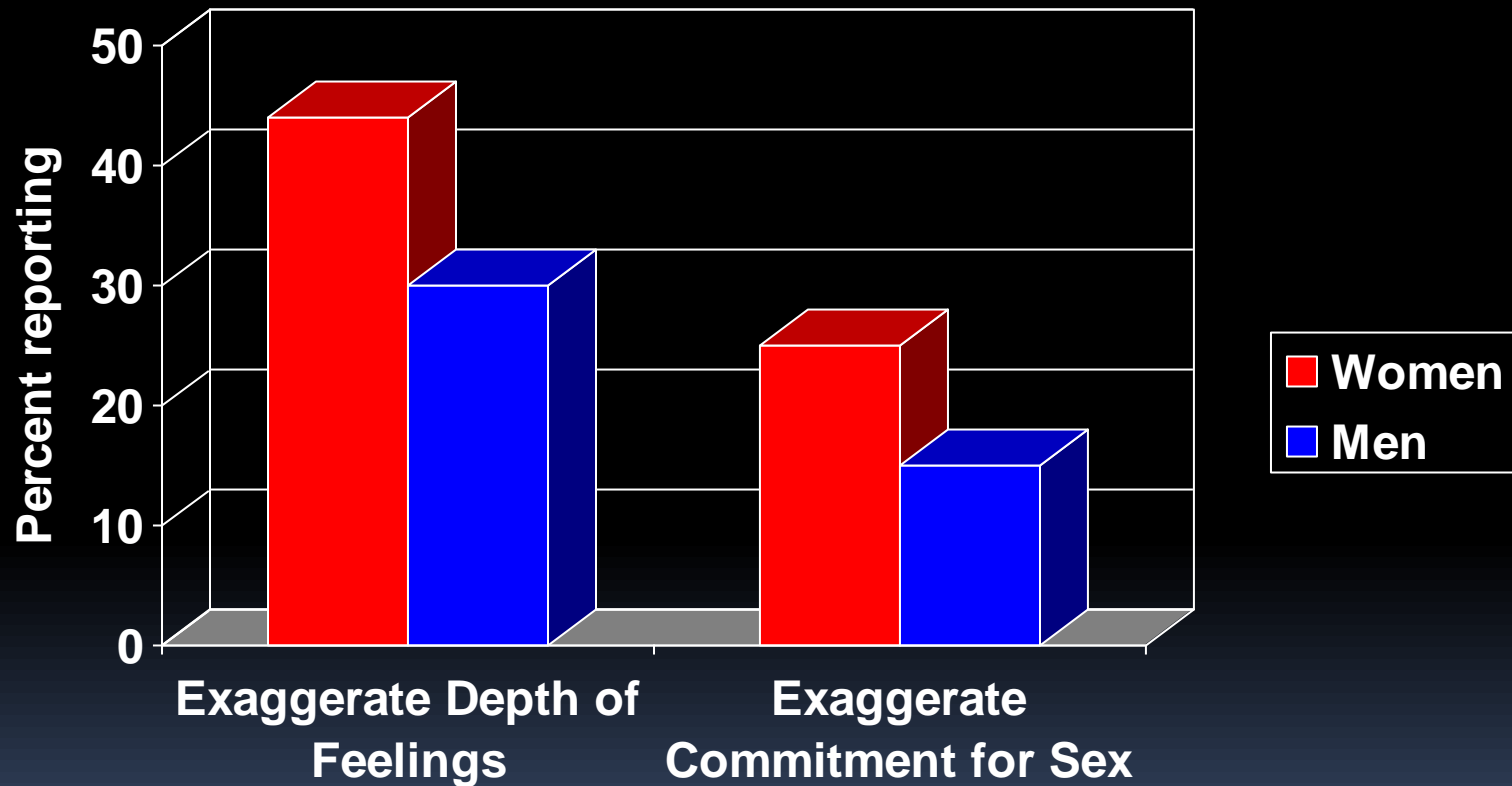
- Thousands of dimensions of differences
- Constants do not count



