

How to Date Effectively: A Scientific (& Pedantic) Guide

The Power Moves | 17 August, 2018 | by Lucio Buffalmano

This is a guide on how to date effectively.

BUT.. It's not your typical article.

It's heavy on theory and science.

First, it presents you with the research.

Then, it draws a few conclusions on how you can date more effectively. If you are not interested in the theory, skip to the results.

If you're looking for more practically-oriented articles, please check:

- [Dating for men: overview](#)
- [Dating for women: overview](#)
- [Proven dating strategies for men](#)
- [Proven dating strategies for women](#)

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Science of Dating Well: Background

Love, sex, romance... Relationships.. Feelings

Some of what makes life worth living.

Conventional wisdom says that it's difficult to analyze this stuff with numbers.

And well, it might be. But that's not an excuse to shun science and data.

Because without any data, we only have personal opinions and platitudes left.

Which is exactly what [most dating resources do](#): share advice which is fully based on opinions and almost completely devoid of any science or data.

Some of the most popular opinions in the [women's dating literature](#) for example:

1. let him wait for sex
2. let him invest (so you get the serious guys)
3. Let him do all the dating (it's the man's job)
4. let him chase you (men are naturally hunters)
5. buy her things (women like money)
6. don't buy her things (or you look like a [provider while you should be a lover](#))

This article will present studies and numbers showing how these popular suggestions only apply in some specific circumstances.

Sexual Market Value: Supply & Demand

The gender ratio split, such as if a sexual market place has more female or males, has a huge impact on the behavior of the males and females in the population.

As we will see the impacts are so large that it influences not just dating behavior, but also cultural norms.

We will start with a few animal examples first, but don't worry: I'm not wasting time with random zoology here, the same principle applies to humans.

More Females = Less Male Commitment

Cichlids are fishes that, similarly to humans, nurture their offspring together until the children can live on their own without parents.

However, also similarly to humans, the offspring can sometimes survive just with the help of their mothers.

And also like humans, fathers sometimes deserted their mothers after birth.

Therefore cichlids made a very good subject for experimenting on gender ratio.

[Mart Gross](#), professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Toronto, writes in [The Evolution of Parental Care](#):

Males increasingly deserted their mates and the young in their care as the opportunity to remate increased in their environment

Basically, it means that males adopted more of a “[player's strategy](#)” by having sex and then moving on when there were more females around.

The same is also true for humans, as Anthony Walsh concludes in [Love: The Biology Behind the Heart](#):

Across a huge variety of species, from lobsters to humans, the sex ratio in a breeding population is the most important environmental factor affecting mating patterns in nominally monogamous species

Now what happens when there are more males instead?

More Males = Females Get Choosier

The consensus seems to be that male behavior is more strongly affected by gender ration.

However, females also become change their dating behavior when they can have their pick of the litter.

In dating environments where the male does not help raising the offspring, females pick the healthiest, strongest mates (or, in the case of humans, more attractive).

In dating environment where men do help raising the offspring though, she also looks at the resources.

[Biologists Neff and Pitcher](#) indeed says:

It's been relatively straightforward to show that females prefer mates who bring the most resources.

Bottom line: when there are lots of men, men need to bring the goods to the table. They need to provide and prove themselves.

More Men = Courtship & Romance

Gender ratio changes whole cultures!

Harvard Psychology professor Marcia Guttentag in her seminal book [Too Many Women](#) shows that

societies with more men emphasize romance and courtship.

This is probably because since men must compete for women, they make a bigger show of how much of a great provider and committed individual they can be (and data shows they work harder and make larger debts too).

Also the arts shift towards romance, courtship and female veneration. Artists paint idealized versions of women and, basically, put them on a pedestal.

Men who want to learn how to date well in environments with lots of women learn the art of being a gentleman.

Ideal lovers, like Rudolph Valentino.

But here is the clincher!

Women Become Prized Possessions

[It's not a game.](#)

Men actually *do* value women more and appreciate their wives and girlfriends more ([John Kim, 2013](#)). They have a tendency to “lock down” their partners and defend them, and in these societies women tend to take more traditional roles at home.

More Women = Libertine Culture

But what happens now when there are more women instead.

Well, a lot happens.

Less Commitment & More Sex

Men commit less in the presence of many women.

And a culture of free sex and libertine values takes hold.

