

How Willing Are You to Accept Sexual Requests from Slightly Unattractive to Exceptionally Attractive Imagined Requestors?

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Abstract In their classic study of differences in mating strategies, Clark and Hatfield (1989, *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality*, 2, 39–54) found that men and women demonstrated a striking difference in interest in casual sex. The current study examined the role of an imagined requestor’s physical attractiveness (slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, and exceptionally attractive) on men’s and women’s willingness to accept three different requests (go out, come to apartment, go to bed) as reflected in answers to a questionnaire. We tested two hypotheses with a sample of 427 men and 443 women from three countries. Hypothesis 1 states that men, relative to women, will demonstrate a greater willingness to accept the “come to apartment” and “go to bed” requests but not the “go out” request for all three levels of requestor attractiveness. This hypothesis reflects Clark and Hatfield’s main findings. Hypothesis 2 states that the physical attractiveness of a potential partner will have a greater effect on women’s than on men’s willingness to accept all three requests, and particularly for the explicit request for casual sex. The results partially supported Hypothesis 1 and fully supported Hypothesis 2. The discussion highlights limitations of the current research and presents directions for future research.

Keywords Sex differences · Mating · Short-term mating · Physical attractiveness

Men and women demonstrate marked differences in mating strategies (e.g., Buss 1994, 2007; Buss and Schmitt 1993; Symons 1979). One striking difference is in the

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desire for casual sex. Men's sexual fantasies are more likely to include multiple unfamiliar partners than are women's sexual fantasies (Ellis and Symons 1990). Men are more likely than women to report having had casual sex (Townsend et al. 1995). Men also express greater desire for casual sex than do women (Shackelford et al. 2004; Surbey and Conohan 2000). Schmitt et al. (2001) demonstrated that men desire more lifetime sexual partners, seek sexual intercourse sooner, and are more motivated to seek casual sex partners than are women. In a study of 16,288 people across 52 nations, Schmitt et al. (2003) demonstrated that men in every country expressed greater desire for more sexual partners than did women.

The classic pair of studies conducted by Clark and Hatfield (1989; see also Clark 1990; Clark and Hatfield 2003) also provides evidence for sex differences in the desire for casual sex. This research presented one of the first empirical tests of sex differences in the willingness to engage in casual sex. Clark and Hatfield (1989) used a unique experimental method. Male and female confederates approached members of the opposite sex who were alone at different places on campus. After a brief (two-sentence) introduction, the confederates randomly asked each person one of three questions: "Would you go out with me tonight?" "Would you come over to my apartment tonight?" or "Would you go to bed with me tonight?" Combined across the two studies, the results revealed that men and women were equally receptive to the "go out with me" request: 50% of the men and 53% of the women agreed to go out on a date. In striking contrast, whereas only 3% of the women accepted the apartment request and not a single woman agreed to the "go to bed with me" request, "a full 69% of the men agreed to go to the woman's apartment and 75% were willing to go to bed with her" (Clark and Hatfield 2003:228). Furthermore, those men who did turn down the "go to bed with me" request felt the need to justify saying no, giving reasons such as "I'm married" or "I'm with someone."

A peculiarity of the Clark and Hatfield studies might have contributed to these large sex differences with respect to the "apartment" and "bed" request. As the researchers noted, the physical attractiveness of both male and female requestors ranged from slightly unattractive to moderately attractive. Yet, the requestors "were instructed to approach only subjects who were attractive enough that they would be willing to actually sleep with them" (Clark and Hatfield 1989:49). Additionally, the requestors were asked to rate the physical attractiveness of the participants they recruited on a scale ranging from 1 ("very unattractive") to 9 ("very attractive"). Both female and male requestors rated the participants they recruited clearly on the attractive side of the scale (means of 7.30 and 7.70 for female and male requestors, respectively). "The confederates' ratings make it clear that they only selected 'moderate' to 'very attractive' male and female subjects" (Clark and Hatfield 1989:49). Thus, it appears that the requestors were considerably less physically attractive than the individuals they approached. This mismatch between the requestors' and the participants' attractiveness might have influenced female participants' responses more than male participants' responses to the request because men lower their standards with respect to a potential short-term mate's attractiveness. Women do just the opposite, raising their standards with respect to a potential short-term mate's attractiveness (Buss and Schmitt 1993; Gangestad and Thornhill 1997; Schmitt 2005a, b). Thus, it may be that the slightly unattractive to moderately

attractive female requestors in the research by Clark and Hatfield (1989) met men's attractiveness standards, whereas the slightly unattractive to moderately attractive male requestors failed to meet women's standards. This failure of the male requestors' attractiveness to meet women's high attractiveness standards in short-term mating contexts might have reduced the women's willingness to comply with these requests. Additionally, the categorical (yes/no) response format (following an unusual short introduction consisting of just two short sentences) might have contributed to obscuring women's more subtle inclination to consider the more intimate requests.

