

## Social Attraction

### Predictors of Liking Others

- Similarity
- Familiarity
- Proximity
- Reciprocity
- Physical Attractiveness

#### Similarity-\_\_\_\_\_ hypothesis

- Byrne (1971) argued that “birds of a feather flock together”
- And the research shows he was right
- Although “opposites attract” is an appealing hypothesis, there is \_\_\_\_\_ evidence to support it

#### “Similarity breeds content”

- Newcombe (1961) put 17 male students together in a boarding house
- After 13 weeks, the ones who had formed the tightest friendships were also likely to be the most similar on \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., they shared similar majors and political preferences)
- This classic finding has been replicated many times

#### “Phantom confederate” research

- Subjects in the lab fill out personality and attitude measures
- Later, they are told to “exchange” information with another person (phantom confederate)
- The phantom’s information is manipulated to be either similar or dissimilar to S’s
- S’s routinely express more liking for similar phantoms – in fact, the \_\_\_\_\_ similarity, the \_\_\_\_\_ the liking

#### Familiarity

- The more we get to know something, the more we come to like it
- Bob Zajonc (“Science”) discovered the \_\_\_\_\_ in the 1980’s
- S’s were exposed to novel stimuli (e.g., polygons, Turkish words, Chinese ideographs, male faces)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ exposure, the \_\_\_\_\_ the liking
- This is especially true when the exposure is \_\_\_\_\_

### Proximity

- It is no accident that we fall in love with people we meet at work or school
- The more chances you have to interact with someone, the more \_\_\_\_\_ they become (and the more opportunities for finding \_\_\_\_\_)

### student housing study

- Festinger, Schachter, & Back (1950) observed friendships formed among students randomly assigned to live in dorms
- After six months, they found that people who lived on the \_\_\_\_\_ floor were more likely to be friends, compared with people who lived one floor apart
- Further, people who lived \_\_\_\_\_ were 3 times more likely to be friends, compared with people who lived down the hall from one another

### Who is Right?

- Is it more true that
- “Familiarity breeds contempt” and
- “Absence makes the heart grow fonder”
- OR that
- “Love depends on frequent meetings”
- Leo Tolstoy

### Physical attractiveness

- Attractive people *are* popular – even infants prefer gazing at them, and small children choose attractive peers as their desired friends
- Thus, we may be “hard-wired” to prefer beauty
- However, the infant research is confounded by the likely \_\_\_\_\_ of their mothers
- The researchers conducted their study in Palo Alto (upper SES); infants may have been responding to what was \_\_\_\_\_

### Gender differences?

- Evolutionary theory predicts that men like women for their youth and attractiveness, whereas women like men for their \_\_\_\_\_
- This is because men ostensibly need to sow many seeds, whereas women need someone who will take care of the family

### Personal ads

- If you look at personal ads, you can find evidence for this
- Women often advertise their youth and looks
- Men more often focus on their maturity, professionalism, and status

### More direct evidence

- But evidence gathered directly is \_\_\_\_\_ very compelling
- For example, Elaine Hatfield asked hundreds of U of MN freshman to a mixer

### Freshman mixer study

- S's were randomly paired with 4 partners for a half-hour each (with whom they danced, talked, swapped phone numbers)
- Afterwards, Hatfield asked them to rate their partners (e.g., on physical attractiveness and personality dimensions)
- They also indicated who they would most like to see on a future date
- Both men and women chose the person they had rated as the most  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Cross-cultural evidence

- Still, David Buss found that in 36 countries, men and women showed \_\_\_\_\_ mating preferences
- Men liked young (fertile) and beautiful women
- Women liked mature (rich) men with status
- This supports \_\_\_\_\_ theory

### What else could explain these data?

- Should we be satisfied with evolutionary theory's explanation?
- Or might there be something else we should consider?

### Gender status differences

- Alice Eagly and Wendy Wood reanalyzed the data (June, 2000)
- First, they got a Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) for each country
  - Number of women employed in top positions (e.g., gov't. and business)
  - Whether women had access to equal health care
  - And were protected by equal opportunity laws

### The GEM study

- The higher the GEM, the higher the status women had in the society
- If sex differences in mating preferences are due to status differences, what should they find?
- The higher the GEM, the \_\_\_\_\_ the sex difference (greater or smaller?)