The current culture of college hookups might indeed be a consequence of an abundance of women in the sexual marketplace.

Jon Birger uses plenty of data and anecdotal evidence indeed that in college with fewer women there is no hookup culture.

Note:

there is a common idea widespread these days that the cultural values move from rigid to libertine to eventually circle back to rigid.

I don't believe in the “inevitability” of cultural shifts, and this view is severely limited by not taking into account the gender ratio.

When Men Are Scarce Women Care Less About His Looks

When men are scarce women care less about men's looks and focus more on the looks *of other women*. Such as, they shift their focus less on looking for the perfect mate and more on the competition.

If you are in an environment with lots of women, you have probably experienced it yourself. Women become much more critical of each other.

Especially, women become critical of feminine women, which they tend to shame because they represent the biggest threat in the dating market (also read [feminine women VS independent women](#)).

Women prioritize career when men are scarce

[Researcher Kristina Durante](#) concludes that:

Whether a woman chooses a briefcase or a baby— whether she invests heavily in a career or in starting a family—is related to the local mating ecology and the availability of mates.

It makes sense after all. If finding a stable man willing to put on family is difficult, putting more energies into a career is a logical choice.

And partially, in my opinion, it's also an ego protecting mechanism (ie.: instead of risking to pursue a man and a family and not making, I turn it down first).

Feminism Rises

Marcia Guttentag's theorizes -and backs up with data- that feminist movements are energized by oversupplies of women.

Why is that so.

Because women come to depend on finicky and commitment-phobic men for a relationship.

But not to come to depend on men for everything else in life, they at least fight to win more independence in the social, political and economic arena.

Dating Markets Women Should Avoid

What does this all mean to you?

It means that, if you want to settle down or have easier access to member of the opposite sex without even needing how to date, it will pay off big time if you're an environment that is under-supplied by members of your own sex.

Difficult Markets for Women

When there are many women, the [sexual market value](#) of women goes down and men commit less.

If you are interested in dating more on your terms and/or finding a committed partner, it might be a good idea to avoid the markets with an oversupply of women.

Here are some of them:

1. Russia & EX URSS Countries

All the top 5 biggest alcohol consuming countries are located in the ex URSS ([Wikipedia](#)).

Italy in comparison is in place 87.

And while 65% of alcohol drinks in Italy are wine, in Russia more than half of the alcohol consumption is spirits.

What does that mean?

Lots of alcoholics.

In Belarus a whopping 11% of the population is physically dependent on alcohol.

Alcoholics are not gender neutral now. Most of them are men.

That leaves lots of women, chasing fewer eligible bachelors.

Have you ever wondered why Eastern and Russian women have a stereotype for being more feminine and attentive to their looks?

Now you may know why...

- [How to be feminine](#)

2. Big Cities

Lena Edlund in a paper called [Sex and the City](#) shows that urban areas see a bigger inflow of young women than young men.

Young men go to the city because of higher wages. Same for women. But also unskilled women move to the city, potentially looking for high earners.

That also means that well off male city dwellers have even more options that they would have otherwise.

This is statically significant because men have a much smaller propensity to pursue women based on their income and women a much smaller propensity of enjoying and pairing up with men who are below their socio-economic level.

3. College Degree Cohort

If you are a smart and driven woman, chances are that you are in a difficult market.

In the last decades women, by and large, have been overtaking men. In 1994 more women received a bachelor degree or higher.

[And the disparity has only grown since then.](#)

Nobody told them of the gender gap yet ☐

4. Religious Groups

In the West women tend to be more devout than men and men tend to leave organized religions more frequently than women.

That means that church groups often see more women than men.

5. Thailand / Philippines

Everywhere there are more gay men than lesbian women.

However, in some places in the world a significantly large percentage of the male population crosses into gay/transsexual.

Sometimes to the point of being indistinguishable from women (here's [how to recognize ladyboys](#)).

Not only these are men that disappear from the man's cohort, but they move into the women cohort chasing other men.

Difficult Markets for Men

And these are the sexual marketplaces that tend to favor women to the detriment of men:

1. Italy / Latin America

Italian men tend to take care of themselves much more than the average.

And they tend to be more forward with their dating.

The same can be said for some other Latin sexual marketplaces.

2. China

Decades of one child policy with a strong bias for male children led to a population with an oversupply of men.

