

# The reality of platonic relationships sociology



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Romantic relationships are characterized by feelings of passion, emotional reactions and physical attractive force ; and Platonic relationships are characterized by the absence of physical attractive force, passion or sex ( Sippola, 1999 ) . These two word pictures are really of import for the range of this paper because both are important to reply the inquiry, “ Can work forces and adult females truly be merely friends? ” In the magazine Psychology Today, Clifford Lazarus wrote an article with an account to this inquiry. Lazarus contends, for the most portion, strictly Platonic relationships for heterosexual work forces and adult females are a myth ( Lazarus, 2010 ) . To back up his contention, he refers to the automatic nature of work forces and the brooding nature of adult females.

Lazarus refers to a sexual desirableness physiological reaction, which work forces demonstrate towards adult females in premier generative age. This automatic suggests the immediate ideas of males when first encountering females are whether or non he would wish to hold sex with her ( Lazarus, 2010 ) . Although, it is argued that females may exhibit the same ideas, although non every bit often as with males, they tend to rapidly travel past this physiological reaction. On the other manus, adult females by and large want to find the suitableness of a possible spouse. This suitableness is referred to as a desire to look for possible long term, socioeconomic stableness with a spouse ( Canary & A ; Dindia, 1998 ) . Women hence, be given to be more sexually brooding and choosier than males, while males tend to be more sexually automatic than adult females.

These automatic and brooding thrusts can be linked to evolutionary theories. Males have an indefinite sum of sperm while females merely have a preset

sum of eggs for her life span ( Lazarus, 2010 ) . This suggests an account of why males may exhibit the above mentioned reflex more than females, and why females exhibit a determinable brooding thrust. This article hence concludes that strictly Platonic relationships in cross-sex friendly relationships do not be. The intent of this paper is to compare and contrast the decision of the Psychology Today article with scholarly research to find if strictly Platonic cross-sex friendly relationships can be between heterosexual work forces and adult females.

It is of import to bespeak that the article ' s decision assumes that a strictly Platonic relationship exists when both people in the relationship have ne'er considered holding a romantic relationship with each other. Through sexually charged coquettish behaviour and evolutionary theories, the first portion of this paper will supply support for the article ' s decision that strictly Platonic cross-sex friendly relationships are not possible. However, the 2nd portion of this paper will show grounds denouncing the predating hypothesis by agencies of costs, romantic purposes and grounds to remain Platonic.

### Coquettish Behavior

Both romantic and Platonic relationships report coquettish activity although frequencies in coquettish behaviour may differ ( Egland, Spitzberg, & A ; Zormeier, 1996 ) . Some illustrations of coquettish behaviours include looking your friend or spouse up and down, staring in their eyes and smiling suggestively. When comparing consequences of the Platonic cross-sex relationships to the romantic cross-sex relationships, Platonic relationships engaged in coquettish activity about every bit much as romantic

relationships ( Egland, et al. , 1996 ) . This determination bolsters the position that even in Platonic relationships, coquettish behaviour is expressed.

Furthermore, coquettish behaviour may be sexually charged. Harmonizing to Henningsen, Braz, and Davies ( 2008 ) , people engage in coquettish behaviour for six chief grounds. First is sexual motive, mentioning to one ' s desires to prosecute in sexual Acts of the Apostless. Second, an person may be relationally motivated, with the purpose of traveling from a Platonic relationship to a romantic relationship. Third is fun motive, mentioning to chat uping to derive sexual exhilaration or bang. Fourth is researching motive, mentioning to coquettish behaviour of Platonic relationships to research and see if positive feedback comes from the other individual. Fifth is esteem motive, which comments on how gaining positive feedback from chat uping may hike ego regard or rousing. And eventually people flirt for instrumental motive, which is chat uping for possible entree to wages.

Chat uping is the primary setup to signal sexual and romantic handiness ( Guererro & A ; Chavez, 2005 ) . All of the grounds people may chat up are charged with motivations other than being Platonic. Flirt can be described as a “ subcategory of social-sexual communicating ” ( Henningsen, et al. , 2008, p. 2 ) . These social-sexual communications carry the intension of being sexually charged, proposing one individual may hold had sexual or romantic ideas at one point in clip in the relationship. This suggests that chat uping is associated with sexual desire, or grounds other than what constitutes a Platonic friendly relationship ( Henningsen, Braz, & A ; Davies, 2008 ) .