These potential methodological limitations of the original Clark and Hatfield studies inspired the present study. Its main goal is to explore the impact of the requestor's attractiveness on the willingness to accept the three different requests. We conducted a questionnaire study that differs from the original study in several important respects. First, instead of using confederates, we used a brief self-report questionnaire with imagined requestors. The participants were assigned randomly to one of three conditions standardizing physical attractiveness for participants by asking them to *imagine* being approached by a member of the opposite sex who, depending on the condition, was introduced as physically "slightly unattractive," "moderately attractive," or "exceptionally attractive." Second, the participants were asked to respond to each of the three requests used by Clark and Hatfield (1989) instead of only one request as occurred in the original studies. Third, instead of the original categorical response format, the participants rated the likelihood that they would accept the respective request, enabling us to learn more about women's more subtle response tendencies. Fourth, we assessed the participants' willingness to accept these request instead of actual behavior. Finally, to examine potential cultural differences in the willingness to accept the various requests, we collected data not only in Florida, as Clark and Hatfield (1989) did, but also in two European countries (Germany and Italy) that apparently differ in sexual morals and preferences (see Buss et al. 1990; Schmitt 2005b). For example, Italian men appear to place less importance on the attractiveness of a prospective mate than do German men, who place less importance on the attractiveness of a prospective mate than do American men. However, men from all three countries place greater importance on this trait than do women (Buss 1989). In the current study, American, German, and Italian men might demonstrate similar differences in responses.

In sum, the purpose of the present study is to assess the effect of a requestor's attractiveness on men's and women's willingness to accept requests to go out with the requestor, to go back to the requestor's apartment, or to go to bed with the requestor. We tested two hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 states that men, relative to women, will demonstrate a greater willingness to accept the "go to apartment" and "go to bed" requests but not the "go out" request for all three levels of requestor attractiveness. This hypothesis reflects Clark and Hatfield's (1989) main findings. Hypothesis 2 states that the physical attractiveness of a potential partner will have a greater effect on women's than on men's willingness to accept all three requests, and particularly for the explicit request for casual sex. This hypothesis derives from the finding that women but not men raise their standards of attractiveness for a casual sex partner.

Method

Participants

The German participants were 152 male and 154 female students (mean age 25.3 years and 23.6 years, respectively) from a university in Bielefeld. The Italian participants were 180 male and 181 female students (mean age 22.0 years and 20.9 years, respectively) from a university in Rome. The United States (US) participants were 95 male and 108 female students (mean age 24.9 years and 26.1 years, respectively) from a university near Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The participants were not paid.

Procedure

The German and Italian participants were approached individually and in small groups in public areas of the respective universities by one of three female students and one male student and asked to complete a short questionnaire. The US participants completed the questionnaire in small groups at scheduled times and locations. To encourage participants to respond honestly, we asked participants to fold the questionnaire immediately after completion and drop it into an opaque box. Depending on condition, the participants were instructed to vividly imagine a member of the opposite sex approaching them on the campus whom they considered slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, or exceptionally attractive. Following the same introductory sentences used by Clark and Hatfield (1989), participants were asked to rate the likelihood that they would accept a request from this imagined potential partner (a) to go out tonight (German: *heute Abend ausgehen*; Italian: *di incontrarsi stasera*), (b) to come over to the apartment tonight (German: *heute Abend zu ihr/ihm nach Hause kommen*; Italian: *di venirlo a trovare a casa stasera*), and (c) to go to bed tonight (German: *mit ihr/ihm ins Bett gehen*; Italian: *di venirlo a trovare a casa stasera*) on 11-point rating scales ranging from 0 (“definitely not”) to 100 (“definitely yes”), in increments of 10. The requests were presented on a single sheet in a fixed order from a to c. Additionally, participants rated their own attractiveness on an 11-point rating scale ranging from 0 (*very unattractive*) to 100 (*very attractive*), in increments of 10. Finally, participants indicated whether they were currently in a committed relationship (“yes” or “no”).

