

THE PREDICTION OF RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION: AN ANALYSIS OF
PARTNER- AND SELF-PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract

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Numerous studies have assessed dating and marital satisfaction (e.g., Karney & Bradbury, 1995); however, most assessed only one member of the couple (Attridge, Berscheid, & Simpson, 1995). Previous research demonstrated that there are many variables correlated with relationship satisfaction, such as positive perceptions of one's partner, whether real or illusory (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Murray et al., 1996a), self-disclosure (Millar & Millar, 1988), and empathy (Davis & Oathout, 1987). Positive, clear, and confidently held mental representations about one's partner have also been associated with having satisfying relationships (Gurung, Sarason, & Sarason, 2001). Overall, feminine characteristics have been correlated with relationship satisfaction more frequently than masculine (e.g. Langis et al., 1994). Furthermore, some research has demonstrated that when both partners were high in femininity, the couple was happier than couples where only one or neither individual was high in femininity (Antill, 1983).

The present design represents an improvement over many of the past studies as both members of a dating couple were assessed. Factors assessed for their association with relationship satisfaction included feminine and masculine characteristics, hypergender beliefs, communal and exchange beliefs, empathy, perspective-taking, self-disclosure, positive and negative partner concepts, partner worth, and clarity of partner

perceptions. Additionally, both members of the couple rated their perceptions of themselves as well as their perceptions of their partners on the characteristics of femininity, masculinity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking.

Results indicated that perceptions of self and partner as high in femininity were correlated with higher ratings of relationship satisfaction for both men and women. Perceiving self as high in femininity and holding clear, positive perceptions about their partners were predictive of men's dating satisfaction. For women, relationship satisfaction was predicted by holding clear perceptions of their partners and by perceiving their partners as high in perspective-taking. Further analyses assessing the congruency between perceptions of one's partner and the partner's self-perceptions revealed that women's perceptions of their partners were consistent with their partners' self-perceptions. However, men tended to underestimate their partners' femininity, empathy, and self-disclosure. Subsequent regression analyses revealed that men were most satisfied in their relationships when they overestimated their partners' empathy and femininity.

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Table of Contents

	Page
I. Abstract.....	3
II. Acknowledgments	5
III. Table of Contents.....	6
IV. List of Tables.....	10
V. Introduction.....	11
Overview.....	11
VI. Relationship Satisfaction.....	14
Relationship Satisfaction and Gender.....	16
Characteristics	
The Role of Femininity in Relationship.....	17
Satisfaction	
The Role of Masculinity in Relationship.....	20
Satisfaction	
Masculinity and Femininity in Relationship.....	21
Satisfaction	
Perceptions of Femininity and.....	23
Relationship Satisfaction	
Hypergender Beliefs and Relationship.....	25
Satisfaction	
Positive Perceptions of Partner and.....	28
Relationship Satisfaction	
Significant-Other Concepts and.....	30
Relationship Satisfaction	
Commitment and Relationship Satisfaction.....	32

	Communication and Relationship Satisfaction.....	33
	Gender Differences versus Sex Differences.....	36
VII.	Summary.....	37
VIII.	The Present Study.....	45
IX.	Methods.....	54
	Participants.....	54
	Measures.....	59
	Procedure.....	63
X.	Results.....	63
	Overview of Analyses.....	63
	The Prediction of Male Satisfaction.....	65
	The Prediction of Female Satisfaction.....	71
	An Analysis of Congruency of Partner Perceptions.....	75
	The Importance of Congruent in Partner Perceptions in the Prediction of Satisfaction.....	77
	Additional Analyses on Satisfaction.....	79
XI.	Discussion.....	83
	Male Satisfaction.....	84
	Female Satisfaction.....	86
	Common Factors for Men's and Women's Dating Satisfaction.....	87
XII.	Limitations of the Present Study and Directions for Future Research.....	90
XIII.	Summary of Findings.....	91

XIV.	Conclusions.....	93
XV.	References.....	95
XVI.	Appendices.....	101
	Appendix A: Section 1: Demographics Survey.....	101
	Appendix A: Section 2: Hypergender Ideology Scale.....	104
	Appendix A: Section 3: The Sexual Relationship Scale.....	106
	Appendix A: Section 4: The Other Concepts Questionnaire.....	108
	Appendix A: Section 5: The Significant-Other-Esteem.....	109
	Scale	
	Appendix A: Section 6: The Other Clarity Scale.....	110
	Appendix A: Section 7a: Interpersonal Reactivity Index.....	111
	Appendix A: Section 7b: Interpersonal Reactivity Index.....	113
	Appendix A: Section 8a: Self-Disclosure Index.....	116
	Appendix A: Section 8b: Self-Disclosure Index.....	117
	Appendix A: Section 9a: Bem Sex-Role Inventory.....	118
	Appendix A: Section 9b: Bem Sex-Role Inventory.....	121
	Appendix A: Section 10: The Relationship Assessment.....	124
	Scale	
	Appendix B: Section 1: Consent Form.....	125
	Appendix C: Section 1: Debriefing Form.....	127
	Appendix D: Section 1a: Correlation of Variables.....	128
	for Men	
	Appendix D: Section 1b: Correlation of Variables.....	129
	for Men	

Appendix D: Section 1c: Correlation of Variables.....130
for Men

Appendix D: Section 2a: Correlation of Variables.....131
for Women

Appendix D: Section 2b: Correlation of Variables.....132
for Women

Appendix D: Section 2c: Correlation of Variables.....133
for Women

List of Tables

		Page
Table 1	Summary of Studies Assessing Female Relationship Satisfaction.....	40
Table 2	Variables Correlated with Male Satisfaction.....	42
Table 3	Variables and Measures Utilized.....	53
Table 4	Demographics Information.....	55
Table 5	Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants.....	66
Table 6	The Correlation Between Predictor Variables and Relationship Satisfaction in Men.....	69
Table 7	Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction in Men.....	70
Table 8	Means and Standard Deviations for Female Participants.....	72
Table 9	The Correlation Between Predictor Variables and Relationship Satisfaction in Women.....	74
Table 10	Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction in Women.....	76
Table 11	Regression Analysis Predicting Male Satisfaction from Difference Scores.....	78
Table 12	Regression Analysis Predicting Female Satisfaction from Difference Scores.....	80
Table 13	Regression Analysis Including Perceptions of Partner and Partner's Self-Reported Characteristics Predicting Relationship Satisfaction in Women.....	82

Introduction

Overview

Much previous research has assessed satisfaction in intimate relationships (Acitelli, Rogers, & Knee, 1999; Glenn, 1990; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). A substantial proportion of this research has focused on marital relationships in an attempt to determine how couples stay satisfied in long-term committed relationships (Antill, 1983; Kalin & Lloyd, 1985; Langis, Sabourin, Lussier, & Mathieu, 1994). However, very few studies have focused on satisfaction in dating relationships. Because dating relationships lay the foundation for how couples interact with each other and whether this interaction is positive or negative, the importance of research on satisfaction in dating relationships has been espoused (Rouse, Breen, & Howell, 1988).

One area of focus for satisfaction in intimate relationships is to assess the traits of masculinity and femininity in each individual in the couple. Previous research has found mixed results when assessing the relationship between femininity, masculinity, and marital satisfaction. Femininity has been associated with expressive behaviors, such as giving emotional support and self-disclosing information (Gaines, 1995; Lamke, Sollie, Durbin, & Fitzpatrick, 1994). Masculinity has been associated with dominance, aggression, and being task-oriented (Winguist, Mohr, & Kenny, 1998). Antill (1983) found that when both partners were high in femininity, they were happier than couples where only one partner or neither partner was high in femininity. Langis and colleagues (1994) found that women were more satisfied with their marriages when they perceived themselves as having feminine characteristics. Conversely, men were more satisfied with

their marriages when they saw themselves as having both masculine and feminine traits (Langis et al., 1994).

Another area of study in relationship satisfaction is that of feminine communication characteristics, such as perspective-taking, self-disclosure, and empathy. Research has demonstrated that individuals in relationships where both partners utilized feminine communication techniques were more satisfied with their relationships than individuals in relationships where only one partner or neither partner utilized feminine communication strategies (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998).

It is assumed that feminine characteristics benefit intimate dating relationships because feminine traits reflect more communal characteristics (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002) and suggest a general orientation toward others (Bem, 1974) as compared to masculine traits. For example, the feminine communication characteristics of empathy, perspective-taking, and self-disclosure promote good communication between individuals. If the individuals in the couple are able to communicate well with each other then they are likely to have fewer conflicts, leading to fewer difficulties in that relationship. Additionally, these feminine characteristics generally are supportive of the relationship and of one's partner. Furthermore, femininity has been positively correlated with displaying empathy, placing importance on marriage and family, and exhibiting nurturing behaviors, all of which are likely to promote the growth and maintenance of romantic relationships (Antill, 1983; Bradbury & Fincham, 1988; Langis et al., 1994).

Increasingly, researchers have also noted that one's perception of one's partner is also an important correlate of a person's satisfaction with their relationship. Positive

perceptions of one's partner have been associated with greater relationship satisfaction for self and partner (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996a). However, perceptions of one's partner seem to be a blend of reality and idealization. Individuals tend to minimize faults, exaggerate virtues, and generally idealize their partners to perceive the positive (Murray et al., 1996a). Furthermore, Murray (1999) found positive illusions to be protective factors for the relationship. Positive idealized perceptions of one's partner have been shown to increase self-esteem in each individual in the couple (Murray, 1999). Given that both individuals in the couple will be assessed, we will be able to explore the nature of the couple's perceptions, including the extent of distortions about one's perceptions, and the importance of these perceptions in predicting mutual satisfaction.

One limitation of past research is that most researchers assessed only one person in the dating couple for satisfaction (Attridge, Berscheid, & Simpson, 1995). The present study will assess both individuals in the dating relationship and analyze data from the individuals', as well as from the couples', perspectives. The present study will focus on how satisfaction in college dating relationships is predicted by the amount of femininity and masculinity in the couple's relationship. This study will also assess communication characteristics, hypergender beliefs, and one's perception of one's partner. It is theorized that feminine characteristics, such as self-disclosure and empathy, will increase satisfaction with one's intimate dating relationship due to these characteristics being supportive of mutual communication and emotional support (e.g. Meeks et al., 1998). However, hypergender attitudes are hypothesized to be negatively correlated with

relationship satisfaction due to these beliefs being associated with less cohesion and more aggression in intimate relationships (e.g. Ray & Gold, 1996). It is also theorized that positive perceptions of one's partner will be positively correlated with satisfaction in that intimate dating relationship because they will buffer against daily difficulties and generally cause the partners to perceive the best in each other (e.g. Murray et al., 1996a).

Relationship Satisfaction

General relationship satisfaction (Acitelli, Rogers, & Knee, 1999; Glenn, 1990; Karney & Bradbury, 1995) and the prediction of relationship satisfaction (Meeks, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998; Sternberg & Hojjat, 1997) are common topics in the area of relationship research. Relationship satisfaction has been described as complex and determined by multiple factors (Meeks et al., 1998). Some of the multiple factors that have been positively correlated with relationship satisfaction include commitment to the intimate relationship (Sacher & Fine, 1996), perceptions of behavior (Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996a), positive feelings for one's partner, and one's own feelings of love for one's partner (Broderick & O'Leary, 1986). Positive perceptions of one's partner, whether real or illusory (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Murray et al., 1996a), and perceptions about how one's partner feels are also important for satisfying intimate relationships. Specific perceptions about one's partner included perceptions of the partner's feelings of love (Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988), empathy (Davis & Oathout, 1987), self-disclosure (Millar & Millar, 1988), and the partner's general communication competence (Canary & Spitzberg, 1989). Positive, clear, and confident

mental representation of one's partner have also been associated with having satisfying intimate relationships (Gurung, Sarason, & Sarason, 2001).

Additionally, there are many gender-specific characteristics, particularly feminine characteristics, that have been positively correlated with satisfaction in intimate relationships (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Lamke et al., 1994; Meeks et al., 1998; Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993). Some of these feminine characteristics include empathy, showing affection (Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993), expressive competence, and general femininity (Lamke et al., 1994). There are also feminine characteristics specific to communication, such as active listening, self-disclosing information, perspective-taking, and displaying empathy, that have been positively correlated with initiating and maintaining satisfying intimate relationships (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998).

Conversely, certain behaviors and characteristics have been associated with problems in intimate relationships. Failure to meet the partner's expectations for empathy (Long & Andrews, 1990) and having displeasing instrumental or selfish behaviors were negatively associated with satisfaction (Meeks et al., 1998). Holding an exchange orientation, which is a relationship where one person gives emotionally and the other person gives only because there is an emotional debt to be repaid (Clark & Mills, 1979), has also been negatively associated with relationship satisfaction (Broderick & O'Leary, 1986). Furthermore, some researchers have found no relationship between masculinity and relationship satisfaction (Antill, 1983), whereas others have found a negative relationship (Aube et al., 1995). Following is a review of some of the major variables that have been correlated with relationship satisfaction in couples.

Relationship Satisfaction and Gender Characteristics

Langis and colleagues (1994) discussed four categories of socially acceptable gender-role orientations: masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated. Masculinity is typically associated with instrumental behaviors such as competence and selfishness, and femininity is associated with expressive behaviors such as giving emotional support, being self-disclosing, and having an orientation toward others (Gaines, 1995; Lamke, Sollie, Durbin, & Fitzpatrick, 1994). Androgynous individuals are high in both masculine and feminine characteristics (Bem, 1974; Gaines, 1995; Langis, Sabourin, Lussier, & Mathieu, 1994), whereas undifferentiated individuals are low in both masculine and feminine characteristics (Langis et al., 1994). However, most relationship research focuses on masculinity and femininity rather than androgyny and undifferentiated characteristics.

Over the last few decades, several research studies have been conducted to determine how masculinity and femininity affect satisfaction in intimate dating and marital relationships (Antill, 1983; Baucom & Aiken, 1984; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986; Lamke et al., 1994; Langis et al., 1994; Murstein & Williams, 1983). Some of these investigations have found mixed results when assessing the relationship between femininity, masculinity, and marital satisfaction (e.g. Langis et al., 1994), whereas many other studies have determined that masculinity and femininity are important factors in the development and maintenance of satisfying intimate relationships (e.g. Lamke et al., 1994). Furthermore, much of this research suggests that, for both men and women,

femininity is the more important correlate of satisfaction in intimate dating or marital relationships (Antill, 1983; Aube et al., 1995; Lamke et al., 1994; Langis et al., 1994).

The Role of Femininity in Relationship Satisfaction

Research on how femininity affects intimate relationships has demonstrated variable results. Some past research has demonstrated that femininity is important for initiating and maintaining satisfying intimate dating (Gaines, 1995; Lamke et al., 1994; Ray & Gold, 1996; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002) and marital relationships (Antill, 1983; Kalin & Lloyd, 1985; Langis et al., 1994). Communal attitudes reflect beliefs that each person in the relationship gives emotionally to the other out of concern for that person's welfare, without the anticipation of being reciprocated. The opposite of communal attitudes are exchange attitudes where one person gives emotionally and the other person gives only because there is an emotional debt that must be repaid.

Researchers have hypothesized that communal beliefs reflect feminine characteristics and should lead to more satisfying intimate relationships, whereas exchange beliefs would not (Clark & Mills, 1979). Specifically, Steiner-Pappalardo and Gurung (2002) focused on femininity and not hyperfemininity. These researchers found that, in men and women, higher amounts of feminine traits, such as holding more positive views of the relationship, having expressive characteristics, and having communal attitudes, were predictive of satisfaction and general positive views of one's partner.

Researchers have specifically assessed the role of femininity in men and its association with relationship satisfaction. Antill (1983) demonstrated that when both men and women were high in femininity, couples were happier than couples where only one

partner or neither partner was high in femininity. Married men were happier in their relationships when their partners were androgynous or feminine; both of these categories were defined as high in femininity. Married men were least happy when their wives had many masculine or undifferentiated characteristics; both of these categories were defined as low in femininity (Antill, 1983). Murstein and Williams (1983) found that the man's femininity was positively correlated with both partners' relationship satisfaction. However, these authors also found that sex-role stereotypic behaviors were important for the partner's relationship satisfaction. Thus, for the wife to be more satisfied with her intimate relationship, her husband would perform masculine-stereotypic behaviors and for the husband to be more satisfied with the relationship, his wife would perform feminine-stereotypic behaviors (Murstein & Williams, 1983). This study highlights the fact that feminine traits are not always translated into feminine behaviors.

