

## HEIGHT AND JEALOUSY OVER PARTNER'S EX AND A NEW RIVAL AMONG COUPLED MEN AND WOMEN

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**Abstract.** Recent studies suggest that body height has an effect on the intensity of jealousy among men and women. Since short men and both short and tall women are regarded as less attractive, they could be at greater risk of being cheated by their partners and therefore more jealous. Numerous studies have documented sex differences in jealousy about a partner's sexual and emotional infidelity with a person of the opposite sex. However, the partner's ex as a rival has been neglected in the literature. Therefore, in this study the relationships between height and jealousy about two types of infidelity among 112 heterosexual men and 314 women were investigated. Infidelity scenarios included two types of rival: new rival and partner's ex. As expected on the basis of prior studies, men were more jealous of sexual infidelity and women of emotional infidelity. Both sexes reported greater jealousy over a new rival than over partner's ex. Among men, there were no relationships between height and jealousy, while among women, significant linear and curvilinear relationships were found for sexual infidelity with an ex-girlfriend. Jealousy was lowest among tall women and highest among short and medium-height women. The results were interpreted within the framework of evolutionary psychology.

**Keywords:** jealousy, height, emotional infidelity, sexual infidelity, rival

### INTRODUCTION

Jealousy is defined as a negative response to actual, imagined or expected emotional or sexual involvement of the partner with someone else (BUUNK and BRINGLE 1987). It elicits behaviors intended to deter rivals and maintain the existing relationship (BUSS and SCHMITT 1993). According to the theory of parental investment (TRIVERS 1972), men and women have faced different adaptive problems, so they have developed different adaptive mechanisms regarding mate guarding. Men have been faced with an adaptive problem of paternity certainty, since fertilization occurs in the female body. This has led to increased sensitivity in men (relative to women) to sexual infidelity. On the other hand, women have been at greater risk of losing their partner's investment

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and resources, so, compared to men, they have developed greater sensitivity to emotional infidelity. Sex differences in jealousy have been documented in different cultures (BUSS et al. 1999; BRASE, CAPRAR and VORACEK 2004; BUUNK et al. 1996; FERNANDEZ et al. 2006; GEARY et al. 1995; MELLGREN et al. 2010; SOUZA et al. 2006) using forced-choice methods (BUSS et al. 1992; DESTENO et al. 2002; KUHLE, SMEDLEY and SCHMITT 2009; PAVELA and ŠIMIĆ 2012; SCHÜTZWOHL 2004; TREGER and SPRECHER 2011; WIEDERMAN and KENDALL 1999), continuous scales (PIETRZAK et al. 2002; SCHÜTZWOHL 2007) and physiological measures (PIETRZAK et al. 2002).

Body height is one of the physical characteristics that can play a role in mate selection. Recent studies suggest that it could moderate the intensity of jealousy within each sex (BREWER and RILEY 2009; BUUNK et al. 2008; BUUNK et al. 2009). If somebody possesses attractive physical characteristics that the opposite sex seeks during mate selection, then a lower level of jealousy would be reported. On the other hand, not having desirable characteristics may lead to a greater risk of being cheated by one's partner. In this way, a greater sensitivity to potential infidelity scenarios may be expected.

Male height is positively associated with indicators of genetic quality (MANNING 1995), as well as with higher overall income (JUDGE and CABLE 2004) and authority status (STULP et al. 2012). Taller men are also perceived as more dominant (MONTEPARE 1995) and they are more likely to be winners in physical fights (SELL et al. 2009). What is more interesting, before political elections, supporters of a given candidate estimate him as taller than his opponents (SOROKOWSKI 2010). There is also evidence that tall men are regarded as more attractive (KURZBAN and WEEDEN 2005; PAWLOWSKI 2003). They also have a greater number of children (MUELLER and MAZUR 2001), meaning that they have greater reproductive success than short men. Considering the relationship between male height and attractiveness, BUUNK et al. (2008) proposed that partners of taller men have less reason to cheat, which implies that taller men are at lower risk of cuckoldry. Besides, attractive men might have a greater ability to replace a current partner, which might influence their levels of jealousy. Consistent with this, BUUNK et al. (2008) found a negative linear relationship between male height and global jealousy. Furthermore, tall men are less likely to report jealous behaviors and cognitions such as suspicion and concern about potential infidelity (BREWER and RILEY 2009). BREWER and RILEY (2010) also demonstrated that men with greater relative height in relation to their partner, i.e. men with greater sexual dimorphism in stature (SDS), reported lower levels of cognitive and behavioral jealousy. It is possible that increased jealous cognitions and behaviors are more adaptive for short men, who are at greater risk of cuckoldry.

