

# Mate Selection

Theories on how we  
choose a mate!

# Marriage: A Decision That Affects . . .

Where you live



If you have children & what they are like



Your occupation



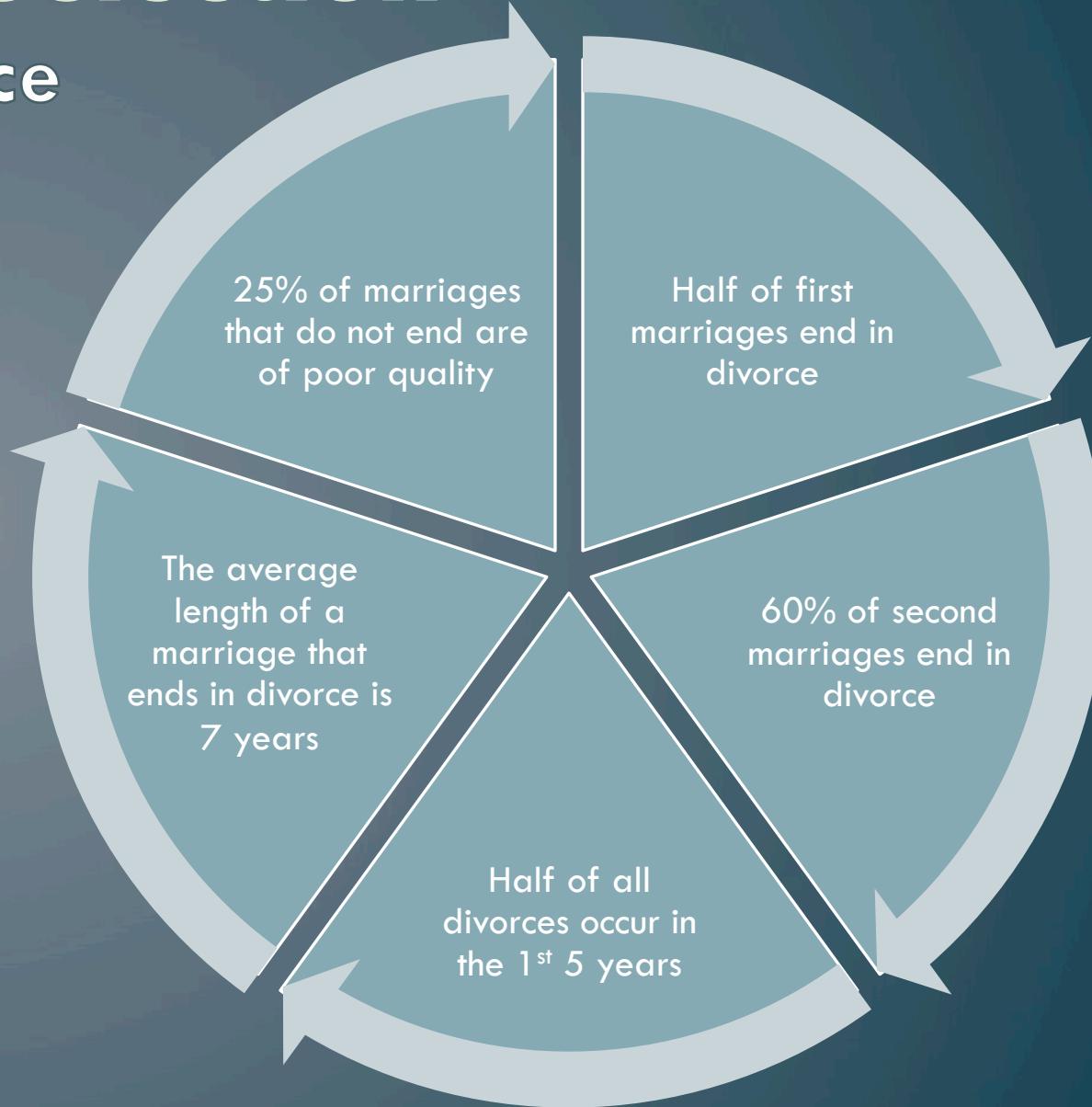
Your financial situation



Your happiness

# Mate Selection

## Divorce



# Theory of Propinquity

- Simply stated, this theory says we marry people we know. If you know only people from your high school, that's who you will marry. If you know only people where you work, your church, your college, people that live on your same floor etc., that is who you will marry.

Do any of your parents have a photo like this? Were they high school sweethearts? How about your grandparents? Why do you think this theory was more common back then?