Problems Women Face in Mating

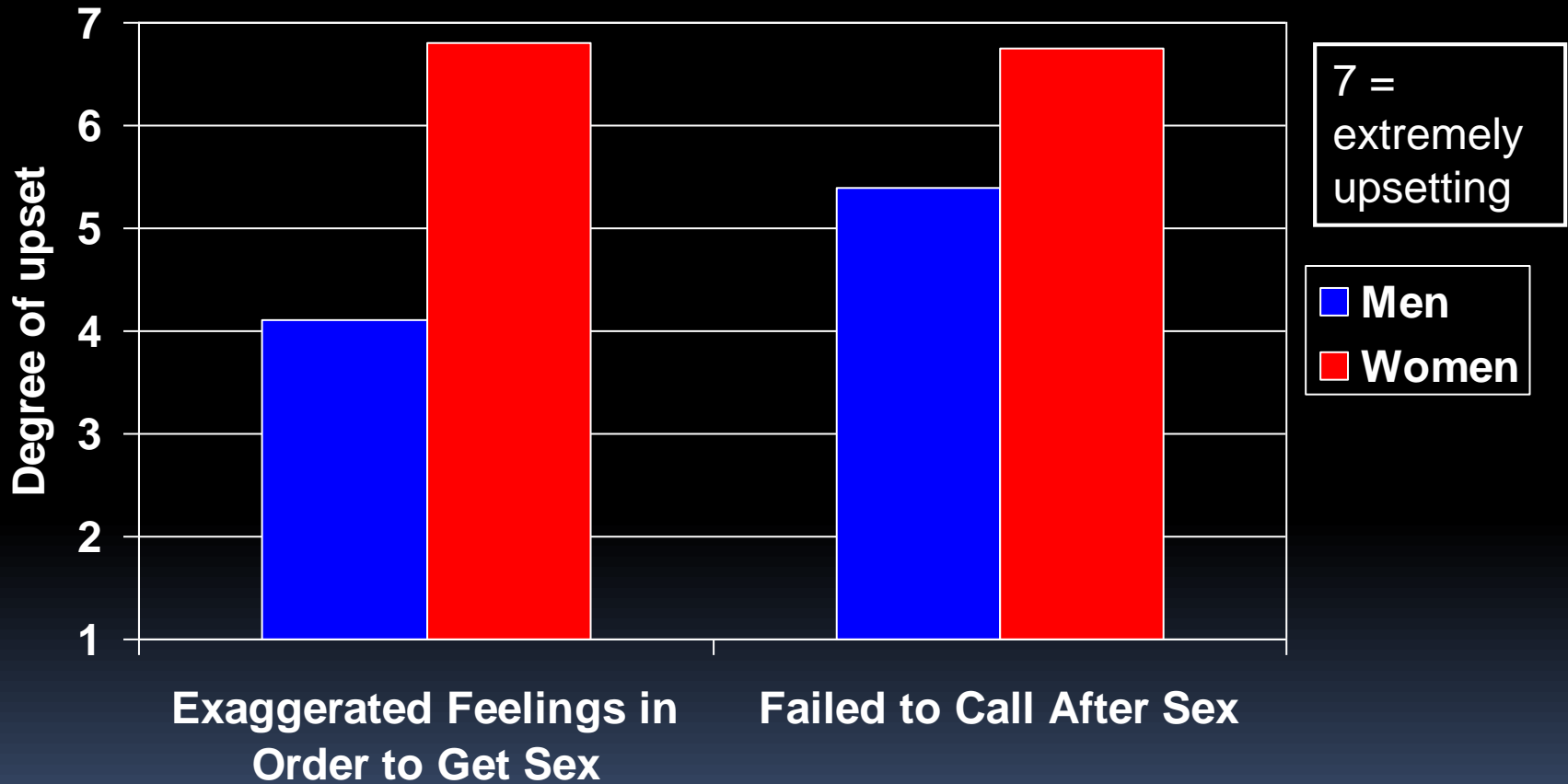
1. Identifying relevant attributes
2. Assessing men on relevant attributes
3. Accurate self-evaluation of mate value
4. Targeting men in mate-value range
5. Avoiding male deception: “players”

Commitment-Related Deceptive Experiences



Source: Haselton & Buss (2005)

Emotional Upset About Deception: Pre- and Post-Copulation



Source: Haselton & Buss (2005)

