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A Comparison of Traditional and Non-Traditional Women's Preferences for Family Oriented Vs. Career Oriented Men

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A Comparison of Traditional and
Non-traditional Women's Preferences for Family
Oriented vs. Career Oriented Men

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL WOMEN'S PREFERENCES FOR FAMILY ORIENTED VS. CAREER ORIENTED MEN

Lee M. Handeland
Old Dominion University, 1989
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One hundred sixty two female university students were divided into two groups according to their level of traditionality as measured by the Attitude Toward Women Scale. They were shown a photograph of a moderate to high attractive male along with a short description identifying the male as having either a high-career/low-family orientation, or a low-career/high-family orientation, and asked to report their degree of preference for this target. Analysis found significant main effects for traditionality of the subjects, career/family orientation of the targets, and an interaction of traditionality of the subjects and attractiveness of the targets. Further analysis indicated the presence of a fourth factor involving class or status of the target. More traditional women tended to rate more attractive targets more positively, regardless of target orientation. Less traditional women indicated clear preferences according to target orientation, without regard to target attractiveness.

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A Comparison of Traditional and
Non-traditional Women's Preferences for Family
Oriented vs. Career Oriented Men

Since the 1960's, there has been increasing interest in the dynamics of people's attraction to members of the opposite sex, and in their choice of partners for intimate relationships. There are two major aspects which have been looked at both independently and in concert: physical attractiveness and psychological characteristics which seem to predict certain physical preferences. The main concentration of the research has been on primary attraction at first meeting. An early study by Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, and Rottman in 1966 found that physical attractiveness was the strongest predictor of liking of randomly paired male and female college students. The more physically attractive the subject, the more he or she was liked. This was confirmed by later studies (Brislin & Lewis, 1968; Walster, 1970).

Others have taken this a step further, looking at combinations of what constitutes physical attractiveness. For the purpose of their research, Wiggins, Wiggins, & Conger (1968) accepted the stereotyped beliefs that, for males, the size of a female's breasts, buttocks, or legs is a major factor in heterosexual attraction. They postulated that preferences for particular body parts in particular

sizes and proportions would be correlated with psychological traits. For example, they predicted that subjects who preferred large-breasted women would have some psychological traits in common, perhaps in accordance with Freudian theory. The 95 male subjects were given a biographical inventory, some MMPI content scales, the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, and a Semantic Differential Rating Scale of body parts. They were also shown 105 slides, each showing two nude female silhouettes in profile, which varied on the dimensions of the breasts, buttocks, and/or legs, and were asked to indicate which figure they preferred and the degree to which they preferred it. Each dimension had 5 possible values, from very small (-2), to moderately small (-1), to standard (0), to moderately large (+1) to very large (+2).

On analysis of the data, two major conclusions were made. The first was that males do tend to fall into specific preference groups according to size of breasts, buttocks, and legs of the female target. The second was that these preferences are correlated with specific consistent personality traits and background characteristics of the subjects. For example, those who preferred an overall large figure tended to have a high need for achievement, while those preferring a small figure scored highly in perseverance. Also, the more stereotypically masculine, independent, non-nurturing males tended to prefer the large breasted figures.

The Wiggins, et al. (1968) method of presenting paired stimulus pictures of nude silhouettes of the target sex, having the subjects evaluate the pictures on a five-point scale, and comparing the results with personality measuring instrument scores, has been used, with variation, as a model for many further experiments. Lavrakas (1975) used male silhouettes and different psychological measures to investigate female preferences for male physiques. He utilized front-view stimuli instead of side-view stimuli, with 4 dimensions, arms, upper trunk, the waist-hips, and the legs, each varying in size on a 5 point range from -2 to +2 as in the Wiggins, et al. (1968) study. Seventy female college students participated, and evaluated 171 stimulus pairs, in addition to receiving a sex-role questionnaire, the Attitudes Toward Women Scale, the Maudsley Personality Inventory, and Semantic Differential ratings. He found that women with similar background and personality characteristics tended to prefer similar builds of men. For example, women with more sisters than brothers, and women who grew up without a father present tended to prefer more muscular male figures.

Since a previous study (Darden, 1972), had indicated that women rated a "muscleman" type as less masculine than a less muscled physique, Lavrakas hypothesized that women, especially nontraditional women, would prefer a less stereotypically masculine figure. As he expected, he found that women who were more traditional in their thinking

preferred the traditional masculine stereotypical moderate V-shaped body. This body type is broad-shouldered, with a medium waist and narrow hips, and is not a "body-builder" type with exaggerated chest-shoulder size. More surprising to him was the finding that liberated women preferred the traditional physique to an unmasculine looking one. Finally, Lavrakas compared the women's physiques with their preferences, and found that, in general, women preferred men with physiques generally similar to their own. That is, heavy women preferred larger men, and thinner women preferred thinner men.

Beck, Ward-hull, and McLear in their 1976 study of the attractiveness preferences of women decided not to use a head-on silhouette of a male stimulus, since they felt that not enough detail could be observed. They postulated that the Lavrakas findings were unclear because of the lack of observable detail. To correct this, they used the structure of the Wiggins, et al. (1968) study outlined above, utilizing the same psychological measures and male silhouettes in profile, with variations in chest, buttocks, and legs at 5 levels. They also used the same female silhouettes that Wiggins et al. had used, which permitted them to compare the findings regarding men's preferences for the female body from the earlier study with women's preferences of the female body. They found that specific personality attributes in males who preferred a certain female body type were not the same personality attributes

found in females who preferred the same female body type. Women were found to have different criteria for female attractiveness than men. Regarding female's ratings of male attractiveness, the researchers were able to refine Lavrakas' work. Beck et al. found that the V-shaped "traditional" body as described in Lavrakas's study included three of the body types in their own study, only one of which was preferred by less traditional women, and which was not preferred by traditionally oriented women. They did confirm Lavrakas' findings that there were personality differences correlated with women's male body-type preferences, although, probably due to the differences in measures, they could not confirm the specific differences Lavrakas found.

In 1984, Maier & Lavrakas summarized the findings of these types of studies:

Taken together, these studies suggest that persons adopting traditional sex roles tend to have preferences for bodies that are defined as attractive in the traditional sense---large breasts in women and a muscular physique in men. In contrast, persons adopting liberated sex roles have less stereotyped preferences (p. 426).

