



## Development and initial psychometric validation of the Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale

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### ABSTRACT

Verbal conflict is an unfortunate feature of some intimate relationships, and can have serious consequences for relationship members. Some previous research has investigated the content and correlates of men's partner-directed insults. No previous research has investigated the content or correlates of women's partner-directed insults, despite the fact that women also abuse their partners physically and non-physically. Here, we present the development and validation of a measure of women's partner-directed insults. In Study 1, we identified Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale (WPDIS) items using men's nominations of insults directed at them by their female intimate partner. In Study 2, we developed a final version of the WPDIS, and provided evidence for the discriminant validity of the WPDIS. Discussion highlights limitations and future directions for research investigating women's partner-directed insults.

### 1. Introduction

Conflict is common in intimate relationships (Catalano, 2000; Karakurt & Silver, 2013; Schafer, Caetano, & Clark, 1998; Straus & Gelles, 1986). Relationship conflict can be physical as well as non-physical, including verbal abuse. Data from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey document that about half of American women report non-physical abuse by an intimate partner during their lifetime (Black et al., 2011). Other research indicates that non-physical conflict, including verbal abuse and insults, occurs in nearly 80% of relationships (Carney & Barner, 2012). Despite the prevalence of this type of conflict, there is limited research specifically investigating the content and correlates of verbal abuse in intimate relationships.

The first study to investigate the content and correlates of partner-directed insults in intimate relationships led to the development of an inventory of men's partner-directed insults, known as the Partner-Directed Insults Scale (PDIS; Goetz, Shackelford, Schipper, & Stewart-Williams, 2006). This inventory was developed using women's reports of insults directed against them by their male intimate partners. The researchers conducted principle components analyses of additional data, using men's self-reports and women's partner-reports of men's partner-directed insults from participants in the United States and New Zealand to develop the final inventory of insults. The PDIS consists of 47 insults organized along four content domains: Derogating Physical

Attractiveness (e.g., “My partner told me that I am ugly”), Derogating Value as a Partner/Mental Competency (e.g., “My partner told me that I am stupid”), Derogating Value as a Person (e.g., “My partner told me that I am worthless”), and Accusations of Sexual Infidelity (e.g., “My partner accused me of having sex with another man”). The researchers demonstrated that the PDIS provides a valid and reliable assessment of men's partner-directed insults in intimate relationships (Goetz et al., 2006).

Subsequent studies have used the PDIS to test hypotheses derived from evolutionary psychological theory. McKibbin et al. (2007) argued that partner-directed insults may be used as a cost-inflicting tactic of mate retention, insofar as inflicted insults reduce a woman's self-esteem and cause her to assess that she can do no better than her current partner. The results supported the researcher's hypotheses: Men's performance of mate retention behaviors (Buss, 1988; Buss, Shackelford, & McKibbin, 2008) positively correlated with their use of partner-directed insults, suggesting that the use of insults is designed, in part, to retain a partner. In a subsequent study, researchers found that partner-directed insults predicted men's sexual coercion of their intimate partners (Starratt, Goetz, Shackelford, & Stewart-Williams, 2008). Miner, Shackelford, and Starratt (2009) investigated the relationship between mate value (value as a prospective long-term partner on the “mating market;” see Buss & Shackelford, 1997, for a discussion) and men's partner-directed insults. The researchers found that women's and especially men's mate value predicted men's use of partner-directed

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insults. The researchers argued that men who perceive that they have lower mate value than their partner resort to cost-inflicting mate retention tactics, including partner-directed insults, to retain their partner.

Research on partner-directed insults has focused exclusively on men's insults directed against their female partners. No research has investigated women's insults, despite the fact that women also abuse their partners physically and non-physically (Archer, 2000; Goetz et al., 2006). The contents of the insults that women direct against their male partners may differ substantively from the contents of the insults that men direct against their female partners, perhaps because the sexes differ somewhat in their preferences for and expectations about long-term partners (Buss, 1989; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Shackelford, Schmitt, & Buss, 2005). The objective of the current research is to develop and validate an inventory of women's partner-directed insults to complement the PDIS. In Study 1, we identified Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale (WPDIS) items using men's nominations of insults directed at them by their female intimate partners. In Study 2, we used principal components analysis on data secured from a new sample to refine the WPDIS. We also provide initial evidence for the reliability and discriminant validity of the WPDIS, testing hypotheses derived from research regarding men's partner-directed insults (see "Validation of the WPDIS" below for details of hypotheses).

