

Spring 4-15-2016

## **Humor Production and Humor Receptivity in Relationship Satisfaction, Conflict and Quality**

Elizabeth Herring  
ejherri@bgsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/honorsprojects>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Other Psychology Commons](#), [Personality and Social Contexts Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

---

### **Repository Citation**

Herring, Elizabeth, "Humor Production and Humor Receptivity in Relationship Satisfaction, Conflict and Quality" (2016). *Honors Projects*. 321.

<https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/honorsprojects/321>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.

HUMOR PRODUCTION AND HUMOR RECEPTIVITY IN RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT,  
SATISFACTION AND QUALITY

ELIZABETH HERRING

HONORS PROJECT

Submitted to the Honors College at Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for graduation with

UNIVERSITY HONORS

April 15, 2016

Primary Advisor  
Anne K. Gordon, Psychology Department

Secondary Advisor  
Lisa Hanasono, Department of Communications

### **Abstract**

In his book, *The Mating Mind*, evolutionary psychologist, Geoffrey Miller, argues that women and men are differentially attracted to mate characteristics due to their adaptive qualities. Specifically, Miller argues that women find men who are intelligent to be desirable, in part, because intelligence is a signal of a healthy brain. A healthy brain is a desirable mate characteristic over the course of evolutionary history, in part, because it would have enabled men to provide resources for his mate and his family, thus, allowing the female to pass on her genes. Similarly, men find females who are physically attractive to be desirable, in part, because it signals reproductive capacity. High reproductive capacity is a quality that indicates that the desired mate would aid the individual in passing on his genes. While there are numerous documented mate preferences for characteristics such as intelligence and physical attractiveness the characteristic of humor has largely been ignored. However, the small body of literature that exists on humor focuses on looking at the sex differences in preferences for humor. Specifically, while research indicates that both men and women prefer a partner with a good sense of humor, interestingly, when questioned more specifically, the research suggests that men prefer a women who are receptive to their humor, not necessarily who make them laugh. On the other hand, women prefer men who produce humor. The aim of the current research is to test if the documented preference for humor production among women and humor receptivity among men correlate with women's and men's relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, the current research investigates the possibility that humor is a preferred mate characteristic due to its ability to reduce relational conflict and facilitate conflict resolution skills.

**KEYWORDS:** humor production, humor receptivity, relationship conflict, conflict resolution, evolutionary psychology, mating mind, relationship quality, relationship satisfaction, sex differences

### **Humor Production and Humor Receptivity in Relationship Satisfaction, Conflict and Quality**

Romantic relationships are a perplexing and interesting topic. Not only are they of interest to scientific researchers but also to society as a whole. Most people are interested in pursuing a romantic relationship of some sort. Thus, the components and characteristics that lead to successful, satisfying and rewarding relationship are essential to identify and understand. Research in evolutionary psychology has focused on doing just that. Specifically, evolutionary psychologists are interested in identifying evolved mate preferences.

Mate preferences are adaptations that solved the problem of mate selection across evolutionary history. Cross-cultural research driven by evolutionary theories, such as the parental investment theory and sexual selection theory, identified a list of common mate preferences. Common preferences include preferences for traits, such as – physical attractiveness, intelligence, kindness and understanding (Buss et al., 1990). However, there are important and notable sex differences in preferences for mate characteristics. Specifically, men exhibit a higher preference for physical attractiveness whereas female prefer traits like intelligence (Buss, 2003). These preferences evolved, in part, due to their adaptive qualities. Specifically, women find men who are intelligent, creative and/or funny to be attractive, in part, because the ability to write, speak fluently, produce art, music, or humor are signals of a healthy brain (Miller, 2000). Women would have benefited over the course of evolutionary history from mating with healthy men. Furthermore, women prefer men who exhibit traits such as intelligence and who have high social status because these are cues of resources (Buss, 2003). Over, evolutionary history, women would have benefited from mating with men with resources, because they will be able to feed and support a family (Buss, 2003). Similarly, men prefer women who are physically attractive, because it is a cue for reproductive capacity (Miller, 2000). Healthy women with high

reproductive capability would have been preferred over the course of evolutionary history, because they enable the male to pass on his genes (Miller, 2000). Thus, despite sex differences, both men and women prefer mate characteristics that are adaptive.