Why do you think Chinese men must own a flat to date well? And why can Chinese women inquire about what the men own?

Because women have their pick.

Some commentators even say the Chinese economic boom is partly fueled by men trying to acquire goods that they can exchange on the sexual marketplace.

3. Technical Universities

Except of architecture which is already mostly women in many places, most technical universities are oversupplied with guys.

4. Tech Sectors

If you want to date well, stay away from silicon valley, tech startups and developers-centric companies. Go into HR instead.

Also read:

- [Sexual market value hacks](#)

The Women Quality Oversupply

Today all across the west there is a consistent, higher number of women obtaining college degree as compared to men.

The issue with that is that women don't like "marrying down" with men who are less educated and/or driven than they are.

Some studies show that would be easier for women if he had a good blue collar job with a sizable income. But as we know, blue collar jobs are disappearing...

This is true for most Western countries and it offers a good explanation as to why we see a decline in marriage rates among college-educated women.

The college gender gap is even wider among blacks

Men Should Be Masculine... But Not Too Much

Most people reading around here probably already know basic stuff such as:

- Deeper voice in men is attractive
- Beard is attractive
- Good body / muscle is attractive

These are all signs of masculinity. And, on average, they are attractive.

What most are less aware of though is that there is an upper bound. This Oxford paper titled "[Lover or a fighter](#)" reveals:

Men's vocal attractiveness peaked at around 96 Hz. Beard growth had equivocal effects on attractiveness judgments. In contrast, perceptions of men's dominance simply increased with increasing masculinity (i.e., with lower-pitched voices and greater beard growth). Together, these results suggest that the optimal level of physical masculinity might differ depending on whether the outcome is social dominance or mate attraction.

Fascinating stuff.

The paper basically says that women want “mannish man”... Up to a certain point.

However other men keep assigning higher dominance level to manlier man without an upper limit.

People who know a bit about seduction knew that androgyny and some feminine traits on an otherwise attractive man can be very attractive (also read [The Art of Seduction](#)).

But this paper backs the idea that too much manliness is a turn off.

Why is that so?

Hard to say, and I recommend you distrust “ad-hoc” evolutionary explanations.

However, it could be that it's because very high testosterone is associated with men abandoning women.

Masculine Men Make for Bad Partners

Men with higher testosterone have been shown to:

- Marry less
- Cheat more
- Divorce more
- Make for general lower quality marriages (hitting, squabbles etc.)

Read [Booth and Dabbs 1993](#).



Me love you long time (and then move on)

Who's More Romantic? Men Are

Most people believe that women are more romantic than men.

Yet [studies show that men tend to be more romantic than women](#).

Why is that so?

Partially it's good old numbers. Women, on average, have more readily available options than men. And men with little options tend to idealize and fantasize about women. White-knighting, treating them well and all that.

Partially, of course, it's also cultural.

And culturally it's more OK for women to embrace romanticism and it's less OK for men to do so.

Men still do it, but you don't see it.

You see women with their screensavers of Brad Pitt and posters of Johnny Depp -how come Depp is so more popular than Pitt by the way?-.

And you equally have men who pine after Catherine Zeta Jones' lips or dream of embracing Scarlett Johansson salacious figure before going to bed... But they don't say it and they hide their dreams.

Also, there is a major difference between men and women when it comes to romanticism. Women are eminently realistic. They might start a relationship that they adore him and romanticize about him... But they will soon grow restless if the relationship doesn't progress and he doesn't deliver the goods -from lover to more serious to official to babies-.

Men instead can keep idealizing a woman for the whole length of the relationship.

However, in my experience, women tend to idealize men harder and stronger when he allows her to take over the very feminine and submissive role in the relationship. That's when you will see women with puppy eyes and star in the eyes.

But, again, that often doesn't last forever.

Are Men Intimidated By Smart Women?

Men are intimidated by smart and successful women.

I bet you heard that a few times.

And men prefer dumb women.

You probably heard that too a few times.

But is it true?

It turns out, that it's not true that man want stupid women.

Indeed an increase in intelligence makes the woman more appealing.

However, there is an upper limit.

When he perceives her to be *too* intelligent, then her overall appeal does indeed decrease. And that limit is not that high. Around a 7/10 in perceived intelligence.

Man will *say* they like intelligent women. Even smarter than they are.

