ABSTRACT

TITLE:	Memetics, Terror Management Theory, and Female Mate Selection
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ABSTRACT: Memes are theoretical cultural replicators. Memetics as a discipline may offer insights into human evolution, particularly as a biological explanation for culture. If memes are real, they should have played a large role in human evolution and should matter with regards to sexual selection. Terror Management Theory (TMT) offers insights into culture as well, positing that humans under fear of death will invest more heavily within their cultural icons. This experiment sought to discover the degree to which memes might influence mate selection in females. Participants were 56 women of mixed age and race from Fort Lewis College. TMT components were added to see whether or not a mortality salience (MS) prime would influence mate selection. Experiment was conducted through survey. Women were exposed to a MS prime (or a dental pain control) and then asked to rate the perceived attractiveness of three male profiles constructed by the experimenter. Results supported the Memetics component of the experiment. There were no significant results for TMT.