Aube and colleagues (1995) also found mixed results for the relationship between femininity in men and relationship satisfaction in men. These researchers found feminine behaviors in men to be associated with less general life satisfaction and greater satisfaction with same-sex friendships, but not to be associated with intimate relationship satisfaction. However, this same study demonstrated feminine behaviors in men to be associated with the experience of a greater number of positive emotions, a greater number of positive interactions, and a greater amount of sharing during interactions (Aube et al., 1995). The characteristics of positive interactions and self-disclosure of information have been associated with intimate relationship satisfaction (e.g., Meeks et al., 1998), so it was unexpected for Aube and colleagues (1995) to find no relationship between the man's

femininity and his satisfaction with his intimate dating relationship. This is particularly interesting because the results showed the feminine characteristics to be associated with more satisfaction with same-sex friendships, but not opposite-sex dating relationships. One explanation for this result might be that the study did not have enough dating couples, as compared to roommate pairs, to find significant results. A second explanation for these findings might be that men are rarely encouraged to express feminine characteristics. This is particularly true in childhood because boys who exhibit feminine traits often receive harsh treatment and negative judgments from their peers (Hemmer & Kleiber, 1981). Thus, men are seldom rewarded for exhibiting feminine characteristics; which makes it difficult for men to act in non-stereotypical ways even though these feminine characteristics are beneficial for their intimate relationships.

Conversely, women are often rewarded for behaving in a stereotypical feminine manner. Generally, feminine behaviors in women have been associated with increasing levels of positive affect, more self-reported sharing with their intimate partners, experiencing generally more positive emotions and interactions with their partners (Aube et al., 1995), and utilizing a greater number of positive problem-solving techniques (Burger & Jacobson, 1979). Femininity has also been positively correlated with displaying empathy, placing importance on marriage and family, and exhibiting nurturing behaviors, all of which are likely to promote the growth and maintenance of romantic relationships (Antill, 1983; Bradbury & Fincham, 1988; Langis et al., 1994).

The Role of Masculinity in Relationship Satisfaction

Masculine characteristics have also been shown to affect satisfaction in intimate relationships in some research studies (e.g., Lamke et al., 1994), but not uniformly so (e.g., Antill, 1983; Kalin & Lloyd, 1985; Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993). Lamke and colleagues (1994) found that a man's perception of his own masculinity was related to his marital satisfaction. However, this was only an indirect relationship with satisfaction because the man's self-perceived masculinity increased his likelihood of perceiving his female partner to be high in femininity. Thus, it was actually the perception of his female partner as feminine that led to his increased relationship satisfaction, not directly his own masculinity. Antill (1983) found no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and masculine traits for either men or women. However, Kalin and Lloyd (1985) found androgyny, characterized as being high in femininity and high in masculinity, to be related to marital satisfaction in men. Thus, high masculinity in men was important for relationship satisfaction as long as these men were also high in feminine characteristics. However, the authors were unclear whether the characteristics of femininity and androgyny were rated by self or by partner. In addition, some studies found that masculinity adversely affected relationship satisfaction. Although, males with high levels of masculinity tended to feel more adequate about their gender (O'Heron & Orlofsky, 1990), Aube and colleagues (1995) found that masculine behaviors in men were associated with higher levels of negative affect, more experiences of angry emotions, and fewer experiences of pleasant emotions.

Masculine behaviors in women have been associated with few positive effects on intimate relationships. Parmelee (1987) found that women's own masculine characteristics were more predictive of their relationship satisfaction than their own femininity. Aube and colleagues (1995) found that women high in masculine traits typically had more positive moods. However, these women also reported experiencing more anxiety, did not share as often during interactions with their partners, and had more negative interactions with their partners than women low in masculinity. Further, masculine behaviors were shown to be unrelated to life satisfaction, positive affect, and positive adjustment-related outcomes for men and women (Aube et al., 1995). Thus, overall, the literature suggests that masculine characteristics do not appear to benefit intimate relationships greatly.

Masculinity and Femininity in Relationship Satisfaction

Vonk and Van Nobelen's (1993) study encompasses much of the general information on the relationship between masculinity, femininity, and satisfaction in intimate relationships. These authors studied thirty dating and married couples in a community setting and found that more feminine couples, as evidenced by being helpful, compliant, subservient, and dependent, were more satisfied with their intimate relationship. However, those individuals with fewer feminine characteristics and more masculine characteristics, such as being rational, competent, domineering, and selfish, were found to have higher general self-esteem (Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993). Another study found that men and women who held more masculine characteristics had more general life satisfaction (Aube et al., 1995). Thus, these studies indicated that feminine

characteristics were good for the intimate relationship and masculine characteristics were better for the individual.

Overall, research data are predominantly supportive of feminine characteristics among females being positively correlated with relationship satisfaction in females (e.g. Antill, 1983; Aube et al., 1995; Bradbury & Fincham, 1988; Langis et al., 1994). Additionally, the more feminine characteristics that an individual, either male or female, had, such as interpersonal sensitivity, understanding others, and loyalty, the more likely their partner was to report marital satisfaction (Antill, 1983; Bradbury & Fincham, 1988). Furthermore, when both partners were high in femininity, the couple was happier than couples where only one partner or neither partner was high in femininity (Antill, 1983).

It is also important to consider that although one's gender-role orientation and the gender-role orientation of one's partner are important in understanding the dynamics of that intimate relationship, other factors, such as the stage of the couple's relationship, may also be correlates of relationship satisfaction. The stage of a couple's relationship, such as the length of the marriage or dating relationship or whether the couple has children, has been shown to affect relationship satisfaction. For example, the wife's femininity was shown to be more important for satisfaction early in marriages and the man's femininity was shown to be more important for satisfaction in longer-term marriages. Furthermore, when the couple has one or no children, the wife's femininity was more important than the husband's femininity for happiness in the marriage. However, when the couple had two or more children, the husband's femininity was demonstrated to be more important than the wife's femininity for happiness in the

marriage (Antill, 1983). Lenz, Soeken, Rankin, and Rischman (1985) found that feminine traits in both partners were important for marital adjustment after a major change in the couples' relationships, such as the birth of a new child.

Conversely, other researchers have found that a combination of masculine and feminine traits was more highly correlated with satisfaction in intimate relationships. For example, Cooper and colleagues (1986) found that working mothers with preschool-aged children who self-reported masculine characteristics, as evidenced by being competitive and individualistic, and feminine characteristics, as evidenced by being warm, tender, and sensitive, reported greater marital satisfaction than women with only masculine or only feminine characteristics. Additionally, the women in this particular study had spouses who reported higher levels of marital satisfaction when their wives possessed both masculine and feminine traits (Cooper et al., 1986). However, happiness in marriage generally tends to decrease with more children, particularly when there are preschool children in the home (Cooper et al., 1986; Staines, Pleck, Shepard, & O'Connor, 1978). Overall, these studies suggested that, in the happiest couples, both partners had feminine characteristics early in the relationship and at least one partner had feminine characteristics later in the relationship.

Perceptions of Femininity and Relationship Satisfaction

Many studies have demonstrated that the perception of masculinity and femininity in one's partner was as important, if not more important, than actual femininity or masculinity in determining satisfaction with one's intimate relationship (Antill, 1983; Lamke et al., 1994; Siavelis & Lamke, 1992). Kalin and Lloyd (1985) found that men

reported more marital satisfaction when they perceived their wives as having more feminine characteristics. In this same study, women reported more marital satisfaction when they perceived their husbands as having feminine characteristics, such as being gentle, tender, and warm, in addition to masculine characteristics, such as being ambitious, competitive, and individualistic (Kalin & Lloyd, 1985). Antill (1983) found that the femininity perceived in one's partner was demonstrated to be more important to individual happiness within the marriage than the perceived femininity in self. However, one limitation of this study is that there was no comparison between own beliefs about femininity and masculinity in self and the partner's perceptions of femininity and masculinity. The present study will improve on this limitation of the Antill (1983) study by the assessing the congruency of own and partner perceptions of femininity and masculinity.

Furthermore, Antill (1983) found that women and men who perceived their partners as feminine were more likely to report higher levels of marital satisfaction. Lamke and colleagues (1994) also found results linking perception of femininity and marital satisfaction. First, females who perceived themselves as highly feminine, as evidenced by characteristics such as self-disclosure and emotional support, were likely to perceive their partner as more feminine. Second, satisfaction was related to the woman's perception of femininity in her partner. However, for men, satisfaction was related to their perception of femininity in themselves and in their wives. In general, the results from this study suggested that married individuals who perceived themselves and/or their spouses to be feminine reported higher levels of marital satisfaction than individuals who

were in a relationship where both partners were low in femininity (Lamke et al., 1994). Siavelis and Lamke (1992) found similar results with dating couples. These researchers found that perceived femininity in one's partner accounted for the greatest amount of variance in satisfaction for both partners. However, one limitation of these studies (Antill, 1983; Lamke et al., 1994; Siavelis & Lamke, 1992) is that they did not assess the congruence between own and partner's perception of femininity in self. Thus, it is unclear whether only the perception of femininity in one's partner, even if it is a distorted perception, leads to greater relationship satisfaction or whether actual feminine characteristics in one's partner are necessary to obtain greater relationship satisfaction. Again, the present study will improve on this by assessing how congruent own and partner perceptions of femininity and masculinity are to determine whether the mere perception of femininity in one's partner increases satisfaction with the intimate relationship.

Hypergender Beliefs and Relationship Satisfaction

When addressing gender issues, researchers have explored the importance of hypergender attitudes in relationship satisfaction (Baucom & Aiken, 1984). These attitudes have been described as hyperfemininity and hypermasculinity. Hyperfemininity is considered to be a woman's adherence to extreme gender role beliefs. A hyperfeminine woman would believe maintaining a relationship defines who she is, having a husband or boyfriend defines her success, and her sexuality is her primary asset (Murnen & Byrne, 1991). A hypermasculine man is characterized by the typical "macho" male personality. Hypermasculinity can be evidenced by the man believing that violence is manly and that

danger is exciting, as well as by the man holding negative, calloused sexual attitudes toward women such as viewing women as weak and as sexual objects that are easily manipulated (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984; Ryckman, Hammer, Kaczor, & Gold, 1990). Additionally, both hypermasculine men and hyperfeminine women believe that men and women should hold traditional gender-roles such as the women being the “homemaker” and the man being the “breadwinner” (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984; Murnen & Byrne, 1991). Hypergender individuals also viewed intimate relationships between men and women as adversarial and manipulative (Smith, Byrne, & Fielding, 1995). It is important to understand gender-role attitudes because these attitudes tend to be stable over time and influence the way that individuals interact with each other.

Substantial research has been conducted on how traditional gender-role beliefs affect romantic relationships (Ray & Gold, 1996; Smith et al., 1995). In the past, it was believed that individuals must conform to traditional gender-roles in order to have healthy and well-adjusted intimate relationships (Kayton & Biller, 1972). Smith and colleagues (1995) suggested that hypergender individuals typically choose partners who also held traditional gender-role beliefs. However, this finding holds more strongly for women than for men. This same study also found that highly hypermasculine men generally did not seem to be aware of whether their partners held traditional or nontraditional gender-role beliefs. These men typically found women high and low in hyperfemininity equally attractive; therefore, they were not significantly more likely to choose hyperfeminine partners. However, women found men who held the same beliefs as they did on gender-roles to be more attractive than men who held the opposite stance.

Generally, hypergender individuals, particularly women, selected partners with similar beliefs because researchers assumed that there would be less conflict between partners when individuals hold the same or similar beliefs on gender-role issues (Smith et al., 1995). For example, it might be assumed that the couple would have less conflict if they were not arguing over who would do the household chores, such as in a traditional gender-role couple it would be assumed that the women would do all the household chores.

However, Bem (1974) suggested that men and women who did not hold traditional gender-role beliefs were more well-adjusted and more satisfied with their intimate relationships. Conversely, Ray and Gold (1996) found that if either partner in an intimate dating relationship scored high on hypermasculinity or hyperfemininity, more verbal abuse was self-reported by the man and more verbal abuse was present in the relationship, as self-reported on a psychological maltreatment scale. Their study also demonstrated that hypermasculine men were more likely to find fault and be critical of their partners than non-hypermasculine men. Hyperfeminine women generally believed that their self-esteem was attacked more often than non-hyperfeminine women. These findings suggested that hyperfeminine women generally felt inferior, easily controlled and threatened, had their feelings hurt easily, and perceived their partners as using emotional control and jealous tactics more often than non-hyperfeminine women. Thus, it was theorized that because women who scored high on hyperfemininity felt inferior and were easily hurt, this led them to be verbally abusive toward their partners to gain control within the relationship (Ray & Gold, 1996).

It is unclear whether these negative interactions were only the perceptions of the female partner or if these behaviors actually occurred in the intimate relationships. Furthermore, holding hypergender beliefs has been positively correlated with the experience of a physically violent relationship, particularly for women (Bookwala, Frieze, Smith, & Ryan, 1992; Gryl, Stith, & Bird, 1991). Furthermore, hypergender beliefs, such as hyperfemininity, have not typically been positively correlated with productive and satisfying intimate relationships (Ray & Gold, 1996). However, hypergender attitudes have been correlated with physical violence and other negative outcomes in intimate dating relationships (Bookwala et al., 1992; Gryl et al., 1991).

Positive Perceptions of Partner and Relationship Satisfaction

In addition to perceptions of femininity and masculinity in self and partner, general perceptions of one's partner are also an important variable when predicting satisfaction with intimate relationships. Positive perceptions of one's partner have been shown to lead to greater relationship satisfaction for oneself and one's partner (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Murray et al., 1996a). Research has demonstrated that women generally view other individuals, their intimate partners (Winguist, Mohr, & Kenny, 1998), and their own relationships more positively than men (Acitelli et al., 1999; Winguist et al., 1998). However, this does not necessarily indicate that the women viewed themselves more positively (Winguist et al., 1998) or that their perceptions of their partners are based in reality (Murray et al., 1996a; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996b).

Generally, perceptions of one's partner seem to be a blend of reality and idealization. It is theorized that individuals may minimize faults, exaggerate virtues, and

generally idealize their partners to see the positive traits that they want to see in themselves and in their partners (Murray et al., 1996a; Murray et al., 1996b). First, LaPrelle and colleagues (1990) suggested that individuals are attracted to similar others and that individuals want to find a significant other who possesses the qualities they desire in themselves. Secondly, individuals who think highly of themselves tend to think highly of their partners. Thus, participants appeared to be projecting their ideas of an ideal partner onto their actual partner. Seeing one's self in one's partner may also be a sign of having a close relationship with that individual, feeling secure in that relationship, affirming perceptions of self-image, and wish fulfilling about that the relationship and the partner (Murray et al., 1996a). Third, when individuals hold positive perceptions of their partners, either married or dating, even if those perceptions are idealized, they are likely to have greater relationship satisfaction than individuals who do not hold positive perceptions of their partners (Meeks et al., 1998). Additionally, even purely idealized perceptions of one's partner are correlated with more satisfying relationships. Idealized versions of one's partner may increase relationship satisfaction because only the good is perceived in the partner and potential problems are minimized (Murray et al., 1996a).

Furthermore, Murray (1999) found that positive illusions can be protective factors for the intimate relationship. Having unconditional positive regard for one's partner and being able to see past that person's imperfections is beneficial for maintaining a satisfying intimate relationship (Reis & Shaver, 1988). Positive illusions and generally seeing the best in one's partner appear to be beneficial for the relationship because arguments and conflicts are more easily dismissed (Murray et al., 1996b). Additionally,

satisfied couples typically believed their partners' faults were due to specific situations or events and not to stable and global personality characteristics. (Fincham & Bradbury, 1993). Thus, problems in the relationship were perceived as being due to some specific situation or outside force, not to personality flaws in their partners. However, declines in satisfaction often coincide with improved insight into the negative traits and behaviors of their partners and the negative parts of their relationship (Huston & Vangelisti, 1991).