Prior research in evolutionary psychology has largely ignored the construct of humor and mate preferences for humor. However, researchers in social psychology found that individuals desire a kind, considerate and honest partner who displayed a keen sense of humor (Goodwin, 1990). Additionally, evolutionary psychology researchers have found that, humor, which appears to be costly to the individual, has evolved as a signal of a healthy brain (Miller, 2000). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that humor is an adaptive mate characteristic because it is indicative of a healthy brain.

The small body of research in evolutionary psychology that does focus on humor looks at preferences for humor by dividing humor into two separate constructs – humor production and humor receptivity. Humor production refers to an individual's ability to produce funny verbal and nonverbal messages. Conversely, humor receptivity refers to the extent to which an individual is receptive to another individual's sense of humor. Research on humor production and humor receptivity has focused on a possible sex difference between males' and females' preferences for humor production and humor receptivity. The distinction between humor production and humor receptivity stemmed from a research study that found women preferred humorous individual as a desirable partner for a romantic relationship but men did not report this preference (Bressler & Balshine, 2006). Specifically, Bressler and Balshine found that women preferred a humorous individual as a desirable partner for a romantic relationship (2006). However, this finding did not hold true for men (Bressler & Balshine, 2006). The discrepancy among the gender in terms of mate preferences for humor seems to indicate that humor is a

multi-faceted construct. Thus, in a follow-up study the authors expanded on their research findings by conceptualizing humor as two separate constructs – humor production and humor receptivity. Women were found to value humor production and receptivity equally (Bressler, Martin & Balshine, 2006). However, when forced to choose women preferred partners who produced humor (Bressler, Martin & Balshine, 2006). On the other hand, males exhibited a preference for mates who were receptive to their humor (Bressler, Martin & Balshine, 2006). The conceptualization of humor as being composed of humor production and humor receptivity was further reinforced by latter research.

Specifically, Hone, Hurwitz and Lieberman expanded on the aforementioned study by examining mate preferences for humor using an alternate experimental method (2015). The authors were interested in exploring the extent to which humor production and humor receptivity are necessities or luxuries in mating (Hone, Hurwitz & Lieberman, 2015). To do so, participants were asked to indicate how much imaginary money they were willing to spend to purchase specific mate characteristics including humor production and humor receptivity (Hone, Hurwitz & Lieberman, 2015). Using this paradigm the authors found that men viewed humor receptivity as a necessary trait in a mate whereas humor production was viewed only as a luxury (Hone, Hurwitz & Lieberman, 2015). Whereas, women were found to view humor production as a necessity and humor receptivity as a luxury (Hone, Hurwitz & Lieberman, 2015). While the results of these studies provide an interesting picture mate differences in preferences for humor they do not explore the applicability of these preferences in real-life mating scenarios.

As a discipline, evolutionary psychology tends to focus on identifying and studying preferences for mate characteristics. However, little research explores how these mate preferences function in real-life relationships. In other words, do mate preferences actually lead

to greater relationship quality as indicated by satisfaction, commitment, trust, passion and love? Research in evolutionary psychology has tended to stray away from examining the success of mate preferences in relationships because there is evidence that many mate preferences do not breed increased relationship quality and instead can lead to relationship distress. Specifically, characteristics such as physical attractiveness can actually negatively impact relationship satisfaction (Miller, 2000; Buss, 2003). Engaging in a relationship with a physically attractive mate can be emotionally distressing because it increases the potential for mate poaching (Miller, 2000). The increased possibility of mate poaching can lead to relationship distress because it fosters negative feelings such as jealousy and insecurity which can have a negative impact on relationship satisfaction (Miller, 2000; Buss, 2003). For the aforementioned reason mate preferences are generally not studied in the context of romantic relationships. Thus, it is evident that there is no clear relationship between evolved mate preferences and relationship satisfaction. However, humor is a unique construct because unlike traits such as physical attractiveness there are less negative relational consequences related to it. Specifically, humor breeds positive affect (Weems, 2014). Thus, it can be reasoned that unlike other preferred mate characteristics, humor may actually be related to increased relationship satisfaction as well as other relationship quality variables. There is some research that indicates the existence of the proposed relationship.