Results

In a first analysis step, we examined the self-attributed attractiveness ratings for potential sex and national differences. A three-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of these ratings with participant sex, nationality, and potential partner’s attractiveness (slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, exceptionally attractive) yielded main effects for participant sex and nationality, $F_{1, 838}=21.70$, $p<0.001$, partial $\eta^2=0.025$, and $F(2, 838)=42.01$, $p<0.001$, partial $\eta^2=0.091$, respectively. The interaction of these factors also was significant, $F_{2, 838}=7.53$, $p=0.001$, partial $\eta^2=0.018$. The relevant means are presented in Table 1. Post-hoc multiple range tests (Tukey HSD,

Table 1 German, Italian, and US men's and women's mean (and SD) self-attractiveness ratings

	German	Italian	US
Men	60.9 (19.5)	62.4 (22.7)	72.0 (15.4)
Women	55.9 (16.8)	48.5 (24.5)	71.1 (16.7)

Attractiveness ratings were made on an 11-point rating scale ranging from 0 (very unattractive) to 100 (very attractive)

$p < 0.05$) revealed that US men rated their own attractiveness significantly higher than did German and Italian men. US women rated their own attractiveness higher than did German women, who in turn rated their own attractiveness higher than did Italian women. The attractiveness of the potential partner did not affect self-rated attractiveness, F -values < 1.80 .

Likelihood to Accept Requests

Owing to the interaction between participant sex and nationality in the self-rated attractiveness, a four-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of the likelihood ratings to accept requests was performed with participant sex, potential partner's attractiveness (slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, exceptionally attractive), and nationality as the between-subjects factors, type of request (go out, apartment, bed) as the within-subjects factor, and self-rated attractiveness as a covariate. The results of this ANCOVA are presented in Table 2.

The two-way interaction between sex and type of request predicted by Hypothesis 1 was significant. However, men's likelihood ratings exceeded women's ratings not only for the "apartment" (53.6 vs. 9.5) and the "bed" request (45.8 vs. 4.2) but also for the "go out" request (59.4 vs. 30.2), t -values > 13 , p -values < 0.001 . Moreover, this interaction as well as the main effects and remaining two-way interactions were modified by three-way interactions between participant sex, nationality, and type of request, $F_{4, 1662} = 4.48$, $p = 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.011$, and between participant sex, potential partner's attractiveness, and type of request, $F_{4, 1662} = 5.63$, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.013$, respectively.

Further analyses of the first three-way interaction revealed no national differences in women's likelihood ratings for the acceptance of any of the three requests (Tukey HSD, $p < 0.05$). In contrast, German men provided lower likelihood ratings than US and Italian men with respect to accepting the "go out" request (52% vs. 62% and 65%, respectively) and the "apartment" request (40% vs. 57% and 63% respectively). In response to the "bed" request, Italian men provided higher likelihood ratings (61%) than US men (43%), whose ratings in turn exceeded those of German men (29%).

A different pattern of results underlies the three-way interaction between participant sex, potential partner's attractiveness, and type of request. The relevant means are presented in Table 3. Men provided higher ratings for the moderately and exceptionally attractive woman than for the slightly unattractive woman for each of the three requests. In contrast, supporting Hypothesis 2, women responded more

Table 2 The results of the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) for the likeliness ratings

	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	partial η^2
Main effects				
Covariate	17.21	1, 831	<0.001	0.020
Sex	457.09	2, 831	<0.001	0.355
Attractiveness	58.04	2, 831	<0.001	0.123
Nationality	18.84	2, 831	<0.001	0.043
Request	67.03	2, 1662	<0.001	0.075
2-way interactions				
Sex × Attractiveness	3.09	2, 831	0.046	0.007
Sex × Nationality	17.79	2, 831	<0.001	0.041
Attractiveness × Nationality	3.70	4, 831	0.005	0.018
Request × Sex	41.78	4, 1662	<0.001	0.048
Request × Attractiveness	24.87	4, 1662	<0.001	0.056
Request × Nationality	13.58	4, 1662	<0.001	0.032
3-way interactions				
Sex × Attractiveness × Nationality	0.84	4, 831	0.502	0.018
Request × Sex × Attractiveness	5.63	4, 1662	<0.001	0.013
Request × Sex × Nationality	4.48	4, 1662	0.001	0.011
Request × Attractiveness × Nationality	1.92	8, 1662	0.053	0.009
4-way interaction				
Request × Sex × Attractiveness × Nationality	1.59	8, 1662	0.123	0.008

sensitively to the requestor’s attractiveness: Women’s willingness to accept the “go out” request increased with the potential partner’s attractiveness. However, their willingness to accept the “apartment” and “bed” requests was higher from an exceptionally attractive man than from either a moderately attractive or a slightly unattractive man (Table 3).