These studies all tended to confirm a general theory that the body type found most attractive is determined by the psychological characteristics of the observer. Another line of inquiry was pursued by Lerner (1969), who ran a study in which women were to impute various behaviors to one of three male targets (as seen in photographs) with

endomorph, mesomorph or ectomorph body types. Strong stereotypical attitudes toward the different body types were found across subjects. The majority of socially negative characteristics (such as "poorest athlete," "drink the most," "be least preferred as a friend,") were attributed to the endomorph and ectomorph body types, while most positive characteristics (such as "assume leadership," "have many friends," "not smoke at all") were attributed to the mesomorph, who had the stereotypical moderate male V-shape.

These studies all emphasize the attractiveness of particular body types. Other research falls into a general category of studies which attempts to explain the overall physical attractiveness dimension of heterosexual interpersonal attraction, which involves much more than body type, and to demonstrate a "beautiful is good" phenomenon (Dion, Berscheid & Walster, 1972; Miller, 1970; Nielsen & Kernaleguen, 1976). Dion, et al. (1972) had male and female subjects rate photographs of one physically attractive, one of average attractiveness, and one unattractive male or female, on a variety of measures. The general categories were social desirability, occupational status, success as parents, social and professional happiness, total happiness, and likelihood of marriage. In all cases except parental competence, the most attractive stimulus persons were rated the highest, and the least attractive were rated the lowest, indicating a strong bias toward physical attractiveness in attribution of desirable qualities. The least attractive

stimulus persons were rated highest in parental competence. These results held across sex of subject and sex of stimulus person.

While the studies by Miller (1970) and Nielsen & Kernaleguen (1976) showed a similar pattern, the thesis "what is beautiful is good" was modified by the results of such studies as those by Dermer & Thiel (1975), Gallucci & Meyer (1984), and Krebs & Adinolfi (1975), who found that the most physically attractive were not the most socially desirable. Dermer and Thiel, in two experiments published in 1975, looked at both subject and target factors involved in attractiveness. In the first experiment, female subjects whose attractiveness had been rated as low, medium, or very high were given photographs of low, medium, and very high attractive females. Medium and highly attractive subjects tended to attribute favorable characteristics to the targets in proportion to their attractiveness in most areas, but low-attractive subjects tended to rate very attractive targets less favorably than moderate-attractive targets. All subjects tended to attribute higher levels of conceit and higher likelihood to commit adultery to the highly attractive targets. The second experiment used both male and female subjects, but did not rate them for attractiveness first, so it could not be judged if the subject-attractiveness --target attractiveness interaction applied to males. It did find that, for males as well as females, although very attractive women tend to be seen as

more popular and more successful in many areas, they are also seen as being more vain, more likely to be divorced, and more egotistical. In fact, "exceptionally attractive women may evoke images more congruent with Pandora than with goodness (p. 1174)."

The research by Krebs & Adinolfi (1975) was one of the few studies which attempted to look at actual relationships, instead of using stimulus target photographs. In this study, 60 male and 60 female subjects were chosen from a pool of 600 freshmen who had been living in dormitories for the previous two months. Those in the pool had been asked such questions as who they "would want as a roommate," and "a person you try to avoid." Four groups each of 15 male and female subjects were developed: an Accepted group, consisting of subjects who got the most positive ratings, a control group who got an average number of positive ratings, a Rejected group who received the most negative ratings, and an Isolated group, who were mentioned the least. These subjects were then rated (from their high school yearbook pictures) on level of attractiveness, filled out several personality questionnaires, and were interviewed about their social life. It was found that, in same-sex social interactions of dormitory residents over periods of time, the most highly attractive subjects tended to be rejected, and the least attractive tended to be ignored. As expected, the Accepted groups were rated as being more attractive than the control groups. Physical attractiveness of the female

subjects correlated positively with dating members of the opposite sex, with no reduction for the most attractive subjects. However, the measure for "dating," a simple count of high school dates attended for the Junior and Senior Proms and New Year's Eve, is probably, as noted by the authors, too superficial a measure to accurately describe the dating situation. The same-sex findings do tend to support Dermer and Thiel (1975) in their conclusions.

Gallucci & Meyer (1984) postulated a social-exchange theory to explain these same-sex interactions. Their conclusion was that the extremely attractive women had many rewarding qualities, but also some punishing (to the person interacting) qualities, such as egotism. Therefore, maximum gain and minimum risk action would be to affiliate with someone moderately but not extremely attractive, since the rewarding qualities would still be there, but the punishing qualities would not.

Others have used a different approach to the attractiveness question. Since attractiveness is a loose term which can really encompass much more than the shape of the body, or physical appearance, Nevid (1984) administered a 53-item attraction preferences scale, which contained demographic and personality factors, as well as physical factors. He also went a step further and questioned subjects separately regarding a sexual relationship and a meaningful, long-term relationship, and tested both males and females. In this way, he tested the male stereotype of

two different standards for two kinds of sexual relationships, and the other stereotype that women are judged in both relationships more on physical appearance than men. He found that there was a sex stereotype for sexual relationships. Males put significantly greater emphasis on physical appearance than did women, especially in the sexual relationship condition, and there was a significant difference between the male standards for a woman for a sexual relationship than for a meaningful one. Personal qualities were emphasized for both sexes for the longer term, meaningful relationships.

Bar-Tal & Saxe's (1976) study of couples and individuals also found the sex stereotypes. They found that women stimulus subjects, whether seen as individuals or as part of a married couple, were judged by both men and women according to the stimulus subject's physical attractiveness. Male stimulus subjects, however, were only rated that way when seen as individuals. When seen as part of a couple, however, the attractiveness of the "spouse" influenced his own attractiveness level. For example, a male stimulus subject rated as average in attractiveness when considered as an individual would tend to be rated above average when linked with a highly attractive "wife," and as below average when linked with a highly unattractive "wife." This indicated to them that matching considerations or equity were playing a part, thus supporting other attractiveness research.

Several researchers have looked at the possibility that matching plays a part in attraction to and choice of partners. The matching hypothesis states that there is a positive relationship "between the physical attractiveness of the seeker and that of the sought-after" (Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, & Rottman, 1966). In their 1966 study using a computer dating scenario, Walster, et al. tried to differentiate between a subject's ideal choice and his or her realistic choice, hypothesizing that subjects would choose stimulus persons for dates who were at the same attractiveness level as the subjects in a real computer dating situation. This was not found to be the case. Subjects uniformly chose and asked out the most attractive stimulus persons, regardless of their own attractiveness. Other studies (Brislin and Lewis, 1968; Walster, 1970), cited by Berscheid, Dion, Walster, & Walster (1971), were also unable to support the theory, although they did report support for the theory in an unpublished study (Kiesler and Baral (1966), which was not available for review).