Fewer studies have investigated the effect of height on jealousy among women. It is assumed that female height has a somewhat different moderating effect on jealousy than male height, because women of average height are more attractive to men than short or tall ones (BUUNK et al. 2008). They are also more symmetrical (SILVENTOINEN, LAHELMA and RAHKONEN 1999) and less likely to get ill (MANNING 1995). In contrast, taller women are more prone to developing depressive symptoms (BRUINSMA et al. 2006) and they are at greater risk of developing cancer (GREEN et al. 2011). Since short and tall women are less attractive to the opposite sex, they could be at greater risk of being cheated by their partners, which implies a greater level of jealousy. Previous studies have found that women of above- and below-average height report increased levels of global jealousy (BUUNK et al. 2008), as well as reactive and possessive jealousy (BUUNK et al. 2009).

However, none of these studies explored a height effect on jealousy regarding type of infidelity (sexual or emotional). There is reason to assume that physical characteristics such as height would have different effects on jealousy evoked by sexual and emotional infidelity. Compared to emotional infidelity, sexual infidelity might be more closely related to physical appearance of the opposite sex. This relation is assumed, because both sexes focus more on physical desirability when evaluating the opposite sex for a sexual relationship than an emotional one (REGAN et al. 2000). LI and KENRICK (2006) found that both sexes prioritize physical attractiveness for short-term relationships. Both sexes also reported that the main reason why they have had or considered a sexual relationship was being physically attracted. Besides that, some studies imply that women's interest in extra-pair relationships is negatively related to the physical attractiveness of their current partner (HASELTON and GANGESTAD 2006). Since height is one of the aspects of physical attraction, it could be expected that it would be related to jealousy about sexual infidelity and less related to jealousy about emotional infidelity.

Nevertheless, in previous studies (e.g. BUSS et al. 1999; KUHLE, SMEDLEY and SCHMITT 2009; PAVELA and ŠIMIĆ 2012), sex differences in jealousy were investigated using infidelity scenarios in which the partner became (sexually or emotionally) interested in someone else. In those studies, subjects imagined an unspecific rival. Besides jealousy over an unspecific rival, in this study we wanted to investigate sex differences in jealousy over a more specific rival as well. There are numerous anecdotal examples of jealousy over a partner's ex. At this date, Internet search engines provide over 15 million different sites with suggestions, personal experiences, offers of help, psychotherapeutic advice and tips on how to deal with jealousy over a partner's ex. At the same time, the scientific literature is scarce. The small body of literature suggests that ex-partners may be considered as desirable relationship alternatives and therefore potential

threats (SPIELMAN et al. 2012). FITNESS and FLETCHER (1993) found that, among married couples, jealousy is elicited when a partner pays attention or gives time and support to a member of the opposite sex, which is especially pronounced when this member of the opposite sex is the partner's ex-spouse. Moreover, previous studies have reported that one of the triggers of jealousy is ambiguous situations involving contact by a present partner with his/her ex-partner (MUISE, CHRISTOFIDES and DESMARAIS 2009; SHEETS, FREDENDALL and CLAYPOOL 1997). SHEETS et al. (1997) found that partners tend to intentionally make references to ex-partners to provoke jealousy in present partners. This implies that a partner's ex could be regarded as a potential threat to a current relationship. Along with this, infidelity with an ex-partner includes the possibility and threat of (re)establishing an emotional bond (MESKÓ and LÁNG 2013). Because of this, an ex-partner could provoke greater jealousy than an un-specific new rival. This assumption was confirmed in the study by CANN and BAUCOM (2004).

Following previous studies, a height effect on jealousy in hypothetical situations of partners' sexual and emotional interest in the two types of rival, a new rival and partner's ex, were investigated among men and women who were involved in a romantic relationship or married.

On the basis of previous findings, we started with several assumptions. First, men's greater sensitivity to sexual infidelity and women's greater sensitivity to emotional infidelity, were assumed, regardless of rival type (BUSS et al. 1999; PAVELA and ŠIMIĆ 2012; PIETRZAK et al. 2002). Second, it was assumed that the partner's ex would provoke higher intensity of jealousy than a new rival. Third, since height is a correlate of physical attraction, a height effect on jealousy over sexual infidelity, but not emotional infidelity, was assumed. Less attractive individuals (short men and short and tall women) could be more jealous in a situation of sexual infidelity for both rival types.