Table 3 Men’s and women’s mean (and SD) likelihood ratings to accept a request to go out, come over to the apartment, and go to bed from a slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, or exceptionally attractive potential partner. Different suffixes within a column indicate significant within-sex differences (Tukey HSD, $p < 0.05$)

	Go out	Come to apartment	Go to bed
Men			
Slightly unattractive	41.6 ^a (30.8)	37.6 ^a (33.4)	32.7 ^a (36.1)
Moderately attractive	63.4 ^b (32.5)	57.2 ^b (35.5)	49.4 ^b (38.4)
Exceptionally attractive	72.3 ^c (31.5)	65.8 ^c (34.5)	54.2 ^b (38.7)
Women			
Slightly unattractive	14.4 ^a (21.4)	3.4 ^a (12.4)	1.8 ^a (10.9)
Moderately attractive	29.3 ^b (28.5)	7.9 ^b (17.3)	3.2 ^a (10.4)
Exceptionally attractive	46.6 ^c (31.8)	17.3 ^c (23.3)	7.7 ^b (17.1)

A Categorical Analysis of the Likelihood Ratings

In an alternative analysis that is more sensitive to whether the participants considered the request or flatly rejected it, likelihood ratings were categorized such that ratings greater than 0 were assigned a value of 1 and outright rejections a value of 0. This analysis allows for a closer comparison with the results of Clark and Hatfield, in that flat rejections are equivalent to their “no” responses. The results of the four-way ANCOVA are presented in Table 4. The three-way interaction between participant sex, potential partner’s attractiveness, and type of request was again significant ($F_{4, 1662}=6.03, p<0.001, \text{partial } \eta^2=0.014$). The relevant means are presented in Table 5.

Post-hoc multiple range tests (Tukey HSD, $p<0.05$) indicated that the requestor’s attractiveness affected women and men differently for each of the three requests. Whereas men did not distinguish among the “go out” request from the slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, and exceptionally attractive requestor, more women were willing to consider the “go out” request from a moderately or an exceptionally attractive man than from a slightly unattractive man. Furthermore, men were more willing to consider the “apartment” request from the exceptionally attractive than the slightly unattractive requestor, whereas the percentage of women willing to consider the “apartment” request increased with male attractiveness. Finally, more men were willing to consider the “bed” request from a moderately attractive or an exceptionally attractive woman than from a slightly unattractive

Table 4 The results of the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) for the categorical likelihood ratings

	<i>F</i>	df	<i>p</i>	partial η^2
Main effects				
Covariate	0.17	1, 831	0.681	0.000
Sex	415.28	2, 831	<0.001	0.333
Attractiveness	33.17	2, 831	<0.001	0.074
Nationality	2.47	2, 831	0.085	0.006
Request	58.05	2, 1662	<0.001	0.065
2-way interactions				
Sex × Attractiveness	6.17	2, 831	0.002	0.015
Sex × Nationality	7.31	2, 831	0.001	0.017
Attractiveness × Nationality	2.69	4, 831	0.030	0.013
Request × Sex	106.31	4, 1662	<0.001	0.113
Request × Attractiveness	2.43	4, 1662	0.046	0.006
Request × Nationality	6.55	4, 1662	<0.001	0.016
3-way interactions				
Sex × Attractiveness × Nationality	0.50	4, 831	0.735	0.002
Request × Sex × Attractiveness	6.03	4, 1662	<0.001	0.014
Request × Sex × Nationality	0.64	4, 1662	0.634	0.002
Request × Attractiveness × Nationality	1.16	8, 1662	0.322	0.006
4-way interaction				
Request × Sex × Attractiveness × Nationality	0.93	8, 1662	0.492	0.004

woman. In contrast, more women considered the “bed” request from an exceptionally attractive than either a moderately attractive or a slightly unattractive man (see Table 5). One difference between the results of analyses of the likelihood ratings and the results of the categorical analyses concerns the three-way interaction between participant sex, nationality, and type of request, which was significant for the likelihood ratings but not for the categorical analysis.

