

Women and men

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



It has become a troubling cliché that women feel unavoidably attracted to men who are completely wrong for them. This leads to other overarching platitudes that permeate our social interactions. All men are pigs. Nice guys finish last. The frustration over these seemingly impenetrable absolutes builds and builds until it bursts in a flurry of Cosmo quizzes. What's going on, and can it be remedied?

You all know someone who's been affected by this paradox, and probably have encountered it sometime yourselves. A friend of mine recently had her birthday ruined by her boyfriend. He accompanied her and many of her friends on a trip to Magic Mountain. After disappearing for hours, she finally found him. He was asleep in her car in the parking lot, which he had broken into in order to nap inside, the ideal resting place. His only present to her was a card. They are still together today.

I couldn't have written a more ridiculous scenario myself. (Well, I could, but it would involve a lobster playing trombone.) Are women attracted to guys like this because somehow the qualities of meanness and insensitivity are inherently desirable?

The answer is no. Granted, there is a positive correlation between the degree of a male's lack of compassion and his ability to engender the attention of the opposite sex, but as any of you know who have taken a statistics course, a correlation does not prove causation. There is an underlying factor that produces this result.

That factor is power. What women seek is someone who is powerful, who can control any situation and make things go his way. From an evolutionary

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standpoint, this means women are far more likely to be attracted to the guy who kills the charging lion than the guy who paints one on the cave wall.

If there is one thing that jerks certainly have, it is power. Women perceive them as having great security and influence. What they often fail to notice is that this power is derived through meanness and selfishness. Conversely, kindness and selflessness are perceived as signs of weakness.

I do not recommend, however, that women try to find comfort in the arms of the spineless. Spineless people aren't necessarily kind. They simply possess too much cowardice to act on their angry impulses. Kindness is not the absence of malice; rather, it is the active pursuit of the satiation of the needs of others above one's own.

It takes far greater strength to pursue good instead of evil, as the odds are stacked against the good. A jerk demonstrates his strength by dominating other males through force and/or humiliation. A kind man will be far subtler. My grandfather once gave me some advice on the subject. He said, "A great man doesn't tell people how great he is. If he is truly great, then they will know it."

Clearly something separates the boys from the men, but how to define that separation? Rudyard Kipling comes fairly close in his poem, "If." I leave it to you to read it; it will be two minutes well spent. When it comes to how a male treats a woman, I have found a definition that seems to distinguish the mature from the immature.

A boy sees his woman as a treasure. She is beautiful, charming, intelligent, etc. The boy will recognize all of these positive attributes as valuable, and therefore worth preserving through his best efforts. He does not love her for herself, only for how she makes him feel about himself.

A man will treasure his woman. He will cherish her, support her, and devote the best fibers of his being to her. This is based on sacrifice and love, rather than on possession.

A treasure, noun, is an object worth keeping. But a relationship should not be a museum in which a male showcases his best piece. To treasure, a verb, implies upkeep and care, dedication and perseverance, love and honor. This is surely the measure of a man.

In trying to avoid sub-standard men, women often fall into another relationship sand trap, the older man. By older, I refer to an age they should be together. At the same time, our wants must be tempered with cognizance. The “plenty of fish in the sea” metaphor still applies to the beginning of a relationship. Squeeze a few tomatoes before you pick one out.

Most of us aren't out there looking for husbands and wives just yet, so perhaps it is adaptive that the qualities that make a good spouse are not those we necessarily value in a college relationship. On the other hand, high school is over, so perhaps it's time for the homo erectus in the varsity jacket to say goodbye.

I find it disheartening that women, seeking powerful men, would rather date Lex Luthor than Superman, or at least are more likely to fall for Luthor

initially. Of course, not all guys fit neatly into the categories of heroes and villains.

In truth, we are neither. Ladies, give us the litmus test for selfishness. A man should be a pillar of strength to his woman, but he should be made of something warmer than cold stone.