MATE SELECTION-Notes to be used with power point

There are various theories that have been identified to help us analyze the mate selection process. We will discuss each theory.

1. THEORY OF PROPINQUITY: Simply stated, this theory says we marry people we know. If you know only people from your high school, that's who you will marry. If you know only people where you work, your church, your college, etc., that is who you will marry.

2. EXCHANGE THEORY: Everyone evaluates his/her own worth and then goes to barter and see what he/she can find. The person thinks, "I am this good looking, this smart, and have this type of job. You are not as good; or better; or about the same, it is a fair trade." Many exchanges are trades. For example, looks for looks, money for money, etc. It is not uncommon to see pictures of people getting married that look like they could be brother and sister. Some exchanges may be for different qualities. A guy with lots of money but who is not very handsome may be able to exchange that money for a girl who is beautiful.

3. COMPLIMENTARY NEEDS THEORY: This theory says that you find someone who compliments your needs. A dominant person may find a submissive person. A quiet person would select an outgoing person, a nurturing person may find someone who likes to be mothered, etc.

    The message should be emphasized that couples really should not be opposites, but rather complimentary to each other. For example, if he is the life of the party, she should enjoy being part of a group, not be the center of attention. A good approach is for each spouse to learn to participate in and enjoy the likes of the other spouse.

4. TIME AND PLACE THEORY (Happy Collision): This theory says that as we travel through life, we will meet many people; but we will marry the person we are going with when the time is right. A person may have dated and broken up with several people that they might have married if the time had been right.

    Society tries to convince us that it is time to marry when: we finish college, a career is established, finishing high school (there is nothing else to do), or when returning from military or other service. (People generally marry about four years after they begin to date on a regular basis.) Some average ages are:
        United States—24.5 for males, 22.5 for females
        Utah—22 for males, 20 for females

    The place half of this theory relates to who is available in the area where you are at the time (goes to the same school, clubs, etc.). This theory says you will marry someone who lives in the same geographical area where you live. An example: There are limits on the amount of time and money a person will spend when commuting to work if there is work closer to home. **Hence, there are limits on how much time and money a person will invest in commuting to date someone when there are available people living nearby**. It has been estimated that 75% of the men and women who marry will live within five miles of each other. A person may have better than a 50-50 chance that their marriage partner lives within walking distance. An indicator of someone's real feelings or intentions is shown by being willing to give up money and time for the other person.

6. FILTER THEORY: This theory says that we put on a pair of glasses with a special filter that says "anyone I date must be at least this tall, of this religion, have a particular type of family, be a college graduate, be good looking, etc." People continue to put on filters until they look around and see very few people. Then they come up with the famous line, "There's NOBODY decent around here." There are three main categories of filters we use: biological, social, and psychological:

Biological filters
Most of you will filter out the same <u>sex</u> people (that eliminates half the people in the world from which you have to choose).

You can also eliminate people by age. If you are a 22-year-old man, you are probably not looking for a 54-year-old woman.
*   In six out of seven marriages, the groom is as old as or older than the bride and in two out of three marriages the difference in age is less than five years. The ages are even closer for men and women who are marrying for the first time.
*   Age difference does not effect happiness. Sometimes a very young male marries a much older female, or an older male marries a much younger female; their chances for divorce are not any higher.
    * The greatest threat to marriage is marrying too young.

Most states have laws regarding how close within the family lines a couple may marry. In Utah, the closest relative you may marry is your second cousin.

You may also choose to filter out those whose physical features are different from yours. Most people do.
        * People often marry persons who have similar body proportions such as height and weight (tall people marry tall people, thin people marry thin people, etc.).

  *   In America, males usually marry females who are their own height or shorter, while females usually marry males who are at least their own height or taller.
        * Persons with physical disabilities often marry persons who also have physical disabilities.
        * Physical attractiveness is what usually brings two people together and is the main determinant as to whether or not there will be any more encounters.
        * There is evidence that people choose mates whose physical attractiveness is roughly equivalent to their own.
        * Although physical attractiveness is important to both sexes in a relationship, males tend to place a greater emphasis on it than females. (Females tend to be more concerned with the male's status than his physical attractiveness.)

Social filters
Social class is a major determinant in mate selection. Most people marry within their own class or income level. When lines are crossed, it is usually the male who has married down.

There is an increased chance of marriage success when you marry within your own social class:
>   What did Cinderella have in common with the prince?
>   How well would a doctor and a waitress relate to each other?
>   Would a truck driver and a senator have trouble communicating?

Race is the least likely line to be crossed in mate selection. Ninety-nine percent of us marry within our own race. However, a mixed-race marriage has a much higher chance of success if they live in a community that is accepting of the marriage.

Religion is another important item to consider in mate selection. Most people marry within their own religion. There are two very good reasons for this: First, it reduces the amount of marital conflict and second, it lessens the complications of child-rearing. Another point to consider is the degree of religiosity of each partner. The more religious either partner is, the harder it is to be married to someone outside of the religion. Couples who profess no religion have a less likely chance of marital survival than mixed religions.

Education and intelligence are also important. Most men are more intelligent than their wives. Most men marry down or at least to an equal level of intelligence and education. Although similar levels of education and intelligence are desirable, they are not essential to the happiness of the marriage. The more education the couple has, the better the chances of a successful marriage. An ongoing education by both partners (formally or informally) is important to the success of the marriage.

Psychological filters
>   This area deals with the compatibility of the conscious and unconscious needs of the couple. These needs are usually based on childhood experiences. People often marry a person similar to the opposite sex parent. There is more than a grain of truth in the old song: "I want a girl, just like the girl, that married dear old Dad." This selection could be negative if they are the children of spouse abusers, alcoholics, etc., because they may marry the same kind of person. However, they may marry someone opposite of the parent because of their negative reaction to the parent. This is their chance to break the abuse cycle.

>   Do your personalities go well together? Some considerations:
>   * amount of personal space each needs
>   * type of love language
>   * seriousness or lightness of personality
>   * role compatibility
>   * interests and hobbies (be sure it is the person you are in love with, not just the activity)
>   * achievement orientation
>   * picky, meticulous, detailed, personality type

>   Give yourself this test:
>   1. Does this person make you a better person?
>   2. Would you rather be with this person than with anyone else in the world?
>   3. Could you spend the rest of your life with him/her?
>   4. Could you spend the rest of your life without him/her?