Berscheid, et al. (1971), in a two-part experiment, did find the matching hypothesis to be valid. In experiment I, they used an "ideal" and a "realistic" condition. In the "ideal" condition, subjects were told that the potential partners had already agreed to go to a dance with the person who picked them. In the "realistic" condition, subjects were told that the person they picked to go to the dance with could refuse, and that the refusal rate after meeting

each other was about 50%. This manipulation did not result in a finding of significant differences between the groups, but did find that the more attractive the subject, the more attractive was the stimulus person picked. In experiment II, conditions were similar, except the subjects were told that they were participating in an experiment involving computer dating, and that they would be paired with someone to go on actual dates with. The "ideal" subjects were told that whoever they picked (out of six pictures of stimulus persons of varying physical attractiveness, who the computer had ostensibly picked according to the subject's criteria) would go out with them. The "realistic" group was told that the stimulus person picked would meet with him/her, and then decide whether to go on the date or not. In this case also, the matching hypothesis was supported without regard to membership in the "realistic" or "ideal" group. In analyzing these results, and comparing them to the previous studies which found no support for matching theory in dating, Berscheid et al. (1971) concluded that, since their experiments were focussed on first-time contact, and the earlier ones used longer-term contact,

It may be that the matching principle is a more potent determinant of how desirable a person one will be willing to approach than it is of how much another will be liked and approached again after initial contact (p. 186).

Research on gender stereotypes has provided a more comprehensive view of attractiveness by looking at traits, role behaviors, and occupation as they are linked to

physical attraction (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1979, 1981; Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Hamilton, 1979). In 1985, Jackson & Cash looked at the factors of likability and adjustment, which they defined as non-stereotypic dimensions as they related to gender stereotypes, and found implications that "gender-incongruent role behaviors result in ...more negative evaluations on non-stereotypic dimensions." Subject variables aside from sex were not examined.

Those studies which have looked at the subject variables of the traditional/liberated woman dimension have generally found that women with traditional thinking find traditional male features attractive, while liberated women often find less traditional features attractive. (An exception was Lavrakas (1975) who found that liberated women preferred the traditional physique.) However, when given a chance on a questionnaire to make a choice between physical attributes and character consideration, women as a group consistently report disregarding the physical in favor of the personality characteristics. This is widely acknowledged in the literature, but studies have usually looked only at the "ideal" choice of the woman, rather than her actual choices.

Maslow (1942) attributed some of women's choice of a partner to her level of dominance-feeling and dominance acting. Low dominance-feeling characteristics tended to be "feminine" traits, such as modest, neat, quiet, faithful, feminine, inhibited, embarassable, etc., while high

dominance-feeling characteristics were more "masculine," such as self-confident, more secure, independent, more masculine, feeling of general capability, etc. High-dominance behavior tended to be more assertive than low dominance behavior. Maslow stated that high dominance women tend to "seek a good lover," while low-dominance women tend to look for a "good husband and father." Today Maslow's definition of high dominance feeling and behavior would seem to fit the liberated woman.

At the same time, expectations for men have been changing. In the past decade, pressure has been put on men to become more caring, to become equal partners with their spouse, to share equally in housework, to communicate feelings, and in general, to take on some characteristics which have been considered to be feminine. Women have become more assertive, have been experiencing anxiety both over demands of their roles, and over the slowness of men to conform to the new ideal. For all the propaganda about the "new" man who is conforming more closely to what women always said they wanted a question arises: "Is this what women really want?" Do women, who continue to voice the desire for a more caring, feeling man, one who is comfortable with full equality, really want such a person? Or are they more comfortable with a "traditional" man, one who takes the head-of-household role? When she finds a man who conforms to her stated ideals, does the woman think he is sensitive, or a wimp? Edwards (1985) and others have

brought the question up in general circulation magazines, but the subject has not been researched as yet.

This study was designed to examine the role of physical attractiveness and sex typing in traditional and non-traditional women's choices of significant others. The intention was to present female subjects with stimulus targets at one of two levels of attractiveness while also varying the dimensions of career-oriented/low interest in family versus family-oriented/low interest in career, to approximate high traditionality/low traditionality dimensions. If behavior and report are consistent, then women's ratings of potential significant others would have a fairly close relationship to ratings of how "liberated" or "traditional" she rates herself.

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant main effect for degree of physical attractiveness with the high attractive male stimulus persons (SPs) being rated more highly than the SPs with average attractiveness. This would be consistent with most previous research.

Hypothesis 2: Much of the research indicates that traditionally oriented women tend to be more likely to use physical attractiveness as a stronger factor in choice of men than do liberated women. Therefore, hypothesis 2 predicts an interaction between physical attractiveness of the SPs and traditionality of the subjects, with more

traditional subjects responding more positively to the more attractive SPs.

Hypothesis 3: Some current articles in popular magazines propose that most women prefer the masculine stereotype, whether they are liberated or not. If so, there would be no significant differences between the traditional and non-traditional groups in choice of men. However, controlled research indicates non-traditional women prefer men who do not fit the masculine stereotype. Therefore, an interaction between traditionality of the subjects, and career/family masculinity orientation of the SPs chosen is predicted, with more traditional subjects rating the high-career/low family orientation SPs more favorably than the less traditional subjects.

Method

Subjects

The subjects consisted of 162 female students who volunteered for the study for extra credit in an undergraduate psychology course. Two subjects had to be dropped because they submitted incomplete data, leaving 160 subjects. The mean age of all subjects was 20.8 years, with a range of 17 to 32 years of age, and with a mean level of education of 14.3 years. 11.8% were black. Unmarried women made up 84% of the subjects, and the average length of a serious relationship was 2.78 years.

Procedure

Subjects participated in groups of two to fifteen. Each subject received a folder containing, in this order, a demographic questionnaire, the Attitude Toward Women (ATW) Scale (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973), one photograph of a stimulus person, a scenario supposedly describing that person and his situation, and a set of seven questions about the subject's responses to the scenario and picture. Subjects were told to complete the questionnaires in the order in which they found them.