Significant-Other Concepts and Relationship Satisfaction

Similar to positive perceptions of one's partner are Significant-Other-Concepts (SOCs), which have been defined as positive or negative "mental representations of close others" (Gurung et al., 2001 pg. 1267). SOCs are thought to be more firmly held beliefs than simply having positive perceptions of one's partner. Higher quality relationships have been associated with high, positive significant-other connectedness and holding positive views of one's intimate partner (Murray, 1999). Some researchers believe that positive concepts about one's significant other are necessary for satisfying and long-lasting intimate relationships (Murray et al., 1996a). Positive SOCs are the positive mental representations individuals hold about their partners which allows them to view their partners as globally good and to attribute difficulties with their partners and with their relationship to situational variables rather than to global personality flaws. Positive SOCs have been shown to work as safeguards against negative feelings between the individuals in the couple and are related to experiencing more adaptive emotional responses under stressful situations (Gurung et al., 2001).

Furthermore, the clarity of SOC's and how confidently an individual holds their SOC's also affect intimate relationships. Clear, positive SOC's make it more difficult for negative external feedback to harm the relationship. Additionally, when they have clear SOC's, individuals need less external feedback to reassure them that their intimate relationship is successful. Confidently held SOC's make relationships more resistant to threats and promote perceptions of having a quality relationship (Gurung et al., 2001). For example, an individual with clear and confidently held positive SOC's is less likely to be concerned that her/his partner will be unfaithful and is more likely to attribute current relationship problems to situational factors, rather than global factors such as negative personality traits in his or her partner.

Furthermore, Gurung and colleagues (2001) assessed undergraduate introductory psychology students and their romantic partners. The participants, most of whom were dating, had relationships of at least two months. Researchers gave the participants a variety of self-report measures to assess self-worth, self-concept, self-clarity, the perception of self-esteem of their significant other, positive and negative attributes of their significant other, clarity of their SOC, closeness to their relationship partner, and general relationship quality. Results indicated that clear mental representations of one's partner predicted relationship quality for men and women. SOC clarity was related to feeling more connected to one's partner, having a more satisfying relationship, perceiving more social support, and lower reported levels of conflict in that relationship. Clarity is generally important because it is a buffer for daily changes in behavior. Thus, small negative events do not harm the relationship as much as they would if there were unclear

SOCs. This research suggests that women with poor quality relationships felt more distressed in a stressful situation than women who were in higher quality relationships (Gurung et al., 2001). Additionally, positive SOC predicted fewer negative feelings in men and men with positive SOC generally had more positive affect. Positive SOC may also safeguard against stress by increasing attributions of negative behaviors to situational, instead of personality, variables (Gottman & Notarius, 2002; Gurung et al., 2001). Overall, this research demonstrates the importance of positive SOC in maintaining satisfying intimate dating relationships.

Commitment and Relationship Satisfaction

In addition to perceptions about one's partner, commitment to the intimate relationship has been shown to be a variable related to one's own satisfaction with one's partner and with one's intimate dating relationship. Commitment is typically greatest when partners invest important and multiple resources into their dating relationship (Sacher & Fine, 1996; Sprecher, 2001) and when they have minimal distress (Sprecher, 2001). Sacher and Fine (1996) found that commitment is high when individuals believed there were no better options for them, when they were in high reward/low-cost relationships, and when they felt dependent on their relationship (Sacher & Fine, 1996). However, the nondependent partner typically possessed the power in the relationship, whereas the dependent partner minimized problems and worked to keep the relationship in tact (Samp & Solomon, 2001). Furthermore, Sprecher (2001) cautioned against inequality in intimate dating relationships, because she found that inequality was related to a decrease in commitment to and satisfaction with that intimate relationship for both

men and women. These results demonstrated that high scores on satisfaction and commitment were associated with increases in perceptions of benefiting from the relationship from the first administration of the questionnaires to the follow-up assessments one and two years later (Sprecher, 2001). However, regardless of the reason for being committed to the intimate dating relationship, commitment has been shown to enhance relationship satisfaction (Sacher & Fine, 1996; Sprecher, 2001).

Communication and Relationship Satisfaction

Communication is another important variable related to relationship satisfaction. Generally, communication is assessed by one's own communication skills, the partner's actual communication skills, and the perception of the partner's communication skills. Specifically, self-disclosure, perspective-taking, empathy, and type of communication are important aspects of communication that were associated with satisfaction in intimate relationships (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998). Empathy has been defined as being responsive to the experience of another person, such as engaging in an appropriate amount of self-disclosure, general relational competence, and generally effective communication (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998). Other researchers have broken the concept of empathy down operationally into three dimensions: perspective-taking, empathic concern, and personal distress. Perspective-taking has been defined as the ability to see things, cognitively, from another person's point of view. Empathic concern is having sympathy and compassion for others and personal distress is the experience of distress and anxiety when others are feeling distressed and anxious (Davis & Oathout, 1987).

Davis and Oathout (1987) demonstrated that a woman's relationship satisfaction was influenced by perceptions that her partner had good communication skills, such as being a good listener and being able to self-disclose information. A man's relationship satisfaction was influenced by the perception of his female partner as having a positive outlook and being trustworthy. However, men's satisfaction in this study was not related to their perceptions of communication skills in their female partners (Davis & Oathout, 1987). Franzoi, Davis, and Young (1985) demonstrated that self-disclosure to one's dating partner was positively correlated with one's own satisfaction with that dating relationship. Additionally, Meeks and colleagues (1998) found that one's own self-disclosure and the perception of the amount of self-disclosure offered by one's partner were positively correlated with one's own satisfaction. These researchers also found that the perception of the amount of perspective-taking offered by one's partner was predictive of satisfaction, but not one's own level of perspective-taking (Meeks et al., 1998). Results demonstrated that satisfaction was more reliably predicted with relationships lasting over one year. Additionally, perspective-taking was more crucial to satisfaction in relationships lasting over one year than in relationships lasting less than one year (Davis & Oathout, 1987).

Women generally scored higher on empathy scales than men (Davis & Oathout, 1987) and femininity in marital relationships has been positively correlated with empathy, which is likely to positively influence the marital relationship (Langis et al., 1994). Franzoi and colleagues (1985) studied college-aged dating couples, finding that males were more satisfied with their relationships when their girlfriends were high in

perspective-taking. However, the female's satisfaction was unrelated to her boyfriend's level of perspective-taking. This dichotomy in perspective-taking supports the idea of traditional gender-roles in females, since men showed more satisfaction when their wives or girlfriends were concerned with stereotypical relationships concerns, such as the emotional and social needs of the relationship and the emotional and social needs of her partner (Franzoi et al., 1985). Davis and Oathout (1987) found similar results with dating and married couples. These researchers also suggested that the findings on perspective-taking indicated that empathy is more relevant to the female role in the relationship than the male role. Thus, it is assumed to be more important for women to be high in perspective-taking and empathy than men in order to help maintain the man's satisfaction with the intimate relationship (Davis & Oathout, 1987). However, failure to meet one's partner's expectations for empathy has been negatively correlated with one's partner's satisfaction (Long & Andrews, 1990). Thus, there appears to be a minimum amount of empathy that is needed for a satisfying intimate relationship and that most of the empathy comes from the female partner. However, these research studies do not appear to indicate whether the woman's empathy and perspective-taking skills influence her own satisfaction with the intimate relationship. These roles do increase the man's satisfaction with the intimate relationship; however, there is no information about how these roles affect the woman's satisfaction or if they affect her satisfaction at all. The present study will improve on this limitation by assessing whether there is a relationship between one's own relationship satisfaction and one's own, as well as one's partner's, levels of feminine communication characteristics.

Gender Differences versus Sex Differences

After discussing variables that are important for relationship satisfaction it is necessary to understand how those variables are viewed. Much of the psychological research on intimate dating and marital relationships, including those studies discussed previously in this paper, have focused on differences between men and women. Most of this research on intimate relationships views the differences between men and women as related to biological sex differences (Pryzgoda & Chrisler, 2000). However, when such researchers used the concepts of sex and gender interchangeably, the possibility of gender characteristics being the reason for the differences has not typically been taken into account. Research suggests that sex and gender are actually different concepts and that gender differences may be a better explanation of how individuals think, feel, and behave (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Therefore, research on gender characteristics may actually be more informative than simply assessing for sex differences. The present study will improve on this limitation by assessing both sex and gender characteristics. Participants will be assessed by sex, men's answers separate from women's answers, and then the gender characteristics of femininity, masculinity, and hypergender beliefs will be assessed to determine whether these gender characteristics are associated with relationship satisfaction.

Sex differences refer to the biological component of being male and female, whereas gender differences refer to the masculine or feminine behaviors and attitudes that individuals possess (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Masculine characteristics are associated with instrumental behaviors, such as being task oriented, having competence,

and being more concerned about oneself than about others (Bem, 1974). Masculine characteristics also include the traits of being self-assertive (Aube, Norcliffe, Craig, & Koestner, 1995), rational, competent, domineering, and selfish (Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993). Typical feminine characteristics reflect expressive behaviors and greater concern for others than oneself (Bem, 1974). Feminine characteristics also include the traits of being nurturant (Aube et al., 1995), helpful, compliant, subservient, and dependent (Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993).

Summary

The prediction of relationship satisfaction has been well researched when assessing one member of the couple (Meeks, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998; Sternberg & Hojjat, 1997). Femininity, but not hypergender beliefs, has been demonstrated to be one important factor for initiating and maintaining satisfying intimate dating (Ray & Gold, 1996; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002) and marital relationships (Langis et al., 1994). Other important factors for relationship satisfaction are holding positive perceptions of one's partner, whether real or illusory (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Murray et al., 1996a) and holding positive, clear, and confident mental representation of one's partner (Gurung, Sarason, & Sarason, 2001). Additionally, there are many gender-specific characteristics, particularly feminine characteristics, that have been positively correlated with satisfaction in intimate relationships, such as empathy (Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993), self-disclosure, and perspective-taking (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998).

Some researchers have found mixed results when assessing the relationship between femininity, masculinity, and marital satisfaction (e.g. Langis et al., 1994). However, much of this research suggests that, for both men and women, femininity is the more important correlate of satisfaction in intimate dating or marital relationships (Antill, 1983; Aube et al., 1995; Lamke et al., 1994; Langis et al., 1994). As for masculinity, some research demonstrates an association with relationship satisfaction, such as the finding that men's masculinity was related to men's own relationship satisfaction (Lamke et al., 1994), but not uniformly so (e.g., Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993). Masculine behaviors in women have not typically been associated with positive effects on intimate relationships (Aube et al., 1995).

Many studies have demonstrated that the perception of masculinity and femininity in one's partner was as important, if not more important, than the actual feminine or masculine characteristics in determining satisfaction with one's intimate relationship (e.g., Siavelis & Lamke, 1992). One study found that perceived femininity in one's partner was more important to individual marital happiness than the perceived femininity in self. This same study also found that women and men who perceived their partners as feminine were more likely to report higher levels of marital satisfaction (Antill, 1983).

Higher quality relationships have been associated with Significant-Other-Concepts (SOCs), such as high, positive significant-other connectedness and holding positive views of one's intimate partner (Murray, 1999). Some researchers believe that positive concepts about one's significant other are necessary for achieving satisfying, long-lasting intimate relationships (Murray et al., 1996a). Positive SOCs allow

individuals to view their partners as globally good and allow one to attribute difficulties with their partners and with their relationship to situational variables (Gurung et al., 2001). Furthermore, the clarity of SOCs and how confidently an individual holds their SOCs also affect intimate relationships. When individuals have clear SOCs, they need less external feedback to reassure them that their intimate relationship is successful. Confidently held SOCs make relationships more resistant to threats and promote perceptions of having a quality relationship (Gurung et al., 2001).

Communication behaviors, such as empathy, self-disclosure, and perspective-taking, are other important variables related to relationship satisfaction. Self-disclosure, perspective-taking, and empathy are important aspects of communication that were associated with satisfaction in intimate relationships (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998). Empathy has been defined as being responsive to the experience of another person, such as engaging in an appropriate amount of self-disclosure, general relational competence, and generally effective communication (Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998).

Previous research has demonstrated that these above mentioned factors have a relationship with satisfaction in one's intimate dating or marital relationship (See Tables 1 and 2). The present study will improve on past research by assessing both members of the dating couple and by assessing gender characteristics as well as sex differences. The present study will also improve of previous research by assessing dating couples, since the relationship prior to marriage is likely to be important for marital satisfaction.

Table 1
Summary of Studies Assessing Female Relationship Satisfaction

Variable	Supporting Evidence	Non-Supportive Evidence
Male Partner's Femininity	Antill, 1983*	Cooper et al., 1986*
	Bradbury & Fincham, 1988*	
	Kalin & Lloyd, 1985***	
	Lamke et al., 1994**	
	Murstein & Williams, 1983*	
	Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**	
Own Femininity	Aube et al., 1995**	---
	Bradbury & Fincham, 1988*	
	Langis et al., 1994*	
	Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**	
Male Partner's Masculinity	Murstein & Williams, 1983*	Antill, 1983*
		Bradbury & Fincham, 1988*
		Kalin & Lloyd, 1985*
		Lamke et al., 1994**
		Langis et al., 1994*

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

Own Masculinity	Parmelee, 1987*	Antill, 1983*
		Aube et al., 1995**
		Kalin & Lloyd, 1985*
		Lamke et al., 1994**
		Langis et al., 1994*
		Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**
		Vogel et al., 1999**
		Vonk & VanNobelen, 1993**
Male Partner's Self-Disclosure	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Own Self-Disclosure	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Male Partner's Empathy	Davis & Oathout, 1987**	---
Own Empathy	Long & Andrews, 1990****	---
Male Partner's Perspective-taking	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Own Perspective-taking	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Significant Other Clarity	Gurung, Sarason, & Sarason, 2001**	---
Positive Illusions	Murray et al., 1996a**	---
	Murray et al., 1996b**	---

*Married Sample. **College Sample. ***College Married **** College dating and Married

Table 2
Variables Correlated with Male Satisfaction

Variable	Supporting Evidence	Non-Supportive Evidence
Commitment	Sacher & Fine, 1996**	---
	Sprecher, 2001**	---
	Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**	---
Female Partner's Femininity	Antill, 1983*	---
	Bradbury & Fincham, 1988*	
	Kalin & Lloyd, 1985***	
	Lamke et al., 1994**	
	Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**	
Own Femininity	Bradbury & Fincham, 1988*	Aube et al., 1995**
	Kalin & Lloyd, 1985***	
	Langis et al., 1994*	
	Murstein & Williams, 1983*	
	Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**	
Female Partner's Masculinity	---	Antill, 1983*
		Bradbury & Fincham, 1988*
		Kalin & Lloyd, 1985*

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued)

Female Partner's Masculinity (con't)	---	Lamke et al., 1994** Langis et al., 1994*
Own Masculinity	Kalin & Lloyd, 1985*** Langis et al., 1994*	Antill, 1983* Aube et al., 1995**
Own Masculinity (continued)	Murstein & Williams, 1983*	Kalin & Lloyd, 1985* Lamke et al., 1994** Parmelee, 1987* Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**
Female Partner's	Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988**	---
Self-Disclosure	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Own Self-Disclosure	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Female Partner's Empathy	Davis & Oathout, 1987**	---
Own Empathy	Long & Andrews, 1990****	---
Female Partner's Perspective-taking	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Own Perspective-taking	Meeks et al., 1998**	---
Significant Other Clarity	Gurung, Sarason, & Sarason, 2001**	---
Positive Illusions	Murray et al., 1996a**** Murray et al., 1996b**	--- ---

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued)

Commitment	Sacher & Fine, 1996**	---
	Sprecher, 2001**	---
	Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002**	---

*Married Sample. **College Sample. ***College Married **** College dating and Married

The Present Study

The present study focused on relationship satisfaction in college dating relationships. A college population was utilized to assess dating couples' relationship factors prior to marriage. This allows researchers to assess what factors may be important for dating satisfaction and look at how these factors are similar to or different from variables that predict satisfaction in marital relationships. Both partners' perceptions about their intimate relationship were assessed, as well as gender traits, gender role beliefs, beliefs and perceptions about one's dating partner, and the overall satisfaction with the dating relationship. The present study assessed differences based on gender characteristics, not simply sex differences. Participants were separated by sex, but data were analyzed to assess for gender characteristics. This distinction between sex and gender differences is important because previous research has suggested that sex and gender are actually different concepts and that gender differences may be a better explanation of how individuals think, feel, and behave (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Therefore, research on gender characteristics, such as masculine or feminine behaviors and attitudes, may actually be more informative than simply assessing differences based on the biological sex.

