Mating Goals Moderate Power’s Effect on Conspicuous Consumption Among Women

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Abstract
This study aimed to use evolutionary psychology to explain conspicuous consumption’s relationship with mating goals among women. We used experiments to show that power moderates conspicuous consumption’s relationship with mating goals among women through an underlying relationship with women’s social comparison tendencies. In Study 1, the participants read a passage describing a young woman wearing a coat made by a conspicuous brand (vs. an ordinary brand) who aimed to attract a desired man (vs. aiming to guard against potential competitors’ attempts to disrupt her established intimate relationship). Participants in the conspicuous-brand condition were more confident that the young woman would succeed in mate attraction and guarding than participants in the ordinary-brand condition, suggesting the participants believed the conspicuous brands facilitated mate attraction and mate guarding more than ordinary brands. Study 2 manipulated the participants’ power states and mating goals and measured participants’ social comparison tendencies and conspicuous consumption index values. In the mate-guarding condition, high-power participants showed more inclination toward conspicuous consumption than low-power participants. In the mate-attraction condition, low-power participants showed a greater inclination toward conspicuous consumption than did high-power participants. Comparison orientation also mediated power’s effect on conspicuous consumption inclination. The evolutionary psychological basis for the above findings is discussed, and suggestions are offered regarding product marketing.

Keywords
women’s conspicuous consumption, power, mate-attraction goal, mate-guarding goal, evolutionary psychology

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Veblen (1899) defines conspicuous consumption as purchasing and displaying costly products to suggest wealth and social status. According to evolutionary psychology, conspicuous consumption may represent a means of competition in mate attraction. Some seemingly useless or disadvantageous biological characteristics actually attract the opposite sex and thereby promote reproductive success (e.g., a peacock’s tail); these are called conspicuous characteristics (Miller, 2009). The similarity between conspicuous consumption and conspicuous characteristics has motivated research aiming to explain conspicuous consumption in terms of evolutionary psychology and particularly in terms of mate attraction (e.g., Griskevicius et al., 2007).

Previous research on this topic has typically examined men, assuming that conspicuous consumption more strongly promotes mate attraction among men (e.g., Griskevicius et al., 2007; Janssens et al., 2011; Sundie et al., 2011). Women tend to favor wealthy, high-status men in order to maximize their own future ability to nurture their children (Trivers, 1972). Therefore, conspicuous consumption helps men attract mates (Hennighausen, Hudders, Lange, & Fink, 2016; Li & Kenrick, 2006). Priming men with mate-attraction goals increases their consumption of luxury and status products (Janssens et al., 2011). Mate preferences differ between men and women; specifically, fertility-related characteristics (e.g., age, physical health) matter more to men than does wealth or status. This makes displaying wealth and status a suboptimal mate-attraction strategy for women. Previous research has therefore assumed that conspicuous consumption is unrelated to mate
attraction among women (Sundie et al., 2011); however, women in fact consume large amounts of luxury products. Thus, existing research in evolutionary psychology has not adequately explained women’s conspicuous consumption (Wang & Griskevicius, 2014).

“Power” refers to individuals’ ability to influence or prevent influence from others (John, French, & Raven, 1959). Power does affect conspicuous consumption; for example, low-power consumers preferred conspicuous goods that signal high status to compensate for their feelings of powerlessness (Rucker et al., 2008, 2009). However, the link to evolutionary psychology and mating goals remains unclear. Humans have evolved to desire power and status (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). Previous research on power has addressed its role in human evolution (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013), yet few studies have focused specifically on its potential effect on women’s conspicuous consumption. Exploring how power and mating interact to affect women’s conspicuous consumption might help in understanding the adaptive function of conspicuous consumption among women.

Power has also been found to affect individuals’ social comparison orientation. High-power women are more likely to compare themselves to others rather than to themselves, whereas low-power women show the opposite pattern (Jin et al., 2014). Furthermore, women often engage in social comparison when they are pursuing mating goals (i.e., mate attraction or mate guarding). Finally, social comparison affects conspicuous consumption (Zheng, Peng, & Dai, 2014). Therefore, conspicuous consumption, social comparison, power, and mating goals are all predicted to be interconnected, and it is the aim of the current study to examine the pathways between each of these variables.

