

Gendernomics: The Contrast Effect

Black Label Logic | 23 November, 2017 | by Black Label Logic

This has been a strange couple of weeks, we've found out that many Hollywood Male Feminists are creeps (*which quite frankly wasn't a massive surprise*) as per the Brimstone Preacher Principle. Rollo posted two very good essays [1,2] on what "creepy" means when women say it. The red pill experienced it's first brush between analytic and continental philosophy and Gay Lube Oil introduced me to the "Bobs and Vegana" meme [3], so all in all this entire week was a bit creepy for a multitude of reasons. In the discussion of the latter meme, the topic shifted into how something mediocre can appear quite excellent as a result of the contrast effect. The contrast effect is the reason why short men should get even shorter friends and avoid hanging out with NBA players and why unattractive women should bring even more unattractive women with them on "Girl's night out". For a demonstration of this effect, take 3 bowls of water, 1 hot, one cold and one lukewarm. Put one hand in the hot bowl, the other in the cold bowl for about a minute and then put both in the bowl of lukewarm water.

There is also a well-known sales technique, whereby a company advertises a cheap product to the consumer in order to bring them in, once the customer arrives at the store, they will talk down the advertised product, and instead suggest a much better product, but one that is also much more costly. Once they sense the customer's trepidation about spending much more money, they will show the customer a product that is not quite as costly as the "high-end" offering, but which they argue is much superior to the advertised product.

If one translates this into a dating site, according to OKcupid 2/3 of messages go to the top 1/3 of women as rated by appearance [4], this is no different than how one expects it to be based on data from other sources, such as the gentleman  who did a Tinder experiment [5] (there are methodology issues such as a low sample size, convenience sampling and self-reporting) and found that the bottom 80% of men are fighting over the bottom 22% of women, and the top 78% of women are fighting over the top 20% of men. To put this in a product perspective, if you are a top 20% product on Tinder then you are probably doing fairly well, however if you are in the bottom 80% then you are probably doing quite bad. On the other hand, if you are a great product on OkCupid you are probably doing good as well, but not as good as on Tinder. The clearest illustration of this [supply-demand](#) issue are the charts.

Based on this, we can expect intense competition for the top 20% of men, and the bottom 22% of women. Something which does not bode well for the top 78% of women, nor the bottom 80% of men.

However, one must wonder, how much is real competition and how much is perceived competition?

The Comparative View

Many a company has attempted to compete by flooding the market with products at rock-bottom prices. The general idea behind it is that if one has a real competitive advantage in production costs one can flood the market, force the competition to follow your price cuts until they go bankrupt or withdraw from the market for other reasons (such as not reaching their hurdle rate) and then raise your prices. An example is private brands that grocery stores utilize in order to offer substitute products for branded products, they are priced at often a much lower rate than branded products in the same category. The premise being that one wishes to influence the customer to think "This product is the equivalent of the more expensive product when it comes to satisfying the need that I'm purchasing it to satisfy." Naturally, a cheaper product can offer a better value for money, equal value for money or less value of money as viewed as the

trade-off between price and quality.

To some extent this may work in the sexual market, for instance by sending out 1000 messages on any given dating site. However as women always seek to score a better deal than they themselves represent, much like with private brands, the “value-for-money” may be off. After all, if one looks at the two variables, traffic and conversion rates, if the conversion rate is held constant increased traffic will result in higher sales. However, if traffic goes up and conversions goes down, then one may find a situation where sales remain the same. To illustrate I made a chart that outlines 4 scenarios, one in which both traffic and conversion rate goes up, one where traffic goes up but conversion rate goes down, one where traffic remains the same and conversion rate goes up, and one where traffic declines but conversion rates go up. I held the increase/decrease in both traffic and conversions as constant between all four scenarios.

✖ As you can see from the chart, Scenario 1, is clearly the most successful one, where both traffic and conversions goes up. This is a win-win, you are getting more people in the door, and getting more sales. Scenario 3 is the runner opp, where traffic is constant but conversion rate is going up. Scenario 4 and Scenario 2 are equal in result, meaning that the consequences of declining conversions or declining traffic are both will both impact negatively to the same degree if they are equal.

You can control one of these variables but not the other, namely traffic. In the case of game, one can increase the number of messages sent or approaches conducted, or in the case of this blog for instance, if I put effort into sharing and distributing content, I see an increase in traffic, but I also do when I post more frequently. Likewise, the goal of game is to improve the conversion rate as you become more fluent, so that the conversion rate increases even if traffic decreases, thus yielding similar results.

The interesting thing to know for this purpose, would be the conversion rate for men who open with “Show bobs and vegana”, because it’s a quick and easy message to craft and if one mass distributed it, even with a very low success rate, one may get a fish or two on the hook. A 0.10% success rate, would be 1 case of the “bobs and vegana” being displayed.

In essence, this is finding the trade-off between quantity and quality, meaning at what point would a person be better off adopting a volume-based approach where he spams the same message to many women, as opposed to crafting individual messages to each woman.