### Gender & Status

- These results show that gender differences \_\_\_\_\_ as women's status \_\_\_\_\_
- The higher the GEM, the more women wanted an attractive (versus wealthy) mate
- And the less men wanted an attractive (versus wealthy) mate
- The lesson to be learned is that studying \_\_\_\_\_ differences is often confounded with studying \_\_\_\_\_ differences

### Reward theory

- Your text talks about similarity, familiarity, proximity, reciprocity, and physical attractiveness in terms of reward theory
- Liking for others can be explained as a “\_\_\_\_\_” analysis

### For example

- We like similar others because they reward us with \_\_\_\_\_
- Proximity increases the likelihood of \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., friendly exchanges, being helped)
- We like those who like us because they reward us with their attention and favors, and boost our \_\_\_\_\_

### \_\_\_\_\_ theory

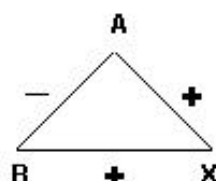
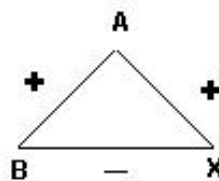
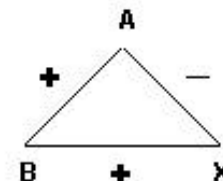
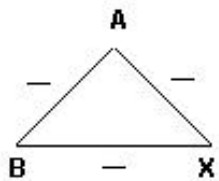
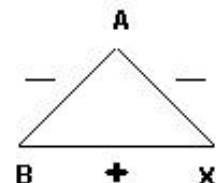
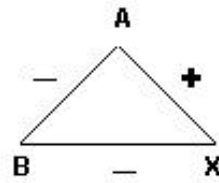
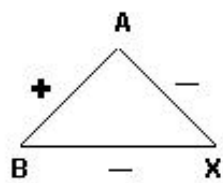
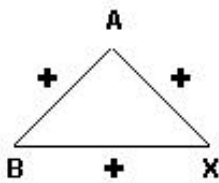
- Your text does not cover a different (but powerful) theory about social attraction
- It is based on \_\_\_\_\_ principles (similar to cognitive dissonance, but focused specifically on human relations)

### Balance Theory

- It emphasizes our need for “harmonious, balanced, consistent” conceptions about ourselves and other people
- For the most part, it considers three things in relationship to one another at one time
- These are called \_\_\_\_\_
- For example, if you like Dave and Dave likes you, and both of you like rock music, that makes for a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship
- But if Dave likes Susan and you do not, that makes for an imbalanced relationship
- The pressure to resolve the inconsistency often results in your either coming to like Susan more, or in your coming to like Dave less

### The “A-B-X” Balance Model

- Newcomb (1961) developed this balance model
- A = you, B = another person, and X = a third element (e.g., music or a third person)
- There is a simple formula for determining whether each triad is balanced or imbalanced; **multiply the signs**:
- (\_\_\_\_\_ = balanced, \_\_\_\_\_ = imbalanced)



### Similarity and Balance Theory

Similarity means that, for the most part, Dave and I will agree about X (providing harmony)

Similarity-attraction can be explained as preference for \_\_\_\_\_ cognitions in our social relationships

#### What about reciprocity?

- Having someone agree with you feels very self-affirming
- Simple act of agreement can boost self-esteem and cause you to want to reciprocate by liking that person in return
- For example, imagine that X = beliefs about yourself (“me”)
- If Dave shares your high opinion of yourself, that can cause you to have a high opinion of Dave

#### Physical attractiveness

- Moreover, once we like Dave, we typically see him as more attractive (than when we didn’t know him)

What happens when we break up? Dave becomes \_\_\_\_\_ attractive!

#### Summary

- Reward theory *and* balance theory each can explain why social attraction is linked to:
- Similarity
- Reciprocity
- Physical attractiveness (and other charitable perceptions of one’s partner)

#### How do they differ?

- \_\_\_\_\_ theory argues that we are rational “economists” in love and friendship (weighing the costs and benefits)
- \_\_\_\_\_ theory argues that we are drawn to people in a manner that enhances cognitive consistencies
- Each is likely to play a role in our reasons for falling in love, but what happens after we fall in love?

### Question

- Who is happiest as a couple?
- A. People who see clearly their partners' faults?
- Or
- B. People who have an unrealistically high opinion of their partner?

### Answer

- If you said \_\_\_\_\_, you are a \_\_\_\_\_ theorist; going in, you should know the costs (as well as benefits) of being in the relationship
- But the answer from research is \_\_\_\_\_

### Romantic \_\_\_\_\_ (Sandra Murray)

- Using college-student and married-couple samples, Murray consistently finds that people who have \_\_\_\_\_ opinions about their partners enjoy happier and more long-lasting relationships
- Benefits of romantic \_\_\_\_\_ include:
  - Less \_\_\_\_\_ in the relationship
  - More \_\_\_\_\_ with relationship
  - Personal well-being (e.g., less depressed)
  - Longer lasting relationships, and less chance of divorce for married couples
  - We seem to do better together with “eyes wide \_\_\_\_\_”
  - This is an interesting effect – after all, it was equally possible that acknowledging partners' faults from the start might better prepare people to deal with the difficulties ahead
  - The opposite turns out to be true – the more \_\_\_\_\_ our view of the other, the \_\_\_\_\_ the relationship