**Mating Goals and Women’s Conspicuous Consumption**

This study used the following definitions of “mate attraction” and “mate guarding.” The former refers to behavior directed toward attracting a desired mate. The latter refers to behavior directed toward guarding against rivals to one’s intimate relationship. Men typically use conspicuous consumption for mate attraction, whereas women use it for mate guarding (Wang & Griskevicius, 2014). Women must invest considerable time and energy nurturing their offspring; therefore, women tend to prefer mates who can reliably provide resources (Marlowe, 2003) and wish to avoid losing their mate to another woman (Geary, 2000). Accordingly, women engaged in mate guarding will aim to identify and monitor potential competitors (Maner, Gailliot, Rouby, & Miller, 2007; Maner, Miller, Rouby, & Gailliot, 2009). Men tend to directly challenge mating competitors, whereas women will rarely aim to disrupt an established relationship (Schmitt & Buss, 2001) and tend to defend their relationship by displaying their partner’s loyalty (Buss, 1988). Women tend to judge that the partners of women who wear conspicuous brands are more faithful than are those of women who wear ordinary brands; additionally, priming mate guarding significantly increases women’s conspicuous consumption (Wang & Griskevicius, 2014). In many cultures, men provide women with resources to show sincerity and loyalty (Jonason, Cetrulo, Madrid, & Morrison, 2009). Therefore, women’s possessions may partly reflect their partners’ investment and thereby indirectly reflect their partner’s loyalty (Heilman, Kaefer, & Ramenofsky, 2012). Women may thus signal their partners’ loyalty by wearing conspicuous brands. This constitutes an evolutionary explanation of conspicuous consumption’s association with mate guarding among women.

Women need to display men’s preferred qualities in order to attract a mate (Roney, 2003). Griskevicius et al. (2007) suggest that conspicuous consumption is a suboptimal mate-attraction strategy for women because conspicuous goods signal wealth and status, which is ranked lower in men’s than in women’s mate preferences; however, research on this point has typically examined male-preferred goods (e.g., luxury watches, grand houses, expensive pens) rather than female-preferred goods (e.g., clothes, accessories; Yuan, Zheng, & Li, 2013). Men use conspicuous consumption to display status and access to resources (Charles & Roussanov, 2007); however, no research has tested if women use it to maximize their attractiveness. The term “conspicuous consumption conviction” refers to women’s belief that they may improve their attractiveness through conspicuous consumption (Yuan et al., 2013). Women’s inclination to consume conspicuous clothes, handbags, and accessories appears to increase if mate attraction is primed (Hudders, De, Fisher, & Vyncke, 2014; Yuan et al., 2013).

**Power, Mating Goals, and Women’s Conspicuous Consumption**

Power arises from comparison and interaction between parties (Magee & Galinsky, 2008) and may therefore influence individuals’ social comparison orientation (Jin et al., 2014). High power causes individuals to place greater weight and value on the self and elevates their perceived self-competence (Rucker, Galinsky, & Dubois, 2012). Furthermore, high-power individuals also tend to show more interpersonal sensitivity and are more likely to pay attention to advantaged comparisons in order to fulfill their sense of entitlement (Mast, Jonas, & Hall, 2009). Accordingly, comparison with others tends to elevate high-power individuals’ perceived self-worth and promote feelings of satisfaction (Major & Testa, 1989), but elicits feelings of low self-worth and inadequacy among low-power individuals (Rucker, Derek, Dubois, & Galinsky, 2011). This may underlie low- and high-power individuals’ preference for self-comparison (i.e., am I better than I was before?) and other-comparison (i.e., am I better than others?), respectively (Jin et al., 2014; Mast et al., 2009).

Mating goals differentially affect women’s frames of reference for social comparison. Regarding mate guarding, women who compete for a single mate will tend to compare themselves with their rivals, thereby entering the other-comparison frame. High power also stimulates women’s
other-comparison orientation (Jin et al., 2014). High-power women are more likely to notice and respond to competition threats, which leads to social comparison and thereby promotes conspicuous consumption as a mate-guarding strategy (Wang & Griskevicius, 2014; Zheng et al., 2014). Regarding mate attraction, women typically benefit most from maximizing their attractiveness; this leads women to enter the self-comparison frame. Low power promotes self-comparison (Jin et al., 2014), particularly regarding improving personal inadequacies. Women commonly believe they can use conspicuous consumption (e.g., of clothes and accessories) to make themselves more attractive (Yuan et al., 2013). Therefore, low-power women aiming to attract a mate may engage more in conspicuous consumption than similar high-power women.