The Effect of Low-Value Products

The metric I would be inclined to utilize in order to gauge success in an environment such as OKCupid is response rate. As outlined earlier, one can control “traffic” or in this case messages sent, but one cannot control conversion rate, or in this case responses received. Based on the data available, it was possible to create a graph that represents the response rates of women and men classified as “High attractiveness”, “Medium attractiveness” and “Low-Attractiveness” to persons rated on a scale from 1 – 7.

✖ The graph shows that a high attractiveness woman messaging a high attractiveness man has a response rate of 52%, whereas a high attractiveness man messaging a high attractiveness woman gains a response approximately 42% of the time. A low attractiveness man on the other hand messaging a high attractiveness woman, receives a response only 12% of the time. The lowest response rate is low attractiveness women messaging highly attractive men. Which is logical given that these men have 78% of women fighting for them and receive 11x as many messages as the low value men.

However, the effect of low and medium attractiveness products is demonstrated through the contrast effect, a low attractiveness man who writes a message following all the “best practices” will probably

receive more responses than a man of equal physical quality who sends “show bobs and vegana plz”.

Likewise, a highly attractive man who writes in accordance with the “best practices” will most likely receive more responses than another man of equal physical stature that sends out “show bobs and vegana plz”. However, the caveat being that the highly attractive man who sends out “bobs and vegana plz” will probably receive more responses than the low value man who utilizes the same opener due to the phenomenon known as the “Halo effect” [8]

The Halo effect simply means that if someone is, for instance, highly attractive or highly articulate, we tend to assume that they are good at other things as well. Conversely, if someone is unattractive or inarticulate that they are bad at other things. It’s one of the reasons why it’s important to always be mindful of your appearance, because it is frequently the first thing people judge you on, and therefore it may inform their subsequent judgments about you. Thus, in the land of “show bobs and vagene” the man who writes a mediocre opener is king.

Summary and Conclusions

A basic principle of economics is that people act according to rational decision theory, this is perhaps where the red pill makes its largest contribution to intersexual dynamics in stripping away the veneer that humans have put on sexual behavior. The value for money proposition is a question of the sexual market value of one person vs. the sexual market value of another person as modified by investment requirements. For instance, an observation made is that the response rate of highly attractive men takes a hit when they message women in the low attractiveness category. The highly attractive man actually receives the same response rate when he messages highly attractive women as when he messages women who are low in attractiveness. One would expect this to be converse, as the man is offering the women high value in exchange for her low value, thus it’s the best possible deal she could get. In other words, she views the offer as “too good to be true”.

However, as the sales technique I outlined in the beginning is concerned, these men represent the “too expensive” for me products, whereas the gentlemen sending “show bobs and vagene” represent the “too cheap for me” product. This creates a middle-market where competition is fierce, but where one could enact a blue ocean strategy, by being “the best of the worst”. For instance a woman who has opened 30 “show bobs and vagene” messages, will probably respond to the first message in her inbox that simply says “hi” purely because it’s the best of many non-optimal choices.

I’ve said before, that getting into the top 20% of men is quite easy these days, because the bar is set surprisingly low, if you go to an average bar or club, you’ll quickly notice that most men there are overfat and undermuscle, have very little game, barely put any thought into what they’re wearing and would be hard pressed to tell you the last time they took a shower. This means that if you’re in average shape, have a little game, put 5 minutes into getting clothes that fit, and took a shower before going out, you are well ahead of the pack. The same thing is true of online dating, if you get a few decent profile pictures, spend 10 minutes on your profile and write an opener without grammatical or syntax errors, your competition will make you look awesome even if you did the bare minimum.

There is an old adage that “In the land of the blind, the one eyed man is king” which could be interpreted as, if you are the least bad, you are the best, and few places does this ring more true than in the sexual market place. The perfection trap is an insidious one and a frequent one for men to find themselves in, where they have a belief that they can attain a place of perfection where rejection is no longer an option. The reality is that the one who wins is the one who is the better option among a largely bad bunch.

You don’t need the perfect opener to hit on a chick, if the last guy who did was 300 lbs, hadn’t showered

in a week, and opened with “nice tits” and you don’t need a perfect OKcupid opener when the last 40 guys used “show bobs and vagina”.

A note:

I recently launched a [Patreon page](#) where I will be posting additional content every month for those who support me and I will do a Google Hangout for the highest tier Patrons (limited to 10 people).

I’ve also had some requests for consults, which I’ve declined up until now, but due to demand I’ve chosen to open up for doing some consults on request. For details please check out my [Consulting and Patreon Page](#)

[As always you can buy my book Gendernomics at Amazon.com as both paperback and Kindle](#)

Sources

[1] [The Creep Part 1 – The Rational Male](#)

[2] [The Creep Part 2 – The Rational Male](#)

[3] <http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/bobs-and-vegana>

[4] <https://theblog.okcupid.com/your-looks-and-your-inbox-8715c0f1561e>

[5] <https://medium.com/@worstonlinedater/tinder-experiments-ii-guys-unless-you-are-really-hot-you-are-probably-better-off-not-wasting-your-2ddf370a6e9a>

[6] <https://theblog.okcupid.com/online-dating-advice-optimum-message-length-8a2887c3d6ca>

[7] <https://theblog.okcupid.com/exactly-what-to-say-in-a-first-message-2bf680806c72>

[8] <http://www.economist.com/node/14299211>

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