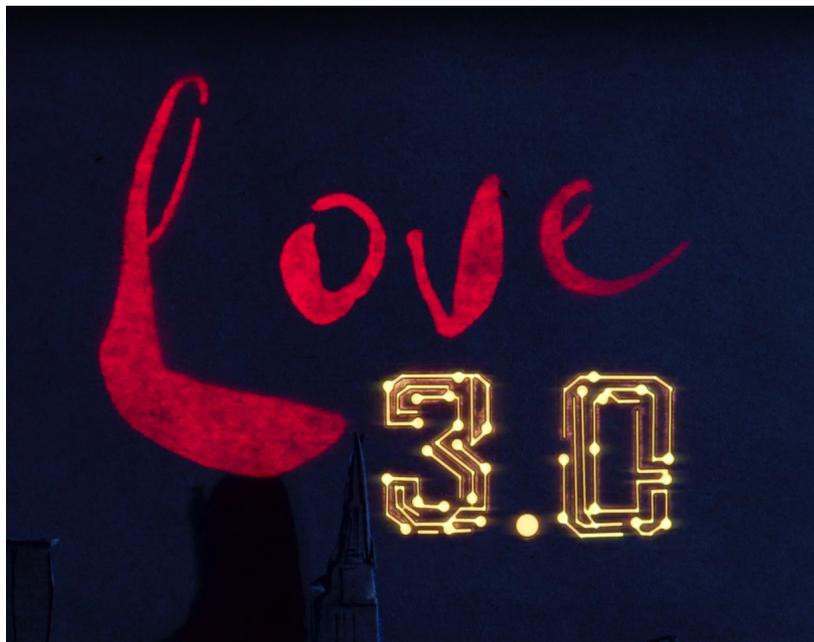
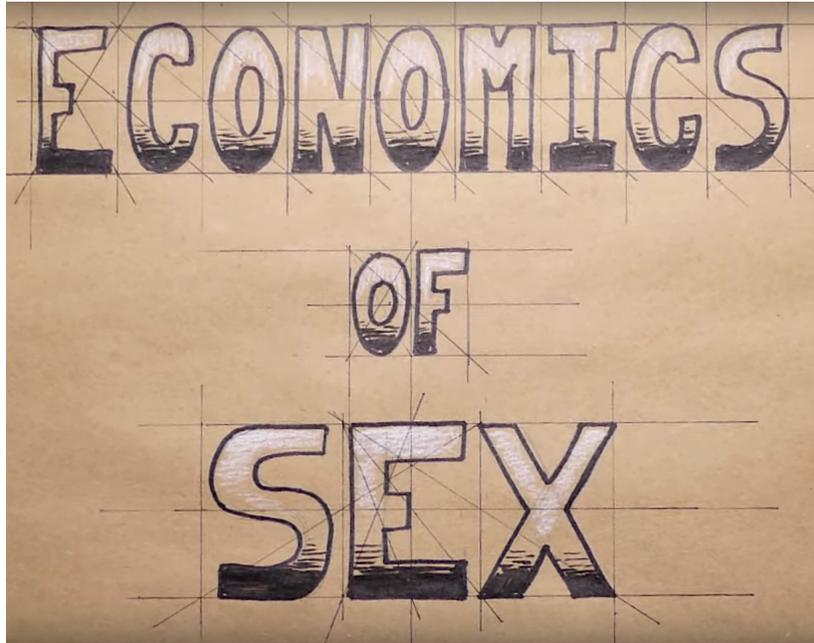


Economics of Sex and Love 3.0

Study Guides



Why are these films timely? Why take time not only to watch them, but to reflect on and discuss them? The answer is that our time and culture are more confused than ever about sex, and misinformation abounds in the popular media. People who hold traditional views on dating, sex, and sexuality are made to feel embarrassed by them, as though they were clinging to the belief that the earth is flat.