But in reality, they are *less* romantically attracted to them.

And *especially* so if the women are smarter than them ([Park et. al., 2015](#)).

Basically, men like intelligent women. But not so much very intelligent women. And especially women who are smarter than they are.

Determining why, [Robert Burris](#) says, it's not as easy though. But yes, it might be the good old ego thing.

Example

Ted in How I Met Your Mother didn't particularly appreciate a woman overplaying the dumb side:

Also read:

- [Dating for successful women](#)

It's the opposite for women:

Women Like Smart Men. And Handsome. As Much As Possible

For women instead there is no upper bound.

Women always preferred men who were smarter and more attractive.

And while women show a preference for looks over intelligence, women measure the two against each other. That means that a not so attractive man still has a chance if he is intelligent.

References:

Karbowsky, A., Deja, D., & Zawisza, M. (2016). [Perceived female intelligence as economic bad in partner choice](#). 102, 217–222. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2016.07.006

Park, L. E., Young, A. F., and Eastwick, P. W. (2015). [\(Psychological\) distance makes the heart grow fonder: Effects of psychological distance and relative intelligence on men's attraction to women](#). Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 41(11), 1459–1473. doi:10.1177/0146167215599749

The Eligible Bachelor Paradox

Have you ever noticed that some very smart, articulate and often even attractive women remains bachelors?

And other less attractive and generally less

Why is that so?

Well, [Mark Gimein](#) provides an explanation with [auction theory](#). He calls it “The Eligible Bachelor Paradox”.

Gimein says that in auction theory -and in real life as well- weak bidders win the auction more often than strong bidders.

In human dating terms, that means that women with less to offer end up with a mate more quickly and reliably than women with lots to offer (lots to offer = confident they can find a mate).

Why?

It's because the weak bidders, as we have seen before, focus more on the competition.

They know they can be outgunned and they are more in a rush to secure a win (ie.: a mate).

The strong daters instead wait around for Mr. Perfect. But in real life Mr. Perfect rarely shows up.

Bad, bad strategy.

Hurry! Difficult Markets Get Worse Over Time

The problem with waiting around is that gender imbalanced don't stay the same. But, just like a game of [musical chairs](#), they get worse over time.

What happens is that while she awaits for Mr. Perfect, all Mr. Good Enough get scooped up by the more aggressive daters.

And she is left at 40 without any single good prospect around.

Hollywood Crates Unrealistic Expectations?

You've heard it before.

People -especially men who are more visual creatures- are now so used to airbrushed women, fake boobs and plastic faces that they can't appreciate "real" women anymore.

That leads to unrealistic expectations that impairs their ability of loving and appreciating "real women".

But... Is it true?

Turns out, sadly... That might really be the case.

[Douglas Kenrick and Sara Gutierrez](#) asked male college students to rate the attractiveness of potential blind dates after and before watching an episode of "Charlie's Angels".

The men rated the much more "real" potential dates as far less attractive.

A follow-up study exposed men to picture of female models or modern art.

The men who saw female models' picture answered that they were less in love with their wives as compared to the men who saw pictures of modern art.

Advice for Men

Get more realistic about your expectations.

Most women grow hair when unshaven and, without bashing anyone, also actresses are much, much plainer without all make up.

The Paradox of Choice

[The Paradox of Choice](#) is a book I deeply enjoyed and even put it in the [top 10 best self help books](#).

Barry Schwarz proves, with data and research, that when we have a lot of options we often don't make any choice.

And when we make one, we tend to be less happy than if we had no choice at all.

The Paradox of Choice connects well with auction theory and further expands it.

In today's society, with social media and online dating, everyone feels as if we were drowning in a sea of options.

How to Date Against The Paradox of Choice

Pick one and work on it.

People who pick and stick with an option and work on it are happier and more fulfilled.



Not sure... I'll just wait

The Carol Syndrome

Is it true that very beautiful women don't get approached much?

Yes.

[José-Manuel Rey](#) developed a mathematical model to prove it.

He says that when a man sees a beautiful woman, he runs the following paradigm in his mind:

1. She's beautiful
2. Many men want her
3. My chances are low
4. I will protect my ego and don't try at all

The key concept of The Carol Syndrome is that dating doesn't happen in a vacuum, and that all players considers his options in relation to other players.