The aim of the current research is to test if the documented preferences for humor production among women and humor receptivity among men correlate with relationship satisfaction (and other relationship quality components). To test the role these mate preferences play in romantic relationships, a series of self-report surveys aimed at measuring mate characteristics, relationship quality and conflict were administered to large sample. The following trends were expected to emerge:

Hypothesis 1. Among female participants, partner humor production will be positively correlated with her relationship satisfaction (and other relationship quality variables). Her partner's humor receptivity will also be correlated with relationship satisfaction.

However, the correlation between partner humor production and her relationship satisfaction will be stronger than the correlation between her partner's receptivity to her humor and her relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2. Among male participants, partner humor receptivity will be positively correlated with his relationship satisfaction (and other relationship quality variables). His own receptivity to his partner's humor production may be uncorrelated with his relationship satisfaction or positively correlated with relationship satisfaction. However, the correlation between partner receptivity and his relationship satisfaction will be stronger than the correlation between his partner's humor production and his relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3. Both humor production and humor receptivity will be more strongly correlated with relationship satisfaction than partner physical attractiveness. However, the correlation between kindness and understanding and relationship satisfaction will be stronger than the correlation between relationship satisfaction and the other mate characteristics.

## **Methods**

### *Participants*

The sample consisted of United States residents ( $N = 334$ ; 168 women and 166 men) ranging in age from 18 to 73 years ( $M = 35.33$  years;  $SD = 11.14$  years) who were asked to respond to an online survey. Participants also reported the age of their romantic partners who ranged in age from 18 to 75



years ( $M = 35.26$  years;  $SD = 11.21$ ). A number of participants were excluded [17 males (10.24%) and 11 females (6.54%)] due to failing to correctly answer one or more of the three check question dispersed throughout the survey. After excluding the necessary participants the final sample was roughly half male and half female ( $N = 306$ ; 149 males and 157 females). The survey was posted on the research platform Amazon Mechanical Turk and participants were compensated with \$1.00. To participate in the study individuals had to be at least 18 years old and in a romantic relationship of at least 6 months duration. Participants reported a variety of sexual identifications, however, 89.87% of the sample was heterosexual. The length of romantic relationship ranged in duration from 6 months to 624 months or 52 years ( $M = 102.66$  months;  $SD = 105.06$  months). In terms of ethnicity, 80.71% of the sample was white (247 participants).

### *Materials*

Participants were asked to complete a self-report survey. The survey was constructed on Qualtrics. The survey was composed of four separate questionnaires: The Perceived Relationship Quality Components Inventory (PRQC), The Mate Characteristics Inventory (MCI) and The Conflict Scale (*see Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C*). Participants were also asked to answer a number of demographic questions (*see Appendix D*). At the beginning of the survey participants were asked to indicate whether their current relationship partner was male or female. Depending on their response participants were then directed to fill out a survey pertaining to male or female partners. For all participants the order of the questionnaires was randomized.

#### *Perceived Relationship Quality Components Inventory*

The PRQC (Fletcher, Simpson & Thomas, 2000) is an 18 item self-report inventory. The scale is composed of 6 different components (relationship satisfaction, commitment, intimacy, trust, passion and love) each component is measured using three different questions. To complete

the scale participants were asked to indicate the degree to which each item applies to their current romantic relationship and partner. The items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *extremely*). Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all six of the relationship quality components to test the degree of reliability between the items for each subcomponent. High reliability was found for all six of the components (relationship satisfaction  $\alpha = .96$ , commitment  $\alpha = .95$ , intimacy  $\alpha = .91$ , passion  $\alpha = .88$ , love  $\alpha = .93$  and trust  $\alpha = .91$ ).

#### *Mate Characteristics Index*

The MCI is a 31 item self-report inventory that was developed for the purpose of the current research. The scale was created to measure an individual's perception of their partner's mate characteristics. The scale is comprised of five main subscales (humor receptivity, humor production, intelligence, physical attractiveness and kindness and understanding). The humor subscales are each composed of six items and the other three subscales are each composed of five items. Each of the items is rated on a 7-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha was calculated for all six of the relationship quality components to test the degree of reliability between the items for each subcomponent. High reliability was found for all five of the mate characteristic components (physical attractiveness  $\alpha = .79$ , intelligence  $\alpha = .87$ , kindness and understanding  $\alpha = .82$ , humor production  $\alpha = .83$  and humor receptivity  $\alpha = .79$ ).