Preference For Economic Resources



Source: colourschool.org

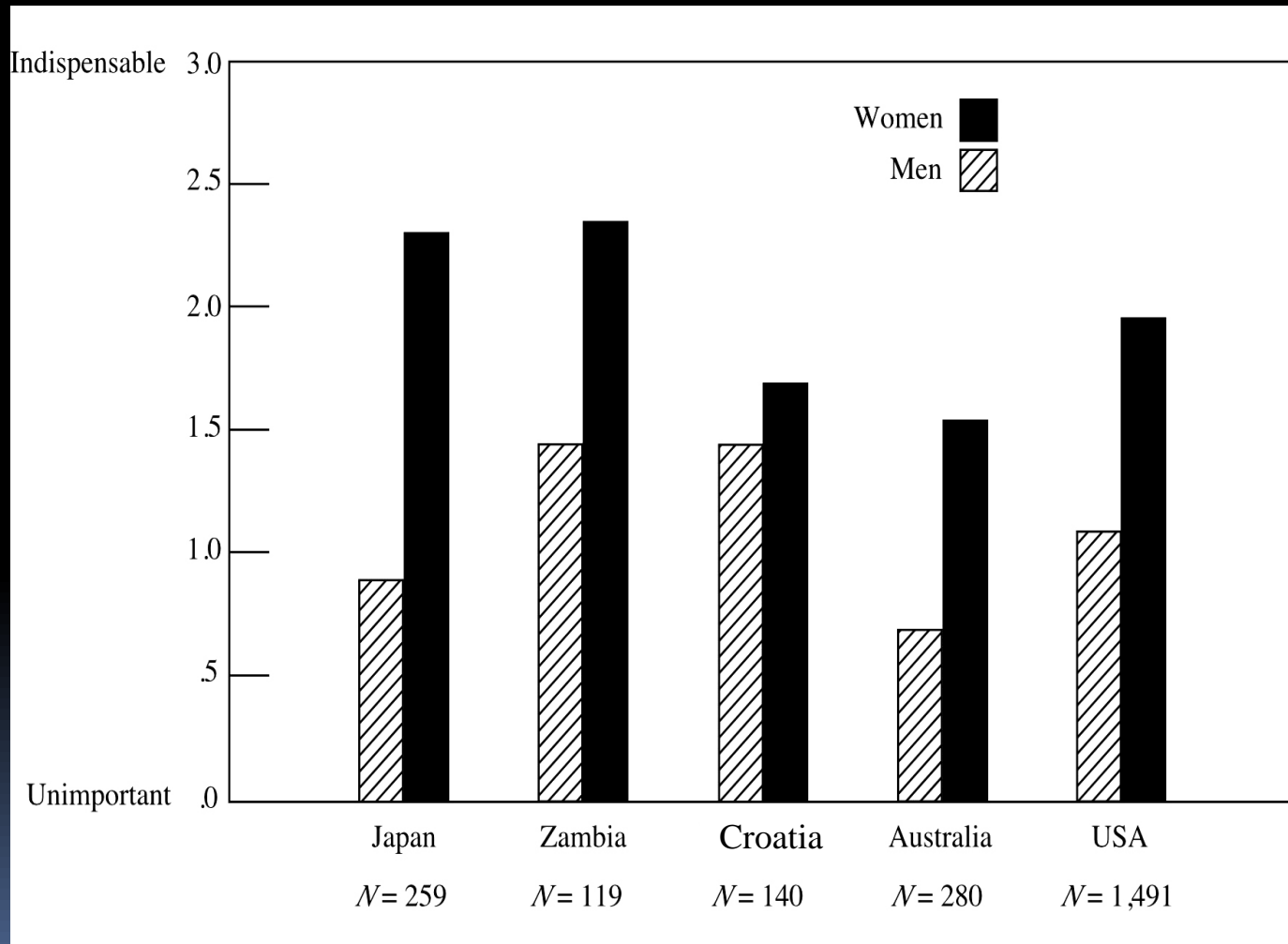


Source: iwallscreen.com



www.PricyPads.com

Good Financial Prospects



Source: Buss (1989)