The truth is something altogether different. As these films make clear, there are compelling philosophical arguments for monogamy and traditional marriage, and social science backs them up. Sex has meaning and consequences – some of them unintended, as described by a look carefully at the economics of sex. Perhaps more importantly, there are compelling emotional connections: monogamy and traditional marriage still resonate within the human heart, fulfilling some of our deepest human longings. They are still good because though the times have changed, our human nature has not.

We hope you enjoy these films and that they leave you with a lasting impression, something that keeps running on repeat in your mind long after you've watched them.

Kevin E. Stuart, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Austin Institute for the Study of Family and Culture



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Notes on the Study Guide

In order to make it as easy as possible for church groups, study groups, and traditional classes to dig more deeply into the issues underlying the *Economics of Sex* and *Love 3.0*, we have compiled a set of discussion questions and a sampling of additional resources to help expand and enrich your conversation about these films.

For each animated film, you will find:

- a list of discussion questions, which can be handed out to group members or to students.
- a discussion question guide for small group leaders or teachers, which lists possible answers to each of the questions.
- summarized information/direct quotes from additional sources (along with original graphics) to provide a more comprehensive picture of the issues introduced by the films.

Feel free to tailor this study guide to meet the particular needs of your group. For example, you may wish to reduce the number of questions or to provide copies of one or more additional sources to your group members. This study guide should function as a storehouse from which you can select whatever materials will best meet the needs of your group.

Finally, please contact us if you have any questions about the content contained in the pages that follow, or if we can support your group’s efforts to strengthen marriage and family life. Our contact information can be found on the final page of this guide.

NB: The opinions expressed in the supplementary sources do not necessarily reflect the views of the Austin Institute. Rather, these sources have been included in order to give people an entry into the larger conversations surrounding some of the issues introduced by the films.

Economics of Sex Study Questions

For the film: <http://www.austin-institute.org/research/media/the-economics-of-sex/>

- 1. How do men and women approach sex differently?**
- 2. What societal factors have led women to lower the price of sex?**
- 3. How has the Pill thrown the mating market into disarray?**
- 4. What happens when sex is separated from marriage?**
- 5. Why is the supply of sex higher now than in the past?**
- 6. How does a generous supply of extra-marital sex affect the dating and mating markets?**
- 7. If women were in charge of the mating market, how might things be different?**
- 8. This animation claims that if women work together, they can increase the value of sex. What concrete things can women do in order to achieve this end? What can men do to increase the value of sex and to encourage marriage?**
- 9. How would you respond to the following claims:**
 - The Pill has had many beneficial effects: it has increased women's freedom, allowed them to choose when to bear children, and has leveled the playing field between men and women.
 - A simple supply and demand paradigm does not work for something as complex as the mating market.
 - This animation presents a negative view of men. Not all men are out for commitment-less sex.

Economics of Sex Study Guide

<http://www.austin-institute.org/research/media/the-economics-of-sex/>

1. How do men and women approach sex differently?

(Possible answers include: Men have a higher sex drive, initiate sex more often, are more permissive and connect romance to sex less often. Women view sex as something that extends beyond mere pleasure and as a means to express and receive love, to strengthen commitment, to affirm desirability, and to ensure relationship security.)

2. What societal factors have led women to lower the price of sex?

(Possible answers include: The social environment, from which women learn how they should price sex, has devalued it; men aren't willing to pay as much for sex because it is easier to come by; the Pill has removed the natural consequence of pregnancy from sex, so the "cost" of sex is lower than it used to be.)

3. How has the Pill thrown the mating market into disarray?

(Possible answers include: It has lowered the cost of sex since pregnancy is no longer connected to sex; it has split the mating market into those who just want sex and those who want marriage; by separating marriage and childrearing from sex, it has allowed men to enjoy sex without having to pay for it in the form of marital commitment and relationship security.)

4. What happens when sex is separated from marriage?

(Possible answers include: When the mating market is split between those who just want sex and those who want sex + marriage, the marriage market becomes more competitive. On the whole, men are more likely to seek sex without marriage, so women are competing for a smaller number of marriage-seeking men. The increased competition decreases their solidarity with each other and encourages them to lower their standards and to appeal to what men want. At the same time, marriageable men are able to be more selective and thereby to gain more control over the marriage market.)