## METHOD

### Subjects

Subjects were recruited through an announcement posted on Internet pages [www.biologija.com.hr](http://www.biologija.com.hr) and [www.edusex.org](http://www.edusex.org). An additional sample was recruited with an e-mail announcement sent to all the psychology students' associations in Croatia. A total of 112 heterosexual men, aged between 19 and 35 ( $M = 26.65$ ,  $SD = 3.96$ ) and 314 heterosexual women, aged between 19 and 34 ( $M = 24.56$ ,  $SD = 3.12$ ) took part in this study. The participation was voluntary.

Mean height for men was 181.38 cm ( $SD = 6.38$ ) and for women 168.81 cm ( $SD = 5.72$ ). A total of 47 subjects were married, while 379 were involved in romantic relationships at least one month.<sup>1</sup>

## Procedure

Ethical approval for this research was obtained from the *Committee for ethical issues and research* at the Department of Psychology at the University of Zadar.

The procedure was set online, using the *Google Drive* application. At the beginning of the procedure, subjects were given the general aim of the study, which was described as an investigation of jealousy in intimate relationships. They were also given an assurance guaranteeing anonymity of their answers. They also had an opportunity to contact the authors for feedback or with any questions and those who did were debriefed about the purpose of the study. Subjects were informed that they could stop answering the questions at any time, in which case their answers would not be recorded. After they agreed to proceed, they filled out a questionnaire containing autobiographical questions (sex, age, sexual orientation, height in centimeters). Subjects also reported their relationships status by choosing one of the following options: in a relationship, married, single, divorced or widowed.

Following the original procedure for assessing jealousy over sexual and emotional infidelity (BUSS et al. 1992) regardless of type of rival, subjects were instructed as follows: *“Please think of a serious committed romantic relationship that you have had in the past, that you currently have, or that you would like to have.”* The general instruction for infidelity with an unspecific rival was: *“Please imagine that you discover that the person with whom you’ve been seriously involved has become interested in some other person of the opposite sex.”* For the situation of sexual infidelity, the instruction was as follows: *“How jealous would you feel if your partner had a sexual relationship with some other person of the opposite sex, with no emotional involvement?”* For the emotional infidelity scenario, the instruction was: *“How jealous would you feel if your partner formed a deep emotional attachment with some other person of the opposite sex, with no sexual involvement?”* For the partner’s ex as rival, the instructions were identical, except that subjects were first instructed to imagine their partner being still interested in his/her ex-partner. For the sexual infidelity scenario subjects were asked: *“How jealous would you feel if your partner is still having a sexual relationship with his/her ex, with no emotional involvement?”* For the emotional infidelity scenario, subjects were asked: *“How jealous would you feel if your partner still has a deep emotional attachment with his/her ex, with no sexual involvement?”* Subjects rated the intensity of

jealousy on a 7-point scale (from 0 – *not at all jealous* to 6 – *maximum jealousy*) for both infidelity types and for both rivals.

## RESULTS

In accordance with KLINE's (2011) criteria of normal distribution, height in centimeters and intensity of jealousy over sexual and emotional infidelity were normally distributed ( $SI < 3$  and  $KI < 8$ ). First, differences in jealousy between married subjects and those in relationships were examined. *T*-tests did not reveal any significant differences in jealousy between two groups of subjects in the situations of sexual and emotional infidelity with a new rival and a former partner (all  $ps > .05$ ). Based on this, in further analysis, data from married subjects and those in a relationship were analyzed together. Furthermore, we investigated the relationships between subject's age and intensities of jealousy. A negative correlation was found between the age and intensity of jealousy over sexual ( $r = -.10, p = .03$ ) and emotional infidelity ( $r = -.12, p = .01$ ) with a new rival and emotional infidelity with a former partner ( $r = -.19, p = .00$ ). Since men were older than women ( $t = 5.67; df = 424, p = .00$ ), the effects of sex, rival type and type of infidelity on intensity of jealousy were tested using analysis of covariance, in which the subjects' age was introduced as a covariate.

There were no correlations between subject's age and height among men and women (all  $ps > .05$ ). Regression analyses were used to test linear and curvilinear relationships between height and jealousy.

Intensities of jealousy over sexual and emotional infidelity and overall jealousy (sum scores of both types of infidelity) are shown in *Table 1*.