Preference For Social Status



Source: biography.com



Source: imdb.com

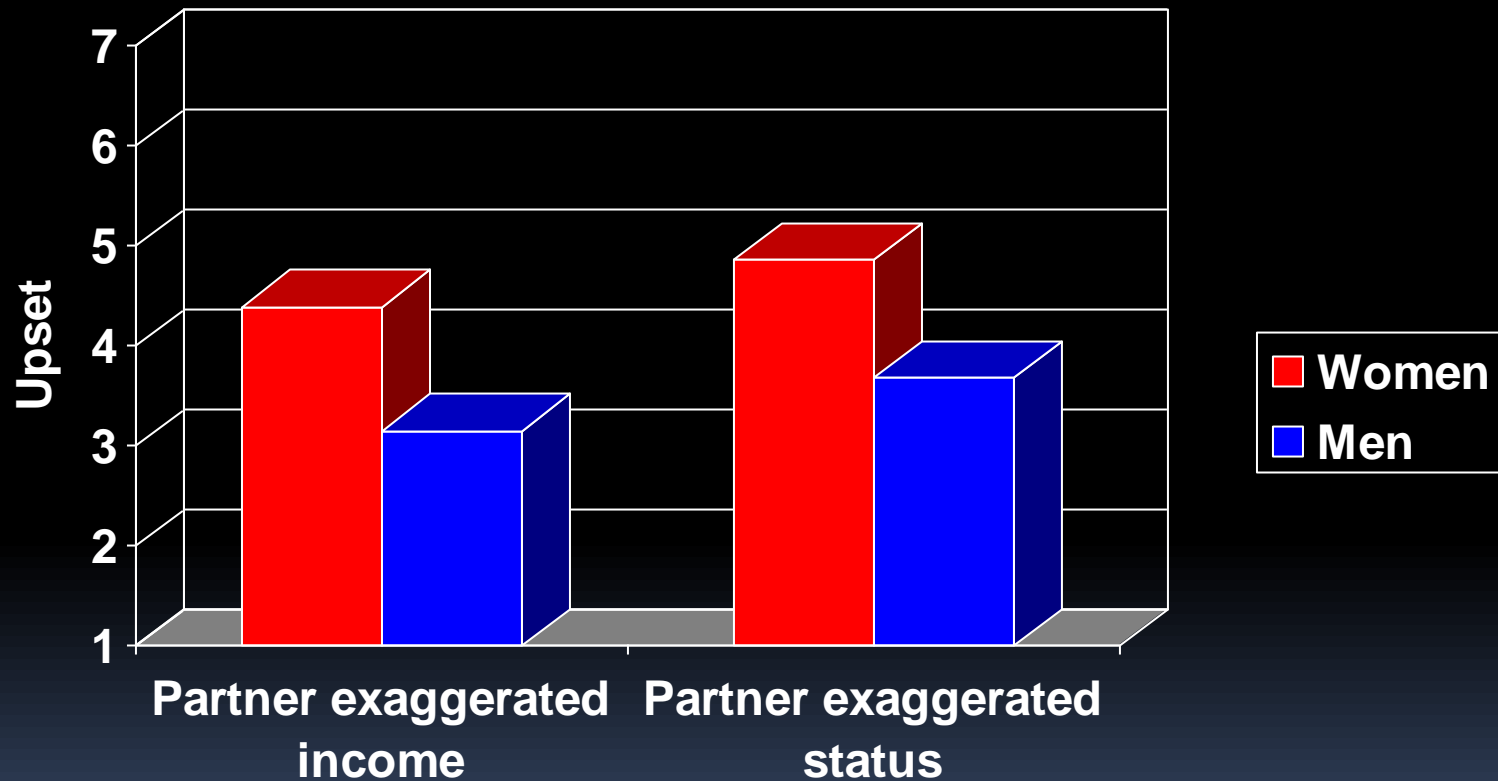


Source: blog.starcam.com

Men in Positions of Power: Do They Get What They Want?



Deception about Status and Resources



Source: Haselton & Buss (2005)

Preference For Slightly Older Men



Source: aces.showbiz.com

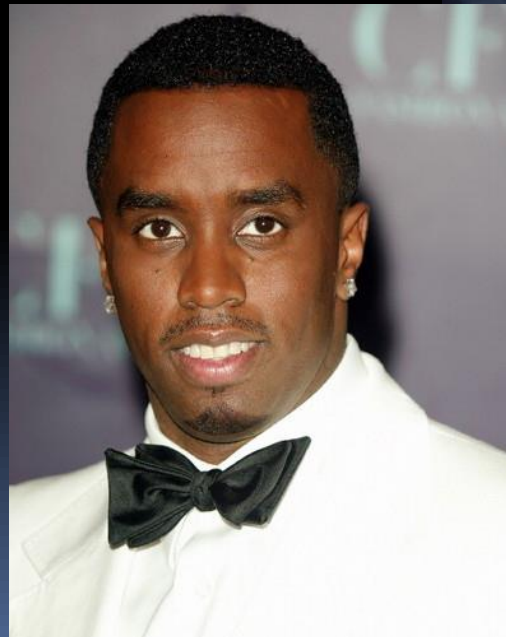
Preference For Ambition and Industriousness