5. Why is the supply of sex higher now than in the past?

(Possible answers include: The supply of sex is greater than it has been in the past because the sexual revolution has loosened sexual mores and has declared that free sexual expression is one of the highest goods; the Pill has allowed people to be sexually active without experiencing the natural consequence of pregnancy; women are responding to men's desire for sex without any concomitant commitment.)

6. How does a generous supply of extra-marital sex affect the dating and mating markets?

(Possible answers include: The generous supply of extra-marital sex has decreased the demand for marriage, has put men in charge of the mating market, has delayed marriage (most people now marry between the ages of 25 and 34), and has adversely affected the number of people getting married.)

7. If women were in charge of the mating market, how might things be different?

(Possible answers include: We'd see more impressive wooing efforts, greater investment from men, longer relationships, fewer premarital partners, shorter co-habitations, and more marrying.)

8. This animation claims that if women work together, they can increase the value of sex. What concrete things can women do in order to achieve this end? What can men do to increase the value of sex and to encourage marriage?

(Possible answers include: Women could collectively decide to reserve sex for committed relationships and, best of all, for marriage; they could speak against all portrayals of women as sex objects, including pornographic photos and films, suggestive advertisements, and fashions that clothe women as if they were sex objects; instead of competing with each other for a limited supply of men, women could foster cooperative relationships with each other, looking out for each other's well-being both in and outside of romantic relationships. Men can similarly reserve sex for committed relationships, the most committed relationship of all being marriage; they can abstain from viewing pornography, which encourages men to view women as sexual objects, and can reject caricatures of masculinity that glamorize behavior that is vicious, abusive, perverse, etc.)

9. How would you respond to the following claims:

a. The Pill has had many beneficial effects: it has increased women's freedom, allowed them to choose when to bear children, and has leveled the playing field between men and women.

(Possible answer: Though a common belief, it's not true. According to Akerlof, Yellen, and Katz's 1996 article, women are more likely to have their freedom restricted by out-of-wedlock childbirth now than they were before the Pill became ubiquitous. Out-of-wedlock births and the number of single mothers have increased dramatically since 1970, and single parenthood places all sorts of restrictions on women's freedom. By reducing the cost of sex and shifting control over the mating market to men, the Pill has not leveled the playing field between men and women. *The Pill has also had detrimental effects on women who would like to bear children but find themselves unable to.* Some medical evidence has indicated that the presence of artificial hormones in drinking water, which cannot help but increase as more women take birth control and urinate synthetic hormones into the water supply system, has decreased both male and female fertility. Women who choose to get pregnant find themselves unable to.)

b. A simple supply and demand paradigm does not work for something as complex as the mating market.

(Possible answer: We agree that the economics of sex is only part of the story. Other dimensions include emotions, biology, spirituality, and morality. But the economic dimension of sex is important to consider, in part, because it forces us to confront the fact that our actions can have profound and unintended consequences. Economics shows us that though we think when we do X that Y will result, sometimes the result is Z... and sometimes Z is the opposite of what we wanted. For a detailed discussion of how the price of sex is determined by the economic forces of supply and demand, see Baumeister and Vohn's 2004 article entitled "Sexual Economics: Sex as Female Resource for Social Exchange in Heterosexual Interactions.")

c. This animation presents a negative view of men. Not all men are out for commitment-less sex.

(Possible answer: Again here, we agree. What the economics of sex shows us is how different men and women are along certain dimensions. Both men and women who are morally well-formed understand sex as a tie that binds two people together. Nevertheless, women have a stronger biological and psychological disposition towards understanding commitment as an essential part of a sexual relationship.)



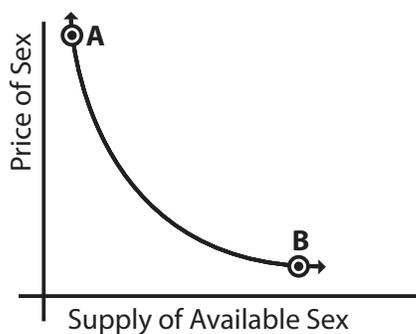
Economics of Sex Supplementary Sources

Baumeister, Roy F. and Jean M. Twenge. (2002). "Cultural Suppression of Female Sexuality." *Review of General Psychology*. 6 (2), 166-203.