The study of how to develop and maintain a satisfying and high quality dating relationship is a relatively new area of investigation when both individuals' perspectives are taken into consideration. Although ample data exist from only one partner's perspective of the intimate dating relationship (Attridge et al., 1995), much information is still needed to understand the relationship from both partners' perspectives. Thus,

information obtained from both partners separately about their intimate dating relationship will assist researchers in obtaining a better understanding of what constitutes that relationship, what factors predict general relationship satisfaction, and whether one or both of the individuals consider the relationship satisfying.

The goals of the present study are to assess relationship satisfaction in the intimate dating relationships of college students. Research suggests that the more feminine characteristics a couple has, without being hyperfeminine, the more satisfying that relationship will be for both partners (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). This suggests that the more feminine characteristics an individual and couple possess, such as self-disclosing information, having empathy, and utilizing perspective-taking skills, the more satisfied that couple will be with their dating relationship. The present study assessed heterosexual college-aged dating couples individually on questionnaires about femininity, masculinity, and satisfaction and asked each individual to assess these same qualities in their intimate dating partner. Then, responses were assessed to determine the accuracy of the participant's perceptions of his or her partner. Secondly, the present study assessed how feminine and masculine characteristics were related to relationship satisfaction. Third, the present study assessed how perceptions about one's partner are related to satisfaction in that intimate dating relationship.

The present study will benefit the area of research in intimate partner relationships in a variety of ways. First, there are few studies that assess how femininity is related to satisfaction in intimate relationships (e.g., Lamke et al., 1994; Langis et al., 1994; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Thus, new information is needed to determine how

femininity affects the satisfaction of individuals in a dating relationship. Second, the present study differs from previous studies by assessing college-aged dating couples. Only one previous study has specifically assessed femininity in both partners of a college-aged dating relationship (Lamke et al., 1994). More information is needed about early dating experiences, such as college dating relationships, because marital relationships are built on the interaction of couples while they are dating (Rouse et al., 1988). It must also be taken into consideration that marital relationships may differ from dating relationships because there are additional variables involved with marital relationships that are not as likely to be involved in dating relationships, such as children, finances, and the general day to day running of a household. Dating relationships may also be different from marital relationships because marital relationships are likely to be more stable (Cooper et al., 1986). However, it is still important to assess dating relationships since they are the foundation for marital relationships. Most importantly, the present research project will differ from previous research by assessing the perceptions of both individuals in the intimate dating relationship. Few previous research projects have actually assessed the relationship from both partners' perspectives (e.g., Antill, 1983) and this should allow for a broader perspective of how the relationship is functioning.

Hypothesis One. : It was hypothesized that male satisfaction would be associated with the self-reported characteristics of masculinity and femininity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. Male satisfaction would also be correlated with general positive perceptions of one's female partner in addition to perceptions of one's partner as high in femininity and feminine behaviors, such as

perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. This hypothesis replicated previous research and was based on previous research that has demonstrated the importance of feminine characteristics in initiating and maintaining satisfying intimate dating relationships (Gaines, 1995; Lamke et al., 1994; Ray & Gold, 1996; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Femininity has been associated with expressive behaviors, such as giving emotional support, self-disclosing, and having an orientation toward others (Gaines, 1995; Lamke et al., 1994). Kalin and Lloyd (1985) demonstrated that married men and women are more satisfied with their relationship when both were high in feminine qualities. In general, previous research supports the idea that dating couples are more satisfied with their dating relationships when they have more feminine characteristics (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Additionally, Gurung and colleagues (2001) found that more positive significant-other-concepts (SOC), such as positive general perceptions of one's partner, are positively correlated with having a more satisfying dating relationship. Furthermore, previous research has found that the perception of feminine characteristics in one's partner was important to relationship satisfaction (Antill, 1983). Lamke and colleagues (1994) found that, for men, satisfaction was related to their perception of femininity in themselves and in their wives (Lamke et al., 1994). The present hypothesis assessed whether these research findings hold for college-aged dating couples as well as for married couples.

Participants were assessed individually. General feminine and masculine traits were assessed utilizing the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). The feminine behavioral characteristics of self-disclosure were assessed with The Self-Disclosure

Index (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983) and the feminine behavioral characteristics of empathy and perspective-taking were assessed with the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980). The Significant-Other Concepts were assessed by using The Other-Concept Questionnaire (OCQ; Gurung et al., 2001) to assess positive and negative partner perceptions. The Sexual Relationship Scale (SRS; Hughes & Snell, 1990) was utilized to determine whether the individuals hold communal relationship beliefs. Finally, satisfaction in the couples' intimate dating relationship was assessed with The Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988) (See Table 3). Individuals answered all measures, with the exception of the satisfaction measure, twice. One time was a self-report and the second was reporting on perceptions about one's partner. Data were analyzed utilizing correlational analyses.

Hypothesis Two. : It was hypothesized that male satisfaction would be predicted by the self-reported characteristics of masculinity and femininity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. Male satisfaction would also be predicted by general positive perceptions of one's female partner in addition to perceptions of one's partner as high in femininity and feminine behaviors, such as perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. This hypothesis was supported by the same research as in hypothesis one demonstrating the importance of gender characteristics and behaviors in maintaining satisfying intimate relationships.

Participants were assessed individually and data from the first hypothesis were utilized to determine whether these feminine characteristics and behaviors were predictive of men's relationship satisfaction. Variables that were correlated with men's

relationship satisfaction in the preliminary bivariate analyses from hypothesis one were analyzed utilizing multiple regression analyses.

Hypothesis Three. : It was hypothesized that female satisfaction would be correlated with the self-reported characteristics of femininity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. Female satisfaction was also expected to be correlated with general positive perceptions of one's male partner in addition to perceptions of one's male partner as high in femininity and masculinity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. As mentioned in the first hypothesis, this hypothesis replicated previous research which demonstrated the importance of feminine characteristics in initiating and maintaining satisfying intimate dating relationships (Gaines, 1995; Lamke et al., 1994; Ray & Gold, 1996; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Additionally, the perception of one's male partner as high in feminine characteristics has also been correlated with the woman's satisfaction in her intimate dating relationship (e.g. Vonk & Van Nobelen, 1993).

The same measures and methods utilized to assess male satisfaction were also utilized to assess female satisfaction, behaviors, and characteristics (See Table 3). Similar to male participants, female participants answered the questionnaires about their own characteristics and their perceptions of their partners. Data were analyzed utilizing correlational analyses.

Hypothesis Four. : It was hypothesized that female satisfaction would be predicted by the self-reported characteristics of femininity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. Female satisfaction was also expected

to be predicted by general positive perceptions of one's male partner in addition to perceptions of one's male partner as high in femininity and masculinity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure.

Participants were assessed individually and data from the third hypothesis were utilized to determine whether these feminine characteristics and behaviors were predictive of women's relationship satisfaction. Data were analyzed utilizing multiple regression analyses. However, the multiple regression contained only those variables that were significantly correlated with women's relationship satisfaction in the preliminary bivariate analyses from hypothesis three.

Hypothesis Five. : This hypothesis examined whether partners were accurate in their perceptions about their partners' characteristics. Generally, perceptions of one's partner seem to be a blend of reality and idealization (Murray et al., 1996a; Murray et al., 1996b). Previous research has demonstrated that when individuals hold positive perceptions of their partners, either married or dating, even if those perceptions are idealized, they are likely to have greater relationship satisfaction than individuals who do not hold positive perceptions of their partners (Meeks et al., 1998). Additionally, even purely idealized perceptions of one's partner were correlated with more satisfying relationships (Murray et al., 1996a).

The same measures and methods utilized to assess male and female satisfaction were utilized to assess accuracy of perceptions about one's intimate dating partner (See Table 3). Assessing the accuracy of partner perceptions was accomplished by taking the difference between one's own score on these measures and one's partner's score for

one's perception of one's partner. A series of t-tests were performed to assess the accuracy of the perceptions of one's partner on a specific characteristic and the partner's self-report of the characteristic.

Hypothesis Six. : This hypothesis explored the question of whether dating relationship satisfaction was related to the congruence of the individuals' beliefs about their partners with their partners' own self-perceptions. Although previous research has suggested that individuals who hold positive perceptions of their partners were more likely to have greater relationship satisfaction than individuals who did not hold positive perceptions of their partners (Meeks et al., 1998), no specific hypotheses were made regarding the congruence variable. Although it is possible that overestimating one's positive attributions might lead to greater satisfaction, this analysis was exploratory in nature.

The same measures and methods utilized to assess male and female satisfaction were utilized to assess congruence of perceptions about one's intimate dating partner (See Table 3). The extent of congruence was assessed by calculating difference scores between the participants' perceptions of their partners and their partners own self-perceptions on the following five variables: femininity, masculinity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking. Regression analyses were performed on all five difference scores where satisfaction was predicted.

Table 3

Variables and Measures Utilized

Variable	Measure
Feminine Characteristics	The Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974)
Masculine Characteristics	The Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974)
Hypergender Beliefs	Hypergender Ideology Scale (Hamburger, Hogben, McGowan, & Dawson, 1996)
Communal and Exchange Beliefs	The Sexual Relationship Scale (Hughes & Snell, 1990)
Empathy	The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980)
Perspective-Taking	The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980)
Self-Disclosure	The Self-disclosure Index (Miller et al., 1983)
Positive Partner Concepts	The Other-Self-Concept Questionnaire (Gurung et al., 2001)
Negative Partner Concepts	The Other-Self-Concept Questionnaire (Gurung et al., 2001)
Partner Worth	The Significant-Other-Esteem Scale (Gurung et al., 2001)
Clarity of Partner Perceptions	The Other-Clarity scale (Gurung et al., 2001)
Dating Satisfaction	The Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988)

Methods

Participants

One hundred nine heterosexual dating couples completed the questionnaires for the present study. Of those 109 heterosexual dating couples, 103 comprised the sample analyzed for this study as six couples dating for less than two months were initially eliminated. Participants were recruited through the subject pool for the introductory psychology classes at Ohio University. At least one member of each dating couple was enrolled in an introductory psychology course and received course credit for his or her participation in this project. If one member of the couple was not enrolled in the class, that individual received \$5 for his or her participation.

A majority of the participants were either 18 or 19 years of age (70.4%) and single and never married (100%). Further the vast majority were white (90.8%), heterosexual (99.5%), Freshmen or Sophomores in college (86.4%) who indicated that they were Christian (60.7%), and had a family incomes of over \$50,000 per year (67.5%). Most participants considered themselves to be in a long-term monogamous dating relationship (69.4%), and felt extremely or very committed to their dating partner (92.2%). Length of dating relationships varied with many participants reporting that they had been dating their current partner between two and twelve months (64.4%), however many also reported dating for more than two years (20.0%). No one had children with their current dating partners (demographic and relationship variables are summarized in Table 4).

Table 4

Demographics Information

Variable	Responses	Number	(Percent)
Age			
	18	56	(27.2%)
	19	89	(43.2%)
	20	38	(18.4%)
	21	6	(2.9%)
	Over 21	17	(8.3%)
Marital status			
	Single, never married	206	(100%)
	Married	0	(0%)
	Separated	0	(0%)
	Divorced	0	(0%)
Class			
	Freshman	132	(64.1%)
	Sophomore	46	(22.3%)
	Junior	8	(3.9%)
	Senior	12	(5.8%)
	Graduate student	2	(1%)
	Not a Student	6	(2.9%)

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Race and Ethnicity			
	White, Non-Hispanic	187	(90.8%)
	Black	12	(5.8%)
	Hispanic	3	(1.5%)
	Asian or Pacific Islander	2	(1.0%)
	American Indian	2	(1.0%)
Religion			
	Catholic	81	(39.3%)
	Protestant	44	(21.4%)
	Jewish	2	(1.0%)
	Other	49	(23.8%)
	None	30	(14.6%)
Family Income			
	\$15,000 or less	4	(1.9%)
	\$15,001 - \$25,000	7	(3.4%)
	\$25,001 - \$35,000	22	(10.7%)
	\$35,001 - \$50,000	34	(16.5%)
	Over \$50,000	139	(67.5%)

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

 Current Dating Status

Do not date	3	(1.5%)
Date casually	53	(25.7%)
Long-term monogamous relationship	143	(69.4%)
Engaged	7	(3.4%)
Married	0	(0.0%)

Children with Current Partner

Yes	0	(0.0%)
No	206	(100%)

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual	205	(99.5%)
Homosexual	1	(0.5%)
Bisexual	0	(0.0%)

Length of Current Intimate Relationship

Less than two months	0	(0.0%)
Two to six months	90	(43.7%)
Six to twelve months	42	(20.4%)
One year to one-and-a-half years	17	(8.3%)
One-and-a-half years to two years	15	(7.3%)
More than two years	41	(20.0%)

 (table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Current Relationship Serious			
Yes	198	(96.1%)	
No	7	(3.4%)	
Exclusively Dating Current Partner			
Yes	198	(96.1%)	
No	5	(2.4%)	
Committed to Current Partner and Relationship			
Extremely committed	132	(64.1%)	
Very committed	58	(28.2%)	
Somewhat committed	14	(6.8%)	
Not very committed	1	(0.5%)	
Not committed	1	(0.5%)	
In Love with Partner			
Yes	176	(85.4%)	
No	29	(14.1%)	

Measures

Demographics Survey. All participants completed a brief demographic questionnaire consisting of questions assessing age, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and facts about their dating relationship. (See Appendix A, Section 1).

Hypergender Ideology Scale (HGIS). The HGIS (Hamburger, Hogben, McGowan, & Dawson, 1996) is a new measure designed to replace the Hyperfemininity Scale (HFS; Murnen & Byrne, 1991) and the Hypermasculinity Inventory (HMI; Mosher & Sirkin, 1984). As an attempt at a combined measure, the HGIS was developed to be suitable for men and women, and thus alleviates the need for two separate scales in assessing extreme, stereotypical gender roles. The measure is a 57-item self-report measure, where responses fall on a 6-point scale ranging from A-”strongly disagree” to F-”strongly agree”. Reliability and validity were supported for this measure. Hamburger et al. (1996) assessed 235 undergraduate students on the HGIS. The internal consistency has been demonstrated to be 0.93. The HGIS has shown to be correlated with the Hyperfemininity Scale for women ($r = .53, p < .001$) and with the Hypermasculinity Inventory for men ($r = .54, p < .001$) (Hamburger et al., 1996). (See Appendix A, Section 2).

The Sexual Relationship Scale (SRS). The Sexual Relationship Scale (Hughes & Snell, 1990) is a 54-item instrument that uses a 5-point scale to measure communal and exchange approaches to sexual relationships. Communal relationships are ones where each person in the relationship gives emotionally to the other out of concern for that

person's welfare, without the anticipation of it being reciprocated. Exchange relationships refer to relationships where one person gives emotionally and the other person gives only because there is an emotional debt that must be repaid (Clark & Mills, 1979). Women are typically viewed as more communal, thus it is considered feminine to have communal orientations (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). Research has shown that this scale has good internal consistency reliability for females ranging between 0.67 to 0.79 (Hughes & Snell, 1990). Factor analyses also support the existence of the two separate subscales (Hughes & Snell, 1990). (See Appendix A, Section 3).

The Other-Self-Concept Questionnaire (OCQ). The Other-Self-Concept Questionnaire (Gurung et al., 2001) was adapted from the Self Concept Questionnaire (Sarason et al., 1991). It is a 42-item measure that uses descriptive words and phrases with a scale ranging from 1 = "very inaccurate" to 4 = "very accurate" to assess mental representations of one's partner. This scale assesses positive (e.g. kind, affectionate) and negative (e.g. demanding, irritable) characteristics. This measure has adequate internal consistency reliability, ranging from between 0.83 – 0.89 for the positive scale and 0.82 – 0.86 for the negative scale (Gurung et al., 2001; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). (See Appendix A, Section 4).

The Significant-Other-Esteem Scale (SOE). The Significant-Other-Esteem Scale (Gurung et al., 2001) is a 10-item scale based on Rosenberg's (1979) Self-Esteem Scale. Individuals rate their perception of worth of their dating partner on questions such as, "At times I think he/she is no good at all." Participants answer questions using a scale ranging from 1 = "almost never" to 4 = "almost always." This measure has adequate internal

consistency reliability, demonstrated by Cronbach's alpha ranging between 0.84 (Gurung et al., 2001) and 0.85 (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002). (See Appendix A, Section 5).