#### *Conflict Inventory*

The CI is a 6 item self-report inventory that was developed for the purpose of the current research. The scale was created to measure an individual's perception of conflict in their relationship as well as their conflict resolution skills. The scale is comprised of two main subscales (conflict resolution and conflict frequency). The humor subscales are each composed

of six items and the other three subscales are each composed of five items. Each of the items is rated on a 7-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*).

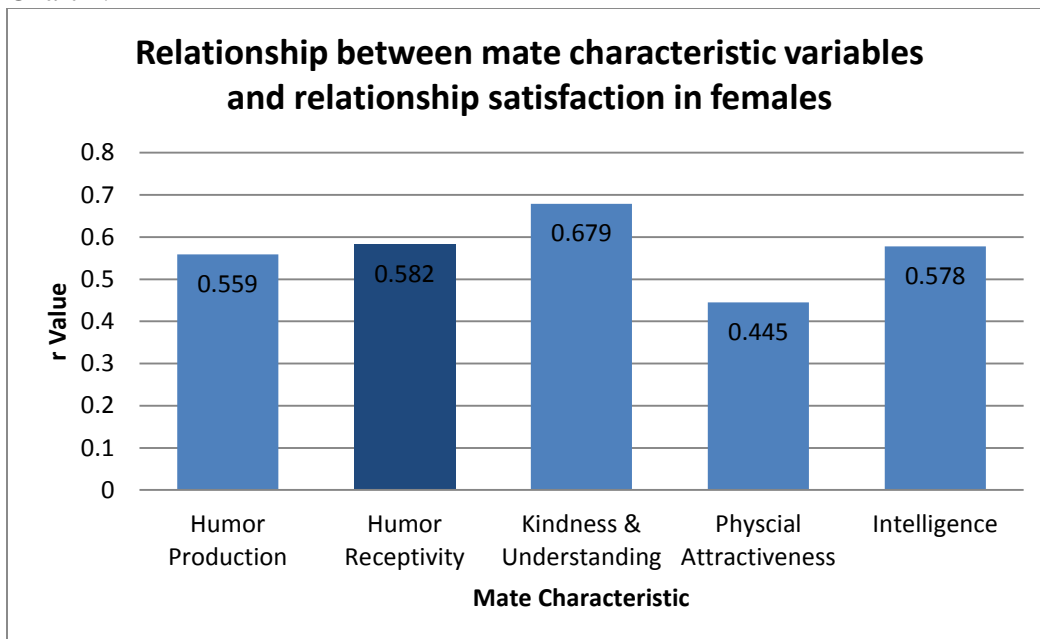
Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each of the conflict components to test the degree of reliability between the items for each subcomponent. High reliability was found for each of the conflict factors (conflict  $\alpha = .85$  and conflict resolution  $\alpha = .68$ ).

## Results

Correlational tests were run to test the relationship among the variables of interest. Due to the large variance in relationship duration ( $SD = 105.06$  months) partial correlations were completed in order to control for relationship durations role in and possible relationships. Of central interest was the strength of the relationship between relationship satisfaction and partner humor production for females and relationship satisfaction and partner humor receptivity for males. For females, the correlation between relationship satisfaction and partner humor production ( $r = .68, p < .01$ ) was greater than the relationship between relationship satisfaction and partner humor receptivity ( $r = .62, p < .01$ ). Interestingly, when relationship duration was not controlled for the opposite pattern was true for females. Specifically, the relationship between relationship satisfaction and partner humor receptivity ( $r = .61, p < .01$ ) was found to be slightly stronger than the relationship between relationship satisfaction and partner humor production ( $r = .60, p < .01$ ) in females. With regards to males, the hypothesized difference in importance of partner humor production and partner humor receptivity was found when controlling for relationship duration. Specifically, the correlation between relationship satisfaction and partner humor receptivity ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ) was stronger than the correlation between relationship satisfaction and partner humor production ( $r = .55, p < .01$ ). The predicted sex differences between the relationship of relationship satisfaction with humor production and humor

