



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Science

of

ALEXANDRA FISHER

BSc (University of Victoria, 2014)

**“For Richer or For Poorer: How Financial Resources Affect Women’s Mate-
Value”**

Department of Psychology

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

1:00PM

Cornett Building

Room A228

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Danu Stinson, Department of Psychology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Erica Woodin, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Steve Garlick, Department of Sociology, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Lynda Gagné, School of Public Administration, UVic

Abstract

Research on mate preferences suggests that men value physical attractiveness and youthfulness most in potential partners, whereas women value status and resources most in a potential partner (Buss, 1989). These differences in mate preferences have implications for the value men and women place on these characteristics (e.g. attractiveness and resources) in potential mates. A man's attractiveness and financial resources both contribute positively to his mate-value, (Sprecher, 1989; Townsend & Levy, 1990). A woman's attractiveness also contributes to her mate-value (Sprecher, 1989; Townsend & Levy, 1990), but the value of her resources is less clear. I expect that men's evaluation of a woman's financial resources will be dependent on her level of attractiveness. I hypothesize that a woman's financial resources will add to her mate-value when she is highly attractive, but detract from her mate-value when she is typically attractive. In Study 1, a woman of varying attractiveness (typical vs. high) approached men on campus and delivered a speech that conveyed her future income (low vs. high). Men's reported desire to join her focus group was used as measure of their impressions of her mate-value. Study 2 directly assesses participant's romantic interest in targets of varying income (low vs. high) and attractiveness (typical vs. high) using a controlled laboratory method where both men and women evaluated a profile of a potential romantic partner. The results of both studies supported my hypotheses. This research provides insight into the complicated nature of a woman's financial resources as part of her overall mate-value.