Trait-Specific Dependence in
Romantic Relationships

Bruce J. Ellis
University of Canterbury
Jeffry A. Simpson
Texas A&M University
Lorne Campbell
Simon Fraser University

ABSTRACT Informed by three theoretical frameworks—trait psychology, evolutionary psychology, and interdependence theory—we report four investigations designed to develop and test the reliability and validity of a new construct and accompanying multiscale inventory, the Trait-Specific Dependence Inventory (TSDI). The TSDI assesses comparisons between present and alternative romantic partners on major dimensions of mate value. In Study 1, principal components analyses revealed that the provisional pool of theory-generated TSDI items were represented by six factors: Agreeable/Committed, Resource Accruing Potential, Physical Prowess, Emotional Stability, Surgency, and Physical Attractiveness. In Study 2, confirmatory factor analysis replicated these results on a different sample and tested how well different structural models fit the data. Study 3 provided evidence for the convergent and discriminant validity of the six TSDI scales by correlating...