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Men shop more to exhibit their socio-economic status
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[Study Shows Men Are Compulsive Overspenders](#)

Their financial troubles are a result of a status race

Researchers learned that the debts, mortgages, loans and mid-life crisis sports cars that many men experience or buy sometime during their lifetime are linked to a hierarchy race, for the best position in the mating game. As it has been for thousand of years, whoever displays the most signs of wealthy living has the highest chance of attracting mates for the next years.

"Men in the ancestral environment were valued if they were good providers. Now we have this new consumer culture, so basically we show our potential through the consumer goods that we purchase, rather than being a good hunter or providing protection," says University of Michigan (UM) researcher, Daniel Kruger, an assistant scientist in the School of Public Health.

He believes that foreclosures, bank and auto bailouts, upside-down mortgages and rising credit card debt can all be explained through a man's quest for a life partner. To test his hypothesis, Kruger analyzed the behavioral patterns of some male test subjects, aged 18 to 45, following the degree of financial consumption. He learned that this behavior only applied to men, as women tend to spend just for the fun of it, not because they want to attract attention on themselves.

"It gives an ultimate explanation for why we feel we have to keep up with the Joneses. Especially for guys, our position in the social hierarchy is based on our resources. Economic success has traditionally been good for men's reproductive success, so men have an incentive to show that they are doing well economically," the researcher adds.

"In terms of the current mortgage crisis, the findings suggest that one of the reasons why we overextend ourselves is that we're basically in a status race. We have expectations that spiral upward as people make more money and everyone wants to show that they are better than average," Kruger concludes.