On the basis of their scores on the ATW scale, subjects were categorized as high-traditional or low-traditional-viewed women. The 40% of the subjects with the highest scores (more traditional) and the 40% of subjects with the lowest scores (less traditional) on the Attitude Toward Women Scale (ATW) were retained, and those scoring in the middle 20% were dropped, leaving an N of 127. The lowest score possible was 15, at the non-traditional end of the spectrum, and the highest possible score was 135, at the extreme traditional end of the spectrum. The actual score range of the subjects was 15 to 97, with a mean of 42.96. Thus the subjects tended toward moderate to non-traditional attitudes, which is in line with previous research. Since this categorization took place a posteriori, cell sizes were not equal. However, cell sizes tended to be close for the cells used in testing for main effects and two-way interactions. The three-way interaction of ATW, scenario,

and picture did have a larger size variation, with the smallest cell size being twelve and the largest being 22.

Materials

The demographic questionnaire consisted of a form asking for the subject's age, year in school, major, marital status, and the length of any current serious romantic relationship. If there was no current serious relationship, then the length of the last serious relationship was asked for.

Since studies have shown differences between liberated and traditionally oriented women in measures of what is attractive, the ATW Scale (Spence, et al., 1973) was administered. This scale consists of fifteen items designed to elicit the degree of agreement or disagreement the respondent feels with statements regarding aspects of male/female roles. It includes statements such as "Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man," and "A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage." A nine-point Likert scale was used for the responses, with 1 being Disagree Strongly and 9 being Agree Strongly. Statements were balanced in focus so that more traditional responses were not always at the same end of the scale.

In order to measure women's reported potential choices, scenarios were used which were composed of paragraphs of around 200 words, describing a male stimulus person and his personality traits along two lines, job ambition and drive

for job success, and desire for a family. There were four scenarios used, two involving a relatively high level of job ambition, coupled with a relative lack of interest in a family-oriented life, and two involving a relatively low level of job ambition, coupled with a high interest in family life. The intention was to use the stereotypical perceived male role of high job or career orientation at the expense of family life, versus the nontraditional male role centering more on family, with work playing a subsidiary role. These scenarios were pretested on 25 undergraduates. Both scenarios written to reflect high job/low family interest were found to be significantly different than the two prepared to reflect low job/low family interest ($p < .001$), and within the pairs no significant difference was found in the dimensions of ambition and importance of family.

Two stimulus pictures at each of two levels of attractiveness were used to look at possible physical attractiveness interactions. Since research has consistently shown that physically unattractive people tend to be rated lower than their more attractive peers on almost any measure, it was felt that using unattractive stimulus persons in this study could mask other effects. Therefore the levels chosen were for moderate attractiveness and high attractiveness. Twenty pictures of high school graduates from a midwestern high school were chosen initially by a researcher in attractiveness research with fifteen years of

experience. Stimulus pictures were chosen at varying levels of attractiveness, with care being taken that all pictures were standardized in regard to clothing and pose. Care was also taken to make sure that stimulus subjects looked older than usual high school students. The twenty pictures were then rated by 25 female undergraduates, who each rated all the pictures on a scale of one to ten for how attractive the student felt the person in the picture looked. The mean scores of the pictures used were significantly different at the $p < .05$ level for the two high and two moderate attractiveness levels. Within the two groups there was no significant difference. The pictures and scenarios were systematically varied so that all pictures were used with each scenario equally.

The questionnaire which followed the scenario and picture consisted of the following seven questions, each to be answered on a scale of one to nine. "One" indicated least likely or least interest, while "nine" indicated most likely or most interested.

1. How likely is this person to ever be divorced?
2. How likely is this person to be a good parent?
3. How likely is this person to experience deep personal fulfillment?
4. How interested would you be in spending time with this person, such as going out to dinner with him?

5. To what degree does this person reflect what you would look for in a man for a long-term romantic relationship?

6. How attractive do you think you would be to a person like this?

7. In your opinion, how suitable would this man consider you to be for a long-term romantic relationship with him?

The first three questions were designed to give non-self-involving value judgements, and were in line with questions asked by former researchers. The fourth and fifth questions asked for the subject's personal choice. Questions six and seven attempted to address another aspect of the theoretical match between subject and SP, that is, how the subject felt the SP would see her. All responses were recorded on a nine-point Likert scale, with 1 being the lowest extreme and nine being the highest.

Results

All analyses of variance used the GLM (General Linear Model) procedure, which is designed for data with unequal Ns. Significance levels for all measures was set a priori at $p < .05$. All ANOVAs were 3-way, 2 X 2 X 2, with the independent variables being ATW score, target attractiveness level, and scenario ambition/family orientation analyses.

As predicted by pretesting, initial analysis found no significant differences within the two photographs at each level of physical attractiveness, so the analysis was

collapsed across the individual photographs. Pretesting indicated no significant differences within the levels of scenario on the ambition/family factors, so two levels of scenario were used to test the hypotheses.

To insure that the groups were equivalent, ANOVAs were performed for each of the five demographic questions. There were no significant effects associated with these variables, nor did they interact with the ATW scores.

The analysis of the responses to the questions will be outlined on a question-by-question basis. The first three questions involved value judgements of the SPs.

Question 1 - How likely is this person to ever be divorced? There was a significant main effect for the scenario of the SP ($F(1,119)=6.17, p<05$), with SPs with high-ambition/low family (high-masculine) ($M=5.15$) being seen as significantly more likely to be divorced than SPs with low-ambition/high-family (low-masculine) ($M=4.50$).

Question 2 - How likely is this person to be a good parent? There was a significant main effect for scenario ($F(1,119)=28.54, p<.0001$). Predictably, subjects felt the low-masculine SPs were significantly more likely to be good parents than the high-masculine SPs ($M=7.20$ and 5.77). There was no other significant difference.

Question 3 - How likely is this person to experience deep personal fulfillment? There were no significant effects on any of the variables here.

The next two questions deal with how the subject feels about the SP.

Question 4 - How interested would you be in spending time with this person, such as going out to dinner with him? There was a significant main effect for traditionality of the subjects ($F(1,119)=6.44, p<.05$). Traditional subjects indicated significantly more interest than non-traditional subjects ($M=5.69$ and 4.67). There was no effect for the masculinity and attractiveness of the SPs.

Question 5 - To what degree does this person reflect what you would look for in a man for a long-term romantic relationship? There were no significant differences on any of the variables here.

The last two questions involve how subjects feel the SP would feel about them.