Source: job-before-success.blogspot.com

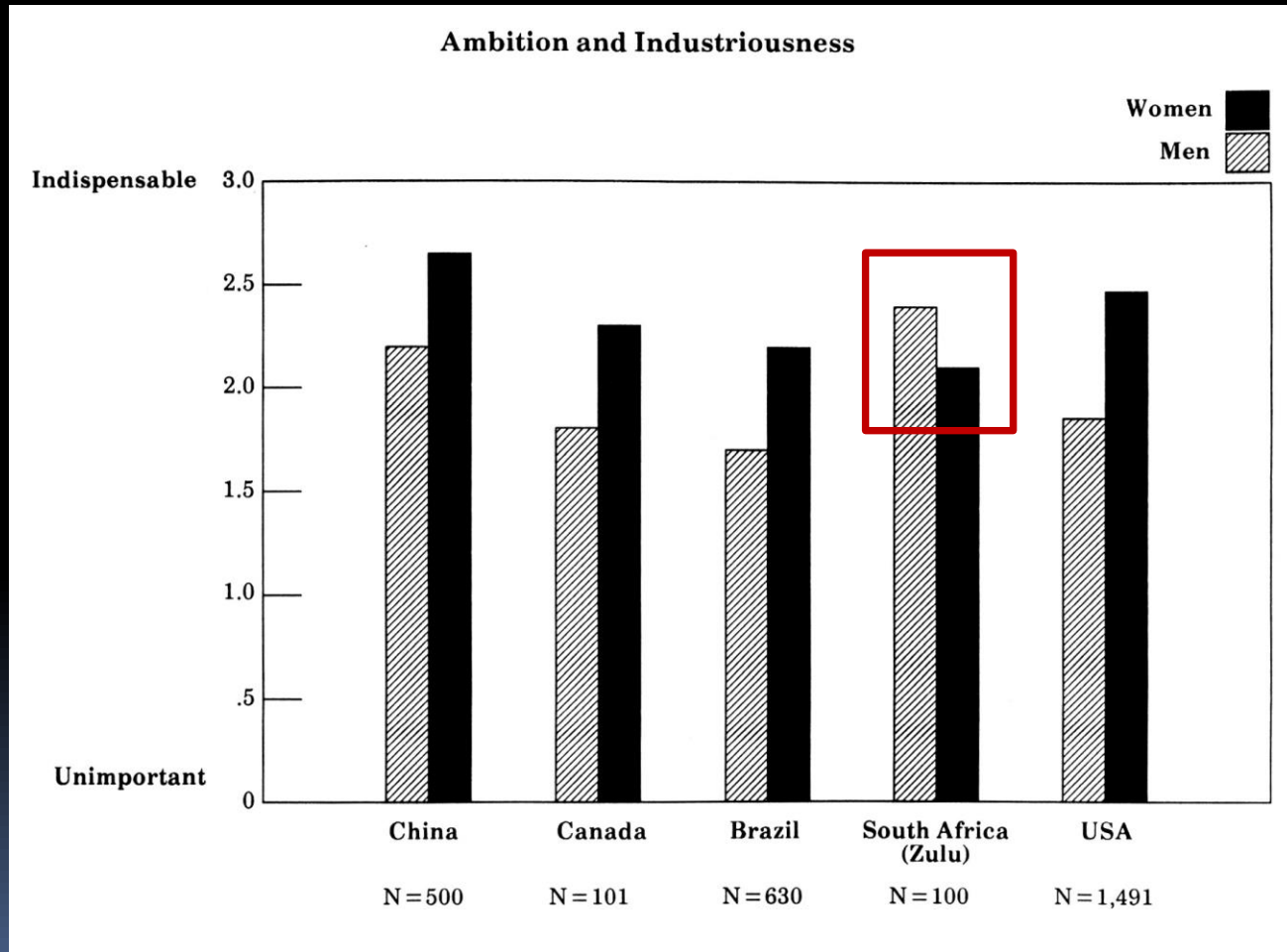


Source: people.com



Source: victorstuff.com

Ambition and Industriousness



Source: Buss (1989)

Preference For Dependability and Stability



Source: collider.com



Source: eonline.com

Preference For Athletic Prowess

A Cue to Protection



EXPOSAY.COM

Image of Sport / PR Photos



Source: athleteswives.com

Preference For Love and Commitment



Willingness to Invest in Children



La Cerra Study

The Hidden Side of Female Sexuality: Female Short-Term Mating



Hypotheses About Potential Benefits of Infidelity for Female

- Low fertility of current mate
- Access to additional resources
- Access to superior genes
- Mate switching: trading up