**The Current Research and Hypotheses**

A single woman may simultaneously engage in mate attraction and mate guarding; however, this is atypical. In this study, we compared the effects of women’s current mating goals (i.e., mate attracting or mate guarding) on their consumption.

Study 1 tested if women associate conspicuous brands with success in mate attraction or mate guarding. We assumed that mate-guarding and mate-attracting women used conspicuous consumption to signal their mates’ loyalty and to maximize their attractiveness, respectively. Therefore, Study 1 tested the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1:** Women associate conspicuous brands with higher success in mate-attraction goals compared to ordinary brands.

**Hypothesis 2:** Women associate conspicuous brands with higher success in mate-guarding goals compared to ordinary brands.

Study 2 tested if power moderates conspicuous consumption’s perceived relationship with women’s mating goals. We assumed that mate-attracting and mate-guarding women would preferentially engage in self-comparison and other-comparison, respectively. Additionally, we assumed that high and low power would promote other-comparison and self-comparison, respectively. Therefore, Study 2 tested the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 3:** Power positively affects women’s conspicuous consumption inclination in the mate-guarding group but negatively affects it in the mate-attraction group.

**Study 1**

**Materials**

Participants in the conspicuous-brand groups were told the overcoat was made by Burberry and read a brief description of the Burberry brand. Participants in the ordinary-brand group were told it was made by ONLY and read a brief description of the ONLY brand. The brands were introduced as follows.

Burberry is a world-famous luxury fashion brand with a traditional British style. Established in 1856, Burberry has become so much a part of British culture that Queen Elizabeth II and the Prince of Wales have granted the company Royal Warrants. Among its customers are the British royal family and celebrities from all over the world.

ONLY is one of the many brands established by the Danish fashion company BESTSELLER. Established in 1975, ONLY caters to the general public. Its clothes are welcomed by the youth throughout the world, not only for their fashionable design by excellent designers but for their reasonable prices. ONLY’s philosophy is to offer high fashion to common people.

**Procedure**

A 2 (brands: conspicuous vs. ordinary) × 2 (mating goals: attraction vs. guarding) between-subjects design was used. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four resulting conditions. The ordinary- and conspicuous-brand mate-attraction and mate-guarding groups included 30, 31, 30, and 32 participants, respectively.

Mate-guarding participants read a fictional passage about a young woman named Annie who has a boyfriend. Annie and her boyfriend were going to attend a party that night; an admirer of Annie’s boyfriend was also going to attend. Participants wrote down three suggestions to help Annie guard against the potential competitor in order to encourage them to process the imagined situation more deeply and thereby promote the manipulation’s effectiveness. In contrast, participants in the mate-attraction groups read a passage describing Annie as a young woman who wishes to attract a particular man. Tonight, she will attend a party that her desired mate will also attend. The participants wrote down three suggestions for Annie to attract her desired mate.

Participants were then told that Annie had bought the pictured overcoat and would wear it to the party. Participants in the conspicuous- and ordinary-brand conditions were told that the overcoat was made by Burberry and ONLY, respectively. Participants then rated Annie’s chance of success at mate attraction or mate guarding using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = very likely to fail, 7 = very likely to succeed). This was designed to indirectly measure the participants’ perception that the brands facilitated mate attraction and mate guarding. The participants also rated the overcoat’s conspicuousness using Veblen’s definition of conspicuous consumption (1899) on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = not at all conspicuous, 7 = highly conspicuous) in order to conduct a manipulation check by ensuring that the brand name attached to the overcoat had the desired effect.

**Study 2**

**Materials**

Participants were 123 female MBA students (age: 24–31 years; M_age = 27.98 ± 1.74) recruited through snowball sampling at two universities.
A 2 (power: high vs. low) × 2 (mating goals: guarding vs. attraction) between-subjects design was used. Participants were 172 women (age: 24–32 years; $M_{\text{age}} = 28.04 \pm 2.30$). The mate-attraction group consisted of 86 MBA students recruited by snowball sampling who had no boyfriend but had an object of affection in mind ($M_{\text{age}} = 27.89 \pm 2.13$). The mate-guarding group consisted of another 86 female MBA students who had a male partner ($M_{\text{age}} = 28.17 \pm 2.45$). No participants reported having a homosexual orientation. Participants were randomly assigned to a high- and a low-power group to create 4 subgroups of 43 participants.

