



What Women Want--What Men Want: Why the Sexes Still See Love and Commitment So Differently

By John Marshall Townsend

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Following the work of E. O. Wilson, Desmond Morris, and David Buss, *What Women Want--What Men Want* offers compelling new evidence about the real reasons behind men's and women's differing sexual psychologies and sheds new light on what men and women look for in a mate, the predicament of marriage in the modern world, the relation between sex and emotion, and many other hotly debated questions.

Drawing upon 2000 questionnaires and 200 intimate interviews that show how our sexual psychologies affect everyday decisions, John Townsend argues against the prevailing ideologically correct belief that differences in sexual behavior are "culturally constructed." Townsend shows there are deep-seated desires inherited from our evolutionary past that guide our actions. In a fascinating series of experiments, men and women were asked to indicate preferences for potential mates based on their attractiveness and apparent economic status. Women overwhelmingly preferred expensively dressed men to more attractive but apparently less successful men, and men were clearly inclined to choose more attractive women regardless of their professional status.

Townsend's studies also indicate that men are predisposed to value casual sex, whereas women cannot easily separate sexual relations from the need for emotional attachment and economic security. Indeed, wherever men possess sexual alternatives to marriage, and women possess economic alternatives, divorce rates will be high. In the concluding chapter, Townsend draws upon the advice of couples who have maintained their marriages over the years to suggest ways to survive our evolutionary predicament.

Lucidly and accessibly written, *What Women Want--What Men Want* shows us why we are the way we are and brings new clarity to one of the most intractable debates of our time.



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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

In this book, Townsend makes years of scholarly research accessible to the general public. The research, including 2000 questionnaires, 200 interviews, and an extensive bibliography, indicates that men and women across many cultures have evolved a psychobiological response to sexual relationships. Men want young, beautiful women and casual sexual relationships; women look for committed relationships with men of wealth and status. Even among "liberated" individuals, these statements hold true. Townsend, a professor of anthropology who has published many scholarly articles, explores why this hasn't changed despite the changing sex roles and economies of modern American society. A well-written, well-researched, and fascinating read; recommended. *?Elizabeth Caulfield Felt, Holland Lib., Washington State Univ., Pullman*
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From Kirkus Reviews

Forget the sexual and feminist revolutions, says Townsend; men and women want what they have always wanted over the decades and centuries and millennia, for that matter. In a nutshell, posits Townsend (Anthropology/Syracuse Univ.), men who engage in dating and mating are looking primarily for physical attractiveness in women; women seek men who have status and earnings power and who will emotionally and materially invest in them. Such proclivities, he argues, are largely hard-wired into us by evolutionary psychology. Thus, for example, studies show that men are far more easily aroused by visual stimuli, while women's fantasies deal more with men who will provide security and caring (thus, pornography is overwhelmingly purchased by males, romance novels by females). Such proclivities are little affected by some women's newfound economic status; even economically self-sufficient or otherwise high-achieving women, such as medical students, often resist dating lower-status men, even if they're perceived as handsome. Nor does marital status or gender orientation play much of a role (Townsend cites studies that reveal that the differences between what gays and lesbians seek in lovers are even more pronounced than between male and female heterosexuals). But his book suffers from methodological (not to mention stylistic) problems. Townsend's sample of interviewees is somewhat skewed (a quarter of these 200 were medical students, while another quarter were Mexican-Americans); some of his statistics are meaningless (Blumstein and Schwartz found that women in their twenties with three children have a 72 percent chance of remarrying, while women in their thirties with no children have a 60 percent chance); and he also is too focused on the macro picture; there is almost nothing here about how individual psychology or cultural conditioning affects the search for, and selection of, a partner. An interesting but flawed sociobiological analysis of what men and women want from each other. -- *Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Review

"A well-written, well-researched, and fascinating read."--*Library Journal*

"Townsend has focused on some very interesting test cases--in particular, women medical students who anticipate having high status and high incomes, and extremely sexually active women. These seemingly exceptional cases are exceedingly interesting, because they prove (test) the rules. Townsend's basic message is that the sexes are not more similar than they appear, they're less similar; they are not becoming more similar now, and they are unlikely to become more similar any time soon."--Donald Symons, Professor of

"John Townsend's interviews constitute a useful addition to the rapidly growing literature on the evolutionary psychology of dating and mating, laying bare just how different the goals of women and men remain."--
Marin Daly, Psychology Department, McMasters University, Ontario

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Myrtle Brown:

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Ruth Goodrich:

This What Women Want--What Men Want: Why the Sexes Still See Love and Commitment So Differently is brand-new way for you who has attention to look for some information given it relief your hunger details.

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