The Other-Clarity Scale (OC). The Other-Clarity scale (Gurung et al., 2001) is a 12-item questionnaire adapted from the self-clarity measure (Campbell, Trapnell, Heine, Katz, Lavalley, & Lehman, 1996). It will be utilized to measure how clearly defined and stable an individual's mental representations are of their partner. Internal consistency reliability is adequate. Cronbach's alpha had been shown to range between 0.87 (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002) to 0.92 (Gurung et al., 2001). Validity of this measure is still being investigated. (See Appendix A, Section 6).

Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980) is a 28-item questionnaire to assess the communication characteristics of perspective-taking, fantasy, empathy, and personal distress. Each subscale consists of seven items and that rated on a scale from 1 = "Does not describe me well" to 5 = "Describes me very well". The present study will utilize only the Perspective-Taking subscale and the Empathic Concern subscale. Internal consistency reliability is adequate for both subscales. The Perspective-Taking subscale has an internal consistency reliability of 0.73 and the Empathic Concern subscale has an internal consistency reliability of 0.71 (Davis & Oathout, 1987). Test-retest reliability has been demonstrated to range between 0.62 to 0.71 for all four scales (Davis, 1980). (See Appendix A, Section 7).

The Self-Disclosure Index (SDI). The Self-Disclosure Index (Miller et al., 1983) is a 10-item measure to assess an individual's decision to self-disclose information to a specific individual. In this study, the target individual will be the participant's significant other. A second form of this measure can be utilized to assess an individual's perception of their partner's self-disclosure. Internal consistency reliability ranges between 0.86 to 0.93 for both versions of this measure, self and perception of partner (Hendrick et al., 1988). (See Appendix A, Section 8).

Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI). The Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) assesses masculinity and femininity in participants. It consists of 60 items, 20 masculine, 20 feminine, and 20 socially desirable items. Participants respond to the questionnaire by answering on a scale ranging from 1 = "never or almost never true" to 7 = "always or almost always true." This measure has good reliability, 0.87 for the masculinity scale and 0.84 for the femininity scale (Bem, 1974). Auster and Ohm (2000) also demonstrated this scale to be a reliable measure of current masculinity and femininity. Holt and Ellis (1998) also found this to be a valid and reliable measure of current masculinity and femininity, with internal consistency reliability of 0.95 for masculinity and 0.92 for femininity (See Appendix A, Section 9).

Relationship Satisfaction Scale (RSS). The Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988) is a 7-item measure to assess relationship satisfaction on a five point scale ranging from 1 = "Low Satisfaction" to 5 = "High Satisfaction". Questions include items such as "How good is your relationship compared to most?" This measure is highly correlated with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) (Hendrick, Dicke, &

Hendrick, 1998). Strong internal consistency reliability has been shown to range between 0.84 (Meeks et al., 1998) to 0.90 (Hendrick et al., 1998). (See Appendix A, Section 10).

Procedure

Experimental sessions were conducted in classrooms in the Department of Psychology and sessions were conducted in groups of no larger than thirty individuals. A trained graduate student in the Department of Psychology at Ohio University served as the experimenter. Prior to beginning the study, all participants were presented with an informed consent form, which they were asked to sign after the experimenter read the form to them. Participants were asked to complete in the order listed: the demographics questionnaire, the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974), the Hypergender Ideology Scale (Hamburger et al., 1996), The Self-disclosure Index (Miller et al., 1983), Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), The Sexual Relationship Scale (Hughes & Snell, 1990), The Other-Self-Concept Questionnaire (Gurung et al., 2001), The Significant-Other-Esteem Scale (Gurung et al., 2001), The Other-Clarity scale (Gurung et al., 2001), and the Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988). On average, it took participants one-and-a-half hours to complete the survey. Following survey completion, participants were debriefed (See Appendix C for form) and dismissed.

Results

Overview of Analyses

The present study assessed men and women separately. Each participant answered questionnaires regarding self-reported characteristics of masculinity and femininity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. Participants

also answered questionnaires about general positive perceptions of one's partner and perceptions of one's partner as high in femininity, masculinity, perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. These data were analyzed separately for men and women using correlational analyses to determine what variables were associated with relationship satisfaction. Multiple regression analyses that contained only those variables significantly correlated with relationship satisfaction in the preliminary bivariate analyses were conducted to predict relationship satisfaction. Data from only 89 men and 92 women, instead of the entire sample of 103 men and 103 women, were utilized due to some participants not completing the seven-question satisfaction questionnaire at the end of the packet of surveys.

The present study also examined whether individuals were accurate in their perceptions about their partners' characteristics. Assessing the accuracy of partner perceptions was accomplished by taking the difference between one's own score on these measures and one's partner's score for one's perception of one's partner. A series of t-tests were performed to assess the accuracy of the perceptions of one's partner on a specific characteristic and the partner's self-report of the characteristic.

Furthermore, the present study explored the question of whether dating relationship satisfaction was related to the congruence of the individuals' beliefs about their partners with their partners' own self-perceptions. The extent of congruence was assessed by calculating difference scores between the participants' perceptions of their partners and their partners own self-perceptions on the following five variables: femininity, masculinity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking. Regression

analyses predicting relationship satisfaction were performed on all five difference scores. Additional regression analyses were also performed on men and women's data separately that combined all significantly correlated variables from all hypotheses.

The Prediction of Male Satisfaction

Pearson Correlations were performed on the data from only 89 subjects, instead of the total sample of 103 men, due to the fact that only 89 of the male participants answered the satisfaction questionnaire. Additionally, these men reported being involved in their current heterosexual dating relationship for at least two months and answered the satisfaction questionnaire to determine which of the seventeen variables (perception of partner's femininity, masculinity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking; perception of own femininity, masculinity, hypergender beliefs, self-disclosure, empathy, perspective-taking, communal beliefs, and exchange beliefs; general positive perceptions of partner, general negative perceptions of partner, clarity of perceptions about partner, and other esteem) were correlated with male satisfaction in their current dating relationship.

Results demonstrated that the mean for men's relationship satisfaction was 4.29 out of 7 with a standard deviation of 0.63 (See Table 5). Additionally, the perceptions of self as having feminine characteristics, $r(89) = .36, p < .01$, partner as having feminine characteristics, $r(89) = .38, p < .01$, self as high in self-disclosure, $r(89) = .22, p < .05$, partner as high in self-disclosure, $r(89) = .33, p < .01$, partner as high in empathy, $r(89) = .32, p < .01$, and self as low in exchange beliefs, $r(89) = -.26, p = .01$, were significantly correlated with male satisfaction with their current dating relationship.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>
Own Masculinity	5.24	.62	3.1 – 7.0
Own Femininity	4.75	.58	2.8 – 6.3
Partner's Masculinity	4.75	.75	2.6 – 7.0
Partner's Femininity	5.14	.75	2.8 – 6.4
Hypergender Beliefs	200.86	21.59	161 – 273
Own Self-Disclosure	4.28	.61	1.6 – 5.0
Partner's Self-Disclosure	4.15	.64	2.0 – 5.0
Own Empathy	19.17	4.52	6.0 – 29.0
Own Perspective-Taking	17.67	5.36	6.0 – 29.0
Partner's Empathy	20.38	4.72	8.0 – 28.0
Partner's Perspective-Taking	16.25	6.14	0.0 – 31.0
Communal Beliefs	43.89	5.28	28.0 – 55.0
Exchange Beliefs	24.11	6.03	14.0 – 47.0
Positive Perceptions	3.38	.39	1.8 – 3.9
Negative Perceptions	1.98	.54	1.0 – 3.5
Other Esteem	2.60	.18	2.1 – 3.3
Other Clarity	2.26	.72	1.1 – 4.2
Satisfaction	4.29	.63	2.0 – 5.0

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)
Means and Standard Deviations for Male Participants

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>
Masculinity Difference	.0004	.84	-2.0 – 2.6
Femininity Difference	-.06	.67	-1.4 – 1.8
Self-Disclosure Difference	.07	.79	-2.3 – 2.0
Empathy Difference	.25	5.32	-14.0 – 13.0
Perspective-Taking Difference	1.10	5.86	-16.0 – 17.0

Furthermore, results demonstrated that positive perceptions of one's partner, $r(89) = .43$, $p < .01$, were positively correlated with male satisfaction. Results also demonstrated that negative perceptions of one's partner, $r(89) = -.27$, $p = .01$, clarity of perceptions about one's partner, $r(89) = -.56$, $p < .01$, and esteem they held about their partner, $r(89) = -.27$, $p = .01$, were negatively correlated with male satisfaction. However, the negative correlations with esteem for one's partner and clarity about belief of one's partner indicated that as satisfaction increased, men held their partners in higher esteem and had clearer beliefs about them (See Table 6).

When all ten variables that were significantly correlated with men's satisfaction were entered into a stepwise regression analysis, three variables were identified as significant predictors of relationship satisfaction: high clarity about one's partner, perceptions of self as high in feminine characteristics, and general positive perceptions about one's partner. As high clarity was the first variable to be entered into the model, it accounted for the greatest amount of unique variance (approximately 30.5%), with an R value of 0.56, $F(1, 87) = 39.57$, $p < .01$. Perceiving oneself as high in feminine characteristics was also identified as an additional predictor of relationship satisfaction, $F(2, 86) = 27.89$, $p < .01$. The amount of variance accounted for by these two variables together increased to 38%. Finally, general positive perceptions of one's partner was identified as a third predictor of relationship satisfaction, $F(3, 85) = 22.17$, $p < .01$. The amount of variance accounted for by all three variables together was approximately 42% (See Table 7).

Table 6

The Correlation Between Predictor Variables and Relationship Satisfaction in Men (N = 89)

Variable	r
Femininity in Self	.36**
Perceived Femininity in Partner	.38**
Masculinity in Self	-.13
Perceived Masculinity in Partner	.09
Hypergender Beliefs	-.20
Self-Disclosure in Self	.22*
Perceived Self-Disclosure in Partner	.33**
Perspective-Taking in Self	-.12
Perceived Perspective-Taking in Partner	-.06
Empathy in Self	.02
Perceived Empathy in Partner	.32**
Communal Beliefs	.04
Exchange Beliefs	-.26*
Positive Perceptions of Partner	.43**
Negative Perceptions of Partner	-.27**
Esteem for Partner	-.27**
Clarity of Perceptions of Partner	-.56**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 7

Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction in Men (N = 89)

Variable	B	SE B	Beta
Step 1			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.50	0.08	-.56**
Step 2			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.46	0.08	-.52**
Self as high in femininity	0.31	0.09	.29**
Step 3			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.41	0.08	-.46**
Self as high in femininity	0.26	0.09	.24**
Positive perceptions of partner	0.37	0.14	.23*

Note. $R^2 = .31$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .08$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .05$ for Step 3 ($ps < .01$).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

The Prediction of Female Satisfaction

The second hypothesis stated that female satisfaction would be predicted by the self-reported characteristics of femininity and the feminine behaviors of perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure. The second hypothesis also stated that female satisfaction would be further predicted by general positive perceptions of one's male partner in addition to perceptions of one's partner as high in masculinity, femininity, and feminine behaviors, such as perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure.

Results demonstrated that the mean for women's relationship satisfaction was 4.20 out of 7 with a standard deviation of 0.76 (See Table 8). Additionally, as satisfaction with relationship increased, participants were more likely to perceive themselves as having many feminine characteristics, $r(92) = .27, p < .01$, partner as having many feminine characteristics, $r(92) = 0.38, p = .001$, self as high in self-disclosure, $r(92) = .27, p < .05$, partner as high in self-disclosure, $r(92) = .30, p < .01$, and partner as high in perspective-taking, $r(92) = .21, p < .05$. Additionally, results demonstrated that positive perceptions of one's partner, $r(92) = .33, p < .01$, were also positively correlated with female satisfaction. Results demonstrated that negative perceptions of one's partner, $r(92) = -.36, p < .01$, and clarity of perceptions about one's partner, $r(92) = -.50, p < .0004$, were negatively correlated with female satisfaction (See Table 9).

When all eight variables that were significantly correlated with women's relationship satisfaction were entered into a stepwise regression analysis, two variables were identified as significant predictors of relationship satisfaction: high clarity about one's partner and perceptions of partner as high in perspective-taking. As high clarity was

Table 8
Means and Standard Deviations for Female Participants

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>
Own Masculinity	4.77	.65	2.9 – 6.1
Own Femininity	5.39	.50	4.2 – 6.5
Partner's Masculinity	5.24	.74	3.2 – 6.7
Partner's Femininity	4.80	.72	2.8 – 6.1
Hypergender Beliefs	187.78	16.19	152.0 – 228.0
Own Self-Disclosure	4.53	.49	3.3 – 5.9
Partner's Self-Disclosure	4.21	.70	2.6 – 6.0
Own Empathy	22.33	3.73	13.0 – 30.0
Own Perspective-Taking	18.91	5.21	8.0 – 34.0
Partner's Empathy	18.90	5.50	0.0 – 28.0
Partner's Perspective-Taking	16.59	6.19	0.0 – 28.0
Communal Beliefs	42.64	5.98	27.0 – 56.0
Exchange Beliefs	23.01	8.38	13.0 – 75.0
Positive Perceptions	3.50	.32	2.6 – 4.1
Negative Perceptions	1.65	.48	1.0 – 3.3
Other Esteem	2.55	.21	1.8 – 4.0
Other Clarity	2.16	.65	1.3 – 3.8
Satisfaction	4.20	.76	1.1 – 5.0

(table continues)

Table 8
Means and Standard Deviations for Female Participants

	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>
Masculinity Difference	.02	.86	-3.1 – 2.0
Femininity Difference	.26	.76	-1.3 – 2.5
Self-Disclosure Difference	.38	.70	-1.6 – 1.8
Empathy Difference	1.90	5.06	-13.0 – 13.0
Perspective-Taking Difference	2.39	6.01	-13.0 – 19.0

Table 9

The Correlation Between Predictor Variables and Relationship Satisfaction in Women (N = 92)

Variable	r
Femininity in Self	.27**
Perceived Femininity in Partner	.27*
Masculinity in Self	-.12
Perceived Masculinity in Partner	-.00
Hypergender Beliefs	.11
Self-Disclosure in Self	.18
Perceived Self-Disclosure in Partner	.30**
Perspective-Taking in Self	-.09
Perceived Perspective-Taking in Partner	.21*
Empathy in Self	.01
Perceived Empathy in Partner	.05
Communal Beliefs	-.10
Exchange Beliefs	-.16
Positive Perceptions of Partner	.33**
Negative Perceptions of Partner	-.36**
Esteem for Partner	.07
Clarity of Perceptions of Partner	-.50**

* p < .05; ** p < .01

the first variable to be entered into the model, it accounted for the greatest amount of unique variance (approximately 32%), with an R value of 0.57, $F(1, 78) = 37.97, p < .01$. Perception of partner as high in perspective-taking characteristics was also identified as an additional predictor of relationship satisfaction, $F(2, 77) = 23.56, p < .01$. The amount of variance accounted for by these two variables together was 36% (See Table 10).

An Analysis of Congruency of Partner Perceptions

The third hypothesis examined the congruence between partners on ratings of masculinity, femininity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking. Men and women were analyzed separately to determine whether they were congruent or incongruent with their partners on the above listed characteristics. To determine congruence, two paired samples t-tests were conducted, one comparing women's perceptions of their partners with the men's self-perceptions and the other comparing men's perceptions of their partners with the women's self-perceptions. The variables placed into each t-test were the individuals' perceptions of themselves and their partners' perceptions of that individual on each of the above listed characteristics. Congruence was determined by identifying whether the mean of the difference for each variable statistically differed from zero. Since t-tests are statistically significant when a variable is significantly different from zero, a statistically significant finding would indicate that the rating scores were incongruent. Results from paired sample t-tests indicated that women were congruent with their partners on all of the above listed characteristics that described their partners, including: masculinity, $t(102) = 0.01, p > .05$, femininity, $t(102) = -0.85, p > .05$, self-disclosure, $t(102) = 0.89, p > .05$, empathy, $t(101) = 0.48, p > .05$, and

Table 10

Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction in Women (N =92)

Variable	B	SE B	Beta
Step 1			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.63	0.10	-.57**
Step 2			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.57	0.10	-.51**
Partner high in perspective-taking	0.03	0.01	.24*

Note. $R^2 = .32$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .05$ for Step 2 ($ps < .05$).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

perspective-taking, $t(101) = 1.89, p > .05$. Men were congruent with their partners on the characteristics that described their partners' masculinity, $t(102) = 0.22, p > .05$, and perspective-taking, $t(101) = 1.46, p > .05$. However, men were incongruent with their partners on the characteristics reflecting their partners' femininity, $t(102) = 3.41, p < .01$, self-disclosure, $t(102) = 5.50, p < .01$, and empathy, $t(101) = 3.80, p < .01$.