### Results

#### Manipulation Check

Participants who were told that the overcoat was made by Burberry and ONLY gave higher and lower conspicuousness scores, respectively (Burberry: $M = 4.03 \pm 1.57$; ONLY: $M = 1.75 \pm .60$), suggesting that the manipulation was successful, $t(121) = 12.85, p = .000$, Cohen’s $d = 1.92$.

#### Dependent Variables

In support of Hypothesis 1, participants in the conspicuous-brand condition ($M = 5.59$, standard deviation $[SD] = .71$) were more confident that the character would succeed in guarding her mate ($M = 4.43$, $SD = .82$), $t(60) = 5.97$, $p = .000$, Cohen’s $d = 1.51$ (see Figure 1). In support of Hypothesis 2, participants in the conspicuous-brand condition ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .73$) were more confident that the character would succeed in mate attraction ($M = 2.53$, $SD = .82$), $t(59) = 7.39$, $p = .000$, Cohen’s $d = 1.89$ (see Figure 1).

### Study 2

#### Method

**Participants and Design**

A 2 (power: high vs. low) × 2 (mating goals: guarding vs. attraction) between-subjects design was used. Participants were 172 women (age: 24–32 years; $M_{\text{age}} = 28.04 \pm 2.30$). The mate-attraction group consisted of 86 MBA students recruited by snowball sampling who had no boyfriend but had an object of affection in mind ($M_{\text{age}} = 27.89 \pm 2.13$). The mate-guarding group consisted of another 86 female MBA students who had a male partner ($M_{\text{age}} = 28.17 \pm 2.45$). No participants reported having a homosexual orientation. Participants were randomly assigned to a high- and a low-power group to create 4 subgroups of 43 participants.

**Procedure**

The researchers were trained graduate students who were blind to the aims of the experiment. The experiment was conducted using the following protocol. Regarding the manipulation of power, we followed Jin, He, and Zhang (2014). Participants completed a leadership questionnaire and were told that their response would determine their assignment to roles of “manager” or “subordinate.” Managers and subordinates formed the high- and low-power groups, respectively. Participants’ responses were collected and participants were randomly assigned their roles. Participants were then informed that they would design a PowerPoint presentation in manager–subordinate pairs. The managers would monitor and assess task progress and control rewards provided to subordinates. We reinforced participants’ roles by telling managers that their questionnaire results had determined their assignment to the manager group and telling subordinates that they were not permitted to control task progress, carry out assessments, or present rewards. The researchers provided no comments to the participants throughout the duration of the experiment. Participants were then told the laboratory was not yet prepared, and that they would perform another task before designing the PowerPoint presentation in order to conserve time.

Before the second task began, to test the power manipulation, participants rated their currently perceived power using a 7-point Likert-type scale ($1 = \text{very low perceived power}, 7 = \text{very high perceived power}$). Participants in the mate-attraction groups were then instructed to imagine that they would attend a party with their desired mate. The participants wrote down three strategies that would help to attract their desired mate in order to encourage them to process the scenario deeply and thereby maximize the manipulation’s effectiveness. Participants in the mate-guarding groups were instructed to imagine that they would attend a party with their boyfriend and that a potential romantic rival would attend the same party. These participants also wrote down three strategies that would help to defend against their rival.

**Measures**

To measure participants’ conspicuous consumption orientation, we used the method by Wang and Griskevicius (2014). Participants were asked, “If you were to buy the following goods to wear to a party, would you choose a luxury brand or an ordinary brand?” Responses used a nine-point scale ($1 = \text{a very cheap ordinary brand}, 9 = \text{a very expensive luxury brand}$). The examined goods were clothes, handbags, shoes, and jewelry. Participants’ scores were aggregated across all goods types to create a conspicuous consumption index.

Participants then responded to the following questions using 7-point Likert-type scales: (1) How important is it for a woman to be more attractive to meet a man? (2) How important is it for a woman to maintain a better appearance to a man than her competitors? Questions one and two assessed participants’
self-comparison and other-comparison orientations, respectively, and permitted testing if power affects social comparison orientation among women with different mating goals. Participants also reported their personal average monthly income and expenses.

