

FAKING IT: THE UNSATISFIED WOMAN

BY RABBI SHMULEY

“Women are less likely to have orgasms during uncommitted sexual encounters than in serious relationships.” Hmm… And the pope is Catholic. And, oh yes, the world is round.

The quotation above about women and sex, from a New York Times article, citing a new Kinsey Institute at Indiana University and Binghamton University study, is pretty obvious.

So why did it take an entire research paper to tell us “that women were twice as likely to reach orgasm from intercourse or oral sex in serious relationships as in hookups”? Because for far too long the belief has been precisely the opposite. That marital sex is a total bore but sex with a stranger sends you to the moon and back. It turns out that if you’re a guy there may be some truth to that. Men get to use women to achieve sexual satisfaction but, when they don’t care for the women in question, they don’t care whether they enjoy the experience either.

Hence, The New York Times story of Natasha Gadinsky, a 23-year-old health care case manager, who tells of the night she hooked up with a guy from Brown University. “After his own orgasm that night, she said, he showed no interest in her satisfaction. The next time they got together, it happened again. He ‘didn’t even care,’ said Ms. Gadinsky, in

New York City, 'I don't think he tried at all.' He fell asleep immediately, leaving her staring at the ceiling."

For years I have made the case that the strongest argument against casual sex, pornography, and womanizing is that it leads to the most boring sex. This is not because it is immoral, irreligious, or unhealthy, or any of the other things said to warn young people off of casual sex.

It's simply because it leads to really bad sex.

And it leads to an even worse epidemic. Of women faking orgasm. There are an array of reasons leading women to fake it. Either because they know that this guy is a lost cause, he'll never get her there, so better to just get it over with. Women even note feeling ashamed or guilty about how long it takes them to reach orgasm and instead of just taking the time to reach climax, they give up so as not to bother a guy with what they deem as their own problem. Whatever the reason, how tragic that in sex, one of the most exhilarating experiences one can have, women find themselves barely enjoying it.

How do you know porn is a bore? Because if looking at the unadorned, naked body of a woman can really sustain a man's interest, it would not require thousands of pictures to keep him on the same web site? And Playboy wouldn't have needed twelve centerfolds per year. It would do a package deal with one model, posing every month, and save a lot of money. Why don't they have this more lucrative business model? Because men will yawn and the magazine would have closed.

And casual sex? Well, the study in *The Times* explains it well. “A study of 24,000 students at 21 colleges over five years found that about 40 percent of women had an orgasm during their last hookup involving intercourse, while 80 percent of men did.” Now, just imagine that. A woman agrees to go to bed with a man, a stranger, hooking up after a party, or some other casual encounter. She takes off all her clothes for him, is looking forward to a passionate, exciting night. And he can’t even be bothered to pleasure her. Talk about selfish.

Now, none of this means that marital sex is more exciting. I’ve written several books examining why the passion in marriage dies for many people and how it can be revived. My upcoming book *Kosher Lust* argues that marriage should be based on desire rather than love, covetousness rather than partnership, erotic excitement rather than mere shared values. But at least marriage is about a man committing to a woman, taking himself off the market, devoting himself to a family, and giving himself to a woman fully. So even if he is a selfish lover in bed – which he shouldn’t be – there are so many other areas where he’s loving. But what’s the point of hooking up with a guy who can’t even take the few minutes required to make you climax?

A while back, I spoke at The City of Ideas Conference in Puebla, Mexico (Ciudad de Las Ideas), where I debated noted atheist Michael Shermer on polygamy versus monogamy. Yes, modern evolutionary science is adamant that men are possessed of a polygamous nature and seek the widest possible distribution of their gene pool. They are not naturally programmed to be with one woman but to disseminate their genetic material to the greatest number of partners. Indeed, as I chronicle in *Kosher Lust* science is now headed in the same direction with women, claiming that many recent studies show that females are likewise non-monogamous by nature.

But while acknowledging that the physical state of men and women may veer toward a craving for exciting and new sexual experiences, humans are also possessed of a soul which seeks precisely the opposite, namely an intimate sexual connection based on primacy and exclusivity. And this spiritual-intimate need strikes even deeper than the physical-polygamous yearning. Moreover, sex with a committed partner is more exciting, erotic, and electrifying, not only because of the presence of love and commitment, but because the intimate nature of the relationship allows the participants to let go fully and submit entirely to instinct.

In Puebla I argued that the principal desire of a woman is not to be loved, because if so she would remain in her parent's home her entire life. Parents, whose love is unconditional, won't divorce her or cheat on her. Rather, a woman's desire is to be chosen. To be made into the one and only. To have primacy and exclusivity conferred upon her by a man who places her at the center of his universe.

If we are not innately monogamous, how else to explain the indescribable, catastrophic pain caused when a partner discovers that his or her or spouse has been unfaithful? Numerous studies show that of all the traumas experienced in life, the pain of discovering that a spouse has been unfaithful ranks among the highest. That kind of emotional suffering, which one almost never overcomes fully, demonstrates that we are programmed to expect faithfulness, to seek out uniqueness and singularity in our relationships, and to be the one and only to our beloved.

While our secular, porn-saturated culture increasingly sees men as sex-obsessed intelligent primates, I see men as intimacy-seekers, searching out a woman who can nurture their hearts, cultivate their humanity, and with whom they can achieve a sense of oneness. Numerous studies show that when married men have affairs it is often

emotional and non-sexual. They frequently seek to unburden themselves emotionally even more than they seek a novel sexual outlet.

Indeed, against all the scientific research, there is the clear fact that even in an age where marriage is being treated as an outmoded institution which has passed its sell-by date, monogamy continues to be the chosen norm for the vast majority of people in cultures throughout the world, even if it is serial monogamy outside the framework of marriage.

With regards to women this is even truer. Women seek the comfort and stability of monogamy, and not just for the security of their offspring but for the establishment of their own uniqueness in the life of a loving and exclusive partner.

What people truly seek in a relationship is a lover who is their best friend, that is, they are searching for the synthesis of passion and intimacy. They lean toward monogamy. They just don't want it to grow stale. They wish for their monogamous relationships to remain passionate and erotic, something that casual encounters, we are increasingly discovering, simply cannot provide.