Data were further analyzed to determine whether men underestimated or overestimated their partners' femininity, self-disclosure, and empathy. Underestimating was inferred by the positive mean for each variable after taking the difference between the woman's higher self-rating and the man's lower rating of his partner. Results indicated that the men tended to underestimate their partners on all three variables, femininity ($M = 0.26$), self-disclosure ($M = 0.38$), and empathy ($M = 1.90$). This finding suggests that the females perceived themselves to be more feminine, self-disclosing, and empathic in their dating relationships than their partners perceived them to be.

The Importance of Congruence in Partner Perceptions in the Prediction of Satisfaction.

The fourth hypothesis explored how the difference between participants' perceptions of their partners' characteristics of masculinity, femininity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking and their partners' self-perceptions were related to satisfaction with the participants' current dating relationships. For each of the five variables, the difference scores that were calculated by subtracting the man's rating of his partner from his partner's self-rating were entered into the analysis. The step-wise regression analysis identified two significant predictors of male relationship satisfaction, $F(2, 86) = 11.78, p < .01$. Men who overestimated their partners' femininity, $r(88) =$

Table 11

Regression Analysis Predicting Male Satisfaction from Difference Scores (N =88)

Variable	B	SE B	Beta
Step 1			
Partner's Femininity Difference Score	-0.31	0.08	-.38**
Step 2			
Partner's Femininity Difference Score	-0.27	0.08	-.33**
Partner's Empathy Difference Score	-0.004	0.01	-.28**

Note. $R^2 = .131$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .066$ for Step 2 ($ps < .01$).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

$-3.41, p < .01$, and empathy, $r(88) = -2.85, p < .01$, were more satisfied in their relationships. Together these variables accounted for 20% of the variance in men's satisfaction with their dating relationship (See Table 11). The regression analysis predicting women's satisfaction from the difference scores found that one variable emerged as a significant predictor, $F(1, 90) = 5.07, p < .05$. The significant difference score that entered the model was the perspective-taking score, $r(91) = -2.25, p < .05$, and suggested that women who overestimated their partners' perspective-taking were more satisfied with their current dating relationship. The difference variable for perspective-taking accounted for 4.3% of the variance in women's satisfaction ratings with an R value of 0.23 (See Table 12).

Additional Analyses on Satisfaction

To determine whether individual relationship satisfaction was predicted by actual characteristics or purely the perception of characteristics in one's partner, partners' self-perceptions were added to correlational and regression analyses. Correlational analyses were performed on all variables from the first two hypotheses (self-reported femininity, masculinity, perspective-taking, empathy, self-disclosure, positive and negative perceptions of one's partner, significant other concepts, and perceptions of one's partner's femininity, masculinity, perspective-taking, empathy, and self-disclosure), in addition to the partners' self-perceptions of masculinity, femininity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking characteristics. Regression analyses were then conducted with all variables correlated with the individuals' satisfaction: own and partner femininity, own and partner self-disclosure, partner empathy, self as low in exchange

Table 12

Regression Analysis Predicting Female Satisfaction from Difference Scores (N =91)

Variable	B	SE B	Beta
Step 1			
Partner's Perspective-Taking Difference Score	-0.003	0.01	-.23*

Note. $R^2 = .043$ for Step 1 ($p < .01$).* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

beliefs, positive perceptions of one's partner, negative perceptions of one's partner, clarity of perceptions about one's partner, esteem they held about their partner, and partners' self-perceptions of masculinity, femininity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking characteristics. For men, none of the women's self-perceptions were correlated with men's relationship satisfaction ($p > 0.05$). Due to the fact that none of the women's self-perceptions of their own characteristics were significantly correlated with the men's relationship satisfaction, no additional regression analyses were performed for men's relationship satisfaction.

For women, the men's self-perceptions of his femininity, $r(92) = 0.36, p < .01$, and self-disclosure, $r(92) = 0.24, p < .02$, were correlated with their relationship satisfaction. These variables, in addition to the characteristics previously significantly correlated with relationship satisfaction (own and partner's feminine characteristics, self and partner's self-disclosure, partner's perspective-taking, positive perceptions of one's partner, negative perceptions of one's partner, and clarity of perceptions about one's partner) were entered in a regression analysis. When all ten variables were entered into a stepwise regression analysis, two variables were identified as significant predictors of relationship satisfaction: high clarity about one's partner and partners' self-perceptions as high in perspective-taking. As high clarity was the first variable to be entered into the model, it accounts for the greatest amount of unique variance (approximately 24%), with an R value of 0.50, $F(1, 90) = 29.27, p < .01$. Partners' self-perception as high in perspective-taking characteristics was also identified as an additional predictor of relationship satisfaction, $F(2, 89) = 19.38, p < .01$. The amount of variance accounted for

Table 13

Regression Analysis Including Perceptions of Partner and Partner's Self-Reported Characteristics Predicting Relationship Satisfaction in Women (N =92)

Variable	B	SE B	Beta
Step 1			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.56	0.10	-.50**
Step 2			
Clear perceptions of partner	-0.49	0.10	-.43**
Partner self-perception as high in perspective-taking	0.35	0.13	.25*

Note. $R^2 = .25$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .05$ for Step 2 ($ps < .05$).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

by these two variables together increased to 29%. The finding that partners' self-perceptions of perspective-taking was predictive of women's relationship satisfaction suggested that men's actual perspective-taking is predictive of women's satisfaction and not solely the women's perception of men as high in perspective-taking (See Table 13). However, men's self-reported perspective-taking and women's perceptions of the men's perspective-taking were highly correlated, $r(102) = 0.50, p < .01$.

Discussion

The present study was conducted with 103 college couples who had been dating for at least two months. Data from only 89 men and 92 women were utilized in many of the analyses due to the remaining participants not completing the satisfaction questionnaire. A majority of the participants were Caucasian, heterosexual, never married, and Christian who were either 18 or 19 years of age. Most reported themselves to be in long-term monogamous dating relationships and exclusively dating their partners. Most couples perceived themselves to be "very committed" to and in love with their dating partner.

One purpose of the present study was to determine what collection of variables, including femininity, masculinity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking, were related to couples' satisfaction with their current dating relationship. Since previous research demonstrated that gender role characteristics may be more predictive of relationship satisfaction than sex differences (Aylor & Dainton, 2004; Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002), femininity and masculinity were assessed rather than only biological sex differences. Thus, relationship satisfaction was assessed to determine whether it was

influenced by the individual's perception of own femininity, masculinity, and feminine characteristics. The present study also assessed perceptions of one's partner on these same characteristics and compared individual self-perceptions to their partner's perceptions of themselves. Comparing partner perceptions of each other added to the literature because, in much previous research, it was unclear whether partners were congruent with each other about their perceptions. Additionally, the present study explored whether perceptions of one's partner or the actual characteristics in one's partner predicted relationship satisfaction.

Male Satisfaction

Men's satisfaction with their current dating relationship was predicted by more self-reported feminine self-perceptions and self-reported clear, positive perceptions about their partners. These three factors combined accounted for 44% of the variance in men's relationship satisfaction. These data replicated previous research that found more feminine self-perceptions to be predictive of satisfaction with one's dating relationship (Antill, 1983; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986; Parmelee, 1987). Specifically, Parmelee (1987) found that men's own femininity, but not masculinity, was related to their dating satisfaction. Even though some studies found men's perception of their own masculinity to be related to their own marital satisfaction (e.g., Lamke et al., 1994), most studies have not substantiated such a relationship (e.g., Kalin & Lloyd, 1985). One possible reason why masculinity may not be related to relationship satisfaction is that masculinity is typically defined by characteristics such as independence, forcefulness, dominance, and aggressiveness; traits that are not generally perceived to be supportive of relationships.

However, characteristics such as being affectionate and compassionate, which were used to define femininity in the present study are more conducive to nurturing and satisfying relationships.

Besides men's self-reported femininity, positive and clear perceptions of one's partner were predictive of men's relationship satisfaction. When these positive perceptions about one's partner were clearly held, individuals were more likely to attribute negative behaviors to specific situations, rather than to global problems with their partners (Gottman & Notarius, 2002; Gurung et al., 2001). Current marital therapy literature also suggests that positive perceptions of one's spouse are necessary for a successful, happy marriage. Gottman and Silver (1999) stated that their research has found that as many as 94% of couples who perceived their history together as positive are likely to have a happy future together. However, when their happy memories about their shared past are negatively distorted, they are likely to be having difficulties with their marriage. Thus, positive feelings toward each other and about their relationship are important for marital satisfaction (Gottman & Silver, 1999), as well as for satisfaction with one's dating relationship.

Positive and clear perceptions about one's partner are also important for the couple as their roles transition from spouses to parents. Through using communication skills such as self-disclosure, along with holding clear perceptions of one's partner, spouses are able to transition to the parent role with less marital discord. Positive perceptions of their partners help them cope with the stress and conflict that children bring to marriages (Bryan, 2002). Data from the present study also suggest that clear

perceptions of one's partners are also important for dating relationships. This may be due to the idea that clear and positive perceptions of one's partner lead to personal and relationship problems being blamed on specific situations rather than to global personality flaws with their partners. Holding clear, positive perceptions of one's partner may also benefit the relationship because less external feedback is necessary to reassure each individual that the relationship is going well and that their partner is being faithful (Gurung et al., 2001).

Female Satisfaction

High clarity of their perceptions about their partners and perceiving their partners as high in perspective-taking were found to be significant predictors in women's satisfaction with their current dating relationships. Women's perceptions of their partners as high in perspective-taking supports previous research findings (e.g., Meeks et al., 1998). Specifically, Davis and Oathout (1987) demonstrated that women's relationship satisfaction was influenced by perceptions of their partners as high in communication skills, such as empathy, perspective-taking, and self-disclosure. Unlike the present study, Davis and Oathout (1987) did not indicate whether women's communication skills influenced their own relationship satisfaction. The present study improved on this limitation by demonstrating that the women's own perspective-taking was predictive of their own relationship satisfaction.

Gottman and Silver (1999) suggested that perspective-taking is important in relationships to help build friendships with their partners, increase fondness and admiration of their partner, and lessen the opportunities to have power-struggles.

Perspective-taking also allows men to know and understand their wives better, thus increasing the wife's feelings of being understood and accepted (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Thus, past research demonstrates the importance of perspective-taking in marital relationships, while the present study demonstrates the importance of perspective-taking in dating couples. Thus, it may be extrapolated that, for women, her own perspective-taking skills are likely to be beneficial for her relationship satisfaction during her dating, as well as her marital, years.

Common Factors for Men's and Women's Dating Satisfaction

Holding clear perceptions about one's partner was found to be predictive of relationship satisfaction for both men and women, which supported previous research on college dating couples (Gurung et al., 2001). For men in the present study, results indicated that clear and positive perceptions of their partners were predictive of men's relationship satisfaction. For women, it did not matter whether these perceptions were positive or negative, as long as they were clearly held beliefs. However, data suggested that women typically rated their partners in positive ways by disagreeing with items such as "Sometimes I feel that he/she is not really the person he/she appears to be." Individuals also rated their partners in positive ways by agreeing with items such as "In general, I have a clear sense of who he/she is and what he/she is like." However, even though these statements suggest that men and women perceived their partners in positive ways, the positive perceptions variable was only predictive of men's relationship satisfaction.

In the long-term, the belief that one has clear perceptions of one's partner has also been related to marital satisfaction. Married couples are typically more satisfied with

their marriages when they believe that their partners know them and when they believe they know their partners. Couples have been found to be more satisfied when they remember major life events such as birthdays and anniversaries, as well as knowing smaller, personal events such as names of co-workers, favorite movies, fears, and life goals about each other (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Thus, the present study was able to also demonstrate that clear perceptions about one's partner appear to be important for dating satisfaction, just as previous research was able to show the importance of clear perceptions for later marital satisfaction.

Femininity in both partners was one of the main constructs assessed in the present study and one's own level of femininity as well as men's and women's perceptions of femininity in their partners were found to be positively correlated with relationship satisfaction for both men and women. When all other variables that were significantly correlated with men's relationship satisfaction were included in a regression analysis, only self-perception of femininity was predictive of men's satisfaction. One possible reason why own and partner femininity were not found to be a significant predictors of relationship satisfaction for both men and women might be that many of the variables were intercorrelated. For example, women's self-described femininity was correlated with own empathy, own perspective-taking, partner masculinity, partner femininity, partner empathy, partner perspective-taking, and positive perceptions of one's partner. Thus, for women, it is possible that own femininity did not appear to be predictive of women's relationship satisfaction because of the intercorrelation of own femininity and

perception of partner's perspective-taking, which was demonstrated to be predictive of women's satisfaction (See Appendix D, Section 1; See Appendix D, Section 2).

Femininity was also assessed by difference variables to determine whether individuals were congruent with their partner's self-perceptions. Women were found to be congruent with all of their partner's self-perceptions, but men were not. However, when the difference variables that were constructed from subtracting women's self-perceptions from men's perceptions of them were entered into a separate regression analysis, it was found that men who overestimated their partner's femininity were the most satisfied. Thus, these findings were partially consistent with prior research that has consistently demonstrated the importance of perceiving one's partner as high in femininity in college dating (e.g., Aube et al., 1995) as well as in marital relationships (e.g., Langis et al., 1994), even when this was an inaccurate perception (e.g., Lamke et al., 1994). Findings were only partially consistent with prior research because the present study did not find that own and partner femininity were as strongly associated with relationship satisfaction as had been predicted or as previous research had suggested.

Previous research noted the importance of married individuals being high in femininity, particularly when both partners work outside of the home (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Research has demonstrated that both men and women in dual-worker marriages are more satisfied with their marriages when both partners are high in feminine characteristics (Cooper, Chassin, & Zeiss, 1985). The husband's femininity becomes even more important to the wife's marital satisfaction when both partners work outside the home and when the couple has more than one preschool-aged child (Cooper et al.,

1986). Thus, although the men's femininity (neither his report nor his partner's perceptions of his femininity) did not predict women's relationship satisfaction, it is possible that a man's femininity might become more important to his partner's satisfaction in longer-term relationships.

Limitations of the Present Study and Directions for Future Research

There are a few limitations of the present study that need to be addressed. First, a convenience sample of college students was utilized for data collection. The college sample was further limited to students in psychology courses and their partners who chose to volunteer for this project. Additionally, because the psychology student had to convince his or her partner to participate in the study, it is possible that the present study might be somewhat biased by having a sample that has more satisfying relationships. For example, if the partner who is not a psychology student is satisfied with the relationship then he or she is likely to be more willing to give free time to participate in an activity that is beneficial to one's partner, such as participating in an activity that will give one's partner class credit or extra credit.

Further limitations included the fact that the researchers utilized self-report measures to collect data, which are limited to information that the participant is willing to acknowledge. Thus, the data could be biased due to social desirability issues. However, self-report is the most common way to obtain data about perceptions of self and partner. The present study assumed that one's own self-perceptions were accurate because the individual was reporting on behavioral characteristics in oneself. Thus, any differences between self and partner perceptions of self were assumed to be due to the partner being

incorrect; however, this may not necessarily be true. One's own self-perceptions could actually be incorrect for a variety of reasons. Additionally, when clarity was assessed in the present study, it was the belief or perception of clarity that was assessed and not actual clarity in beliefs about one's partner.

Furthermore, the fact that participants completed questionnaires in the same room, may have led to biased responding. Further, data were not collected about whether couples were living together which may have been an important correlate of some of the critical variables in the analyses. Finally, the use of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) to assess femininity and masculinity was potentially problematic. The Bem scale was constructed in the early 1970's and some of the items utilized to assess gender roles may be outdated. Additionally, this questionnaire assessed femininity with statements such as "sympathetic," "tender," and "cheerful." However, this measure also used words such as "yielding", "loyal", "childlike", and "gullible" (Bem, 1974) to assess femininity, which are not particularly politically correct terms by which to define women at this time. However, even with these possible difficulties, recent studies have found this measure to still be useful in classifying masculinity and femininity (e.g., Auster & Ohm, 2000; Holt & Ellis, 1998). Thus, it seems to be a reasonably valid and reliable measure of masculinity and femininity and one that would be appropriate to use in further research.

