

FORMATION, MAINTENANCE AND BREAKDOWN OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS- See Appendix for issues and debates in Psychology	
The formation, maintenance and breakdown of romantic relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theories of the formation, maintenance and breakdown of romantic relationships: for example, reward/need satisfaction, social exchange theory
Evolutionary explanations of human reproductive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relationship between sexual selection and human reproductive behaviour Sex differences in parental investment
Effects of early experience and culture on adult relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The influence of childhood on adult relationships The influence of culture on romantic relationships (You will need to adopt a more analytical approach focusing on how culture influences relationships)

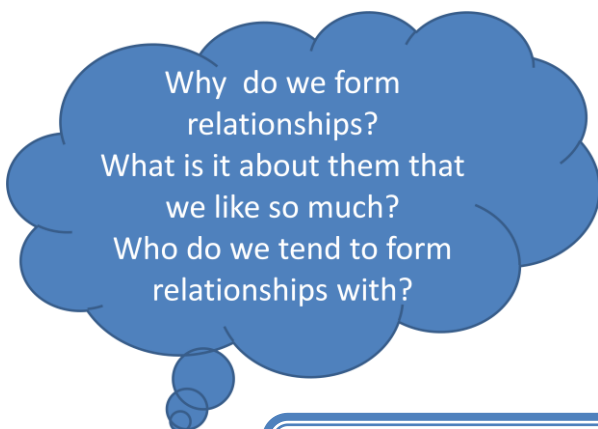
See Appendix for how to evaluate to gain top grades

Evaluative commentaries are in italics

Describe **and** evaluate **two or more** theories of the formation of romantic relationships. (8 marks + 16 marks)

Discuss theories relating to the breakdown of relationships (8 & 16 marks)

- Reward/need satisfaction
- Social Exchange Theory
- Duck and Lee's model of Relationship Dissolution



According to Argyle (1994): Direct Reinforcement

**Formation / Maintenance of Relationships:
Reward / Need Theory**

There are seven basic motives or needs, each of which can be satisfied at least in part by interpersonal relationships: When our needs are satisfied it is rewarding and we learn that X = feeling good

- B
- A
- D
- D
- A
- S
- S

Argyle(1994)

Needs/motives	How relationships help meet needs
Biological needs	Collective eating and drinking behaviours
Affiliation	Seeking the company and approval of others
Dependency	Being comforted or nurtured
Dominance	Making decisions for other people – being bossy
Aggression	Engaging in football violence
Sex	Flirting, making love
Self esteem	Being valued by others

Change this to make it meaningful to yourself



It is possible that the reason why we spend so much of our time in social relationships is that we find them rewarding (positive reinforcement) or that we find them unpleasant and unrewarding. This model tries to explain social



relationships in terms of the influence that reinforcing behaviour has over us, using conditioning as a basis.

This theory was developed by **Byrne and Clore (1970)** and is based on **learning theory: classical and operant conditioning**. Whilst classical conditioning is learning by association; operant conditioning is about learning by consequences. Therefore we are more likely to do things that are reinforced rather than do things for which we are punished. **Both classical and operant conditioning occurs together**. For example, we make a pleasurable association between two events, and then because the association was pleasurable we might repeat the similar behaviours.