## 2. Study 1: nominations of women's partner-directed insults

### 2.1. Method

#### 2.1.1. Participants

Participants were 40 men recruited from psychology courses at a university in the Midwestern United States. Participants were required to be 18 years or older and in a committed, long-term heterosexual relationship, or must have been in such a relationship in the past. Participants received extra credit course points for participating. The sample was 67.5% Caucasian, 22.5% African American, 2.5% Native American, and 7.5% "Other." Participants ranged in age from 18 to 64 years, ( $M = 26.9$ ,  $SD = 11.4$ ). 41% of the sample reported that they were currently in a committed relationship. The mean relationship length was 41.3 months ( $SD = 71.1$ ).

#### 2.1.2. Materials and procedure

Participants were recruited from undergraduate psychology classes. Participants who signed the consent form were instructed to complete the survey packet at home and to bring it to the next class meeting. The survey packet consisted of an Act Nomination Form (Buss & Craik, 1983). This procedure asks participants to nominate specific examples of a target behavior. This procedure has been used productively in previous research (e.g. Buss, 1988; Goetz et al., 2006; McKibbin et al., 2009). Participants reported insults directed at them by a current or former partner in a committed, long-term heterosexual relationship. The instructions stated: "Using the blank lines provided below, please list 10 insults that your current romantic partner or a past romantic partner has used towards you. For example, 'She called me stupid' or 'She said I was worthless.'" Participants were asked to nominate up to 10 insults. After completing the Act Nomination Form, participants completed a demographics questionnaire. Participants returned the survey to the researcher at the next class meeting in a sealed envelope provided to them. No identifying information was recorded. Survey materials and consent forms were stored separately to maintain anonymity.

### 2.2. Results and discussion

Participants nominated 360 partner-directed insults. The mean number of insults nominated by each participant was 9.2 ( $SD = 2.0$ ). To construct a preliminary inventory of women's partner-directed insults,

we eliminated insults with similar wording (e.g. "She said I was selfish" and "She told me I was selfish"), retaining one exemplar insult. We eliminated nominations that consisted of multiple insults (e.g. "She said her friends were right about me and that I was no good"). We also eliminated nominations that were esoteric, or unlikely to be reported by most men (e.g. "You have a penny anty [sic] job"). Following these eliminations, 93 nominated insults remained. These were used to construct a preliminary Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale, which we administered to a new sample of participants in Study 2.

## 3. Study 2: development and validation of the Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale

### 3.1. Method

#### 3.1.1. Participants

Participants were required to be heterosexual and at least 18 years old. The sample consisted of 650 participants recruited from undergraduate psychology courses at a university in the Midwestern United States. Of these, 405 (62.3%) were women and 245 (37.7%) were men. The average age of the sample was 22.7 years ( $SD = 7.5$ ). Three hundred and four (46.8%) participants reported that they were currently in a committed, long-term relationship. The average relationship length was 39.1 months ( $SD = 64.7$ ). The sample was 66.3% Caucasian, 13.5% African American, 0.8% Native American, 5.6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2.5% Hispanic/Latino, and 11.0% "Other." Participants received course credit for participation.

#### 3.1.2. Materials and procedure

Participants received a link to a preliminary version of the Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale (WPDIS). We provided the link through email or through online course shell postings. After affirming they were heterosexual and 18 years or older, participants received by email a form on which to indicate their consent to participate. After consenting, participants were directed to an online survey. The survey included the preliminary WPDIS, which consisted of the 93 insults identified in Study 1. Men provided reports of the frequency with which each insult had been directed against them by a current or former female intimate partner. Women provided reports of the frequency with which they had directed each insult against a current or former male intimate partner. Participants were instructed as follows: "Below, rate how often you (your partner) have (has) said each insulting thing to your partner (you)." The instructions were followed by the text *She (I) said...* then approximately 12 insults per online page. Participants reported the occurrence frequency of each insult on a 6-point Likert scale, with 0 = *Never*, 1 = *1 time*, 2 = *2 to 5 times*, 3 = *6 to 10 times*, 4 = *11 to 24 times*, and 5 = *25 or more times*. This scale replicates the response scale used by Goetz et al. (2006) for the Partner-Directed Insults Scale. The survey also included the Mate Retention Inventory-Short Form, a 38-item inventory of cost-inflicting and benefit-provisioning mate retention behaviors (MRI-SF; Buss et al., 2008; see also Results and discussion) and a brief demographic survey. After completing the survey, participants were debriefed and thanked.