Summary of Findings

The present study demonstrated a variety of variables to be predictive of dating relationship satisfaction. Forty-four percent of men's dating relationship satisfaction was predicted by own self-reported feminine characteristics and self-reported clear, positive

perceptions about their partners. Even though some researchers found no relationship between men's femininity and their satisfaction with college dating relationships (Aube et al., 1995), many other researchers have found men's femininity to be important for his dating (Steiner-Pappalardo & Gurung, 2002) and later marital satisfaction (Kalin & Lloyd, 1985; Langis et al., 1994). Positive, clear perceptions about one's partner were also likely to be predictive of men's relationship satisfaction because they buffer against attributing negative behaviors of one's partner to global personality problems (Gottman & Notarius, 2002; Gurung et al., 2001).

For women, belief of clarity about their perceptions about their partners and perceiving their partners as high in perspective-taking accounted for 36% of the variance in women's satisfaction with their current dating relationship. Again, as with men, clarity was predictive of women's dating satisfaction. Perceived perspective-taking in one's partner was also predictive of women's relationship satisfaction. This finding supports previous research demonstrating that perspective-taking is important for building friendships and lessening opportunities for power-struggles in married couples (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Congruency between partners was also assessed in the present study. Women in the present study were congruent with their partners on all of the characteristics assessed, which included masculinity, femininity, self-disclosure, empathy, and perspective-taking. However, men were only congruent with their partner's self-perceptions of masculinity and perspective-taking and were incongruent their partner by underestimating with their partner's self-perceptions of femininity, self-disclosure, and empathy.

Conclusions

Results of the present study suggest several areas of future research. One idea for future research would be to assess couples on the same variables that were assessed in the present study; however, to add objective observations of those variables as well. For example, while assessing self-reports for own femininity and partner's femininity, researchers could directly observe the couple interacting and rate femininity from those interactions. Then, the researchers could compare all three ratings of femininity to determine whether actual or perceived femininity were more important for dating satisfaction. Researchers could also use the observational data to determine whether individuals are accurate in their perceptions of their own and their partner's femininity.

Another area might be to assess dating and engaged couples on the same characteristics that were assessed in the present study, but to do so utilizing a longitudinal design. A longitudinal analysis would allow researchers to assess the characteristics of each person in the couple to analyze what factors might lead to or deter from satisfying long-term dating and marital relationships. Since there has been much previous research conducted on marital relationship, the next necessary step would be to replicate these studies using dating samples to determine what factors remain important in intimate relationships, which factors are only important for marital relationships, and which factors are only important for dating relationships.

A third area for future research would be to conduct this same study on a slightly different population. For example, more research is needed with less satisfied couples or couples in violent relationships. It is possible that many of the variables assessed in the

present study might be important in predicting violence in relationships. Finally, given that clarity of perceptions about one's partner predicted relationship satisfaction in both men and women, future research should identify behavioral correlates of this construct. The items on the scale suggest that clarity of perceptions might be related to such behaviors as consistency in responding or openness regarding one's experience, however, additional research would help to better elucidate this construct.

Information obtained in the present study is important for practical work in couples' therapy. Results suggested that it would be useful to educate couples about the importance of feminine characteristics (at least for men) and perspective-taking. The items on The Other-Clarity Scale suggested that perceptions of behaviors such as openness, consistency, and dependability are other characteristics that would enhance satisfaction. Since self-disclosure was correlated with relationship satisfaction in the current study and in previous research studies (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Davis & Oathout, 1987; Meeks et al., 1998), therapy might also focus on developing or enhancing these skills to promote satisfying relationships.

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Appendices

Appendix A, Section 1 Demographics Questionnaire

1. What is your age? (Choose one)
 - A. 18
 - B. 19
 - C. 20
 - D. 21
 - E. Over 21

2. What is your marital status? (Choose one)
 - A. Single, never married
 - B. Married
 - C. Separated
 - D. Divorced

3. What class are you in? (Choose one)
 - A. Freshman
 - B. Sophomore
 - C. Junior
 - D. Senior
 - A. Graduate student
 - B. Not a Student

4. What is your race or ethnic background? (Choose one)
 - A. White, Non-Hispanic
 - B. Black
 - C. Hispanic
 - D. Asian or Pacific Islander
 - E. American Indian or Alaska Native

5. In what religion were you raised? (Choose one)
 - A. Catholic
 - B. Protestant
 - C. Jewish
 - D. Other
 - E. None

6. What is your best guess of your family's income last year? (Choose one)
 - A. \$15,000 or less
 - B. \$15,001 - \$25,000
 - C. \$25,001 - \$35,000
 - D. \$35,001 - \$50,000
 - E. Over \$50,000

7. What is your current dating status? (Choose one)
 - A. I do not date.
 - B. I date casually.
 - C. I am involved in a long-term monogamous relationship (6 months or more)
 - D. I am engaged.
 - E. I am married.

8. Do you have children with your current partner?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

9. What best describes your sexual orientation? (Choose one)
 - A. Heterosexual
 - B. Homosexual
 - C. Bisexual

10. How long have you been in your current intimate relationship?
 - A. Less than two months
 - B. Two to six months
 - C. Six to twelve months
 - D. One year to one-and-a-half years
 - E. One-and-a-half years to two years
 - F. More than two years

11. Do you consider your current relationship serious?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

12. Are you exclusively dating your current partner?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

13. How committed are you to your current partner and relationship?
 - C. Extremely committed
 - D. Very committed
 - E. Somewhat committed
 - F. Not very committed

G. Not committed

14. Are you in love with your partner?
A. Yes
B. No

Appendix A, Section 2
Hypergender Ideology Scale

A	B	C	D	E	F
strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	somewhat agree	strongly agree

1. I think it's gross and unfair for men to use alcohol and drugs to convince a woman to have sex with them.
2. Physical violence never solves an issue.
3. Most women need a man in their lives.
4. I like to see a relationship in which the man and woman have equal power.
5. Using alcohol or drugs to convince someone to have sex is wrong.
6. Gays sicken me because they are not real men.
7. Sex should never be used as a bargaining tool.
8. A real man fights to win.
9. Real men look for fast cars and fast women.
10. A true man knows how to command others.
11. When a man spends a lot of money on a date, he should expect to get sex for it.
12. The only thing a lesbian needs is a good, stiff cock.
13. I like relationships in which both partners are equals.
14. Sometimes it doesn't matter what you do to get sex.
15. Women should show off their bodies.
16. Men should be ready to take any risk, if the payoff is large enough.
17. A woman can be complete with or without a partner.
18. No wife is obliged to provide sex for anybody, even her husband.
19. Most women use their sexuality to get men to do what they want.
20. Most women play hard-to-get.
21. Women should break dates with female friends when guys ask them out.
22. Lesbians have chosen a particular lifestyle and should be respected for it.
23. Men have to expect that most women will be something of a prick-tease.
24. A real man can get any woman to have sex with him.
25. Women should be flattered when men whistle at them.
26. It is important that my partner and I are equally satisfied with our relationship.

27. Some gay men are good people, and some are not, but it has nothing to do with their sexual orientation.
28. Women instinctively try to manipulate men.
29. Most women will lie to get something they want.
30. Men shouldn't measure their self-worth by their sexual conquests.
31. Get a woman drunk, high, or hot and she'll let you do whatever you want.
32. Men should be in charge during sex.
33. If you're not prepared to fight for what's yours, then be prepared to lose it.
34. It's okay for a man to be a little forceful to get sex.
35. Women don't mind a little force in sex sometimes because they know it means they must be attractive.
36. Homosexuals can be just as good at parenting as heterosexuals.
37. Any man who is a man can do without sex.
38. Gays and lesbians are generally just like everybody else.
39. Pickups should expect to put out.
40. Some women are good for only one thing.
41. Women often dress provocatively to get men to do them favors.
42. If men pay for a date, they deserve something in return.
43. It's natural for men to get into fights.
44. Effeminate men deserve to be ridiculed.
45. All women, even feminists, are worthy of respect.
46. If a woman goes out to a bar for some drinks, she's looking for a real good time.
47. I do what I have to do to get sex.
48. Any man who is a man needs to have sex regularly.
49. Masculinity is not determined by sexual success.
50. Homosexuality is probably the result of a mental imbalance.
51. Nobody should be in charge of a romantic relationship.
52. Real men look for danger and face it head on.
53. A gay man is an affront to real men.
54. He who can, fights; he who can't, runs away.
55. Gay men often have masculine traits.
56. Women sometimes say "no" but really mean "yes".
57. I believe some women lead happy lives without having male partners.

Appendix A, Section 3
The Sexual Relationship Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Listed below are several statements that concern the topic of sexual relationships. Please read each of the following statements carefully and decide to what extent it is characteristic of you. Some of the items refer to a specific relationship. Whenever possible, answer the questions with your current partner in mind. If you are not currently dating anyone, answer the questions with your most recent partner in mind. If you have never had a relationship, answer in terms of what you think your responses would most likely be. Then, for each statement fill in the response on the answer sheet that indicates how much it applies to you by using the following scale:

- A = Not at all characteristic of me.
- B = Slightly characteristic of me.
- C = Somewhat characteristic of me.
- D = Moderately characteristic of me.
- E = Very characteristic of me.

NOTE:

Remember to respond to all items, even if you are to completely sure. Your answers will be kept in the strictest confidence. Also, please be honest in responding to these statements.

1. It would bother me if my sexual partner neglected my needs.
2. When I make love with someone I generally expect something in return.
3. If I were to make love with my sexual partner, I'd take that person's needs & feelings into account.
4. If a sexual partner were to do something sensual for me, I'd try to do the same for him/her.
5. I'm not especially sensitive to the feelings of a sexual partner.
6. I don't think people should feel obligated to repay an intimate partner for sexual favors.
7. I don't consider myself to be a particularly helpful sexual partner.
8. I wouldn't feel all that exploited if an intimate partner failed to repay me for a sexual favor.

9. I believe sexual lovers should go out of their way to be sexually responsive to their partner.
10. I wouldn't bother to keep track of the times a sexual partner asked for sensual pleasure.
11. I wouldn't especially enjoy helping a partner achieve their own sexual satisfaction.
12. When a person receives sexual pleasures from another, s/he ought to repay that person right away.
13. I expect a sexual partner to be responsive to my sexual needs and feelings.
14. It's best to make sure things are always kept "even" between two people in a sexual relationship.
15. I would be willing to go out of my way to satisfy my partner.
16. I would do a special sexual favor for an intimate partner only if that person did some special sexual favor for me.
17. I don't think it's wise to get involved taking care of a partner's sexual needs.
18. If my sexual partner performed a sexual request for me, I wouldn't feel that I'd have to repay him/her later on.
19. I'm not the sort of person who would help a partner with a sexual problem.
20. If my sexual partner wanted something special from me, s/he would have to do something sexual for me.
21. If I were feeling sexually needy, I'd ask my sexual partner for help.
22. If my sexual partner became emotionally upset, I would try to avoid him/her.
23. People should keep their sexual problems to themselves.
24. If a sexual partner were to ignore my sexual needs, I'd feel hurt.

Appendix A, Section 4

The Other-Concepts Questionnaire

Directions: Rate how accurately each of these words and phrases describes your romantic partner. Use the scale below for each item. Mark your responses in the spaces provided.

1	2	3	4
Very Inaccurate	Somewhat Inaccurate	Somewhat Accurate	Very Accurate

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ | Reliable | 22. _____ | Assertive |
| 2. _____ | Warm | 23. _____ | Keeps his/her word |
| 3. _____ | Often Depressed | 24. _____ | Smiles a lot |
| 4. _____ | Often Angry | 25. _____ | Feels guilty |
| 5. _____ | Anxious and worried | 26. _____ | Touchy and temperamental |
| 6. _____ | Sociable | 27. _____ | Demanding |
| 7. _____ | Appreciative | 28. _____ | Moody |
| 8. _____ | Often gloomy | 29. _____ | Well-liked |
| 9. _____ | Irritable | 30. _____ | Emotionally stable |
| 10. _____ | Bitter | 31. _____ | Kind |
| 11. _____ | Reassuring | 32. _____ | Encourages others |
| 12. _____ | Frightened | 33. _____ | Affectionate |
| 13. _____ | A leader | 34. _____ | Impatient with other's
mistakes |
| 14. _____ | Tense and jittery | 35. _____ | Sexy |
| 15. _____ | Enjoys talking to people | 36. _____ | Dependable |
| 16. _____ | Often feels blue | 37. _____ | High-strung |
| 17. _____ | Critical of others | 38. _____ | Practical |
| 18. _____ | Expects a lot of others | 39. _____ | Relaxed |
| 19. _____ | Has had an unhappy life | 40. _____ | Sensitive to feeling of others |
| 20. _____ | Dominant and forceful | 41. _____ | Impatient |
| 21. _____ | Stands up for his/her rights | 42. _____ | Fearful |

Appendix A, Section 5
The Significant-Other-Esteem Scale

Below there is a series of statements about your romantic partner's personal attitudes. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with these statements by marking the number that best describes your attitude or feeling. There are no right or wrong answers.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. _____ On the whole, I am satisfied with her/him.
2. _____ At times I think he/she is no good at all.
3. _____ He/she has a number of good qualities.
4. _____ He/she is able to do things as well as most other people.
5. _____ He/she does not have much to be proud of.
6. _____ He/she certainly seems useless at times.
7. _____ He/she is a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
8. _____ I wish I could have more respect for her/him.
9. _____ All in all, I am inclined to feel that he/she is a failure.
10. _____ I take a positive attitude toward her/him.

Appendix A, Section 6
The Other-Clarity Scale

Please think about your romantic partner and respond to the following questions by writing your answer in the space provided using the scale below.

1 - Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 - Strongly Agree

- ___ 1. My beliefs about my partner often conflict with one another.
- ___ 2. On one day I might have one opinion of him/her and on another day I might have a different opinion.
- ___ 3. I spend a lot of time wondering what kind of person he/she really is.
- ___ 4. Sometimes I feel that he/she is not really the person he/she appears to be.
- ___ 5. When I think about the kind of person he/she has been in the past, I'm not sure what he/she was really like.
- ___ 6. I seldom experience conflict between the different aspects of his/her personality.
- ___ 7. Sometimes I think I know other people better than I know him/her.
- ___ 8. My beliefs about him/her seem to change very frequently.
- ___ 9. If I were asked to describe his/her personality, my description might end up differing daily.
- ___ 10. Even if I wanted to, I don't think I could tell someone what he/she is really like.
- ___ 11. In general, I have a clear sense of who he/she is and what he/she is like.
- ___ 12. It is often hard for me to make up my mind concerning him/her because I don't really know what he/she wants.

Appendix A, Section 7a
INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX

The following statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes you by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter on the answer sheet next to the item number. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING. Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

A	B	C	D	E
DOES NOT				DESCRIBES ME
DESCRIBE ME				VERY
WELL				WELL

1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me.
2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.
4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.
6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease.
7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.
8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.
10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation.
11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me.

13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm.
14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.
15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.
16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.
17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.
18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.
19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.
20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.
21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.
24. I tend to lose control during emergencies.
25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.
26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.
27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.
28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

Appendix A, Section 7b
INTERPERSONAL REACTIVITY INDEX

The following statements inquire about your partner's thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations. For each item, indicate how well it describes your partner by choosing the appropriate letter on the scale at the top of the page: A, B, C, D, or E. When you have decided on your answer, fill in the letter on the answer sheet next to the item number. **READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING.** Answer as honestly as you can. Thank you.

ANSWER SCALE:

A	B	C	D	E
DOES NOT DESCRIBE MY PARTNER WELL				DESCRIBES MY PARTNER VERY WELL

1. My partner daydreams and fantasizes, with some regularity, about things that might happen to him/her.
2. My partner often has tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than him/her.
3. My partner sometimes finds it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.
4. Sometimes my partner doesn't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
5. My partner really gets involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.
6. In emergency situations, my partner feels apprehensive and ill-at-ease.
8. My partner is usually objective when he/she watches a movie or play, and he/she doesn't often get completely caught up in it.
8. My partner tries to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before he/she makes a decision.
9. When my partner sees someone being taken advantage of, he/she feels kind of protective towards them.
10. My partner sometimes feels helpless when he/she is in the middle of a very emotional situation.