Since we are all social creatures, this does make sense. And plenty of anecdotal evidence seems to support it.

High and Low Competition Markets

If we look at how often men reproduced in the past, we can get an idea of how competitive a market is for men.

When lots of men passed their genes, we can assess that a region is:

- Low in competition (every man got a shot)
- High in monogamy

When few men passed their genes, we can assess that a region is instead more towards polyamory and higher in sexual competition.

[This female to male breeding ratio](#) paper shows us that:

- In East Asia 91% of men have reproduced
- In Europe 77%
- In Africa 71%

There are no figures for India, but if we look at a [Durex poll from 2005](#) India is one of the most sexually conservative places in the world.

The arranged marriages and few divorces leaves Indians with little comparative experience in the dating marketplace when they're outside of India.

What Does It Mean

These figures mean that, theoretically, guys going from high competition markets to lower competition markets might bring with them a higher level of training.

That's far from a given though, since men from high competition markets might have as well *not* have trained at all.

It does mean though, with a higher degree of reliability, that men from low competition markets will fare, on average, poorly in higher competition markets.

For a woman looking for a stable relationship, an environment with lower competitions is might be better.

My note:

These numbers left me scratching my head a bit.

Black women seem more protective of their men, which fits into the paradigm of more philandering men. But traveling to Africa I have found it to be one of the easiest place to meet women and get laid. Black women are also warmer on approach than most other women. Also in Europe.

And they seem to play less unavailable games (and games in general) and help men along the dating process.

Everything I have researched made sense to me. Just this one is a conundrum I have yet to solve.

The Strongest Currency: Sex

| Women Give Sex For Stuff – Men Give Stuff For Sex

You have probably heard the story of Weinstein and how he asked for sex in exchange for help.

Now, let's be clear, that guy is disgusting.

His takes sleazy to a whole new level.

However, what he was engaging is nothing more than has been going for a long time. And women have been doing the same as well.

The difference is that women trade sex -or the hint of sex- to get stuff. And men trade stuff and favors for sexual favors.

Books such as [Goal Digger Guide](#) even teach women how to get stuff from men.

Daniel Kruger puts this theory, and something we all instinctively knew, on a [research paper here](#).

The fact that there are far more women selling sex and far more men buying sex is also proof of how sex is traded in the sexual marketplace.



Also read:

- [The sexual market place](#)

Are We Monogamous?

Are humans monogamous?

It's a fair question.

In short, [evolutionary psychology](#) tells us that we are “in between monogamous and polyamorous”. We form pair-bonds, with the occasional cheating.

We can clearly see it in our behaviors.

Male humans do invest time and resources in the offspring, which is a crucial aspect of monogamy. But most of us know of instances of cheating around us, too.

In the scale of male parental investment, we are around the middle in the animal kingdom ([The Moral Animal](#)).

To make it short, humans have a tendency for monogamy. But also a tendency to cheat and move from monogamous partner to another.

As we have seen before, the gender ration split also influence how monogamous couples are (more men means more monogamy).



Contrary to popular beliefs gorillas and silver-back have very small penises and minuscules testicles. This is the case because gorillas have their mating warfare at a physical level. *Not* at a sperm level. Once they win the battle with other males, their females are theirs and they won't stray. So they don't need much sperm (genitals) or to place their sperm deeper inside (long penises). Obviously, we are different.

Pareto Law in Dating

[CDC](#) data and an [ABC News Poll](#) show that sexual partners are more evenly distributed among women than among men.

Albeit the polls show that there aren't that many men who are getting nothing, there is indeed a tendency for a few men to have much more sex than most others.

Note: I wouldn't personally trust self-reported data on surveys. Especially when it comes to sex. However Gladwell in [The Tipping Point](#) makes a good case with data that is harder to lie about: sexually transmitted diseases.

And those show that a few "super infectors" were responsible for the bulk of a virus' spread.

[This study by OKCupid](#) showed that women are much, much harsher than men when it comes to scoring the opposite sex.

In that sample women rated 80% of men below average.

All seem to point to women having sky high standards.

Maybe too high?

What It Means To You

Many women complain that men don't want to settle down.

I suspect this is because many women disproportionately go for the top guys who, indeed, tend to settle down much less than more "regular" guys.

While this is certainly not true for everyone, either men or women, it might make sense for women to start considering a broader range of men.