### 3.2. Results and discussion

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin – KMO (0.931) and Bartlett's sphericity tests [ $\chi^2(4,278) = 29,420.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ] supported the suitability of the data for Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The former indicates the total variance accounted for by a common construct, with 0.50 suggested as the minimum acceptable value (Kaiser, 1970), whereas the latter indicates the existence of correlations in the dataset by testing the null hypothesis that all variables are uncorrelated. We then proceeded with a PCA without setting the number of components for extraction. We found 21 components meeting the Kaiser criterion (eigenvalue  $\geq 1$ ). However, a parallel analysis (Horn criterion) and a scree plot (Cattell

criterion) suggested eight and four components, respectively. Parallel analysis generates randomized data with the same parameters as the observed data (i.e., 650 participants and 93 variables). The Horn criterion suggests retention of components for which the eigenvalue in the observed data is greater than the associated eigenvalue in the randomized data (Horn, 1965).

Component extraction criteria suggested different numbers of components for extraction. The purpose of PCA is to identify the fewest components underlying a construct, and the structure with the fewest components included four components (Cattell criterion). Moreover, the four-component solution produced components with constituent items that loaded in a conceptually interpretable manner. We therefore performed another PCA, setting the number of components for extraction to four, and followed with *varimax* rotation. We considered a cutoff of  $\pm 0.40$  for component loadings (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Fifteen items did not load sufficiently highly on any component (e.g., “He was a mama’s boy”), and 13 items loaded at least  $\pm 0.40$  on multiple components (e.g., “He would not make a good partner”). We excluded these 28 items from further analyses. Additionally, we deleted 11 items that were ambiguous or redundant. The excluded items, although statistically acceptable, were not essential to the constitutive definition of the component on which they loaded. For example, the item “He was crazy” is ambiguous because it can be interpreted either as an insult or as a compliment, and the item “He was too self-centered” is redundant because it overlaps conceptually the item “He was selfish.”

We next calculated composite reliability scores for each component. Composite reliability is a better estimate of internal consistency than Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  because it incorporates weights of component loadings and error variances (Raykov, 1997; see Table 1). Component I included 20 items, such as “He was selfish” and “He was rude.” We labeled Component I “Abrasive Personality” because the constituent items involved “cost-inflicting” personality features (e.g., mean, selfish). Component II included 15 items, such as “He was spineless” and “He was too short.” We labeled Component II “Value as a Partner/Attractiveness” because these insults refer to a partner’s mate value and attractiveness (e.g., ugly, short). Component III included nine items, such as “He was lazy” and “He was a quitter.” We labeled Component III “Resource Potential” because the constituent items involved a partner’s potential to acquire resources (e.g., lazy, bad provider). Component IV included 10 items, such as “He was a nerd” and “He was silly.” We labeled Component IV “Insufficient Masculinity” because these insults refer to a partner’s lack of dominance or lack of traditionally masculine traits (e.g., nice, silly). The final version of the WPDIS included 54 items indexing four components. Item component loadings, component communalities ( $h^2$ ), Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ , component composite reliability scores, and descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 1.

### 3.3. Initial psychometric validation of the WPDIS

As part of the evaluation of the discriminant validity of the WPDIS, we correlated WPDIS component scores with reports of different mate retention behaviors. Mate retention behaviors are deployed to reduce the risk of partner infidelity or relationship defection (Buss, 1988), and are organized into two domains: Cost-inflicting (i.e., behaviors that reduce the likelihood of partner infidelity or defection by inflicting costs on a partner) and benefit-provisioning (i.e. behaviors that reduce the likelihood of partner infidelity or defection by increasing a partner’s relationship satisfaction; Miner, Starratt, & Shackelford, 2009). Women’s partner-directed insults may involve, for example, derogating a partner’s masculinity or discrediting his value as a partner, causing him to feel unworthy of the relationship or any other potential relationship. Cost-inflicting mate retention tactics reduce the risk of partner infidelity or defection by, for example, lowering a partner’s self-esteem (Miner, Starratt, & Shackelford, 2009). We therefore expect the scores on the components of women’s partner-directed insults to correlate