*Table 1.* Intensity of jealousy over sexual and emotional infidelity and overall jealousy

	Rival	Infidelity type		
		Sexual <i>M (SD)</i>	Emotional <i>M (SD)</i>	Overall <i>M (SD)</i>
Men	New	5.32 (1.89)	5.12 (1.74)	10.44 (3.30)
	Partner's ex	5.22 (1.81)	4.88 (1.93)	10.10 (3.44)
Women	New	5.49 (1.57)	6.03 (1.26)	11.52 (2.46)
	Partner's ex	5.39 (1.52)	5.78 (1.48)	11.17 (2.69)

The intensity of jealousy ratings were evaluated in a 2 (subject's sex)  $\times$  2 (rival type)  $\times$  2 (infidelity type) analysis of covariance, with repeated measures across the rival and infidelity types and subject's age as a covariate. Following Langsrud's (2003) recommendations, Type II sums of squares were used to control for any possible confound due to unequal sample size regarding subject's sex. After controlling for subject's age, the main effects of subject's

sex [ $F(1,423) = 10.10, p = .00, \eta_p^2 = .02$ ] and type of a rival [ $F(1,423) = 8.63, p = .00, \eta_p^2 = .02$ ] were significant. Interaction of subject's sex and type of infidelity was also significant [ $F(1,423) = 30.62, p = .00, \eta_p^2 = .07$ ]. Compared to men, women reported higher levels of jealousy. Compared to infidelity involving a partner's ex, infidelity involving a new rival induced higher levels of jealousy for both sexes. Significant interaction of subject's sex and type of infidelity indicated that women reported greater jealousy over emotional than sexual infidelity, whereas men reported greater jealousy over sexual than emotional infidelity. Moreover, women reported greater jealousy over emotional infidelity than men (see *Table 1*). However, sex differences in jealousy over sexual infidelity were not significant. It is possible that the non-significant sex differences in that situation are due to women's greater overall jealousy, which 'masked' the sex differences for the sexual infidelity scenario. To further test this, we introduced a relative measure of jealousy over sexual and emotional infidelity, by calculating the ratio between jealousy over sexual infidelity and overall jealousy for each subject. In this way we obtained the proportion of sexual jealousy in overall jealousy, while the rest of the proportion relates to emotional jealousy. Further, we tested sex differences in the proportion of sexual jealousy in overall jealousy using *t*-test for independent samples. As expected, the proportion of sexual jealousy was higher among men than women ( $t(424) = -5.51, p = .00, d = .61$ ). Since  $1 - q_{\text{sexual}} = p_{\text{emotional}}$ , the results showed the opposite pattern for women, i.e. a greater proportion of emotional jealousy in overall jealousy. (The *t*-test values were the same, but in the opposite direction).

Consistent with previous research (BREWER and RILEY 2009; BUUNK et al. 2008, 2009), regression analyses were performed to detect linear and curvilinear relationships between height and jealousy over the two types of infidelity with the two types of rival (see *Table 2*).

*Table 2.* *F* ratios and significance of linear and quadratic relationships between height and jealousy

	Rival	Infidelity type					
		Sexual		Emotional		Overall	
		Linear <i>F</i> (1,110)	Quadratic <i>F</i> (2,109)	Linear <i>F</i> (1,110)	Quadratic <i>F</i> (2,109)	Linear <i>F</i> (1,110)	Quadratic <i>F</i> (1,109)
Men	New	0.04	0.33	1.23	0.82	0.23	0.43
	Partner's ex	3.38 <i>F</i> (1,312)	2.08 <i>F</i> (2,311)	0.36 <i>F</i> (1,312)	0.49 <i>F</i> (2,311)	1.70 <i>F</i> (1,312)	1.27 <i>F</i> (2,311)
Women	New	0.65	0.86	0.75	0.83	0.01	0.66
	Partner's ex	12.23***	7.82***	0.13	0.07	3.84**	4.05*

Notes: \* $p < .10$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

Among men, no significant relationships, either linear or quadratic, were revealed between height and jealousy over the two types of infidelity with the two types of rival. However, among women (see *Table 2*), significant linear and curvilinear relationships were found between height and jealousy over sexual infidelity with an ex-partner. Jealousy over sexual infidelity with an ex-partner was lowest among tall women and higher among relatively short women and those of medium height.