Results

Manipulation Check

Perceived power was significantly higher in the high-power subgroups (M = 4.88, SD = 1.33) than in the low-power subgroups (M = 3.41, SD = 1.24), suggesting that the power manipulation was successful, t(169) = 7.50, p = .000, Cohen's d = 1.14.

Control Variables

One extreme value for monthly income and expenses was discarded (>3 SDs from the mean); subsequently, mean age, income and expenses did not differ significantly between the subgroups, excluding the possibility they might significantly explain any differences identified between the subgroups, age: F(3, 167) = .33, p = .81; income: F(3, 167) = .41, p = .74; expenses: F(3, 167) = .72, p = .54.

Comparison Orientation

In the mate-attraction condition, low-power participants rated question one (i.e., being attractive; M = 5.79, SD = .74) as more important than high-power participants did (M = 5.05, SD = .91), suggesting that low power stimulates self-comparison among mate-attracting women, t(83) = 4.13, p = .000, Cohen’s d = .89. In the mate-guarding condition, high-power participants rated question two (i.e., being more attractive than one’s rivals; M = 5.95, SD = .79) higher than low-power participants did (M = 4.74, SD = .79), suggesting that high power stimulates other-comparison among mate-guarding women, t(84) = 7.12, p = .000, Cohen’s d = 1.53.

Conspicuous Consumption Inclination

A 2 (mating goals: guarding vs. attraction) × 2 (power: high vs. low) analysis of variance indicated that the main effect of power was not significant, F(1, 167) = .26, p = .612 (see Figure 2). However, the participants in the mate-guarding condition gave higher conspicuous consumption index scores than did those in the mate-attraction condition, F(1, 167) = 42.27, p = .000, η² = .20 (see Figure 2). In support of Hypothesis 3, mating goals and power interacted to significantly affect participants’ conspicuous consumption inclination, F(1, 167) = 14.20, p = .000, η² = .08 (see Figure 2). The simple-effects analyses revealed that in the mate-guarding condition, high-power participants gave higher conspicuous consumption index scores (M = 7.08, SD = 1.93) than did low-power participants (M = 6.20, SD = 1.20), F(1, 167) = 9.19, p = .003, η² = .05. In the mate-attraction condition, conspicuous consumption index values were lower among high-power participants (M = 4.98, SD = 1.30) than among low-power participants (M = 5.64, SD = .63), F(1, 167) = 5.29, p = .013, η² = .03.

Mediation Analysis

We conducted the mediation analysis using Preacher and Hayes’ bootstrapping technique (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Participants in the mate-guarding and mate-attracting conditions were analyzed separately. Regarding mate-guarding participants, power was entered as the independent variable (low power = 0, high power = 1), other-comparison orientation (measured by question two) as the mediator variable, and conspicuous consumption index as the dependent variable. We used an SPSS macro developed by Preacher and Hayes (2008) with 5000 bootstrap re-samples of the data with replacement. Other-comparison orientation mediated power’s positive effect on conspicuous consumption index, suggesting that high power positively affects women’s conspicuous consumption by stimulating other-comparison orientation among mate-guarding women (indirect effect = 0.14; bias-corrected 95% confidence interval: 0.06–0.83; the direct and total effects are shown in Table 1). Regarding mate-attraction participants, power was entered as the independent variable (low power = 0, high power = 1), self-comparison orientation (measured by question one) as the mediator variable, and conspicuous consumption index as the dependent variable. The analytical protocol was as above. Self-comparison orientation mediated power’s negative effect on conspicuous consumption index, suggesting that high power negatively affects women’s conspicuous consumption by suppressing self-comparison orientation among mate-attracting women (indirect effect = −0.16; 95% bias-corrected confidence interval: −0.62 to −0.13, the direct and total effects are shown in Table 1).

General Discussion

The present study sought to explain women’s conspicuous consumption behavior in terms of evolutionary psychology.
Through two studies, we examined the relationship between mating goals and women's conspicuous consumption (Study 1) and the moderating effect of power (Study 2).