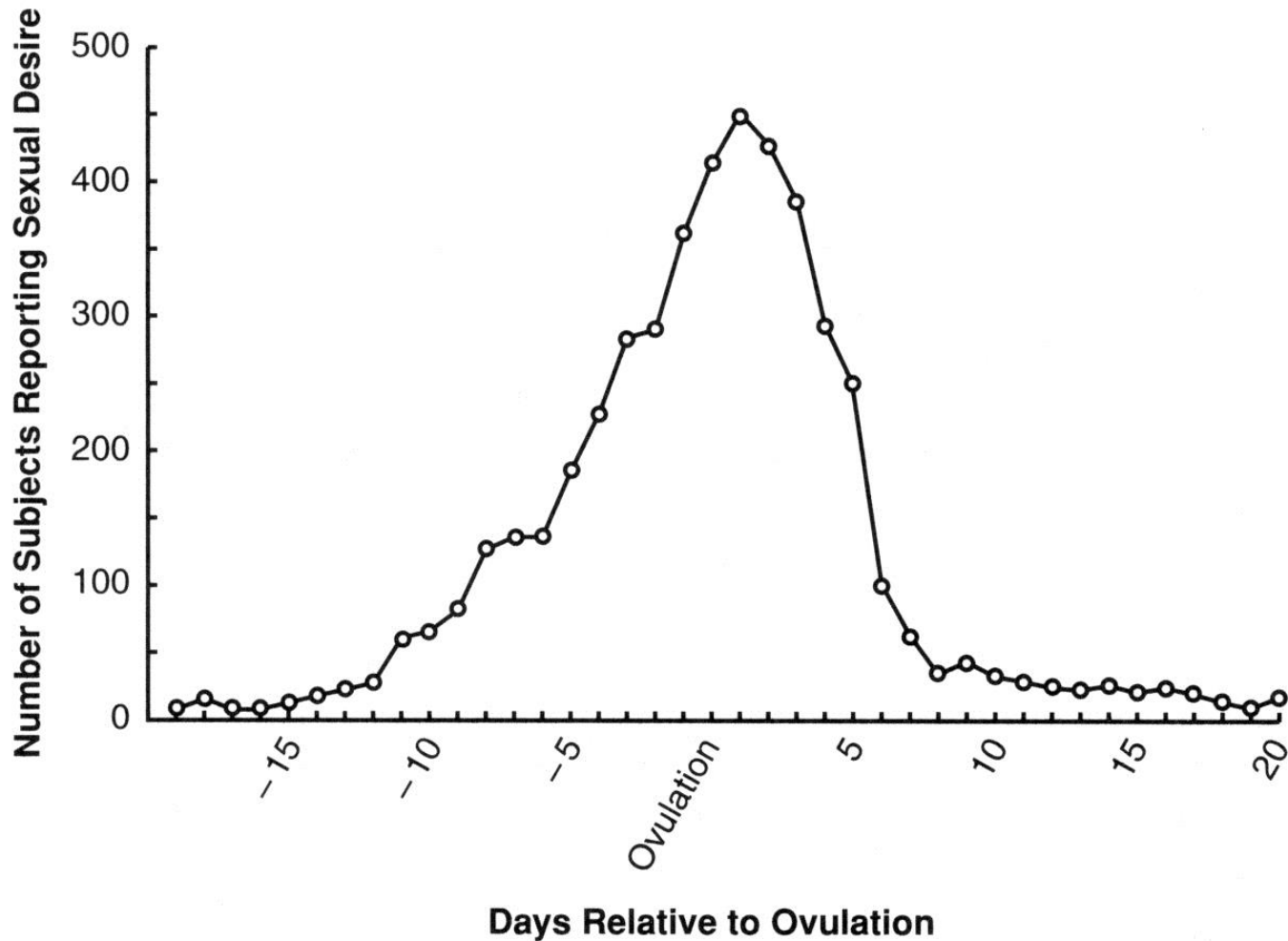


cookingwiththemovies.blogspot.com

Sexual Infidelity Tactics

- She smiled at another guy in the presence of her mate.
- She told the other guy to “call me” when her regular mate was out of town.
- She told her partner she was going to attend a lecture on human mating strategies.

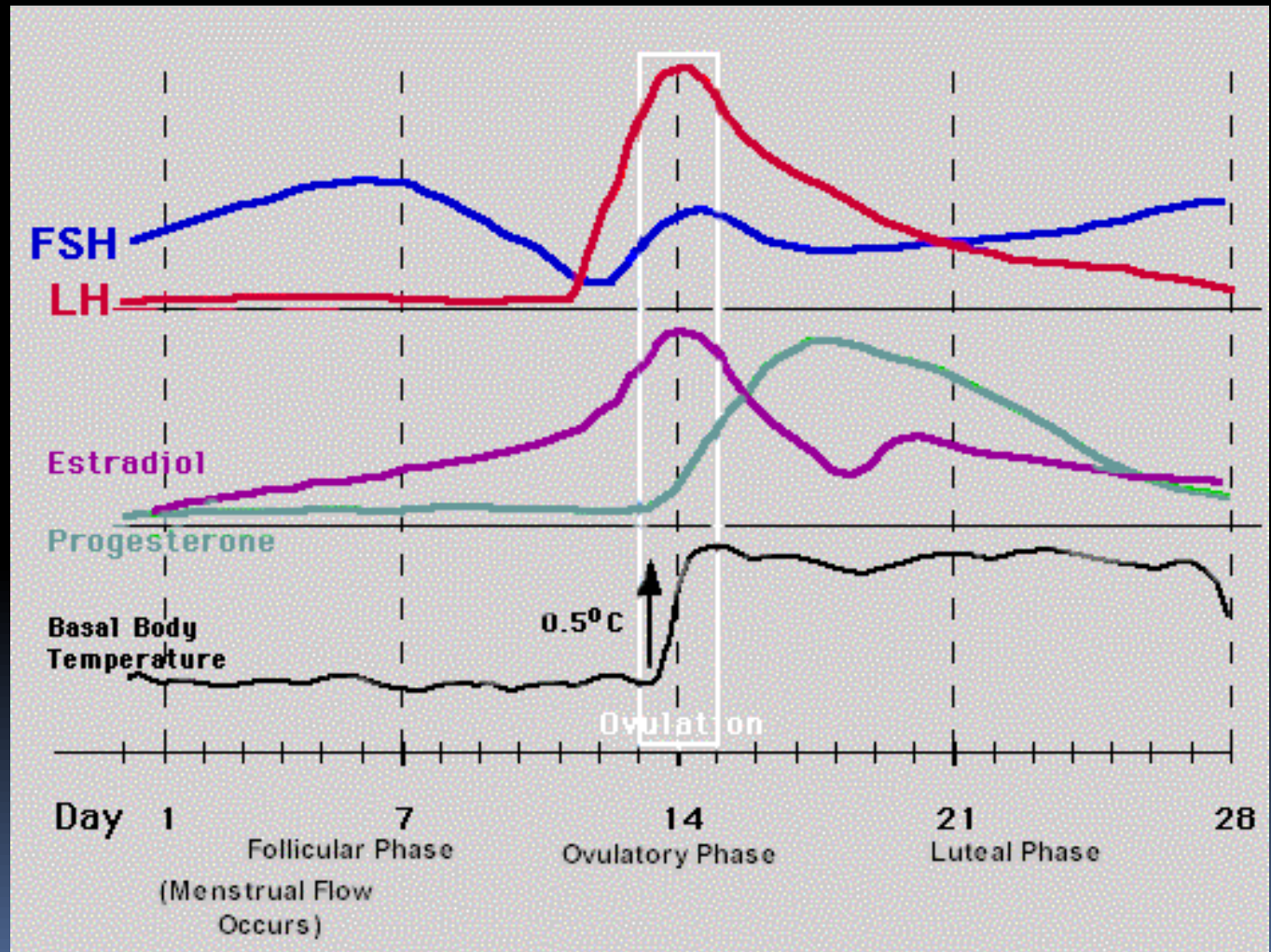
Women's Sexual Desire as Function of Ovulation Cycle



Pillsworth, Haselton, & Buss, (2004); Rice (1988)

Ovulation and Women's Preferences

Hormone Levels



Source TBD

Masculinity in Men's Faces

Who is most attractive?