However, no significant relationships, either linear or quadratic, were revealed between women's height and jealousy over sexual infidelity with a new rival or emotional infidelity with either type of rival. In general, shorter women tended to report higher levels of jealousy, but only for the situation of sexual infidelity with an ex-partner. Relationships between overall jealousy and height were also investigated. As shown in *Table 2*, only relationships between women's height and jealousy over a partner's ex were significant. It seems that these relationships between women's height and overall jealousy were due to a height effect on jealousy over sexual infidelity.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of height on two types of jealousy with two types of rival among men and women. The results showed that men were more jealous of sexual infidelity than women, whereas women reported greater jealousy over emotional infidelity than men. These results replicate previous research regarding sex differences in jealousy (BRASE et al. 2004; BUSS et al. 1992, 1999; BUUNK et al. 1996; DESTENO et al. 2002; FERNANDEZ et al. 2006; GEARY et al. 1995; KUHLE et al. 2009; MELLGREN et al. 2010; PAVELA and ŠIMIĆ 2012; PIETRZAK et al. 2002; SCHÜTZWOHL 2004, 2007; SOUZA et al. 2006; TREGER and SPRECHER 2011; WIEDERMAN and KENDALL 1999). Since those differences were in the same direction for both types of rival, it seems that the same adaptive function of jealousy occurs in the context of a partner's infidelity both with a new rival and with partner's ex. These results were expected, since women's sexual infidelity increases paternity uncertainty for men and men's emotional infidelity increases the risk of losing resources and support for women. Furthermore, both sexes reported greater jealousy over a new rival than over a partner's ex. This result is contradictory to the results reported by CANN and BAUCOM (2004), which showed that a former partner was seen as a more threatening rival. However, the results of this study could be in line with the evolutionary interpretation of greater jealousy over a new rival. It is possible that partner's exes represent less of a threat since they have been defeated in terms of fitness advantage. Also, current partners have

successfully shown their advantage to establish the existing relationship (CANN and BAUCOM 2004).

The results have also shown a significant height effect only among women's jealousy over sexual infidelity involving partner's ex. This relationship implied that tall women were the least jealous, while short women and those of medium height reported higher levels of jealousy. There are four aspects of this result that draw attention. First, height had an effect on jealousy only among women and not men. Second, a height effect was found only for sexual and not emotional infidelity. Third, tall women tend to report less jealousy. Fourth, the effect was evident only for an ex-girlfriend as the rival.

First, the non-significant relationship between height and jealousy among men was unexpected. This is inconsistent with previous research, since tall men possess a desirable physical characteristic, meaning they are at lower risk of cuckoldry and therefore less jealous (BREWER and RILEY 2009; BUUNK et al. 2008). In an attempt to explain this result, the focus should be on different measures of jealousy in this and in previous studies. BUUNK et al. (2008) used a measure of global jealousy ("In general, how jealous are you in your current relationship?"). In jealousy assessment, the authors also manipulated different rival characteristics (physical attractiveness, social influence, etc.). Furthermore, BREWER and RILEY (2009) used measures of cognitive, behavioral and emotional jealousy. These authors reported an effect of height on cognitive and behavioral jealousy, which relates to suspicion and concern and to behavior aimed at deterring a rival. However, the authors reported no significant effect of height on emotional jealousy, relating to the emotions of a man that arise in various situations when his partner is in contact with a person of the opposite sex. We argue that the measure of emotional jealousy used in Brewer and Riley's study is similar to the measure used in this study, as they both refer to unclear and hypothetical situations of infidelity and both assess the subject's emotions. As BREWER and RILEY (2009) pointed out, in this case men's emotional reactions were independent of their height, which could also be applied to this study. Furthermore, height is a physical characteristic relating to physical attractiveness and dominance. As mentioned previously, both sexes tend to value physical characteristics during mate selection, especially for sexual relationships. Previous studies implied the existence of a dual strategy in women's mate selection. Women gave greater importance to physical appearance (indicators of genetic fitness) for short-term and indicators of parental investment for long-term relationships (PILLSWORTH and HASELTON, 2006; REGAN et al. 2000). However, in comparison to men, women were less inclined to value physical characteristics (LI and KENRICK 2004; REGAN et al. 2000; VAN STRAATEN et al. 2008). It seems that women prioritized intelligence, social status, skills, prowess and similar qualities (BUSS and BARNES 1986;

FISMAN et al. 2006; GREGERSEN 1982; REGAN et al. 2000). Because women tend to seek additional characteristics during mate selection, for both short-term and long-term relationships, we propose an explanation that men's physical appearance, compared to women's, plays a smaller role in the risk of being a victim of sexual and emotional infidelity. In general, if women put greater value on non-physical appearance during mate selection, then effects of height on jealousy among men might be absent. In line with this, previous research found that women are more jealous of a physically attractive rival, while men are more threatened by a rival who has better financial prospects and greater physical strength (BUSS et al. 2000). It would be interesting to further test this proposal, perhaps exploring the possible effect of men's social status/income (non-physical traits), along with the physical traits (such as height), on jealousy over the two types of infidelity.