Question 6 - How attractive do you think you would be to a person like this? There were no significant main effects for this question. There was a significant interaction between the traditionality of the subjects and the attractiveness of the SP (fig 1) ($F(1,119)=4.14, p<.05$). A simple effects test was run for target attractiveness at each level of subject traditionality. There was no significant difference between the less traditional and more traditional subjects in relation to the less attractive SPs. Less traditional subjects were only moderately likely to think that the less attractive SPs would find them attractive. However, the more traditional subjects were

significantly more inclined to think they would be attractive to the SP if the SP were highly attractive $F(1,119)=7.00, p<.0001$). They were also significantly more likely than the less traditional subjects to think they would be attractive to the high attractive SP. The less traditional subjects showed a slight, nonsignificant trend in the opposite direction. That is, they tended to feel they would be less attractive to the more attractive SPs.

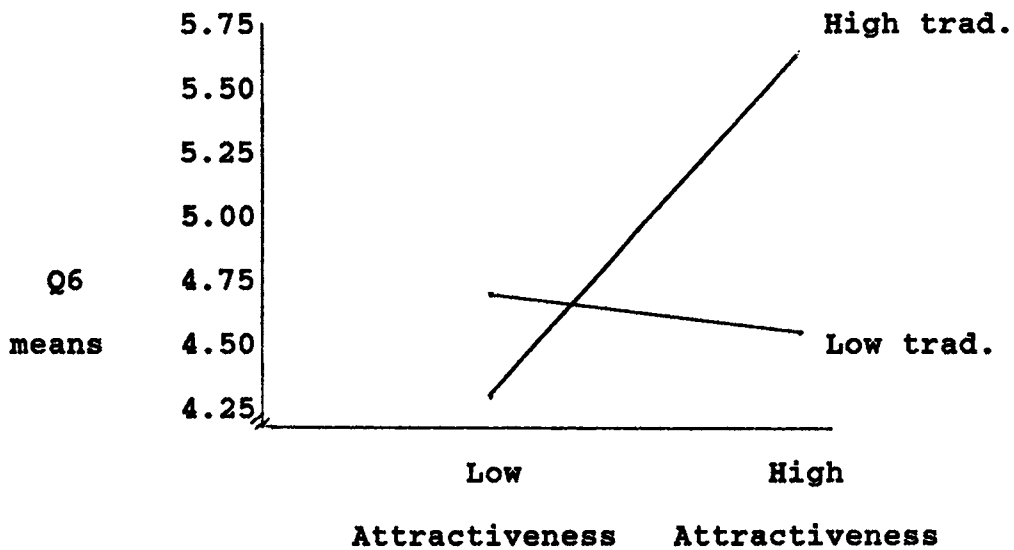


Fig. 1, ATW X Target Attractiveness for Question 6

	Low Attractiveness	High Attractiveness
Low Trad.	4.71	4.57
High Trad.	4.29	5.69

Table 1. ATW X Attractiveness Question 6

Question 7 - In your opinion, how suitable would this man consider you to be for a long-term romantic relationship with him? On this question, the only significant main effect was for the traditionality of the subjects ($F(1,119)=4.03, p<.05$). More-traditional subjects ($M=5.33$) felt that the SPs would be more interested in a long term relationship with them than did less traditional subjects ($M=4.51$).

Upon analyzing the data and reviewing the literature, there arose a question about whether there was a confounding element in the scenarios, which had been pretested only on the work achievement/family dimensions. It seemed possible that a class or status factor may have influenced the subjects' responses, since one high achievement and one low achievement scenario included the subject joining an accounting firm, and the other set included him joining a large construction firm. Therefore, $2 \times 2 \times 4$ (subject traditionality \times target attractiveness \times scenario) ANOVAs were run on the same questions as before, utilizing four scenario levels instead of two. These levels were called Low ambition/high family/ accounting (LA), High ambition/low family/ accounting (HA), Low ambition/high family/ construction (LC), and High ambition/low family/ construction (HC). The Student Newman-Keuls test was used wherever post-hoc tests were indicated.

For question one, "How likely is this person to ever be divorced?" there was a significant main effect ($F(3,111)=8.36$, $p<.0001$) for scenario. This effect was shown through individual means comparisons to be purely the effect of the high ambition/low family accounting (HA) targets. They were seen as significantly more likely to be divorced ($M= 5.81$) than LC, HC, or LA targets ($M= 4.82$, 4.41 , 4.16). There were no significant differences among the latter three.

On question two regarding the likelihood of the target being a good parent, there was a significant main effect for scenario ($F(3,111)= 19.12$, $p<.0001$) which was explored using the Newman-Keuls individual means comparison. LA targets were seen as significantly more likely ($M=7.56$) than the rest to be good parents, while HA targets were seen as significantly less likely ($M=5.03$) than the rest. There was no significant difference between the LC ($M=6.85$) and the HC ($M=6.59$), which rated in between the extremes.

On question three regarding the likelihood of SPs experiencing deep personal fulfillment, there was a significant main effect for scenario ($F(3,111)= 3.48$, $p<.05$). In running the Newman-Keuls individual means comparison, however, no significant differences were pinpointed. The means for the groups, in order of decreasing size, were $HC=6.90$, $LA=6.72$, $HA=5.94$, and $LC=5.76$.

There was a significant interaction effect of scenario by target attractiveness ($F(3,111)= 3.28, p<.05$). The simple effects test was run for the scenario at each attractiveness level. The significant effect turned out to be for the less attractive SPs ($F(3,111)=5.53, p<.05$). The more attractive SPs were seen to be equally and moderately likely to attain deep personal fulfillment regardless of the scenario. However, the less attractive SPs were seen to vary on this dimension depending on the scenario. Less attractive HCs were considered to be extremely likely and LCs and HAs were considered to be most unlikely of the targets to experience deep personal fulfillment. Less attractive LAs were considered to be significantly more likely than the LCs and the HAs, and significantly less likely than the HCs to experience deep personal fulfillment (Fig 2., Table 2.). Even the lowest ranked were seen as moderately likely to accomplish this, however, as the lowest mean was 5.25 on a 9-point scale. None was seen to be really unlikely to attain deep personal fulfillment.

