

MATE SELECTION COURTSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

FLIRTING

Moving closer
Gazing into the perspective partner's eyes.
Interpersonal touch
Smiling

THE DATING PROCESS

THE FIRST DATE

30% of men sampled by Clark, Shaver, Abraham (1999) compared to 8% of women identified sexual intimacy (or just “following hormones” as the reason why they sought to initiate or accept a date.

THE CASUAL DATING STAGE

Adolescent
Percentage of High School Students
Who have Engaged in Intercourse

	Females 9th-12th grades	Males 9th-12th Grades
1991	51%	57%
1995	52%	54%
1997	48%	49%

Source: Center for Disease Control

COLLEGE DATING

Discussion Question

What is expected and expectable dating behavior?

Christopher & Cate, (1985): the average length of a casual dating relationships varied between:

7.72 weeks Rapid sexual involvement

9.56 weeks Gradual sexual involvement

The Commitment Dance

Percentage of College Student Respondents Who Had Ever Engaged In Various Sexual Behaviors

	Male	Female
Necking	97%	99%
French Kissing	93%	95%
Breast fondling	92%	93%
Male fondling of female genitals	86%	82%
Female fondling of male genitals	82%	78%
Genitals touching	77%	72%
Intercourse	75%	60%
Male mouth contact with female genital	60%	59%
Female Mount contact with male genitals	61%	54%

Data is from 1979 DeLamater and MacCorquodale;
Subjects: Undergraduates at the University of Wisconsin

Communication and Casual Dating

Certain topics are avoided to prevent scaring off the other person

The Future of the relationship (i.e., Commitment)

- Rules for the relationship
- Negative personal behavior
- Negative Life experiences
- Prior sexual experiences

Dating and Alcohol

When I'm drinking, I can say and do things with women that I'd never ever think of when I'm sober.

Disinhabitant

Men's Split Sexual Attitudes

Women's Split Sexual Attitudes

SERIOUS DATING

(The deepening stage of relationship development)

“. . .with the increase in cohabitation and high commitment non-cohabiting relationships in today's society, it is no longer appropriate to assume that relationship growth is always directed from less toward greater estimated chance of marriage”

Brown & Amatea, 2000)

Intimacy

Social Penetration Theory

- 1. Orienting**
- 2. Exploratory affective exchange**
- 3. Affective exchange**
- 4. Stable exchange**

Disillusionment.

Loss of Independence and Balance

Possessiveness and Jealousy

Sexual Differences

Differences in sexual frequency, duration, arousal style, and goals are normally suppressed during early encounters and in the heights of being in love.

In an effort to retain the title of his partner's 'best lover' a man may attempt to lead his partner into better orgasms or multiple orgasms. Paradoxically, his intentions can easily become a pressure on her to 'perform spontaneously.' For she may assume he's rating his quality as her lover and their compatibility as sex partners on how well she loses control and has orgasms. On her part, a woman may feel too guilty to ask for any changes in sexual behavior. Or she may expect all men to reach sexual release

quickly and pretend to reach a peak when he does, in order to protect herself from performance expectations on his part. No amount of authoritative pronouncements about normalcy, freedom, and honesty in sex can change the fact that sex carries multiple meanings about the relationships and both partner's sexual self-esteem. With so much symbolism involved, sexual communication could not be simple for long.

Brown and Amatea, 2000

Pre-Engagement Cohabitation

Trial run for marriage?

Cohabitation Effect

Before-engagement cohabiters had “more negative interactions, lower interpersonal commitment, lower relationship quality, and lower relationship confidence than those who did not cohabit until after engagement or marriage.” Kline, et al. 2004

Pre-engagement cohabitation increases risk for poor marital outcome.