

# What Men Want in the Bedroom ... ... and Beyond

And what does it mean if a guy checks out other ladies in front of his wife?

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What do men really want --both in bed and in their emotional relationships with their mates?

And if a married man ogles other women in front of his wife, what does it really mean?

*Q: Can you tell me how long good sex should last?*

*Q: How do men like to be treated in love and sex?*

**A:** Answering this pair of reader questions is a little like trying to explain who was better: Mozart or Muddy Waters. There's no right answer.

Ideally, good sex lasts a lifetime. But I don't think that's what the reader means. She probably means "how long should good sex last each time you do it?" to which experts we consult about such things always say the same thing -- "long enough".

So if you get the sudden urge for a morning quickie that still allows you to catch your bus on time, that can be good sex. Or if you wake up one Sunday craving Bloody Marys and the kind of sex that finds you crumpled in a sweaty, gooey heap 9 hours later, that can be good sex, too.

Now as to the other reader's question about how men want to be treated in love and sex ... well, bless you for asking. Really. But when it comes to sex, again there is no right answer. I've met guys who want to be ritually abused with static electricity; guys who want to service a woman like a pagan slave boy; and guys who would love to eat a pepperoni-double-cheese-pizza while a woman takes care of business. Possibly the only accurate generalization we can make is that men -- and women too -- like variation.

As for love, the one thing I think is true for most men is that we want to be understood. We are not stereotypes any more than women are stereotypes. Surveys such as msnbc.com's "[Lust, Love & Loyalty](#)" show that sex is not the sole -- or even the most common -- reason why men cheat. Often the paramour is not as attractive as the wife or girlfriend.

Male infidelity has much more to do with feeling competent, wanted, respected and ... well, "manly" in that old-fashioned way that used to be considered a virtue until it came to be regarded a menace.

*Q: The last couple years I have noticed my husband making eye contact with any woman in sight. When we go for a drive, he checks out every woman in the opposite lane. He says he is not*

***looking. But it's obvious. Our sex life is good. And I have been told I look 28 even though I am 46. So what can I do? He makes me feel unloved and worthless.***

**A:** Have you told him that he makes you feel unloved and worthless? If not, you should. Then you can tell him there is a lot of science to support you.

Studies of “body dissatisfaction”, “social physique anxiety”, and “social comparisons” usually boil down to the same results. When women compare themselves to other women, they often compare “upwards”. Meaning that they compare themselves to women who are leaner and more attractive. And when they do -- concluded a Kent State University study -- women feel "increases in daily negative affect, body dissatisfaction, and weight-related cognitions.”

When the man you love seems to do the comparing, you can't avoid it.

It is normal and natural for all of us (men and women) to look at attractive people. Men are going to do this no matter how much we love the women in our lives. Some women are more comfortable with this instinct than others, seeing it as a sign of life (as men sometimes say: "we're married, not dead"). But courtesy dictates a little discretion and consideration for the feelings of the person you love.

Some women defuse the situation by commenting on the women the guy is ogling. As one woman told me, “I'll say, ‘Yeah, she's hot,’ or ‘Nice rack, huh?’ and somehow he loves me more because I'm not punishing him.” Other women make a point to look at hunky men. Isn't that what that whole “Wrangler Butts Drive Me Nuts” thing is about?

I am not suggesting that you should do either. Both you and he should respect your feelings. But you might suggest that he confine his head turning to times when he's not with you and then cite this following bit of research -- based on a poll of 3,627 women and published in 2000 in the International Journal of Eating Disorders -- as incentive for him to start making you feel like the most beautiful woman in the World:

“Women more satisfied with body image reported more sexual activity, orgasm, and initiating sex, greater comfort undressing in front of their partner, having sex with the lights on, trying new sexual behaviors, and pleasing their partner sexually than those dissatisfied.”

That ought to convince him to amend his obvious ogling ways.