Discussion

We generated and tested two hypotheses in the current research. Hypothesis 1 stated that men, relative to women, will demonstrate a greater willingness to accept the “apartment” and “bed” requests but not the “go out” request for all three levels of requestor attractiveness. The results support this hypothesis for the “apartment” and “bed” request. Men are more likely than women to accept these two requests, regardless of the attractiveness of the imagined prospective partner. These results are in concordance with those reported by Clark and Hatfield (1989). However, in contrast to the results reported by Clark and Hatfield, men also were generally more willing to accept the “go out” request. We have no convincing explanation for this discrepancy. However, one of the reviewers suggested that men’s opportunity costs (wasted time) might appear less when asked on the spot to go out without sure fitness benefits as was the case in the original Clark and Hatfield (1989) study.

Hypothesis 2 stated that the physical attractiveness of a potential partner will have a greater effect on women’s than on men’s willingness to accept all three requests, and particularly for the request for casual sex. This hypothesis was confirmed. Regardless of the type of request, men were more willing to accept the request from a moderately and exceptionally attractive woman than from a slightly attractive woman, suggesting that men were not entirely insensitive to the requestor’s attractiveness. In contrast, women’s willingness to accept the “go out” offer increased with the imagined requestor’s physical attractiveness. With respect to the “apartment” and “bed” request, women exacted higher standards than men, as

Table 5 The percentage of men and women considering a request (i.e., likelihood ratings > 0) to go out, come to the apartment, and go to bed from a slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, or exceptionally attractive potential partner. Different suffixes within a column indicate significant within-sex differences (Tukey HSD, $p < 0.05$)

	Go out	Come to apartment	Go to bed
Men			
Slightly unattractive	86.7 ^a	76.8 ^a	65.3 ^a
Moderately attractive	92.2 ^a	85.8 ^{ab}	78.6 ^b
Exceptionally attractive	94.4 ^a	90.1 ^b	82.5 ^b
Women			
Slightly unattractive	49.7 ^a	12.9 ^a	5.4 ^a
Moderately attractive	75.8 ^b	28.2 ^b	12.8 ^a
Exceptionally attractive	84.4 ^b	52.1 ^c	23.8 ^b

women reported a greater likelihood of agreeing to these requests only from an exceptionally attractive prospective partner. These results are consistent with the “good genes” hypothesis for women’s short-term, casual sex (Gangestad and Thornhill 1997). Women are more likely to engage in casual sex with an exceptionally attractive man than with a less attractive man.

There are some notable differences between the present main results and those of Clark and Hatfield (1989). First, although women’s willingness to agree to the request decreased from the “go out” to the “bed” request, a considerable willingness could be observed not only for the “go out” request but also for the “come to apartment” request and the “bed” request, particularly from imagined exceptionally attractive men. As the categorical data indicate, more than half of the women were willing to consider the “come to apartment” request and one-fourth of the women did not outright reject the “bed” request from an imagined exceptionally attractive man. Men’s responses differed from those of the Clark and Hatfield study in one aspect. Whereas in the Clark and Hatfield study more men accepted the “bed” request (72%) than the “go out” request (50%), we found a continuous decrease in the likelihood ratings from the “go out” to the “bed” request.

We detected some differences based on nationality. First, US men and women provided higher ratings of their own attractiveness than their European counterparts. Especially striking is the difference of these ratings between the US and Italian women. This difference might be partially attributable to the fact that the US women were considerably older than the Italian women, thus having more self-confidence in their appearance than the still-insecure Italian women. The low self-attractiveness ratings of the Italian women barely reflect their actual attractiveness as the male experimenter claimed that the Italian sample included “five of the ten most beautiful women he had ever seen.” Second, the three-way interaction between type of request, sex, and nationality was significant in the ANCOVA of likelihood ratings: US, German, and Italian women did not differ in their likelihood ratings with respect to any of the three requests. In contrast, German men reported lower likelihood ratings than US and Italian men. Moreover, only with respect to the “bed” request did Italian men provide higher likelihood ratings than US men. However, when we analyzed data categorically (absolute rejections versus some likelihood), the interaction was not significant. This might indicate that, although the sex differences are detected across nations, the size of the difference varies (cf. Buss 1989).