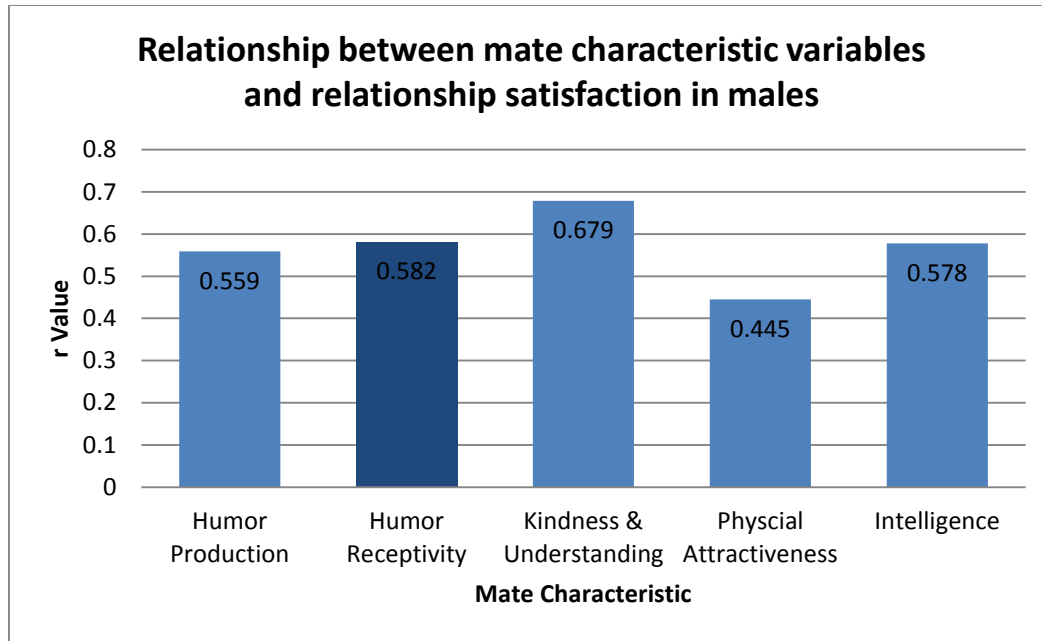
receptivity were found. Specifically, for females, a moderately stronger correlation between relationship satisfaction and partner humor production as compared to the correlation between relationship satisfaction and partner humor receptivity was found. For males, a moderately stronger correlation between relationship satisfaction and partner humor production as compared to relationship satisfaction and partner humor receptivity was found. The relationship between relationship satisfaction and the other mate characteristic variables for males and females can be found in Chart 1 and Chart 2.

Chart 1.



*Note.* For all correlations relationship duration was controlled for. All correlations are significant at  $p < .01$  level.

Chart 2.



*Note.* For all correlations relationship duration was controlled for. All correlations are significant at  $p < .01$  level.

In addition to analyzing the relationship between partner humor production and partner humor receptivity with relationship satisfaction partial correlations were also ran to examine the relationship between both humor variables and the other components of relationship quality (i.e., commitment, intimacy, trust, passion and love). Interestingly, for females the relationship of partner humor production and the various relationship quality variables was higher than partner humor receptivity's relationship with the various relationship quality variables (with the exception of passion which exhibited a stronger relationship with partner humor receptivity). The results for the relationship between humor production and receptivity with the various relationship quality variables can be found in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1.

Relationship between humor production and humor receptivity in relationship quality variables in females

Humor	Commitment	Intimacy	Passion	Love	Trust
	r	r	r	r	r
Production	.52	.64	<b>.45</b>	.63	.59
Receptivity	<b>.56</b>	<b>.68</b>	.41	<b>.66</b>	<b>.61</b>

\*\*Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2.

Relationship between humor production and humor receptivity in relationship quality variables in males

Humor	Commitment	Intimacy	Passion	Love	Trust
	r	r	r	r	r
Production	<b>.55</b>	<b>.63</b>	<b>.42</b>	<b>.63</b>	<b>.61</b>
Receptivity	.52	.58	.41	.62	.58

\*\*Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

In addition to correlations examining the relationship between relationship characteristics and relationship quality variables correlations were also performed to test the relationship between humor production and humor receptivity with measures of conflict (conflict resolution and conflict frequency). For both males and females humor production and humor receptivity were associated with less conflict and greater conflict resolution skills. Specifically, Humor receptivity ( $r = -.556, p < .01$ ) and humor production ( $r = -.552, p < .01$ ) were found to be negatively correlated with conflict. Furthermore, humor receptivity ( $r = .586, p < .01$ ) and humor production ( $r = .605, p < .01$ ) were found to be positively correlated with conflict resolution skills.