Probably, considering that they actually rate men wrong the whole time...

Women Are Bad at Assessing Men

Based on lots of empirical evidence, I can tell you that women rate men wrong *all the time*. Both in terms of short term and long term mate potential.

1 enjoys every moment; 1 thinks I'm a weirdo (the former was also much more attractive, so it's not all a question of SMV)

A woman I have never been intimate with basically proposes herself sexually to me in the belief that there is a queue of women wanting to have sex with me.

Another other woman whom I met at a parade and with whom I thought we had a good time together never replied.

And this other woman blocked me right away.

This girl I had a date with "enjoys every moment with me".

And this other woman never wants to see me again "after my very inappropriate behavior".

This ex girlfriend of mine believes I can get all the girls I want.

While another short fling told me in person she regretted it ever having done it with me (a very low point of my life BTW).

How does the same person go from top sperm donor to weirdo? And from guy who can get any girl to guy who doesn't deserve a reply?

He didn't go anywhere!

Women are simply terrible at estimating men's potential upon brief interactions.

The line between sexy and "go away" is so extremely easy to cross that most people wouldn't believe it until they actually experience it (or until evidence is provided like in this post).

I have approached women who reacted star-struck, and some other times like I had leper.

Over the longer term though, patterns start to emerge.

In short: women are terrible at assessing potential in the short term.

But over the long term women's assessments and reality start to align better.

2 think I'm the best; 2 block me

What It Means to You

Bottom line:

1. Do not rely on first blush impressions
2. If you're looking for a relationship, give some "weirdos" and "poor prospects" more leeway
3. Don't believe the first impressions of sexy guys: often they're not that better than normal ones

First impressions are by far the easiest to sway and the easiest to get wrong.

[Players](#) and [womanizers](#) are also the best at faking positive first impressions. And often they have little to show for except that they put women on a higher priority in their life -while the rest of their lives suffer-.

Attachment Theory: How Women Miss Emotionally Available Men

Are women passing up the best men for a relationship?

No scientific how to date guide could be complete without a look at attachment theory.

And attachment theory says that indeed many women do are passing up the best men and highest quality men for a relationship.

Amir Levin, author of *Attached*, says that some women, and especially women with an [anxious attachment style](#), confuse an activated attachment system with love.

What does that mean, in practical terms?

It means that when women cannot get enough of their partner/fling, they confuse their craving for more time together as love.

But it's not love, it's simply that her emotional needs are not being met.

Basically: (emotionally) **unavailable men give women the false belief that they are in love.**

This means that women often end up with men with an [avoidant attachment style](#), and that rarely makes for very good relationships.

And what happens when these women meet men with a secure attachment?

[Men with a secure attachment](#) tend to be [higher quality men](#). They are more emotionally stable and they are comfortable giving intimacy and asking for it.

However, they are also more *available*, and they give women less emotional roller coaster.

And women who are used to emotional roller coasters find more stable men boring.

So when they meet a high quality, secure men, they mistakenly believe there is no chemistry. Which is wrong: most of the times love is developed over time.

Genders and Attachment Styles

Note: the opposite can also happen. Such as that men confuse an activated attachment system for love,. The movie 500 Days of Summer is the example of a man who falls madly in love with an unavailable woman.

But it's a bit less common.

Ultimatum Games & Dating

Nobody that I am aware of has yet applied [ultimatum games](#) to dating.

Which is highly surprising, since ultimatums can be a great tool to force a decision for the many “sticky topics” that often happen in dating, such as:

- Commit or leave
- Marry me or leave
- Make me a baby or leave

What's the popular dating advice here?

Some popular authors say you must ask for commitment. Some others recommend women never to ask men for commitment.

The latter is very bad advice.

Research on Ultimatums

John Molloy, author of *Why Men Marry Some Women and Not Others*, assembled a team to interview 3,000 couples right after they got married.

60% of the recently married women said they were ready to walk away if their men were not ready to get

married.

Note: Molloy's research is not a final proof that "ultimatums" and demands for commitment work. However, I consider it to be a strong indicator for something that makes logical sense: that feigning disinterest in a commitment, marriage and "official status" is not a good strategy.

Why Ultimatums Works

Jon Birger in his wonderful [DateOnomics](#) makes the point that ultimatum work because they create scarcity (one of [Cialdini's principles of influence](#)).