One might be inclined to attribute these differences to our methodological approach in which men and women provided responses to each of the three requests from imagined requestors. This approach might be considered less ecologically valid than Clark and Hatfield’s “real-life” studies. However, a real-life situation does not necessarily imply greater (ecological or construct) validity. Consider the situation used by Clark and Hatfield more closely. For women, and especially for young and attractive women like those approached by the requestors, men’s requests implying casual sex are probably not uncommon (see Buss 2003 for a review). Women may have developed strategies for dealing with such requests, even if they are not always as immediate and explicit as the request from a slightly unattractive to moderately attractive stranger to go to bed after just two brief introductory sentences. Thus, it is likely that women’s responses were determined not only by their reluctance to engage in casual sex *per se*, but also by a strategy to fend off such requests as

expressed by statements like “You’ve got to be kidding,” or “What is wrong with you? Leave me alone.” (Clark and Hatfield 1989:52).

The validity of the real-life situation for men is even more debatable. Women requesting outright casual sex from an attractive stranger are probably a rare event. How might men deal with such a rare event? We do not want to imply that such a request does not coincide with men’s desire to engage in casual sex. However, this rare event appears to be more complex. A slightly unattractive to moderately attractive woman who needs just two sentences to request sex from an attractive stranger probably worked up all her courage and risks a situation that makes her vulnerable to reputational damage. Perhaps some of the men’s compliance with the “bed” request was partly determined by the motive not to offend her. These considerations also might explain why men who rejected the “bed” request felt obligated to offer apologies such as “I’m married” or “I’m going with someone” (Clark and Hatfield 1989:52).

Real-life situations are complex, and responses to them are not determined by a single factor. Rather, both women’s and men’s responses in the Clark and Hatfield study probably were determined not only by their genuine (dis-)interest to engage in casual sex, but also by—albeit sex-differentiated—psychological factors. Despite their limited ecological validity, questionnaire studies offer advantages over other methodologies. The participants’ responses to the questionnaire were not arbitrary but instead were patterned and systematic, suggesting that they are suitable for testing the hypotheses. The responses are assumed to reflect not manifest behavior but the participants’ attitudes toward that behavior, which in turn accounts for manifest behavior under local circumstances. Thus, our questionnaire study is valuable inasmuch as it informs us about men’s and women’s real attitudes toward casual sex in a way that may be less influenced by factors that might contribute to the determination of manifest behavior.

The current results suggest areas for future research. For example, women have been shown to shift their mate preferences across the ovulatory cycle (see Gangestad et al. 2005 for a review). It might be interesting to investigate shifts in likelihood scores across women’s ovulatory cycle. Women may be more likely to engage in casual sex when they are most fertile, particularly if they are in a committed, long-term relationship. Moreover, like the Clark and Hatfield (1989) study, the present study used a broad definition of the requestor’s physical attractiveness. Future research could more closely examine the impact of various specific aspects of physical attractiveness, such as fluctuating asymmetry (Gangestad and Thornhill 1999), body mass index (e.g., Tovée and Cornelissen 2001), and waist-to-hip ratio (e.g., Singh 1993; Schützwohl 2006). Although physical attractiveness is an important aspect in short-term mating, future research might investigate other aspects of attractiveness, such as a requestor’s financial prospects and social status (e.g. Buss 1989, 2003), which affect women’s more than men’s short-term mating strategies. Additionally, differential risks from casual sex for women and men (e.g., pregnancy, greater risk of sexually transmitted infections, or societal condemnation) need to be taken into account in future research if we want to improve our understanding of men’s and women’s decisions about casual sex. Finally, the present study used a set order of the presentation of the requests. From a methodological perspective it appears important to examine whether the

presentation order of the requests would affect men's and women's likelihood ratings. For example, would the likelihood ratings for the "apartment" request be higher when this request would not precede—as in the present study—but follow the "bed" request?

In conclusion, this study attempted to replicate and extend the classic research by Clark and Hatfield (1989) in a questionnaire study with imagined responses to requests from a slightly unattractive, moderately attractive, or exceptionally attractive individual. We found that regardless of the requestor's attractiveness, men are far more interested in casual sex than are women. Women express greater likelihood of accepting offers of casual sex only from an exceptionally attractive man, compared with a less attractive man. Men, in contrast, manifested no differences in their interest in casual sex with a moderately or an exceptionally attractive woman.

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