

## **Abstract**

Mate preferences are a multidimensional set of mental representations about the characteristics of a potential partner. The aim of this theoretical work is to present the current state of knowledge in the field of inheritance of mate preferences. While there have been several studies that have attempted to estimate the contribution of genetic components and (shared and non-shared) environment to mate preferences and mate choice, the current research suggests the key role of gene-environment interactions. This thesis provides a brief introduction to behavioral genetics and introduces the basic principles of heritability of mate preferences. All studies previously conducted on humans are dealt with in greater detail. However, the environment appears to play a more significant role than direct genetic influences. Consequently, other mechanisms of ontogeny of mate preferences, of which this environment may be composed (i.e. imprinting-like effect, associative learning, social learning, active parental influence on mate choice), are presented. The thesis is concluded with a synthesis of findings on individual mechanisms of the emergence and development of mate preferences and their potential interactions. Each mechanism may explain a relatively small part of the emergence of mate preferences, yet they overlap and interact to a considerable extent, and therefore it is necessary to consider them in their mutual relations.

**Key Words:** mate preferences, mate choice, behavioral genetics, heritability, gene-environment interactions