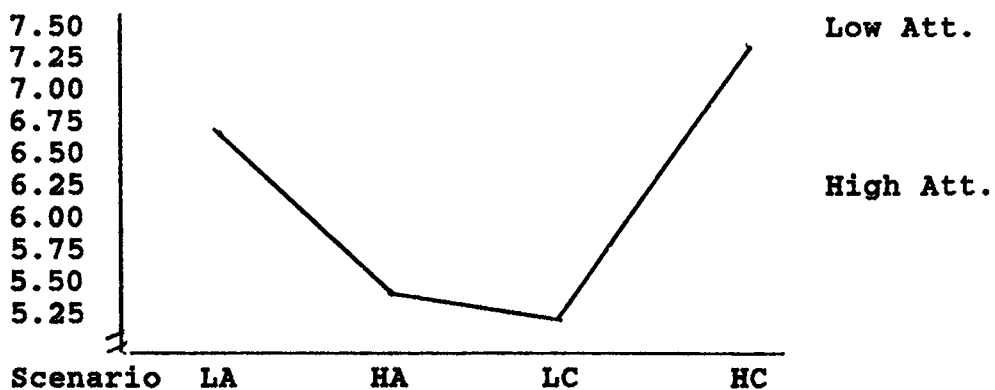


Fig. 2. Scenario X Attractiveness interaction for Question 3

	Low Attractiveness	High Attractiveness
LA	6.64	6.78
HA	5.41	6.53
LC	5.25	6.22
HC	7.38	6.31

Table 2. Means for Scenario X Attractiveness interaction Question 3

On question four, concerning how the subjects would feel about going out with the target, there was a significant main effect for traditionality of the subjects ($F(1,111)=6.70$, $p<.01$). More traditional women were more likely to want to go out with the target than were less traditional women ($M=5.69$ and 4.67).

There was also a significant main effect for scenario ($F(3,111)=3.70$, $p<.05$). Individual means comparisons showed that significant differences were found between the LC targets, who were least preferred ($M=4.32$), and LA ($M=5.88$) and HC ($M=5.76$) targets, who were most preferred. HA targets ($M=4.88$) did not differ significantly from either group.

Question five showed a significant main effect for scenario ($F(3,111)=10.47$, $p<.0001$). Subjects reported the HC and LA targets ($M=5.93$ and 5.56) significantly more reflective of what they would look for in a man for a long-term romantic relationship, than the LC and HA targets ($M=3.62$ and 3.59).

Question six, which asked how attractive the subject thought she would be to a person like this, had two significant main effects. There was a significant main

effect for the scenario ($F(3,111)=8.03, p<.0001$). Once again, as on the previous question, LA and HC targets were grouped, as were HA and LC targets. LA and HC targets ($M=6.03$ and 5.21) were viewed as responding significantly more positively than HA and LC targets ($M=4.15$ and 3.88).

The second significant main effect was for target attractiveness ($F(1,111)=4.00, p<.05$). More attractive targets were seen as more likely to find the subjects attractive than less attractive targets were ($M=5.08$ and 4.48).

Question seven, which asked how suitable the subject felt the target would consider her to be for a long-term romantic relationship with him, showed two significant main effects. The first was for the traditionality of the subjects ($F(1,111)=4.79, p<.05$). The more traditional subjects were significantly more likely than the less traditional subjects to feel the target would consider her for a long-term relationship ($M=5.32$ and 4.51).

A significant main effect for scenario was also found, ($F(3,111)=8.45, p<.0001$) in which HC targets ($M=6.31$) were considered significantly more likely to feel that way than any of the others. LA targets ($M=5.22$) were next most likely, and were significantly more likely than HA targets ($M=3.81$), who rated the lowest. LC targets ($M=4.50$) were not significantly different from the LA or HA targets.

Finally, there was a significant interaction effect for subject traditionality by scenario ($F(3,111)=2.88, p<.05$). Testing for simple effects for traditionality at each level of scenario found significant effects for three of the four scenarios. High traditional subjects were significantly more likely than low traditional subjects to feel the SP would consider her for a long-term relationship for the LA SP ($F(1,111)=3.24, p<.05$), the HA SP ($F(1,111)=4.87, p<.05$), and the LC SP ($F(1,111)=5.63, p<.005$). The low traditional subjects responded quite negatively compared to the high traditional subjects. It is interesting that the one exception to this was for the HC SPs, which the low traditional subjects rated as being quite likely ($M=6.8$) to consider the subjects for a long-term relationship. There was no significant difference between high and low traditional subjects for the HC target. (Fig 3, Table 3).

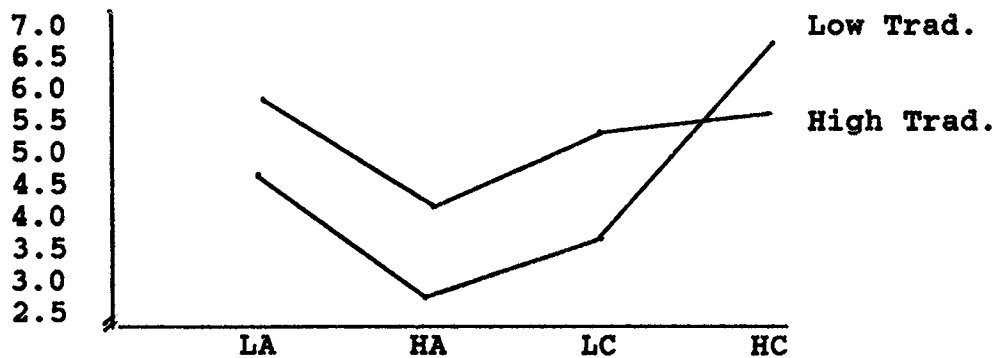


Fig. 3. Means for Subject Traditionality X Scenario Interaction Question 7

	Low Traditional	High Traditional
LA	4.59	5.93
HA	2.75	4.45
LC	3.74	5.47
HC	6.80	5.79

Table 3. Means for Tradition X Scenario interaction Question 7

Discussion.

In order to present as clear as possible a focus on the results of this study, the two sets of analyses which were run will be discussed separately. The results of the original planned analyses utilizing the two level scenario will be discussed first.

The first two questions were included as an indirect test of the scenarios' ability to differentiate between the two levels of scenario, and are questions which are frequently asked in this type of research. The responses to the first two questions reflect the stereotypical view that a man who is more interested in work than family is more likely to be divorced, and less likely to be a good father than one who is less career-oriented and more family oriented (Dion, Berscheid & Walster, 1972). These responses were according to expectation.