**Table 1**  
Component structure and loadings of the WPDIS items (n = 650).

Item	Description	Component loadings				$h^2$
		I	II	III	IV	
01	He was selfish	<b>0.75</b>	0.18	0.24	0.02	0.66
02	He was mean	<b>0.73</b>	0.08	0.17	0.14	0.59
03	He was rude	<b>0.73</b>	-0.01	0.20	0.11	0.58
04	He was a jerk	<b>0.72</b>	0.06	0.18	0.13	0.58
05	He was stubborn	<b>0.65</b>	0.01	-0.02	0.27	0.50
06	He didn't know how to listen	<b>0.65</b>	0.16	0.20	0.16	0.52
07	He would overreact	<b>0.64</b>	0.16	0.06	0.24	0.50
08	He didn't care about the relationship	<b>0.61</b>	0.21	0.31	-0.05	0.52
09	He acted childishly	<b>0.61</b>	0.12	0.32	0.27	0.56
10	He was difficult to talk to	<b>0.60</b>	0.23	0.19	0.11	0.46
11	He thought he was above everyone	<b>0.57</b>	0.35	0.09	0.10	0.46
12	He was unforgiving	<b>0.55</b>	0.24	0.03	0.07	0.37
13	He had no emotions	<b>0.54</b>	0.37	0.09	-0.04	0.43
14	He was dishonest	<b>0.51</b>	0.36	0.19	-0.01	0.42
15	He was negative all of the time	<b>0.49</b>	0.35	0.18	0.10	0.41
16	He was forgetful	<b>0.49</b>	-0.05	0.14	0.31	0.36
17	He never knew what he was talking about	<b>0.43</b>	0.19	0.25	0.33	0.40
18	I did not like his personality	<b>0.43</b>	0.29	0.35	-0.02	0.39
19	He was unfaithful	<b>0.43</b>	0.35	0.05	-0.17	0.33
20	He was impulsive	<b>0.42</b>	0.12	0.17	0.31	0.32
21	He was not as good looking as he thought	0.30	<b>0.64</b>	0.05	0.19	0.53
22	He was insufferable	0.17	<b>0.63</b>	0.20	0.24	0.53
23	No one would ever like him	0.17	<b>0.61</b>	0.21	0.05	0.45
24	He was the worst decision of my life	0.23	<b>0.58</b>	0.38	-0.10	0.54
25	He wasn't capable of having a lasting relationship	0.29	<b>0.56</b>	0.30	-0.07	0.50
26	He was bad in bed	0.12	<b>0.56</b>	0.17	0.11	0.37
27	My previous lover was better	0.04	<b>0.52</b>	0.08	0.17	0.31
28	He was spineless	0.12	<b>0.50</b>	0.39	0.18	0.45
29	He was boring	0.28	<b>0.50</b>	0.25	0.25	0.45
30	He was ugly	0.12	<b>0.50</b>	0.25	0.08	0.33
31	His genitals were too small	0.01	<b>0.49</b>	0.09	0.19	0.28
32	His muscles were getting small	0.05	<b>0.47</b>	0.14	0.45	0.45
33	I could do much better than him	0.33	<b>0.47</b>	0.26	-0.03	0.39
34	He was a tool	0.25	<b>0.45</b>	0.33	0.16	0.40
35	He was too short	0.04	<b>0.42</b>	-0.06	0.19	0.22
36	He had no motivation	0.27	0.14	<b>0.70</b>	0.25	0.65
37	He was a bum	0.25	0.26	<b>0.64</b>	0.06	0.54
38	He didn't make enough money	0.20	0.16	<b>0.63</b>	0.21	0.51
39	He was not a good provider	0.24	0.30	<b>0.59</b>	-0.02	0.49
40	He was a quitter	0.13	0.30	<b>0.58</b>	0.23	0.50
41	He was pathetic	0.26	0.24	<b>0.58</b>	0.18	0.50
42	He was lazy	0.35	-0.05	<b>0.49</b>	0.38	0.50
43	He couldn't be successful without me	0.07	0.26	<b>0.47</b>	0.12	0.31
44	My pet meant more to me than he did	0.06	0.35	<b>0.42</b>	0.22	0.35
45	He was a nerd	0.12	0.04	0.08	<b>0.60</b>	0.38
46	He was weird	0.29	-0.03	0.17	<b>0.59</b>	0.47
47	He was a dork	0.18	-0.06	0.11	<b>0.56</b>	0.36
48	He was too nice	-0.03	0.06	-0.08	<b>0.53</b>	0.30
49	He was a wimp	0.01	0.37	0.32	<b>0.49</b>	0.48
50	He lacked confidence	0.11	0.27	0.25	<b>0.46</b>	0.35
51	He was silly	0.37	-0.15	-0.02	<b>0.45</b>	0.36
52	He had no common sense	0.22	0.28	0.28	<b>0.43</b>	0.39
53	He was girly	0.05	0.25	0.28	<b>0.42</b>	0.32
54	He was too sensitive	0.22	0.21	0.08	<b>0.41</b>	0.26
	Eigenvalue	26.6	5.5	4.1	2.6	
	Explained variance (%)	28.6	5.9	4.4	2.8	
	Composite reliability score	0.911	0.853	0.811	0.765	
	Cronbach's $\alpha$	0.927	0.892	0.859	0.765	
	Mean	1.97	1.29	1.42	1.86	
	Standard deviation	0.88	0.53	0.69	0.72	
	Kurtosis	0.96	10.56	8.22	1.88	
	Skewness	1.17	2.98	2.61	1.22	