### Self-fulfilling prophecy

- Murray likens romantic illusions to SFP
- When partners have “great expectations” of one another, they tend to live up to them
- As a result, love is not blind, but actively \_\_\_\_\_ the type of relationships we have

### “Partner-Serving Bias”

- Romantic illusions are also akin to \_\_\_\_\_ biases (e.g., believing ourselves to be much better than average)
- If we extend these biases to the one we love we are happier as a couple, just as self-serving biases promote \_\_\_\_\_ happiness

### After we fall in love, cont'd

- \_\_\_\_\_ theory suggests that we might keep our distance, and continually appraise the other person (the “What have you done for me lately?” theory)
- \_\_\_\_\_ theory suggests that our association with the other intensifies over time
- Which one do you think is correct?

### The Self = Other

- It's \_\_\_\_\_ theory
- In fact, over time, the other becomes psychologically represented as part of the self
- The bond between romantic partners results, literally, in a \_\_\_\_\_ social identity
- Aron & others (1991) first demonstrated this using a computerized judgment task

### Method

- They used only married couples
- Subjects checked off adjectives from a list of 90 personality traits (3 times: once for self, once for spouse, once for a celebrity)
- This gave researchers 4 lists
  - Traits subjects shared with their spouse (not the celebrity)
  - Traits shared with the celebrity (not the spouse)
  - Traits only the spouse had
  - Traits only the celebrity had

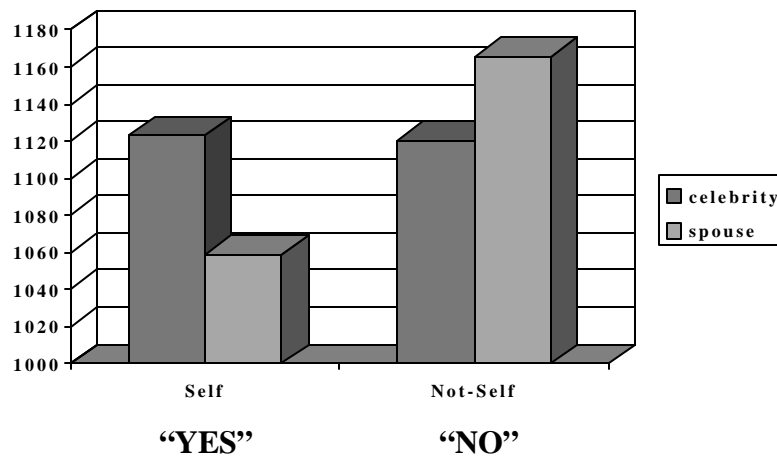
Sample lists follow  
(no need to write these down)

### Hypothesis

- Subjects then made yes/no self-descriptiveness judgments for each of the 90 traits on a computer
- The computer recorded their reaction time
- If the self and spouse are cognitively represented as one unit, subjects should be faster at making “yes” judgments when the trait is shared with \_\_\_\_\_, compared to when the trait is shared with the \_\_\_\_\_
- They should also be slower to reject “spouse only” traits, compared with “celebrity only” traits

**High bar = slower response time**

### Reaction Time in ms



### Summary

- Results suggest that subjects had trouble distinguishing themselves from their \_\_\_\_\_ (but no problem distinguishing themselves from the \_\_\_\_\_)
- On average, the couples had been married 6 years – it would be interesting to find out how long you have to be with someone before they “become part of you”

### Exchange vs. Communal Relationships

- Not all relationships are marked by charitable views and intimate bonds
- Your text mentions a distinction
- \_\_\_\_\_ – based on reward theory, but particularly concerned with keeping the costs and benefits *equal*
- \_\_\_\_\_ – based more on *genuine caring*

### This Chart is in Meyers

#### Change over time

- Relationships that start out as communal may, in time, deteriorate to \_\_\_\_\_ relationships
- This happens in marriage when, for example, women are expected to both work and care for the children and household
- Wives rightly complain about the “double shift” they have to carry – over time, this causes them to be more concerned with \_\_\_\_\_ issues in the relationship (which can lead to divorce)

#### Sex differences in marital happiness

- In fact, surveys of thousands of couples indicate that men are \_\_\_\_\_ being married than women are
- Are there other sex differences in the ways in which we experience love?