The likelihood of being divorced for the work-oriented SP was seen as being only slightly over 50/50 chance, while the low ranking for these same SPs for being a good father was still on the positive side, indicating a relatively optimistic view of the SPs. There was a greater differential for the question of being a good father than for being divorced.

Hypothesis 1 predicted a significant main effect of physical attractiveness between the SPs. This was not found to be the case. On none of the seven measures was there a main effect for target attractiveness. No question addresses the physical attractiveness dimension directly, but previous research has found physical attractiveness to be one of the most consistent factors in interpersonal attraction and trait assignment (Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, & Rottman, 1966; Dion, Berscheid & Walster, 1972; Dermer & Thiel, 1975; and others). One possible explanation for this is that the differences between moderate and very attractive SPs, although statistically significant when viewed as a single factor, were not great enough to override the other factors the subjects were taking into consideration. That is, that in order for appearance to take precedence over the personality factors attributed to the SP, the discrepancy must be great. This would tend to support women's reported contention that appearance is not of primary importance (Nevid, 1984).

Hypothesis 2 predicted an interaction between the traditionality of the subjects and the attractiveness of the SPs chosen. There was only one area where this occurred, on the response to question 6, which asked how attractive the subject feels she would be to the SP. The more traditional subjects showed a positive correlation between the SP's attractiveness and how attractive they felt

they would be to him. Less traditional subjects showed a slight, non-significant trend in the opposite direction.

The less-traditional subjects were significantly less likely to be willing to go out with any of the SPs, and were significantly less likely to feel that the SP would consider them suitable for a long-term romantic relationship, regardless of the attractiveness or masculinity of the SPs. This could reflect some basic difference in focus between traditional and non-traditional college women, in that the non-traditional woman's attention may be more on establishing the basis for her career, rather than on establishing relationships with men at this point. Part of the traditional woman's outlook, on the other hand, is the high importance of a relationship with a male.

The data seem to indicate that the less-traditional subjects report less interest in men in general than the more-traditional subjects, and that the more traditional subjects prefer (or rather, feel preferred by) better-looking men. These results may indicate subtle differences between traditional and non-traditional women. The basic choice might be whether or not to choose men as a major focus of attention, at least while in college, rather than a choice of which type of man to choose.

Hypothesis 3, predicting an interaction between traditionality of the subjects and masculinity of targets was not confirmed. This was unexpected, and the results were analyzed to try to determine if there was some

uncontrolled factor which could have obscured this interaction.

In constructing the scenario levels, in order to have two different scenarios at each level, two different types of business were used. One set of high/low concerned someone interested in a career in accounting/finance, and the other set concerned someone in a large construction company. On reflection, it seemed that this could have caused a class or blue-collar/white-collar distinction.

Research has been done which indicates that women may use the social status of the male as a determinant in choosing a potential partner. For example, Green, Buchanan, and Heuer (1984), in a study of computer dating practices, found that females tended to use physical attractiveness and status of males in their choices of dates. This confirmed earlier research (Harrison & Saeed, 1977) which looked at ads in lonely hearts columns, to see what advertisers said they wanted. They found that women tended to specify characteristics in men which went along with higher status.

The possibility of differences between the supposedly similar scenarios was checked by running the second set of three-way ANOVAs. The results of these tests indicated that there was, indeed, a significant confounding factor. When these ANOVAs were run, the scenario factor was significant for all questions, and was involved in interactions in questions three and seven, proving that

significant effects had been masked by the merging of the scenarios.

The analysis of the ANOVAs showed a consistent pattern of response. With the exception of question two, regarding the likelihood of the SP being a good parent, the HC SP and the LA SP were rated more positively than were the HA SP and the LC SP. In other words, the high work/low family/Construction SP and the low work/high family/Accounting-financial SP tended to be viewed significantly more favorably by subjects, regardless of the traditionality of the subjects or the attractiveness level of the SPs. Subjects felt more positively about these SPs, and also felt that they would be viewed more positively by these SPs.

The same pattern was found in the Scenario X SP attractiveness interaction for question three, which asked how likely the SP was to obtain deep personal fulfillment. There were no significant differences among the scenarios for the high-attractive SPs, but for the low-attractive SPs, the LA and HC SPs were again significantly higher rated.

On question seven, which asked how suitable the subject thought the SP would find her for a long term romantic relationship, the interaction effect shows the same pattern for the low traditional subjects. Although the differences are not statistically significant, the trend is the same for the high traditional subjects.

This pattern shows that the confounding factor was more complex than the tentative hypothesis of status would suggest. This pattern would seem to indicate some sort of a status/SP masculinity interaction took place. This study was not designed to test for it, however. Further research would be necessary to isolate the differentiating factors.

An interaction effect involving low and high traditional subjects on the four different levels of scenario was found on question seven. Low traditional women reported being significantly less likely than did the high traditional women to feel that the SP would consider them for a long term romantic relationship for three out of four of the scenarios. They did differentiate significantly between the preferred and less preferred SPs, however. The HC SPs were rated extremely positively. The more traditional women rated the four scenarios as not significantly different from each other.

This might suggest a somewhat less male-oriented attitude in the less traditional women. It may also suggest a more focussed or discriminatory preference pattern for the less traditional women than for the more traditional women.

Popular literature (Edwards, 1985), which has indicated that traditional and non-traditional women may both prefer more traditionally masculine men, has not been substantiated here in either set of analyses. On the dimensions of career ambition and family, as shown in the first set of analyses, it appeared to indicate that the popular literature might be

accurate. However, the second set of analyses indicated a greater complexity to the question than had been assumed. Male physical attractiveness seems to be somewhat more important to more traditional women than to less traditional women. At least for more liberated college women, attention to men in general might be less than for more traditional college women.

This research was designed to look at women's preferences in men using a somewhat less abstract method than lists of characteristics. An attempt was made to make the task somewhat closer to real life by using scenarios and pictures, but without going so far as to run a field study. As such, it is a preliminary study. Further research could look at the complex factors involved in the class or status variable. It would also be valuable to include unattractive SPs to determine if there is a threshold of attractiveness beyond which women do not use attractiveness as a criterion when other factors are involved.

It was unfortunately not feasible at this time to look at women's actual choices by screening spouses and significant others. However, comparing theoretical and actual choices would be a logical next step, with the significant others being rated as to their attractiveness and career/family orientation.