Note: The bolded numbers refer to the component loading of each item in its respective component.

**Table 2**  
Correlation matrix of WPDIS's components and mate retention behaviors (n = 650).

	CI	BP	AP	VPA	RP
Cost-Inflicting mate retention (CI)					
Benefit-Provisioning mate retention (BP)	0.52**				
Abrasive Personality (AP)	0.47**	0.30**			
Value Partner Attractiveness (VPA)	0.46**	0.07	0.60**		
Resource Potential (RP)	0.45**	0.13*	0.64**	0.72**	
Insufficient Masculinity	0.40**	0.27**	0.54**	0.49**	0.52**

\*\*  $p < .001$ .

\*  $p < .01$ .

positively with women's use of cost-inflicting mate retention behaviors (Hypothesis 1), and we expect that these correlations will be larger than those between scores on the WPDIS components and women's use of benefit-provisioning mate retention behaviors (Hypothesis 2). To assess mate retention behaviors, we used the Mate Retention Inventory—Short Form (MRI-SF; Buss et al., 2008), a 38-item inventory in which participants report how frequently they performed each mate retention behavior in the past year on a 4-point scale varying from 0 = *never* to 3 = *often*. The items are organized into two domains: cost-inflicting (22 items;  $\alpha = 0.90$ ) and benefit-provisioning (16 items;  $\alpha = 0.89$ ).

The results indicated that scores on all four WPDIS components positively correlated with women's use of cost-inflicting mate retention behaviors ( $r$ s varying from 0.40 to 0.52, all  $p$ s  $< .001$ ; see Table 2), supporting Hypothesis 1. Additionally, WPDIS component scores except “Value as a Partner/Attractiveness” positively correlated with women's use of benefit-provisioning mate retention behaviors ( $r$ s varying from 0.13 to 0.29  $p$ s  $< .01$ ; see Table 2). We next conducted Fisher's  $r$ -to- $z$  transformations to investigate differences in the magnitude of the correlations of scores on the WPDIS components with the two domains of women's mate retention. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the correlations between scores on the WPDIS components and women's use of cost-inflicting mate retention behavior were larger than the correlations between scores on the WPDIS components and women's use of benefit-provisioning mate retention behavior [specifically: Abrasive Personality ( $z = 3.71$ ;  $p < .01$ ), Value as a Partner/Attractiveness ( $z = 7.43$ ;  $p < .001$ ), Resource Potential ( $z = 6.10$ ;  $p < .001$ ), and Insufficient Masculinity ( $z = 2.64$ ;  $p < .01$ )].

#### 4. General discussion

In the current research, we developed and validated a measure of women's partner-directed insults. This measure complements a well-validated measure of men's partner-directed insults (the Partner-Directed Insults Scale – PDIS; Goetz et al., 2006). The Women's Partner-Directed Insults Scale (WPDIS) consists of 54 insults assessing four content domains: Abrasive Personality, Value as a Partner/Attractiveness, Resource Potential, and Insufficient Masculinity.

