

The ugly truth about one night stands

11 August 2009

Men are far more interested in casual sex than women. While men need to be exceptionally attractive to tempt women to consider casual sex, men are far less choosy. These findings by Dr Achim Schützwohl, from the Department of Psychology at Brunel University in the UK, and his team are published online in Springer's journal *Human Nature*.

The research shows that men are more likely than [women](#) to report having had casual sex and they express a greater desire for it than do women. It is also thought that women but not men raise their standards of attractiveness for a casual sex partner.

Dr Schützwohl and his colleagues looked at the influence of an imagined requestor's [physical attractiveness](#) on men's and women's willingness to accept three distinct offers: go out, go to their apartment and go to bed with them. A total of 427 male and 433 female students from the US, Germany and Italy answered a questionnaire. They were asked to imagine being approached by a member of the opposite sex, described as either "slightly unattractive", "moderately attractive" or "exceptionally attractive". They then rated how likely they would be to accept each of the three offers.

The authors found that the requestor's looks affected men and women differently. Across all three levels of requestor attractiveness, men were more likely to go out, go to their apartment and go to bed with them than were women. German men were less likely to go out with the requestor and go to their apartment than American and Italian men. Italian men were more likely to go to bed with the requestor than were American men. German men were even less likely than American men to go to bed with the requestor. These differences highlight cultural differences in sexual morals and preferences.

For each of the three offers, men were more likely to accept when the hypothetical woman was

moderately or exceptionally attractive than when she was slightly unattractive, but whether she was moderately or exceptionally attractive made no difference. Women however placed more importance on the requestor's good looks. They were more likely to accept the apartment and bed requests from an exceptionally attractive man than from either a moderately attractive or slightly unattractive man.

The authors conclude: "While [men](#) are not entirely insensitive to their requestor's attractiveness, women have higher standards and are more likely to engage in casual sex with an exceptionally attractive man than with a less attractive man."

[More information:](#) Schützwohl A et al (2009). How willing are you to accept sexual requests from slightly unattractive to exceptionally attractive imagined requestors? *Human Nature*; DOI [10.1007/s12110-009-9067-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12110-009-9067-3)

Source: Springer

APA citation: The ugly truth about one night stands (2009, August 11) retrieved 17 June 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-08-ugly-truth-night.html>

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