

Study reveals complexities of female arousal

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Challenging the idea that women's sexual motivations are tied exclusively to romantic emotions or reproduction, a new study by psychologists at The University of Texas at Austin found women's sexual decisions are motivated by a shocking array of reasons that range from the mundane ("I was bored") to a sense of adventure ("I wanted to know what it was like before getting married"), and from the altruistic ("I felt sorry for him") to the borderline evil ("I wanted to give him a sexually transmitted disease").

"Understanding why [women](#) have sex is extremely important, but rarely studied," said David M. Buss, [evolutionary psychology](#) professor. "One thing that's interesting about our study is that it goes against the stereotype that men desire sex for pleasure while women have sex only for love or commitment."

Detailed in their new book "Why Women Have Sex: Understanding Sexual Motivations from Adventure to Revenge (and Everything in Between)," Buss and Cindy M. Meston, [clinical psychology](#) professor, collected personal accounts from more than 1,000 women of diverse educational, ethnic and religious backgrounds on their reasons for having sex.

"We knew motivations for sex were more complex than what had previously been talked about in the literature—having a baby, love and physical pleasure," Meston said. "But we were still astonished by the amazing diversity of sexual motivations—from curing a headache to feeling closer to God to getting their partners to take out the trash."

Other findings:

- Thirty-one percent of women, at some point, purposely evoked jealousy in their sex partner, compared with only 17 percent of men.
- Eighty-four percent of wives, at some point, said they had sex out of a sense of duty, compared with 64 percent of husbands.
- Thirty-eight percent of women admit to "poaching" someone for a short-term fling.
- Fifty percent of women reported having sex to cure a migraine headache.
- Women, in general, are turned on by men with deep voices and symmetrical bodies.

Meston believes the results of this research will help inform every woman's (and her partner's) awareness of her relationship to sex and her sexuality. The book will be released Sept. 29.

"Our investigation into why women have sex will help both men and women to better understand the sexual psychology of women," Meston said. "This could help increase empathy and sexual communication between partners, and between men and women more generally. My hope is this research will help people to become better 'consumers of [sex](#) ,' and to make decisions that lead ultimately to more sexual satisfaction and less remorse and regret."

Provided by University of Texas at Austin ([news](#) : [web](#))

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