Second, a height effect on jealousy over sexual and not emotional infidelity was expected among women. It is proposed that physical characteristics are more predictive for sexual infidelity than emotional, because of the greater association between physical characteristics and sexual relationships (LI and KENRICK 2006; REGAN et al. 2000). This result is similar to the result reported by BUUNK et al. (2009), which showed that women's height had an effect on jealousy over a physically attractive rival.

Third, tall women reported less intensity of jealousy than short and average-height ones in this study. A negative linear relationship between height and jealousy was also revealed in a previous study (BUUNK et al. 2008). Besides the negative linear effect, in this study a quadratic one was revealed as well. The direction of this quadratic effect is the same as in previous research where the rival had high social status (BUUNK et al. 2008). This could explain the result that tall women were the least jealous. Their lower level of jealousy might be caused by their advantage in intrasexual competition and not affected by their lower attractiveness as initially assumed. Taller women are perceived as more assertive, intelligent and affluent in comparison to shorter women (CHU and GEARY 2005). There is also evidence of a positive association between women's height and their dominance (MELAMED 1992). If dominance is a desirable situational trait when it comes to intrasexual competition among women, then perhaps taller women have another advantage, thus reporting less jealousy. Additional research is recommended for further testing this proposed prediction regarding the negative relationship between dominance (actual and/or perceived) and intensity of jealousy about the two infidelity types.

A fourth aspect of the significant relationship between women's height and jealousy relates to the fact that a height effect was obtained only for the scenario in which an ex-girlfriend is the rival. We find it quite challenging to offer an adequate explanation. This is especially due to the lack of research in this field.

Considering the general differences between the two types of rival, we could assume that women may be aware or familiar with the physical appearance of their partner's ex-girlfriend. On the other hand, the characteristics of an unspecific new rival might be quite vague and unknown, because we did not specify any physical, or any other, characteristic. If intrasexual competition depends on one's comparison with a rival in salient characteristics, physical appearance (such as height) might have an effect in a situation where comparison with a rival is actually possible. This might be in line with the result that a height effect was found only for the sexual infidelity scenario, which might relate more to physical appearance than emotional infidelity.

Generally, the results of this study are in line with previously-found sex differences in jealousy over the two infidelity types. Both sexes reported greater jealousy over a new rival than over a partner's ex. An effect of height on jealousy was found only among women for sexual infidelity with an ex-partner. It is noteworthy that we used a different measure of jealousy than in previous research, which might have affected the results. Specifically, infidelity scenarios could evoke jealousy as an adaptive response in the context of intrasexual competition. Furthermore, following previous studies a within-subjects design was employed in this study since it provided greater statistical power in *a priori* power calculations. There are some limitations of this design due to the possibility of anchoring bias. However, it is worth emphasizing that the results of this study are in line with most of the previous findings. This consistency could imply that biases affected the results to a lesser degree. Moreover, there are other variables not included in this study, such as life history strategy, that might give some additional insights in the relationship between height and jealousy. Previous studies showed that height is curvilinearly related to the life history strategy (BUUNK et al. 2009). This means that less attractive women (short) were more likely to adopt a faster life history strategy, whereas more attractive women (women of medium height) were more likely to adopt a slower life history strategy, producing fewer offspring and providing greater nurturing. Slower life strategy is characterized by high parental and low mating effort, which may lead to less intensity of jealousy.

To conclude, since this study is one of only a few which include ex-partners as rivals, we find the results of this study as an appropriate incentive and encouragement for future research on the relationship between physical characteristic and emotions such as jealousy over hypothetical infidelities.

### Note

<sup>1</sup> Data collection originally included single subjects as well. However, they were left out of consideration for the current paper. In comparison to single subjects, coupled subjects reported higher levels of jealousy (PAVELA, BANAI and ŠIMIĆ 2014; ŠIMIĆ, PAVELA and UGRINA 2010), which might be due to their greater ability to imagine a hypothetical threat to an existing relationship. There is a reason to assume that among coupled men and women hypothetical threat would seem more vivid, in comparison to a non-existing relationship among single men and women.

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