Coquettish behaviour is frequently intended to be interpreted in a manner that carries sexual motivation ( Henningsen, et al. , 2008 ) . This implies that those in Platonic relationships have an intended intent or witting motivation to prosecute in it. For case, Platonic relationships that do non desire to turn romantic voluntarily do non prosecute in coquettish behaviour ( Guerrero & A ; Mongeau, 2008 ) . This suggests that Platonic relationships may be witting of chat uping, therefore bespeaking that people engage in chat uping through a peculiar motive ; in these cases a sexually charged motive. Since Platonic relationships do prosecute in coquettish behaviour with one another, there is ground to believe that the coquettish behaviour is sexually charged

Furthermore, work forces may construe expressed behaviour from adult females otherwise than from what adult females intend. If adult females are non voluntarily seeking to give coquettish signals or marks of coquettish behaviour, work forces are much more readily evident to construe non-flirtatious signals as coquettish ( Canary & A ; Dindia, 1998 ) . Therefore, even in an seemingly Platonic friendly relationship, work forces may be misinterpreting these non-flirtatious signals as coquettish, and hence sexual every bit good, even if there is no connotation to pass on coquettish behaviour. This implies even in some seemingly Platonic relationships, certain behaviours may signal marks of sexual desire accidentally. Check THESE PRECEDING 3 PARAGRAPHS

### Evolutionary Positions

Harmonizing to evolutionary theories, coquettish behaviour is contingent upon a desire to reproduce ( Canary & A ; Dindia, 1998 ) . As mentioned in

the article, work forces have a type of automatic thrust and adult females have a type of brooding thrust ( Lazarus, 2010 ) . From an evolutionary stance, a expression into interactions between work forces and adult females will reenforce these automatic and brooding thrusts.

### Brooding and Automatic Behavior

Womans are more likely to take a spouse or mate who exhibits position and resources, hence being more brooding than males ( Lazarus, 2010 ) .

Womans are by and large more interested in work forces with high resource potency ( Canary & A ; Dindia, 1998 ) . This indicates why adult females focus on a long term stable relationship ; one which is able to back up their progeny. On the other manus, work forces are much more likely to near adult females who display more marks of coquettish behaviour ( Canary & A ; Dindia, 1998 ) . This indicates work forces ' s automatic thrust, bespeaking sexual ideas or involvement upon initial brushes ( Lazarus, 2010 ) .

Interests of work forces and adult females vary depending on age group. Males prefer younger adult females, while adult females prefer older males as age ascends. Womans tend to be more fertile when they are younger, while work forces tend to be more economically sufficient and successful as they grow older ( Alterovitz & A ; Mendelsohn, 2009 ) . This suggests work forces being more concerned with the birthrate of adult females by preferring younger couples, while adult females reported being more concerned with male socioeconomic position, indicated by choosing older work forces ( Alterovitz & A ; Mendelsohn, 2009 ) .

### Parental Investment Theory

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Additionally, the female perceptual experience of older males holding the resources to supply for their progeny and males holding the feeling to copulate with a fertile female is consistent with the evolutionary theory of parental investments. Under parental investing theory, the investments of work forces and adult females differ. For illustration, a adult females needs to transport the progeny. On the other manus, work forces could technically stop their investing of the offspring instantly after construct. As referenced by Tafoya ( 2006 ) , adult females ' s potency for reproduction after construct is inhibited, while on the other manus work forces as quoted by Lazarus ( 2010 ) , have their sperm " invariably replenished. " Furthermore, because of the paternity uncertainness hypothesis, a adult male can ne'er cognize with absolute certainty that a kid is his. On the reverse, even though the female parent may non cognize who the male parent of her kid is, this hypothesis holds that she will cognize for certain that she will go through her cistrans on to her progeny ( Tafoya, 2006 ) .

Sing this hypothesis and the theory of parental investments, the automatic nature of work forces and brooding nature of adult females are explained. A male ' s automatic thrust can be explained since males ne'er know if the kid is theirs with absolute certainty and their investing demand non travel beyond construct ( Tafoya, 2006 ) . Therefore, males seem to exhibit lesser committedness, reenforcing their automatic inclinations. Additionally, work forces are more likely to accept a short term mate of any overall quality than adult females. For case, it is more likely that work forces instead than adult females select a short term mate whose overall qualities such as wealth, position and attraction are missing. Work force are besides more likely than

adult females to hold a one dark base or take part in an matter ( Li & A ; Kenrick, 2006 ) .

On the other manus, adult females know their cistrans will be passed on and are doing more of a forfeit from an evolutionary point of view by the surcease of their possible reproduction. This indicates that females may be more selective about their couples as indicated in the article by brooding thrusts. Furthermore, adult females prefer resources and position when looking for a short term mate more than males. In fact, adult females prefer the same qualities in their short term couples as they do in their long term couples ( Li & A ; Kenrick, 2006 ) . This implies adult females represent this brooding thrust in support of a possible parental investor, that being the possible mate. It is shown that copulating every bit good as parenting is indispensable to success of offspring, which helps to explicate the features of these automatic and brooding thrusts ( Tafoya, 2006 ) . However, evolutionary positions non limited to parental investing theory.