I am not convinced about the scarcity principle in this case. I think demanding commitment work in part because of the threat, but also because demands increase the woman's value.

A woman who demands commitment indeed is also making a statement that she is a woman who expects to receive, and that is an indicator of value, confidence, and market value (because she believes she can get commitment from someone else).

Also, it raises her value by placing her closer to the Madonna in the [Madonna-whore dichotomy](#). And men love that.

You Must Follow Through

All the best negotiators ([Secrets of Power Negotiating](#), [Never Split the Difference](#)) will tell you that if you don't follow through on ultimatums you lose almost all of your power.

Basically:

If you make an ultimatum, you must be ready to follow through.

What We Learned so Far

Here is how all this information translates to you:

- **Men Won't Necessarily Chase You**

Dating book best sellers tell you that you have to let men chase. Because they are hunters.

Not fully true.

Yes men do pursue and romance... When there are more women in the environment!

Otherwise men, like all human beings, have an ego and enjoy women who return their love and fervor.

Read more in: [the myth of the chase](#).



Hunters at heart... Or just few preys?

- **Men end up with what's available**

All human beings have a tendency to follow the path of last resistance.

And when there are lots of women available -but even when there aren't that many-, men to end up with what's available and easier for them.

- **Men approach very beautiful women less**

Because they think she must be too difficult and their chances must be low.

- **Asking for commitment seems to work**

Not asking for commitment on the other hand favor the men: they get what they want without having to commit.

- **A few men get most of the sex**

The sexual marketplace seems to be a market where the Pareto law applies. Women are more evenly distributed and guys are more skewed towards a few big sex takers.

How to Date Effectively: Results

Bottom line.

[WIFY](#).

What does this all mean for you?

1. Don't Let Him Do All The Work

We have seen that the advice of "letting him chase" is meaningless unless we also look at the environment.

Making him chase you works. And it works great. IF the culture is one of courtship, women idealization

and if men outnumber women (the two overlap as we have seen).

If that's not the case:

2. Date Assertively

Auction theory shows that women who date assertively pair up with men more frequently and more reliably.

Dating assertively of course does not mean to be masculine and/or to lead the dating dance. You still have to be feminine.

Dating assertively means to swap the culture of “feign disinterest, let him chase and invest as much as possible” to one of “[show up and help him move the interaction along](#)”.

3. Consider Guys Without a Degree

Women show a strong reluctance to “marry down”. And that so far has included men who don't hold a degree.

Women with a degree should probably be well served by considering also the pool of non college-degree men, where men are struggling with an oversupply of males.

This is especially true for cohorts where the gap is even wider, like black women.

4. Give More More Men More Chances

I.e.: stop only focusing on the top 10%.

The data shows what we instinctively know is true: the manliest men and the men with most options commit less and cheat more. And if you manage to settle with one, data also show they make for worse relationships.

Of course, if you are looking for fun, go after whoever strikes your fancy.

But if you are looking for commitment, you are probably well served by giving more men more chances and looking for more diamonds in the rough.

5. Settle Down Early

If you are in a difficult market, it's a mathematical certainty that things will only get worse. Then, it can pay off to make an effort to settle down early.

6. Ask for Commitment

This article makes the point -through data- that “letting him chase, invest & wait” does not work in environments with an overabundance of women.

However, “have sex with him and never ask for anything” is not the solution. That does not work either. Instead, ask for commitment.

There is no data as to how/when to ask for commitment.

7. Pick Environments With Good Gender Ratio

If you're a woman, date in environments with more men (and the opposite for men).

Or consider countries where your traits are more in demand.

And if you want a relationship, countrysides are better than cities.

8. Make Yourself Easy to Approach

The Carol Paradox, or the idea that beautiful women are pursued less applies to beautiful women. But the truth is that all men are scared of rejection with *all* types of women.

The easier you make it for men to approach you, the more opportunity you will have.

[Leil Lowndes](#) says that men miss most female approach signals, which are too subtle for them. The solution?

- Look more welcoming (smile more)
- Make your signals more obvious
- Position yourself near him

If you want to read more, check this article:

- [How to find a boyfriend](#)
- [Dating strategies for women](#)

Summary

This article looked at data on dating, sex and relationships.

It then drew a few rules on how to date effectively based on that data.

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