### Discussion

While prior research in evolutionary psychology has focused on mate preferences the current research has illustrated that some of these preferences might be linked to higher relationship satisfaction and relationship quality overall. Evolutionary psychologists have historically strayed away from studying mate characteristics in the context of real-life relationships because some mate preferences such as, physical attractiveness can actually have negative consequences (i.e., decreasing relationship satisfaction). Specifically, physical attractiveness makes mates highly desirable – increasing the risk that one's mate will be poached. The risk of poaching can breed negative feelings such as jealousy and thus decrease relationship satisfaction. However, the current research confirms the theory that there is

something unique about humor. Due to the positive affect that is created by humor, humor can have protective qualities in romantic relationships without the negative consequences associated with other mate characteristics which can lead to mate poaching and other relational problems. Therefore, humor is uniquely situated to not only be a preferred mate characteristic but also breed increased relationship quality. The current research supports these sentiments finding that humor (both humor production and humor receptivity) does correlate with higher relationship quality components.

The current research focused on testing if the sex differences in preferences for humor production and humor receptivity would hold when these constructs were studied within the context of romantic relationships. To test the theory a series of carefully constructed and internally valid self-report measures were utilized. The proposed sex difference in the relationships between partner humor production and partner humor receptivity with relationship satisfaction were confirmed. Additionally, similar sex differences were revealed in the relationship among the other relationship quality variables and humor production and receptivity. Such that, females who reported higher levels of relationship quality also reported that their partner was high on humor production. On the other hand, males who reported that their partners were high on humor receptivity also reported higher levels of relationship quality components.

The findings presented have major implications for society's understanding of long-term romantic relationships. Interestingly, both humor production and humor receptivity were found to exhibit a stronger correlation with relationship satisfaction than the correlation between physical attractiveness and relationship satisfaction for both males and females. This finding is especially compelling because over the course of evolutionary history males have been found to exhibit a strong preference for physically attractive females because this was seen as an indicator

of health and reproductive capability. Thus, the findings of the study indicate that humor may play a large role in determining relationship satisfaction. In addition to contributing to research in evolutionary psychology by illustrating that mate preferences do play a role in relationship satisfaction the current research also established the role of humor in mediating conflict in relationships. Specifically, individuals with humorous partners reported lower levels of conflict and greater conflict resolution skills.

As with any study there are several notable limitations. To begin, the sample was extremely homogenous in terms of race/ethnicity and sexual orientation. Thus, it is difficult to generalize the results of the current study to populations other than those presently examined. Further research is needed to determine if the identified trends hold true across various ethnic populations as well as across various sexual orientations. Additionally, it would be interesting to look at the role that culture plays in mediating the connection between relationship satisfaction and mate characteristic variables.

Overall, the components that contribute to relationship satisfaction are of the utmost importance to study. By understanding these components mental health researchers and professionals can advise individuals on how to ensure they are involved in a relationship that will be satisfying to them. Based on the results of the current research it is reasonable to assume that humor, both humor production and humor receptivity, plays a large role in relationship satisfaction.



### References

- Bradbury, T. N., Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. H. (2000). Research on the nature and determinants of marital satisfaction: A decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62(4), 964-980.
- Bressler, E. R., & Balshine, S. (2006). The influence of humor on desirability. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 27(1), 29-39.
- Bressler, E.R., Martin, R.A., & Balshine, S. (2006). Production and appreciation of humor as sexually selected traits. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 27(2), 121-130.
- Buss, D. M. (2003). *The Evolution of Desire*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Buss, D. M., Abbott, M., Angleitner, A., Asherian, A., Biaggio, A., Blanco-Villasenor, A., . . . Yang, K. (1990). International preferences in selecting mates: A study of 37 cultures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(6), 816-828.
- Buss, D. M., & Barnes, M. (1986). Preferences in human mate selection. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50(3), 559-570.
- Camargo, M. A., Geher, G., Fisher, M. L., & Arrabaca, A. (2013). The relationship between hypothesized psychological genetic fitness indicators and indices of mating success. *Journal Of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology*, 7(2), 138-162.
- Fletcher, G. J. O., Simpson, J. A., & Thomas, G. (2000). The measurement of perceived relationship quality components: A confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26(3), 340-354.
- Goodwin, R. (1990, November). Sex differences among partner preferences: Are the sexes really very similar? *Sex Roles*, 23(9), 501-513.
- Hampes, W. P. (1992). Relationship between humor and intimacy. *Psychological Reports*, 71, 127-130.
- Hone, L.E., Hurwitz, W., & Lieberman, D. (2015). Sex differences in preferences for humor: A

Martin, R. A. (2006). *The psychology of humor: An integrated approach*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier Academic Press.