This research is limited in generalizability to college students, as in general, the college population is a more homogenous group than the general population. In research

of this type utilizing, for example, members of dating services as subjects, variables such as age and social status become much more potent. This study, although it was not deliberately designed to do so, did touch on what is probably, at least in part, the social status variable. In doing so, it has raised some very interesting questions which have not been fully addressed in research so far.

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Please complete this demographic form
before turning to the next page

AGE

YEAR IN SCHOOL

MAJOR

MARITAL STATUS 1. MARRIED 2. SINGLE, NOT CURRENTLY IN A
SERIOUS ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP 3. SINGLE, CURRENTLY IN A
SERIOUS ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP

IF YOU ARE MARRIED, HOW LONG HAS THE RELATIONSHIP BEEN GOING
ON? (INCLUDE BEFORE YOU WERE MARRIED AS WELL AS SINCE)

IF YOU ARE NOT MARRIED, WHAT IS THE LENGTH OF YOUR CURRENT
OR (IF NO CURRENT ONE) YOUR LAST SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP?

A T W

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the roles of women in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feeling about each statement by circling the number on a scale of 1 to 9 which coincides with your level of agreement with the statement. 1 indicates strong disagreement; 9 indicates strong agreement.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree
 Strongly Mildly Mildly Strongly

1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

2. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

3. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

4. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

5. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

6. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

7. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
Disagree Disagree Agree Agree
Strongly Mildly Mildly Strongly

8. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

9. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

10. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

12. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

13. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

14. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

15. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

Background data

Jack S. is a senior in college. He has had a job offer from an accounting firm which promises long term security and moderate salary, but not a lot of chances for advancement after the first couple of years. He has also had an offer from a fast-growing, innovative financial planning firm, which could lead to fast advancement with commensurate pay with room eventually at the top. In this position, success would depend on a lot of very hard work and long hours for at least the next few years, and there would be a risk of failure. As the son of a doctor, Jack has experienced first hand what it was like growing up in a family where the father's first priority was his work. This has influenced Jack's decision. He decided to take the secure job in the accounting office, since, to him, a job is merely to make money in order to be able to concentrate on the important things in life, mainly family and friends. He wants to have two or three children.

His ideal spouse would be a woman who would prefer to either stay home with the children, or work part-time, with him working part-time, and splitting the child care. He has even fantasized about being a house-husband, staying home with the children while his wife worked.

Jack has reached the point where he is interested in finding a partner for a long term romantic relationship, with marriage in mind.

LA

Background data

Mark J. is a senior in college. He has had a job offer from an accounting firm which promises long term security and moderate salary, but not a lot of chances for advancement after the first couple of years. He has also had an offer from a fast-growing, innovative financial planning firm, which could lead to fast advancement with commensurate pay with room eventually at the top. In this position, success would depend on a lot of very hard work and long hours for at least the next few years, and there would be a risk of failure. As the son of a doctor, Mark has experienced first hand what it was like growing up in a family where the father's first priority was his work. This has influenced his decision. Mark, like his father, is truly interested in becoming a successful professional, and has accepted the position with the financial planning firm. He finds the prospect of the risks, work and rewards exciting.

His ideal spouse would be someone who understood the importance of his career, and who would be able to aid his advancement by being supportive, entertaining business colleagues, and understanding his need to work long hours and be gone a lot. He would like to have children, but feels that his wife would be the one with the major responsibility for their upbringing, since, in order to be successful in what he does, he must give his job full attention.

Mark has reached the point where he is interested in finding a partner for a long term romantic relationship, with marriage in mind.

HA

Background data

Jim B. is a senior in college. He has accepted a job with the oldest, most successful construction firm in the area. It is obvious to him that there are two directions his career can go from this point. He could probably remain with the company over the years, with slow but steady advancement, and a high probability of being able to retire with the company, although he would never make a lot of money. On the other hand, there is such a demand in the community for construction related services that he could, with luck, open his own business, after gaining the necessary experience. In that case, success would depend on a lot of very hard work and long hours for at least the next few years. There would be a risk of failure, since the field is very competitive, but success could be very profitable. Jim has thought this through, and decided that the costs in time, effort, and stress involved in starting his own business were not worth the possible rewards. He is not, and has never been, interested in highly competitive activities. To him, work is a means of getting enough money to raise a family without worrying about where the next meal is coming from, and not much more. Real life, to him, exists outside work. He wants to accomplish something meaningful, which means a happy family life. His ideal spouse would also be more interested in family than in a career, or, even better, would be interested in working while he stayed home with the children.

Jim has reached the point where he is interested in finding a partner for a long term romantic relationship, with marriage in mind.

LC

Background data

Ron T. is a senior in college. He has accepted a job with the oldest, most successful construction firm in the area. It is obvious to him that there are two directions his career can go from this point. He could probably remain with the company over the years, with slow but steady advancement, and a high probability of being able to retire with the company, although he would never make a lot of money. On the other hand, there is such a demand in the community for construction related services that he could, with luck, open his own business, after gaining the necessary experience. In that case, success would depend on a lot of very hard work and long hours for at least the next few years. There would be a risk of failure, since the field is very competitive, but success could be very profitable. Ron has thought this through. He has no intention of staying with the company as an employee after he learns the business. He would feel bored and stifled. He wants to accomplish something meaningful, which means seizing the opportunity to create his own business. Whatever hardships and risks he encounters on the way to creating a successful business will be well worth it.

His ideal wife is one who could learn to help in the business, and would be patient with the hard work, time spent, and initial low income in order to be successful in the long run. Although he thinks he would like children someday, at this point it would not be practical.

Ron has reached the point where he is interested in finding a partner for a long term romantic relationship, with marriage in mind.

HC

IN ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER INDICATING THE APPROPRIATE DEGREE OF CERTAINTY FOR EACH QUESTION.

1. How likely is this person to ever be divorced?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at unlikely 50/50 probably a
all certainty

2. How likely is this person to be a good parent?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at unlikely 50/50 probably a
all certainty

3. How likely is this person to experience deep personal fulfillment?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at unlikely 50/50 probably a
all certainty

4. How interested would you be in spending time with this person, such as going out to dinner with him?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at not much 50/50 interested very
all interested

5. To what degree does this person reflect what you would look for in a man for a long-term romantic relationship?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at a little 50/50 a great deal 100%
all

6. How attractive do you think you would be to a person like this?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at a little moderately very extremely
all attracted

7. In your opinion, how suitable would this man consider you to be for a long-term romantic relationship with him?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9
not at unlikely 50/50 probably a
all certainty