

Do Attractive Women Want it All? New Study Reveals Relationship Standards are Relative

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Although many researchers have believed women choose partners based on the kind of relationship they are seeking, a new study from The University of Texas at Austin reveals women's preferences can be influenced by their own attractiveness.

David Buss, psychology researcher at the university, has published the findings in "Attractive Women Want it All: Good Genes, Economic Investment, Parenting Proclivities and Emotional Commitment" in this month's *Evolutionary Psychology*.

Previous researchers argued that what women value depended on the type of relationship they were looking for. Women looking for long-term partners want someone who will be a good provider for them and their children, but women seeking short-term flings care more about masculinity and physical attractiveness, features that may be passed down to children.

Buss and Todd Shackelford, psychology professor at Florida Atlantic University, found women ideally want partners who have all the characteristics they desire, but they will calibrate their standards based on their own desirability.

"When reviewing the qualities they desire in romantic partners, women gauge what they can get based on what they got," Buss said. "And

women who are considered physically attractive maintain high standards for prospective partners across a variety of characteristics.”

The researchers identified four categories of characteristics women seek in a partner:

- good genes, reflected in desirable physical traits,
- resources,
- the desire to have children and good parenting skills, and
- loyalty and devotion.

Most women attempt to secure the best combination of the qualities they desire from the same man, but the researchers said a small portion of women who do not find a partner with all the qualities may trade some characteristics for others.

Although women’s selectivity across categories reflected how attractive they appeared to other people, the researchers found the characteristics men desired in a partner did not vary based on their own physical attractiveness.

Source: University of Texas at Austin

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