### Friends with Benefits and Biosocial Theory

Evolutionary theories are apparent in friends with benefits relationships. Friends with benefits refer to non-romantic or Platonic relationships who engage in sexual activities ( McGinty, Knox, & A ; Zusman, 2007 ) . Friends with benefits is non merely a tendency, but besides is normally engaged in. About 60 % of undergraduates reported holding had an experience with a friends with benefits relationship ( McGinty et al. , 2007 ) . This reinforces the natural sexual activity and sexual behaviour with the opposite sex. Biosocial



theory of development may ask more profoundly as to why friends with benefits occurs.

Biosocial Theory predicts human behaviour by looking to an individual's familial sensitivity and their environment. Women show to be more emotionally involved in a friend with benefits relationship than work forces. Because adult females emphasize emotional fond regard, it is argued that adult females do so in order to hold a stable relationship ( McGinty et al. , 2007 ) . In holding a stable relationship, adult females need to rise up their progeny, therefore proposing why adult females are more emotionally concerned with friends with benefits relationships than work forces. On the other hand, work forces are more sexually focused with the relationship. At times, work forces are shown to be involved in multiple friends with benefits relationships, therefore beefing up the point that work forces exhibit an automatic thrust ( McGinty et al. , 2007 ) .

Furthermore, Schneider & A ; Kenny ( 2000 ) surveyed how rewarding and dearly-won people see an opposite-sex Platonic friendly relationship. Sexual entree was reported as a possible benefit of being in a cross-sex friendly relationship, every bit good as a reported cost. For illustration, work forces may be friends with adult females as a agency to derive sexual entree, nevertheless, work forces report holding less sexual entree than adult females. This suggests work forces are more concerned with sexual entree than adult females ( Bleske & A ; Buss, 2000 ) . This reinforces the thought of the automatic nature of work forces.

However, adult females are reported to be benefited when protected by an opposite sex friend. Though this is not shown to what extent this suggests a positive cue for adult females as mate potency, it has been suggested in a comparative survey that males who protect their friends really gain more sexual entree. This was apparent in a survey of baboons, where the males protect the eating evidences, and in return the female gives them periodic sexual entree ; hence proposing work forces ' s evolutionary thrust for protecting adult females ( Bleske & A ; Buss, 2000 ) .

Coquettish behaviour and evolutionary positions back up the reflexive and brooding inclinations of males and females, severally. This suggests that work forces and adult females in Platonic cross-sex friendly relationships engage in sexually charged behaviour. The predating information besides supports, as the article contends, that Platonic relationships may not be executable merely because of evolutionary thrusts ( Lazarus, 2010 ) .

Although these findings reinforce the thought that strictly Platonic relationships do not be, there is information to believe otherwise. The undermentioned research in classs of similar costs, romantic purpose, and grounds to remain Platonic indicate grounds against the predating research, postulating there may be grounds Platonic relationships can be without holding purpose for or a passage to romantic relationships.

### Similar Costss and Status

Males and Females do not differ in how dearly-won it is to be denied sex from the individual in the friendly relationship ; the potency for rejection is perceived as low in cost for both sexes ( Bleske & A ; Buss, 2000 ) . This

suggests that work forces and adult females may be able to be friends without worrying about sexual entree. However, this information does back up males and/or females think about sex. Since the possible cost for rejection was low, this implies the male and females evaluated each other before doing the determination to go romantic ( Bleske & A ; Buss, 2000 ) . Therefore, this seems to be more closely related to the decision in the article, and more supportive of automatic and brooding behaviour than non.

Even so, the position of the relationship may hold an consequence on the friendly relationship. Although, ex-romantic spouses report desiring a Platonic relationship to turn romantic one time once more, a friend who has ever been Platonic would non desire the relationship to turn romantic ( Schneider & A ; Kenny, 2000 ) . This indicates that how a relationship is initiated may hold an existent impact on the relationship. Platonic friendly relationships hence, may be depending on past experiences with the person. This undermines the contention that Platonic cross-sex friendly relationships can ne'er be Platonic, since past experience can hold an impact.

### Romantic Purpose

Romantic purpose was non classified in the above article Why Work force and Women Ca n't be " Just Friends " . Romantic purpose can change and impact relationships otherwise. In the purely Platonic relationships, cross-sex friends reported less contact, flirting and activity compared to romantic relationships. Arguably, purely Platonic friendly relationships do non chat up, touch and pass every bit much clip with one another relation to reciprocally romantic relationships, perchance because making so may endanger the

friendly relationship ( Guerro & A ; Chavez, 2005 ) . Furthermore, long term purely Platonic friendly relationships can travel past initial romantic purpose. Friendships in the long term are shown to utilize care behaviours such as less contact and flirting as a agency to non potentially destroy the Platonic friendly relationship ( Guerro & A ; Chavez, 2005 ) . These happening suggests purely Platonic and reciprocally romantic relationships do vary with romantic purpose, and therefore may non comprehend one another as anything more than Platonic friends.