# 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.”

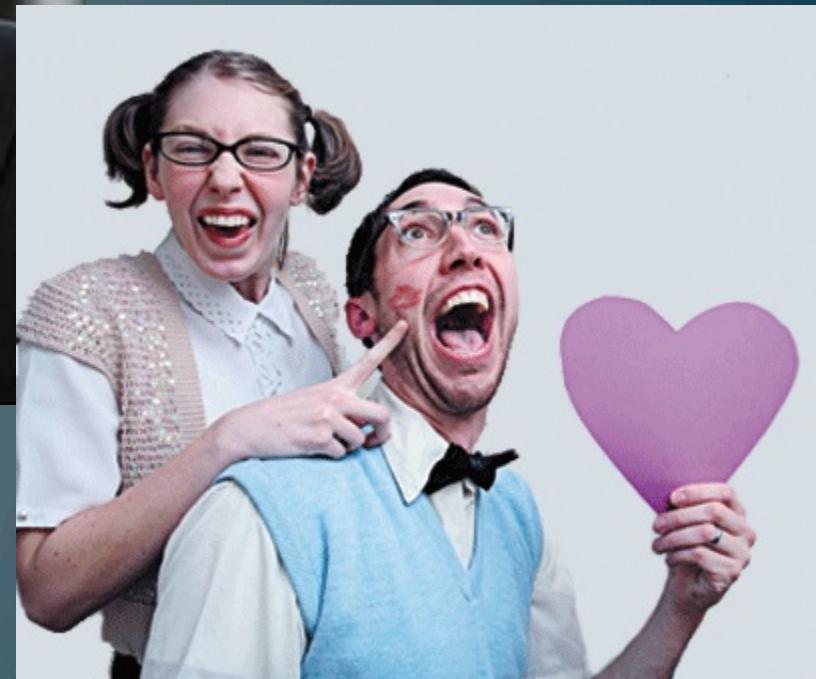
Many exchanges are trades.

- Looks for Looks—Couples that look alike
- Money for Money—Same type of Financial Situation

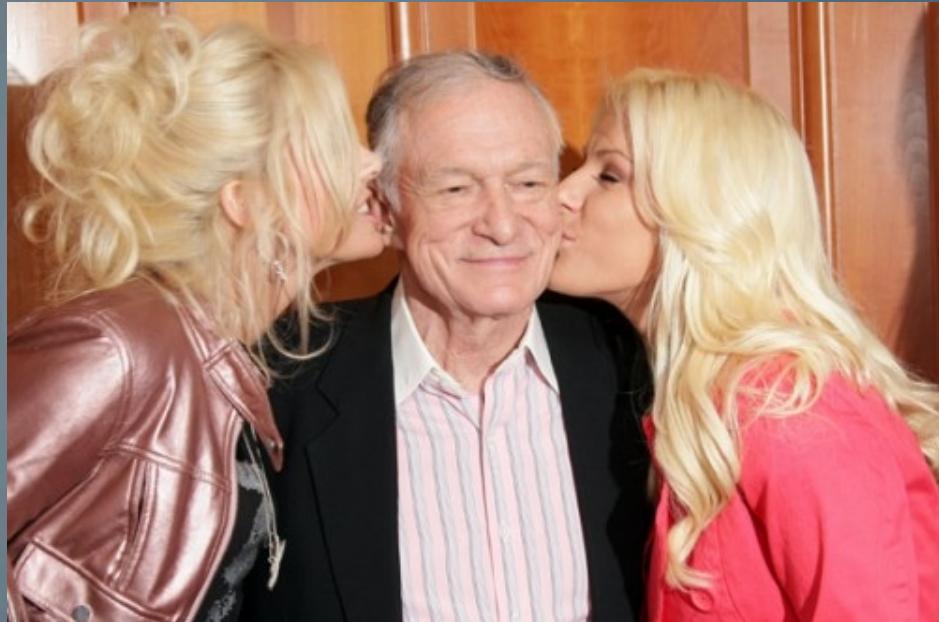
Some exchanges may be for different qualities.

- A guy with lots of money but who is not very handsome may be able to exchange that money for a beautiful girl.

# What's the exchange?



# What's the exchange?



# Complimentary Needs Theory

You find someone who complements your needs.

- A dominate person may find a submissive person
- A quiet 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 Continued...

## Average Marriage Age

- United States Utah
- 28.5 for males; 26.6 for females 24 for males; 22 for females

## Place

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

# Biological Filters

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"

# 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

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