

Sexist men and women -- made for each other

August 23 2011

Men with a preference for "one-night stands" and negative sexist attitudes towards women are more likely to use aggressive courtship strategies. They compete with other men who are also interested in the woman, tease the woman, and isolate her away from her friends. In response, women with a preference for 'no strings attached' sex and negative attitudes towards other women are more likely to respond to men's aggressive strategies.

These findings by Jeffrey Hall and Melanie Canterbury, from the University of Kansas in the US, are published online in Springer's journal [Sex Roles](#).

Hall and Canterbury set out to understand the characteristics of men who use aggressive courtship strategies, based on speed seduction techniques described in the US bestseller *The Game* by Neil Strauss and the popular cable TV program *The Pickup Artist*. They also studied the characteristics of women who find such strategies appealing.

The researchers conducted two surveys. The first [pilot study](#) surveyed a sample of 363 college students from a large Midwestern university in the US. The second, larger national study recruited 850 adult volunteers via the internet. The authors asked both male and female participants about their sexist attitudes toward women and whether they were willing to take part in uncommitted or short-term sex. They also asked about the extent to which men used assertive strategies to initiate relationships and the extent to which women found these approaches desirable.

The results showed that men who were keen on 'one-night stands' were more likely to use aggressive strategies when flirting with women, and women who were also open to casual sex were more likely to respond to this type of aggressive courtship. In addition, men with negative, sexist attitudes towards women, justifying male privilege, were more likely to use assertive strategies, which may serve to 'put women in their place' in a submissive or yielding role during courtship. Women with sexist attitudes towards members of their own gender were more likely to be responsive to men's assertive strategies. This suggests that they find men who treat them in a dominant way during courtship more desirable, because it is consistent with their sexist ideology.

Hall and Canterbury conclude: "Our results suggest that assertive courtship strategies are a form of mutual identification of similarly sexist attitudes shared between courtship partners. Women who adopt sexist attitudes are more likely to prefer men who adopt similar attitudes. Not only do sexist men and women prefer partners who are like them, they prefer [courtship](#) strategies where men are the aggressors and [women](#) are the gatekeepers."

More information: Hall JA & Canterbury M (2011). Sexism and assertive courtship strategies. *Sex Roles*. DOI:10.007/s11199-011-0045-y

Provided by Springer

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