**Women's Conspicuous Consumption and Mating Goals**

Study 1 demonstrated that women associate conspicuous brands with higher success in mating goals compared to ordinary brands. Previous research has examined men's conspicuous consumption in evolutionary terms (e.g., Griskevicius et al., 2007); however, this past research assumed that conspicuous consumption primarily functions to display wealth and status. The present research suggests that women believe conspicuous products can maximize their attractiveness and signal their partner's loyalty, thereby facilitating mate attraction or mate guarding, respectively. Overall, it appears that perceptions about mate attraction and guarding affect women's conspicuous consumption.

This research supports the suggestion that behaviors stemming from human evolution affect conspicuous consumption in women. The present findings may inform conspicuous brands' image-building and marketing efforts. For example, brands may present themselves as offering products that facilitate mate attraction by making women more attractive, or facilitate mate guarding by signaling devotion (i.e., when given as a gift). The present findings suggest that such strategies would motivate women to consume conspicuous brands' products.

**Power and Conspicuous Consumption by Women**

Study 2 showed that power moderates the relationship between mating goals and women’s conspicuous consumption. Acquiring power and status is a basic human drive (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013), and this drive affects conspicuous consumption (Han, Nunes, & Drèze, 2010). Although power’s direct effect on conspicuous consumption has been confirmed (Rucker & Galinsky, 2008, 2009), previous research did not test if it indirectly affects conspicuous consumption. In this research, Study 2’s results suggest that high and low power appear to increase conspicuous consumption among mate-guarding and mate-attracting women, respectively. We also found that social comparison orientation mediated between power and women’s conspicuous consumption. High power increased mate-guarding women’s conspicuous consumption inclination by promoting their adoption of the other-comparison orientation frame (i.e., by increasing women’s concern with being better than their rivals). Low power increased mate-attracting women’s conspicuous consumption inclination by promoting the self-comparison orientation (i.e., by increasing women’s concern with being better than before).

The findings of present research are novel and not suggested by previous research; additionally, they may inform conspicuous brands’ marketing strategies targeting women. Specifically, marketing for products that improve women's attractiveness should aim to suggest low power, whereas marketing for luxury gifts for women should aim to suggest high power.

**Theoretical Contributions**

Numerous social scientists assume that while several human behaviors might be adaptive, many others are probably not (Griskevicius & Durante, 2015). Previous research on consumer behavior examined conspicuous consumption in terms of materialism, status, power, and psychological compensation (Han et al., 2010; Lee & Shrum, 2012; Podoshen, Li, & Zhang, 2011; Rucker & Galinsky, 2008). Furthermore, these studies typically focused on the proximate factors that affect conspicuous consumption (e.g., consumers’ psychology and circumstances) rather than the ultimate factors (e.g., conspicuous consumption’s evolutionary history and functional utility; Griskevicius & Kendrick, 2013; Tinbergen, 1963). These ultimate factors are not the immediate triggers of the behavior, which makes people especially poor at recognizing them. With its grounding in evolutionary theories, the current research reveals some of the evolutionary factors underlying women’s conspicuous consumption behavior. It also expands our understanding of human behavior from an evolutionary psychology perspective.

Introducing the moderating effect of power on the relationship between mating goals and women’s conspicuous consumption is another novel contribution of this article. The acquisition of power and mating is both basic motivations that serve an adaptive function. However, prior theories in evolutionary psychology have mainly focused on explaining their major effects on human behavior in various domains; research focusing on how mating and power interacted to affect human behavior is rather scarce. This research might represent the
beginning of a new research area that focuses on the interaction effects of mating and power on various behaviors, which may ultimately enrich theories in evolutionary psychology.

**Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

This research used experiments to demonstrate that women’s association of conspicuous brands with attractiveness and status underlies their belief that conspicuous goods promote mating goals better than ordinary goods do. This was achieved by comparing women with different mating goals and manipulating power under laboratory conditions. It remains unclear if conspicuous consumption orientation is stable in women who maintain a particular mating goal over time. This research examined relatively young unmarried women; accordingly, the present results are unlikely to generalize to older or married women. Additionally, this research used nonrandom sampling to recruit participants, reducing the chance the sample was representative. Future research should therefore test the current findings using a population-based sample. This research examined conspicuous consumption among women with different mating goals. Future research should aim to test whether mating goals moderate differences in women’s moods and beliefs.

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