There is moderate overlap between insults on the PDIS and insults on the WPDIS. The PDIS consists of insults directed at a woman's infidelity, physical attractiveness, value as a partner, and value as a person (Goetz et al., 2006). The WPDIS consists of insults directed at a man's personality, physical attractiveness, resource earning potential, and masculinity. These sex differences and similarities in the content of partner-directed insults may derive from sex differences and similarities in preferences for and expectations about a long-term partner. Some of the most effective insults target attributes that contribute to a partner's mate value (Goetz et al., 2006), and there are well-documented sex differences in mate value. For example, women place greater value than do men on social status and resource-acquisition potential in a long-term partner (Buss, 1989; Shackelford et al., 2005). Insults directed at a man's dominance, status, or resource-acquisition potential therefore

may be particularly effective, as reflected by the emergence of the Resource Potential and Insufficient Masculinity components in the current research. Women place greater value than do men on sociability and dependability in a long-term partner (Buss, Abbott, Angleitner, Asherian, et al., 1990; Shackelford et al., 2005), likely reflecting women's greater desire for a partner who will share expendable resources and invest in the relationship. Insults within the WPDIS component of Abrasive Personality may derive from this preference. Finally, men and women value as a long-term partner someone who is kind and physically attractive (Buss et al., 1990)—although men more than women value physical attractiveness in a long-term partner (Buss, 1989). Items on the Value as a Partner/Attractiveness component may reflect these across-sex desires for a kind partner, as well as for an attractive partner.

The WPDIS is sufficiently internally reliable for use in research, with component reliabilities ranging from 0.77 to 0.91, and demonstrates predictive validity. Previous research suggests that men's partner-directed insults may function as cost-inflicting mate retention behaviors (McKibbin et al., 2007; Miner, Shackelford, & Starratt, 2009; Miner, Starratt, & Shackelford, 2009). Women's partner-directed insults may serve a similar function. Thus, we hypothesized positive correlations between women's partner-directed insults and their mate retention behaviors, especially their use of cost-inflicting mate retention behaviors. As hypothesized, WPDIS component scores positively correlated with women's use of cost-inflicting mate retention behaviors. The correlations between WPDIS component scores and women's use of cost-inflicting mate retention behavior were larger than the correlations between WPDIS component scores and women's use of benefit-provisioning mate retention behavior. Such findings suggest that the WPDIS may have utility in applied settings as well.

#### 4.1. Limitations and future directions

Participants were recruited from undergraduate psychology courses at a state university in the Midwestern United States, and the samples may not be representative of individuals outside this population. Researchers using the WPDIS in other contexts should consider modifying the WPDIS to reflect local languages and practices. For example, the item “My previous lover was better” may not be appropriate for inclusion as an insult directed by women against a male partner in cultures that forbid or strongly discourage premarital sexual activity. Additionally, we did not explicitly define certain insult terms (e.g., “tool”, “dork”, or “jerk”) but instead presumed that participants understood these terms as intended. Given that participants in Study 2 were recruited from the same population as those in Study 1, this assumption is reasonable. However, future research might investigate this assumption empirically.

Study 2 secured women's self-reports and men's partner-reports of women's partner-directed insults. These data were not secured from matched members of couples—that is, the samples were independent. Thus, we cannot address the accuracy of the reports of insults. Future researchers may wish to consider obtaining dyadic data, which would afford accuracy assessments.

Because there are no previous studies that specifically investigated the content of women's partner-directed insults, there are several avenues for future research, in addition to those already noted. For example, future research may collect both self-reports and partner-reports from both members of a couple in order to cross-validate responses on the WPDIS. Future research might also investigate the relationships between scores on the WPDIS and other variables associated with mate retention behavior. For example, the current research suggests that items on the WPDIS are associated with cost-inflicting mate retention behavior. Previous research (e.g., McKibbin, Miner, Shackelford, Ehrke, & Weekes-Shackelford, 2014) demonstrated a negative relationship between men's emotional stability and men's cost-inflicting mate retention, as well as a positive relationship between men's agreeableness and men's benefit-provisioning mate retention. Future research might



investigate whether a similar relationship exists between women's partner-directed insults and women's personality characteristics. Additionally, future research may also investigate whether negative emotionality or personality traits such as neuroticism mediate the relationship between the use of cost-inflicting mate retention and the deployment of insults. Relative mate value predicts the use of partner-directed insults by men against women. Women mated to men of lower relative mate value report that their partners direct more insults at them (Miner, Shackelford, & Starratt, 2009). A similar relationship may obtain for women's partner-directed insults. With these future research directions in mind, the WPDIS may offer a useful new tool for researchers investigating conflict in intimate relationships.

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