### Reasons to Stay Platonic

There are six motivations as to why relationships should stay Platonic. To safeguard the relationship, deficiency of or no attractive force, web disapproval, 3rd party, hazard antipathy and timeout. This order with safeguarding the relationship being most of import implies that there is an intrinsic ground for relationships to stay strictly Platonic. The rewarding nature of the relationship may be seen as more rewarding than a relationship traveling towards one that is romantic or sexual. For case, a wages in a Platonic relationship is the ability to portion emotion and/ or derive support about external state of affairss ; the ability to unwrap in the relationship. On the other manus, less rewarding factors may direct people to stay Platonic as good. For illustration, one may experience that the friend in the relationship is non attractive, or one may non desire to expose oneself to possible emotional instability ( Messman, Canary, & A ; Hause, 2000 ) . Therefore, research suggests cross-sex Platonic relationships may hold strong grounds for being.

Furthermore, all Platonic friendly relationships may not be sexually charged. The sexual challenge in cross-sex friendly relationships, which refers to work forces and adult females being hardwired to be sexually attracted to one another, is said to merely happen in a minority of cross-sex friendly relationships. Furthermore, the sexual challenge may be linked to attractive force of the spirit, instead than of the organic structure. Therefore, reinforcing that sexual challenges may not be accurately represented when mentioning to the sexual desire of work forces and adult females ( Messman et al. , 2000 ) .

## Decision

Coquettish behaviour and evolutionary theories strongly support the thought that there can not be strictly Platonic relationships as indicated in the article. However, alternate research suggests Platonic friendly relationships may be possible ; similar costs, subjective romantic purpose, and grounds to stay grounds to stay Platonic are grounds that friendly relationships have some inducement to stay strictly Platonic. Although there is support for both sides, the implicit in inquiry is whether work forces and adult females together can hold strictly Platonic friendly relationships. Coquettish behaviours every bit good as the evolutionary theories of biosocial and parental investing demonstrate that cross-sex Platonic friendly relationships are disputing. The bulk of the information in the Why Work force and Women Can't be " Just Friends " article does give acceptance to the bulk of these findings.

Although in visible radiation of these findings, the article seems to be narrow in its rating. The chief point of the article contends that Platonic relationships do not be because of evolutionary concluding based on automatic and brooding thrusts ( Lazarus, 2010 ) . On the other manus, the article does not account for romantic purpose, a important portion of relationships. The article assumes based on the first meeting of work forces and adult females that there are unmanageable biological reactions which occur. Although these reactions tend to go on, the article should still account for the past and present position of the relationship, every bit good as each individual ' s purpose to whether or non they want a platonic or romantic friendly relationship. Since the article fails to account for this romantic purpose of a males and females, it hence neglects the possibility of differences in perceptual experience ; that is, how people view each other based on their past experience with that individual ( Messman et al. , 2000 ) .

Furthermore, long term Platonic friendly relationships vary in their romantic purpose depending if care behaviours are used. For case, in a relationship that has ever been Platonic, both individuals will utilize more care behaviours to continue their Platonic friendly relationship, in order to safeguard the friendly relationship from traveling towards romanticism. However, care behaviours are besides shown non to be utile. For case, one of the people in the relationship may be denied a coveted sexual patterned advance ( Guererro & A ; Chavez, 2005 ) .

Although there can be alterations made to the article, the implicit in statement is supported by the bulk of research. Assuming a strictly Platonic relationship to be a cross-sex friendly relationship where neither party has

the idea of turning a romantic relationship, or holding desire for sexual activities ; the being of strictly Platonic relationships is slender. Platonic relationships prosecuting in coquettish behaviour carry a sexual intension ( Egland, et al. , 1996 ) . This implies that males and females even in Platonic relationships may exhibit these automatic and brooding thrusts.

Furthermore, the differing parental investments for males and females bolster the sentiment sing automatic and brooding thrusts ; this concerns why males invest less in their relationships while females invest more in their relationships ( Li & A ; Kenrick, 2006 ; Tafoya, 2006 ) . Additionally, the biosocial theory suggests evolutionary underpinnings consistent with automatic and brooding behaviour ; these include sexual behaviour in friends with benefits relationships and behaviours of wages and costs. Therefore, the article and the preceding findings suggest that the beings of strictly Platonic cross-sex heterosexual relationships are improbable.