Sociobiology of Human Behavior

- Marriage is a universal human institution
- Different reproductive strategies for men and women
- Men are more prone to violence and risk-taking
- Men and women use different indicators for a mate’s reproductive value
- The waist-to-hip ratio
- Men go to extremes to avoid being cuckolded
- Infanticide of step-children
- The ecological problem of “sociobiologically correct” human behavior
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Figure 19.1: Ready for sex? Subjects were asked to rate their willingness to have sexual intercourse with an attractive member of the opposite sex after being acquainted for different periods of time. Ratings were on a scale from 3 (definitely yes) to -3 (definitely no). From Buss (1994)
Figure 19.2: Hedging against sperm competition. The number of sperm ejaculated during intra-pair copulations increases with time elapsed since the last ejaculation. A man also inseminates more sperm if he has spent less time with his woman, which implies a higher risk of sperm competition. Numbers on columns indicate how many ejaculates were analyzed. After Baker and Bellis (1995), p. 206
Figure 19.3: Skewing the chances of conception. Polyandrous women favor conception from extra-pair copulations (EPC) relative to intra-pair copulations (IPC) by limiting non-copulatory orgasms, by timing copulatory orgasms to shortly after male ejaculation, and by retaining sperm in their reproductive tracts. After Baker and Bellis (1995), p. 243
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Figure 19.4: Physical attractiveness of a long-term mate or marriage partner. When asked to rate this variable in the context of 18 other variables men attached greater importance to this criterion than women. From Buss and Schmitt (1993)
Figure 19.5: Financial prospects of a long-term mate or marriage partner. When asked to rate this variable on a scale from 0 to 3, women attached greater importance to this criterion than men. From Buss (1994)
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Figure 19.6: Waist-to-hip ratio. Men were asked to rate their preference of marriage partners dependent on body weight and waist-to-hip ratio. From Singh (1993)
Figure 19.7: Maternal waste to hip ratio and child cognition

Low waist-to-hip ratio of pregnant women correlates with presence in their blood of fatty acids used in neural development, and with cognitive scores of their children.

From Lassek and Gaulin (2008)
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According to police statistics from Canada and England, a young child is much more likely to be abused, even killed, by a stepparent than by a genetic parent. Most of the perpetrators are stepfathers.
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