Benefits to Women of EPC Mating

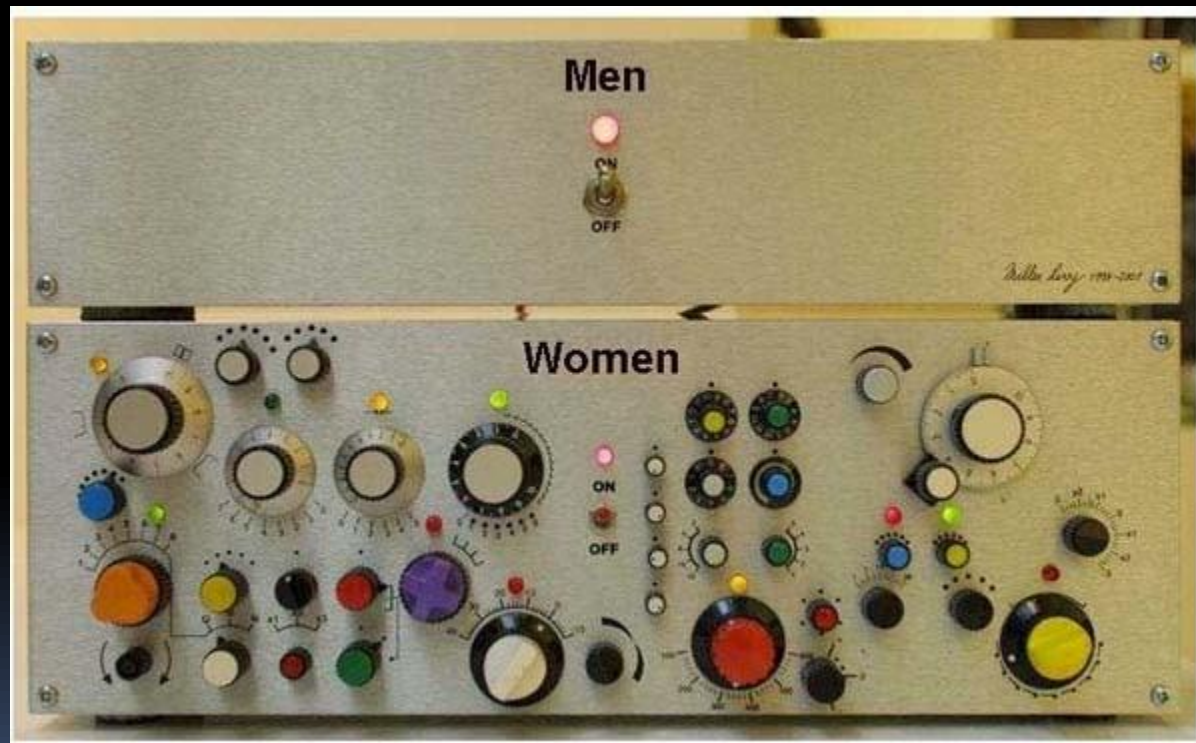
Hypotheses Most Supported Across Different Studies

