

Mate Selection



Theories on how we chose a mate!

Mate Selection



Marriage: A Decision That Affects . . .

- Where you live
- If you have children & what they are like
- Your occupation
- Your financial situation
- Your happiness



Theory of Propinquity

- Simply stated, this theory says *we marry people we know*
 - If you know only people from your high school, you will marry someone from high school.
 - If you know only people where you work, your church, your college, etc., that is who you will marry.



Exchange Theory

- Everyone *evaluates his/her own worth and then goes to barter to see what he/she can find*
 - “I am this good looking, this smart, and have this type of job. You are not as good; or better; or about the same, it is a fair trade.”
- Many exchanges are trades
 - Looks for Looks—Couples that look alike
 - Money for Money—Same type of Financial Situation
- Some exchanges may be for different qualities
 - A guy with lots of money but who is not very handsome may be able to exchange that money for a beautiful girl



Complimentary Needs Theory

- *You find someone who compliments your needs*
 - A dominate person may find a submissive person
 - A quite person would select an outgoing person
 - A nurturing person may find someone who likes to be mothered, etc.
- The message should be emphasized that couples really should not be opposites but compliments
 - If he is life of the party, she should enjoy being part of a group, just not the center of attention.



Time and Place Theory

- Throughout life, we meet many people--*we will marry the person we are dating when the time is right*
 - You may have dated several people you could have married had the time been right.
- Society tries to convince us when the time is right:
 - We finish college or a career is established
 - After returning from military or other service



Time and Place Theory

- Average Marriage Age

- United States

- 24.5 for males
- 22.5 for females

- Utah

- 22 for males
- 20 for females

- Place

- You will marry someone who lives in the same geographical area as you
- 75% of people who marry will live within five miles of each other.



Filter Theory

- Filter Theory
 - *People filter through qualities that they want*
 - *Specific height, religion, education, etc.*
 - People continue to put on filters until they look around and see very few people
 - "There's NOBODY decent around here."



Biological Filters

- *Sex*
- *Age*
 - In 6 of 7 marriages the groom is the same age or older
 - 2 out of 3 marriages the age difference is less than 5 years
- *Physical characteristics*
 - Similar body proportions such as height & weight
 - Males tend to place a greater emphasis on this than females (Women are more concerned with status)



Social Filter

- *Social Class*
 - Most people marry within their own class or income level. When lines are crossed, it is usually the male who has married down.
- *Race*
 - 99% of us marry within our own race.
- *Religion*
 - Most people marry within their own religion.
 - Level of religious activity
- *Level of Education*
 - Usually have similar Education levels



Psychological Filters

- People often marry a person similar to the opposite sex parent
- *Similar Personality Traits*
 - *Amount of personal space each needs*
 - *Type of love language*
 - *Sense of Humor*
 - *Interests and hobbies (be sure it is the person you are in love with, not just the activity)*
 - *Role compatibility*
 - *Achievement Orientation*



Mate Selection Test

- Ask yourself the following when selecting a mate . . .
 - Does this person make me a better person?
 - Could I spend the rest of my life with this person
 - Could I spend the rest of my life without this person?