12. My partner sometimes tries to understand his/her friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for my partner.
13. When my partner sees someone get hurt, he/she tends to remain calm.
14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb my partner a great deal.
16. If my partner is sure he/she is right about something, he/she doesn't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.
16. After seeing a play or movie, my partner has felt as though he/she were one of the characters.
17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares my partner.
19. When my partner sees someone being treated unfairly, he/she sometimes doesn't feel very much pity for them.
19. My partner is usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.
20. My partner is often quite touched by things that he/she sees happen.
21. My partner believes that there are two sides to every question and tries to look at them both.
22. My partner would describe him/herself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
23. When my partner watches a good movie, he/she can very easily put him/herself in the place of a leading character.
24. My partner tends to lose control during emergencies.
25. When my partner is upset at someone, he/she usually try to "put him/herself in his shoes" for a while.
27. When my partner is reading an interesting story or novel, he/she imagine how he/she would feel if the events in the story were happening to him/her.
27. When my partner sees someone who badly needs help in an emergency, he/she go to pieces.

28. Before criticizing somebody, my partner tries to imagine how he/she would feel if he/she were in their place.

Appendix A, Section 8a
Self-Disclosure Index

Please indicate how likely you are to discuss the following topics with your intimate dating partner on the following five point scale.

Not discuss at all

Discuss fully and completely

0

1

2

3

4

1. My personal habits
2. Things I have done which I feel guilty about
3. Things I wouldn't do in public
4. My deepest feelings
5. What I like and dislike about myself
6. What is important to me in life
7. What makes me the person I am
8. My worse fears
9. Things I have done which I am proud of
10. My close relationships with other people

Appendix A, Section 8b
Self-Disclosure Index

Please indicate how likely your intimate dating partner is to discuss the following topics with you on the following five point scale.

Not discuss at all

Discuss fully and completely

0

1

2

3

4

11. My personal habits
12. Things I have done which I feel guilty about
13. Things I wouldn't do in public
14. My deepest feelings
15. What I like and dislike about myself
16. What is important to me in life
17. What makes me the person I am
18. My worse fears
19. Things I have done which I am proud of
20. My close relationships with other people

Appendix A, Section 9a
Bem Sex-Role Inventory

Answer the following questions on the provided seven-point scales as they best describe you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
never or almost never true						Always or almost always true

1. Defend my own beliefs
2. Affectionate
3. Conscientious
4. Independent
5. Sympathetic
6. Moody
7. Assertive
8. Sensitive to others' needs
9. Reliable
10. Strong personality
11. Understanding
12. Jealous
13. Forceful
14. Compassionate
15. Truthful
16. Have leadership abilities
17. Eager to soothe feelings
18. Secretive
19. Willing to take risks
20. Warm
21. Adaptive
22. Dominate
23. Tender
24. Conceited

25. Willing to take a stand
26. Love children
27. Tactful
28. Aggressive
29. Gentle
30. Conventional
31. Self-reliant
32. Yielding
33. Helpful
34. Athletic
35. Cheerful
36. Unsystematic
37. Analytical
38. Shy
39. Inefficient
40. Makes decisions easily
41. Flatterable
42. Theatrical
43. Self-sufficient
44. Loyal
45. Happy
46. Individualistic
47. Soft-spoken
48. Unpredictable
49. Masculine
50. Gullible
51. Solemn
52. Competitive
53. Childlike
54. Likable
55. Ambitious
56. Do not use harsh language
57. Sincere
58. Act as a leader

59. Feminine

60. Friendly

Appendix A, Section 9b
Bem Sex-Role Inventory

Answer the following questions on the provided seven-point scales as they best describe your partner.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
never or almost never true						Always or almost always true

1. Defend my own beliefs
2. Affectionate
3. Conscientious
4. Independent
5. Sympathetic
6. Moody
7. Assertive
8. Sensitive to others' needs
9. Reliable
10. Strong personality
11. Understanding
12. Jealous
13. Forceful
14. Compassionate
15. Truthful
16. Have leadership abilities
17. Eager to soothe feelings
18. Secretive
19. Willing to take risks
20. Warm
21. Adaptive
22. Dominate
23. Tender
24. Conceited

25. Willing to take a stand
26. Love children
27. Tactful
28. Aggressive
29. Gentle
30. Conventional
31. Self-reliant
32. Yielding
33. Helpful
34. Athletic
35. Cheerful
36. Unsystematic
37. Analytical
38. Shy
39. Inefficient
40. Makes decisions easily
41. Flatterable
42. Theatrical
43. Self-sufficient
44. Loyal
45. Happy
46. Individualistic
47. Soft-spoken
48. Unpredictable
49. Masculine
50. Gullible
51. Solemn
52. Competitive
53. Childlike
54. Likable
55. Ambitious
56. Do not use harsh language
57. Sincere
58. Act as a leader

59. Feminine

60. Friendly

Appendix A, Section 10
The Relationship Assessment Scale

Answer the following questions about yourself and your intimate dating relationship utilizing the provided five-point scale.

1	2	3	4	5
Low Satisfaction				High Satisfaction

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?
2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?
3. How good is your relationship compared to most?
4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship? (reverse score)
5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?
6. How much do you love your partner?
7. How many problems are there in your relationship? (reverse score)

Appendix B, Section 1
Consent Form

Ohio University
Human Subjects Consent

Title of Research: The Prediction of Relationship Satisfaction: An Analysis of Partner- and Self-Perceptions

Principal Investigators: Melissa Lueken and Dr. Christine Gidycz

Department: Psychology

- I. Federal and university regulations require us to obtain signed consent for participation in research involving human participants. After reading the statement in II below, please indicate your consent by signing this form.

- II. Statement of Procedure:
 1. The purpose of these procedures is to examine the intimate partner relationships of university women. In this study, “intimate relationship” refers to a dating relationship that an individual has with another person, same sex or opposite sex. This project will evaluate how attitudes are related to dating experiences. The findings from this project will aid in our understanding of social and worldly issues, and will promote future research as well.

 2. Many questionnaires will be used to assess knowledge and attitudes on a variety of issues, including gender roles, dating status, dating satisfaction, and communication behaviors. Additionally, some questionnaires address personal characteristics. Some of the surveys are sexually explicit in nature. Please consider before participation whether you may be embarrassed, offended, or upset by the sensitive content of such materials. Participation is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time without penalty.

 3. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to fill out questionnaires on one occasion. Your participation will take approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. You will receive one experimental credit point toward your psychology class for each hour of participation at the end of the session.

 4. All questionnaires are confidential and will be identified only by numerical codes. You will receive a Subject Number at the beginning of the session. There will be no master list of names. Any information you provide to the experimenters will be kept confidential. However, the principal investigator is required to notify proper individuals in the event that information regarding future plans for injury toward oneself or others is disclosed by participants to the investigator.

 5. Although there will be no physical risks to the participants, it is possible that

you might experience slight psychological distress while completing the surveys. While there are slight risks, there are benefits to be gained from participation in this study. This study is beneficial to participants because they will earn credit for their psychology course. Participation in this study will also help researchers identify the factors that characterize the types of intimate relationships women and men experience in college.

6. I agree that known risks have been explained to my satisfaction and I understand that no compensation is available from Ohio University and its employees for any injury resulting from my participation in this research. Please be advised that no provision has been made to compensate for any injury sustained during participation in this study. Feel free to contact Melissa Lueken at 593-1088 or Dr. Christine Gidycz at 593-1092 if you have any questions.

7. I certify that I have read and understand the statement of procedure and agree to participate as a subject in the specific research described therein. My participation in this research is given voluntarily. I understand that I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which I may otherwise be entitled. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age.

Signature: _____ Print: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C, Section 1
Debriefing Form

DEBRIEFING FORM

Thank you for your participation in this research project. This study was designed to investigate how attitudes are related to individuals, their dating behaviors, and their satisfaction with their current dating relationship. Specifically, the study will investigate whether attitudes and behaviors of femininity and masculinity in both men and women are related to one's satisfaction with their current dating relationship. The information provided by these questionnaires will help psychology researchers and clinicians learn more about the relationship between these different constructs, particularly women's and men's college dating experiences.

As a reminder, all of your questionnaire responses will remain strictly confidential. If you have any further questions regarding the nature of this study or would like to request details of the results of the study, please feel free to contact one of the following:

Graduate Researcher: Melissa Lueken
Porter Hall - Office 44-K
593-1088

Faculty Researcher: Christine A. Gidycz
Porter Hall - Room 231
593-1092

In addition, if you are concerned about the study materials used or questions asked and wish to speak with a professional, or if you would like more information or reading material on this topic, please contact one of the following resources:

Ohio University Counseling and Psychological Services: 593-1616

Tri-County Mental Health Services: 592-3091

Careline (24-hr Hotline): 593-3344

Appendix D, Section 1a
Correlation of Variables for Men

	self masc	self fem	partner masc	partner fem	hypergender	self SD	partner SD
self masc	--	.08	.31**	.08	.19	.21*	-.06
self fem	.08	--	.15	.60**	-.14	.39**	.34**
partner masc	.31**	.15	--	-.03	.31**	.20*	.12
partner fem	.08	.60**	-.03	--	-.10	.31**	.30**
hypergender	.19	-.14	.31**	-0.1	--	-.04	-.20*
Self SD	.21*	.39**	.20*	.31**	-.34	--	.48**
Partner SD	-.06	.34**	.12	.30**	-.20*	.48**	--
Self emp	-.15	.34**	.01	.24*	-.15	.33**	.31**
self PT	-.06	.17	-.22*	.17	-.19	.26**	.09
partner emp	-.18	.17	-.08	.27**	-.14	.20*	.34**
partner PT	.10	.13	.07	.19	.06	.27**	.16
communal	.20*	.14	.15	.19	.05	.27**	.09
Exchange	.05	-.20*	-.03	-.18	.37**	-.27**	-.26**
ocpos	-.04	.27**	.20*	.28**	-.07	.22*	.33**
ocneg	.11	-.19	.02	-.11	.10	-.10	-.22
otherest	.08	-.10	.01	-.13	.08	.06	-.01
othercla	.20*	-.21*	.03	-.28**	.18	-.38**	-.34**
satisfaction	-.13	.36**	.09	.38**	-.2	.22*	.33**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Appendix D, Section 1b
Correlation of Variables for Men

	Self emp	Self PT	Partner Emp	Partner P T	communal	exchange	Ocpos
self masc	-.15	-.06	-.18	.10	.20*	.05	-.04
self fem	.34**	.17	.17	.13	.14	-.20	.27**
partner masc	.01	-.22*	-.08	.07	.15	-.03	.20*
partner fem	.24*	.17	.27**	.19	.19	-.18	.28**
hypergender	-.15	-.19	-.14	.06	.05	.37**	-.07
Self SD	.33**	.26**	.20*	.27**	.27**	-.27**	.22*
Partner SD	.31**	.09	.34**	.16	.09	-.26**	.33**
Self emp	--	.48**	.50**	.34**	.21*	-.19	.24*
self PT	.48**	--	.30**	.55**	.0001	-.28**	.17
partner emp	.50**	.30**	--	.46**	.04	-.30	.47**
partner PT	.34**	.55**	.46**	--	-.09	-.12	.45**
communal	.21*	.0001	.04	-.09	--	.05	.01
exchange	-.19	-.28**	-.30**	-.12	.05	--	-.38**
ocpos	.24*	.17	.47**	.45**	.01	-.38**	--
ocneg	-.20*	-.15	-.32**	-.41**	.19	.33**	-.56**
otherest	-.10	-.02	-.13	.03	.15	.14	.03
othercla	-.24	-.16	-.50	-.20	.03	.27**	-.33**
satisfaction	.02	-.12	.32**	-.06	.04	-.26*	.43**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Appendix D, Section 1c
Correlation of Variables for Men

	Ocneg	otherest	otherclar	satisfaction
self masc	.11	.08	.20*	-.13
self fem	-.19	-.10	-.21*	.36**
partner masc	.02	.01	.03	.09
partner fem	-.11	-.13	-.28*	.38**
hypergender	.10	.08	.18	-.20
Self SD	-.10	.06	-.38**	.22*
Partner SD	-.22*	-.01	-.34**	.33**
Self emp	-.20*	-.10	-.24*	.02
self PT	-.15	-.02	-.16	-.12
partner emp	-.32**	-.13	-.50**	.32**
partner PT	-.41**	.03	-.20*	-.06
communal	.19	.15	.03	.04
exchange	.33**	.14	.27**	-.26*
ocpos	-.56**	.03	-.33**	.43**
ocneg	--	.26**	.38**	-.27*
otherest	.26**	--	.39*	-.27*
othercla	.38**	.39*	--	-.56**
satisfaction	-.27*	-.27*	-.56**	--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Appendix D, Section 2a
Correlation of Variables for Women

	self masc	self fem	partner masc	partner fem	hypergender	self SD	partner SD
self masc	--	-.66	.27**	.13	.004	-.06	-.02
self fem	-.07	--	.21*	.47**	-.008	.15	.23**
partner masc	.27**	.21*	--	.02	.08	-.05	-.06
partner fem	.13	.47**	.02	--	-.08	.16	.33**
hypergender	.004	-.008	.08	-.08	--	-.13	-.02
Self SD	-.06	.15	-.05	.16	-.13	--	.63**
Partner SD	-.02	.23	-.06	.33**	-.02	.63**	--
Self emp	-.04	.35**	-.03	.20*	-.19	.39**	.21*
self PT	-.24*	.27**	-.01	.09	-.19	.20*	.30
partner emp	.05	.33**	.05	.44**	-.20	.25**	.14
partner PT	-.08	.25*	-.03	.37**	-.16	.25*	.12
communal	.15	-.09	.06	-.12	.12	.003	-.17
exchange	-.06	-.19	-.17	-.04	.26*	-.11	.06
ocpos	.05	.36**	.32**	.48**	-.10	.24*	.24*
ocneg	.08	-.02	-.01	-.18	.12	-.11	-.08
otherest	-.04	.06	.11	-.09	.07	.07	-.08
othercla	.06	-.21	.02	-.35**	.05	-.30**	-.32**
satisfaction	-.12	.27**	-.001	.27*	.11	.18	.30**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Appendix D, Section 2b
Correlation of Variables for Women

	Self emp	Self PT	Partner Emp	Partner P T	communal exchange	Ocpo	ocpos
self masc	-.04	-.24*	.05	-.08	.15	-.06	.05
self fem	.35**	.27**	.33**	.25*	-.09	-.19	.36**
partner masc	-.03	-.01	.05	-.03	.06	-.17	.32**
partner fem	.20*	.09	.44**	.37**	-.12	-.04	.48**
hypergender	-.19	-.19	-.20	-.16	.12	.26**	-.01
Self SD	.39**	.20*	.25**	.25*	.003	-.11	.24*
Partner SD	.21*	.03	.14	.12	-.17	.06	.24*
Self emp	--	.44**	.59**	.30**	.13	-.21*	.28**
self PT	.44**	--	.43**	.45**	.07	.02	.29**
partner emp	.59**	.43**	--	.62**	.09	.02	.46**
partner PT	.30**	.45**	.62**	--	-.02	-.03	.45**
Communal	.13	-.07	.09	-.02	--	.03	.03
exchange	-.21*	-.02	.02	-.03	.03	--	-.18
ocpos	.28**	.29**	.46**	.45**	.03	-.18	--
ocneg	-.19	-.17	-.12	-.25*	.11	.26**	-.54**
otherest	-.18	.005	-.05	.04	-.03	-.02	-.17
othercla	-.17	-.17	-.21*	-.26**	.20*	.25*	-.56**
satisfaction	.008	-.09	.05	.21*	-.10	-.16	.33**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Appendix D, Section 2c
Correlation of Variables for Women

	Ocneg	otherest	otherclar	satisfaction
self masc	.08	-.04	.06	-.12
self fem	-.02	.06	-.21*	.27**
partner masc	-.01	.11	.02	-.001
partner fem	-.18	-.10	-.35**	.27*
hypergender	.12	.07	.05	.11
Self SD	-.11	.08	-.30**	.18
Partner SD	-.08	-.08	-.32**	.30**
Self emp	-.19	-.18	-.17	.008
self PT	-.17	.01	-.17	-.09
partner emp	-.12	-.05	-.21*	.05
partner PT	-.25*	.04	-.26**	.21*
communal	.11	-.03	.20*	-.10
exchange	.26**	-.02	.25*	-.16
ocpos	-.54**	-.17	-.56**	.33**
ocneg	--	.38**	.59**	-.36**
otherest	.38**	--	.26**	.06
othercla	.59**	.26**	--	-.50**
satisfaction	-.36**	.06	-.50**	--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$