- Mate switching
- Resource acquisition
- Good genes

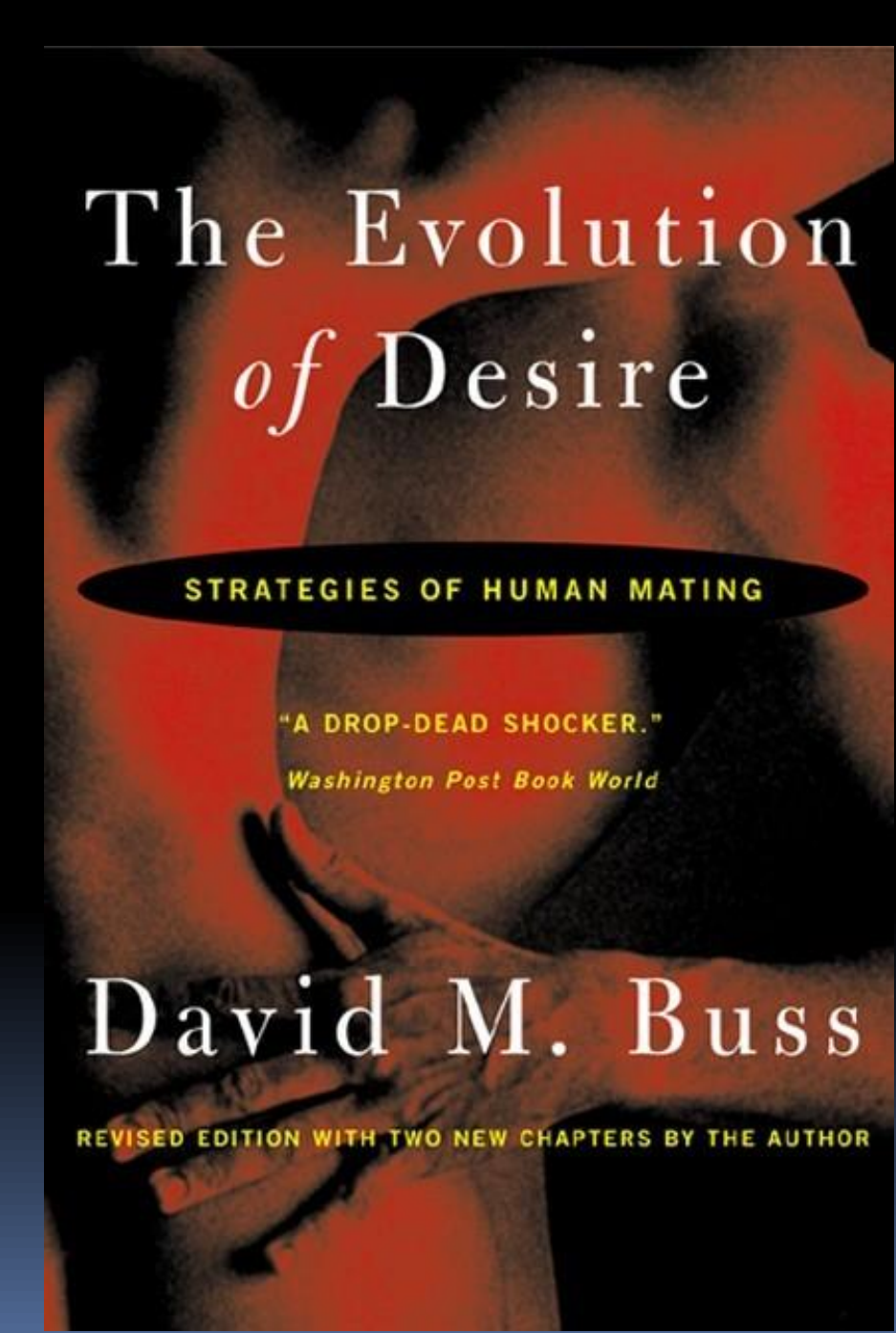
Men Don't Always Know What Women Want



What Women Want: There's Much More Research to Do



Thank you!



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REVISED EDITION WITH TWO NEW CHAPTERS BY THE AUTHOR

*I snared
another
would
get
thrill
a Conquest*

why
women
have
sex

*Understanding sexual motivations—from
adventure to revenge
(and everything in between)*

*The Psychology of Sex in
Women's Own Voices*

CINDY M. MESTON PH.D. AND DAVID M. BUSS PH.D.

What About Homosexual Orientation?

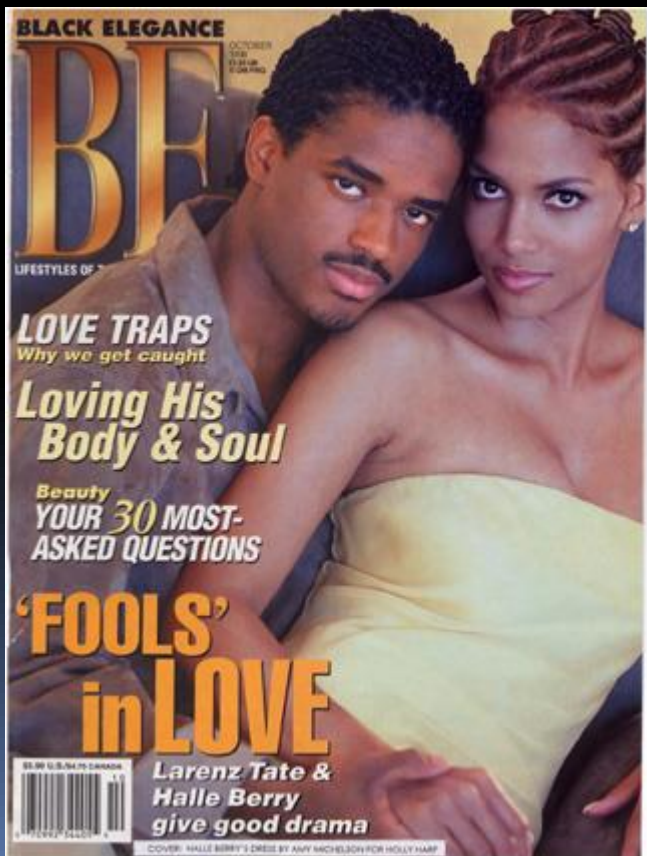
- Origins (Vasey, 2010)
- Mate preferences (Lippa, 2007)
- Mating strategies (gender differences)

Origins of Homosexual Orientation: Theories

- Kin selection
- Byproduct of unknown modern conditions
- Sexually antagonistic gene selection
 - Reduces reproduction when in males
 - Increases reproduction when in females

Context Effects of Women's Preferences

Effects of women's mate value--high MV women more choosy, discriminating



Dr. David Buss



Dr. David Buss is an evolutionary psychology researcher and professor at The University of Texas at Austin. He is also a leading author and speaker at universities, corporations, and public forums. He is currently head of the Individual Difference and Evolutionary Psychology Area at UT, and supervises a lab of evolutionary psychology Ph.D. students. Members of his lab receive advanced training in evolutionary psychology, social psychology, personality psychology, comparative psychology, research methods, and statistics.