#### Which gender?

- Believes in love at first sight
- Believes in love as a basis for marriage
- Believes that love can overcome obstacles
- Believes that love relationships can be perfect
- Falls in love quickly
- More willing to let emotions guide behavior
- Falls out of love slowly
- Less likely to end a premarital relationship

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

In several studies, \_\_\_\_\_ proved to be the more \_\_\_\_\_ sex

### Explanations for sex differences

- \_\_\_\_\_ theory
- Men and women are invested differently in sexual bonding (for women, the burden is literally greater, hence they are choosier)
- If the male strategy is to “sow many seeds” it behooves them to fall in love \_\_\_\_\_

### Which gender? Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

- Reports liking sex the most
- Reports having sex with greater number of partners
- More actively engaged in sexual pursuits
- Fantasizes about sex often during the day
- Willing to have sex with strangers

### \_\_\_\_\_, continued

- While this supports evolutionary theory, there is a snag
- Why are men slower to end relationships?
- Evolutionary theory would predict the opposite
- So let’s look at possible \_\_\_\_\_ explanations for why men fall in love faster (and out of love slower) than women

### Status

- People with \_\_\_\_\_ status are freer to let their emotions rule their behavior
- Women may be more \_\_\_\_\_ about love because their status is more often tied to that of their partners
- Falling in love quickly is a luxury that many women cannot afford
- But what about the fact that men fall out of love more slowly?

### Same-sex friends: which gender?

- Touches their friends more
- Self-discloses to their friends more
- Reveals their feelings to their friends
- Shares secrets with friends
- More freely discusses their relationships
- Friendships focus on intimate conversation more than shared activities (work or play)

### Socialization differences

- In fact, both men and women report that they have more \_\_\_\_\_ relationships with female, compared with male, friends
- Of course, men are *taught* to self-disclose less, and to be less intimate in their friendships
- The result? Men are less likely to get their \_\_\_\_\_ needs met by their \_\_\_\_\_
- This may be why they are more reluctant to leave a romantic relationship – they need it more for emotional release
- It also helps to explain why men are more eager to \_\_\_\_\_ romantic relationships
- In essence, they have all their eggs in one emotional basket
- By contrast, women get their needs met by their friends as well as their romantic partners

### Nevertheless

- Once women fall in love, they begin to look a lot like men
- Women in love are just as emotionally involved as men are, and just as committed to the relationship
- Further, both sexes report feelings of euphoria and passion at the onset of love relationships
- These feelings are extremely powerful

### Cultural bias

- \_\_\_\_\_ love is the main theme of most of our “cultural narratives” (songs, books, movies, etc.)
- “Love that is not madness is not love”  
- Spanish Proverb
- Your book mentions \_\_\_\_\_ love as more enduring and stable (something to aim for)

### Research bias

- Interesting, then, that most of the research has focused on passionate love!
- Like people in general, scientists appear to be more hypnotized by the strong emotions of love and lust, compared with the more stable ones of friendship and loyalty
- Still, introducing love as a scientific topic was \_\_\_\_\_ easy – and there remains an odd \_\_\_\_\_

### Introducing Romance to Science

- Many people still feel that “love” is better left to the poets and mystics
- What does science have to offer? Worse, it might strip the mystery away – which might take the fun out of it, too
- In fact, the “love pioneers” struggled for years to get romance accepted as a scientific issue, worthy of investigation

### Making fun of “love” science

- While academics have now embraced romance, many others still feel we have no business putting love under a microscope
- Case in point: a recent piece in *The New Yorker* about neurological scientists studying mating behaviors in mice

### Oxytocin

- The research being discussed here concerns oxytocin, a \_\_\_\_\_ hormone found to be important with respect to forming \_\_\_\_\_
- Next week, we’ll see a film that discusses this research – which often involves prairie voles (who mate for life) and mice

### “The Department of Mating”

- “Science Explains Why Men are That Way” (by James Collins)  
(Don’t try to take notes; just enjoy the story)

### Love Science

- Despite derision, science marches on!
- In fact, love is one of the fastest growing topics in psychology
- A PsycInfo search using “Close Relationships” as a keyword supports this

### Love Science

- It’s exciting that “hard scientists” have begun taking a look
- For example, the many references that your text makes to “love as a drug” are backed up by \_\_\_\_\_ research
- People in love *are* high – on endorphins and hormones
- It turns out that...

### Neurological Evidence for Love

- Love “lights up your eyes” – and also, four tiny bits of your brain
- Researchers asked 17 people in love to view pictures of their lovers and their same-sexed friends, while in the fMRI magnet
- Four parts of the brain consistently lit up in response to lovers, compared with friends
- Each of these neurological areas are associated with \_\_\_\_\_
- Moreover, viewing lovers \_\_\_\_\_ activity in three larger parts of the brain known to be active when people are upset or depressed
- Thus, being in love can literally “pump you up” emotionally – by \_\_\_\_\_ happiness and \_\_\_\_\_ depression