

# Half of women have negative feelings about 1-night stands

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The sexual and feminist revolutions were supposed to free women to enjoy casual sex just as men always had. Yet according to Professor Anne Campbell from Durham University in the UK, the negative feelings reported by women after one-night stands suggest that they are not well adapted to fleeting sexual encounters. Her findings (1) are published online in the June issue of Springer's journal, *Human Nature*.

Men are more likely to reproduce and therefore to benefit from numerous short-term partners. For women, however, quality seems to be more important than quantity. Also for women, finding partners of high genetic quality is a stronger motivator than sheer number, and it is commonly believed that women are more willing to have casual sex when there is a chance of forming a long-term relationship.

Professor Campbell looked at whether women have adapted to casual sex by examining their feelings following a one-night stand. If women have adapted, then although they may take part in casual sex less often than men because of their stricter criteria when selecting partners, they should rate the experience positively. To test the theory, a total of 1743 men and women who had experienced a one-night stand were asked to rate both their positive and negative feelings the following morning, in an internet survey.

Overall women's feelings were more negative than men's. Eighty per cent of men had overall positive feelings about the experience compared to 54 per cent of women. Men were more likely than women to secretly

want their friends to hear about it and to feel successful because the partner was desirable to others. Men also reported greater sexual satisfaction and contentment following the event, as well as a greater sense of well-being and confidence about themselves.

The predominant negative feeling reported by women was regret at having been "used". Women were also more likely to feel that they had let themselves down and were worried about the potential damage to their reputation if other people found out. Women found the experience less sexually satisfying and, contrary to popular belief, they did not seem to view taking part in casual sex as a prelude to long-term relationships.

According to Professor Campbell, although women do not rate casual sex positively, the reason they still take part in it may be due to the menstrual cycle changes influencing their sexual motivation. Indeed, during the ovulatory phase (between days 10 to 18 of their cycle), women report increased sexual desire and arousal, with a preference for short-term partners.

Source: Springer

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