Miller, G. (2000). *The Mating Mind: How Sexual Choice Shaped the Evolution of Human Nature*. New York, NY: Anchor Books.

Panksepp, J. (2007). Neuroevolutionary sources of laughter and social joy: Modeling primal laughter in laboratory rats. *Behavioral Brain Research*, 182(2), 231-244.

Panksepp, J. (2000). The riddle of laughter: Neural and psychoevolutionary underpinnings of joy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9(6), 183-186.

Weems, S. (2014). *Ha! The science of when we laugh and why*. New York, NY, US: Basic Books.

## Appendixes

### Appendix A

Instructions: For the following statement please indicate how well the statement applies to your current partner and relationship by choosing the appropriate number.

1. How satisfied are you with your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

2. How content are you with your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

3. How happy are you with your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

4. How committed are you to your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

5. How dedicated are you to your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

6. How devoted are you to your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

7. How intimate is your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

8. How close is your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

9. How connected are you to your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

10. How much do you trust your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

11. How much can you count on your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

12. How dependable is your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

13. How passionate is your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

14. How lustful is your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

15. How sexually intense is your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

16. How much do you love your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely

17. How much do you adore your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						Extremely



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

8. Even when my partner is having a bad day he still laughs at my attempts to cheer him up.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

9. I make my partner crack up.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

10. When I make a joke my partner responds with laughter.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

11. I make jokes that my partner does not get or understand.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

12. I make my partner laugh more frequently than he makes me laugh.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

13. My partner laughs at something I say or do at least once a day.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

14. My partner makes insightful comments.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

15. My partner is bright.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

16. My partner and I have conversations about books, current events, or other intellectually stimulating topics.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

17. I find myself wishing my partner was smarter.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

18. My partner has a higher-than-average level of intelligence.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

19. When my partner tells a joke I respond with laughter.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

20. Even when I'm having a bad day I can count on my partner to make me laugh.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

21. My partner makes jokes that I do not get or understand.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

22. Something my partner says or does makes me laugh at least once a day.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

23. When my partner makes a joke I respond with laughter.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

24. My partner cracks me up.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	----------------------	---------	-------------------	-------	-------------------

25. I find my partner's male friends to be more humorous than my partner.

Strongly	Disagree	Somewhat	Neutral	Somewhat	Agree	Strongly
----------	----------	----------	---------	----------	-------	----------

	Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Agree
26. My partner makes me laugh more frequently than I make him laugh.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
27. I find my partner to be caring towards others.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
28. Other people comment on how nice my partner is to me.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
29. My partner hurts my feelings.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
30. When I have a problem my partner is understanding.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
31. My partner is nice to me.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

### *Appendix C*

#### **Conflict Inventory**

1. My partner and I fight a lot.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
2. When my partner and I fight we makeup quickly.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree



3. There have been times when I have been mad at my partner for several days.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Somewhat Disagree    Neutral    Somewhat Agree    Agree    Strongly Agree

4. I think about breaking up with my partner.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Somewhat Disagree    Neutral    Somewhat Agree    Agree    Strongly Agree

5. My partner and I are good at resolving our differences.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Somewhat Disagree    Neutral    Somewhat Agree    Agree    Strongly Agree

6. The fights I have with my partner escalate quickly.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Somewhat Disagree    Neutral    Somewhat Agree    Agree    Strongly Agree

*Appendix D*

**Demographic Information**

1. Please enter your current age (in years): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please enter your partner's age (in years): \_\_\_\_\_
3. Please indicate your gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Not listed \_\_\_\_\_
4. Please indicate the current length of your romantic relationship: Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months \_\_\_\_\_
5. Please indicate your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual/Straight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Homosexual/Gay/Lesbian \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bisexual \_\_\_\_\_  
 Not listed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Prefer not to answer \_\_\_\_\_

6. Please indicate your race/ethnicity. Please check one.

White/Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_  
 Black/African American \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hispanic/Latino(a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Asian \_\_\_\_\_  
 Native American \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_  
 Biracial/Multiracial \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_