In this article, Baumeister and Twenge respond to the theory that women are the victims of sexual repression. If women's sexuality has been repressed, they argue, women themselves are mostly responsible for it. Traditionally, women control their own sexual behaviors and pressure other women to do the same in exchange for goods that men can provide: money, social status, respectability, stability, etc. When some women engage in sexually permissive behaviors, they cheapen the value of sex for all women because the market rate for sex declines. Women are better off when sex is precious, and mothers and female peer groups are most effective at exerting social pressures to ensure that sexual norms are upheld by all women within a particular society. Below you will find a few excerpts from the original article, which has been adapted to make the content accessible to a wider audience.

Women, Sex, and the Basic Economic Principles of Supply and Demand

Women are in a better bargaining position when:



A = Low Supply = High Price

B = High Supply = Low Price

- **they keep the supply of sex below men's demand for sex.** When supply is lower than demand, the price for sex goes up.
- **sex is scarce.** When sex is plentiful, individual women are in a weaker position to demand much in return for sex.
- **it is harder for men to obtain sex.** The harder it is for men to obtain sex, the more they will be willing to offer women in return.

Most women need to cooperate to a substantial degree in restricting sex if women as a whole are going to maintain control over the sexual supply and demand dynamic and if they are to receive the benefits they want from sex.

By restricting the supply of sex available to men, women can extract more benefits in exchange for sex, such as money, gifts, long-term relationship commitment, fair treatment, sexual fidelity, and conforming to expectations. Women's control over the supply and demand dynamic decreases, however, if men can easily get sex from other women (Cott, 1979).

Regulating the Market

Regulating female sexuality:

- **Mothers are the main source of influence in restricting female sexuality.** The more the mother communicates with her daughter with regard to sexual matters, the later the daughter will begin having sex (Libby, Gray, and White, 1978; DeLamater, 1989; Werner-Wilson, 1998, Kahn, Smith, and Roberts, 1984).
- **Female peers and friends also influence a young woman's decisions about her sexual behavior.** Young women tend to go as far sexually as their friends have gone. The female peer group maintains a relatively uniform level of sexual activity among its members (Rodgers and Rowe, 1990; Billy and Udry, 1985; Mirande, 1968; Sack, Keller, and Hinkle, 1984).
- **Women will punish other women who make sex too freely available to men.** These women are akin to the “rate busters” in manufacturing: they end up lowering everyone's price. One term people use to derogate such a promiscuous woman is that she is “cheap,” and, if taken literally, this term does invoke an exchange analysis: she is dispensing the female resource, sex, at a lower price than the going rate. When there are too many cheap products available, the purveyors of quality products feel pressure to give discounts as well. The other women will therefore put pressure on the so-called cheap woman to raise her price and demand more in exchange, not only for the woman's own sake but for the sake of all the women in that community.

“When there are too many cheap products available, the purveyors of quality products feel pressure to give discounts as well.”

Regulating male sexuality:

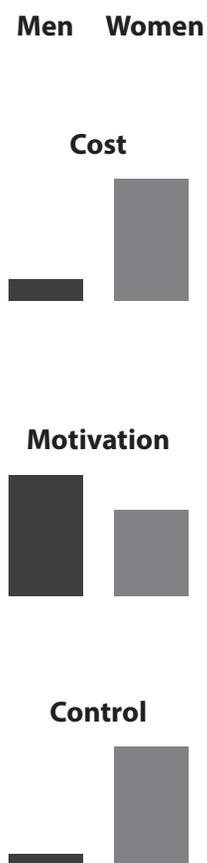
- **Men make sex laws to regulate other men.** Women use reputation, gossip, and other controls to regulate the behavior of other women, and men use laws and other forces to restrain the behavior of other men.



Baumeister, Roy F., and Kathleen D. Vohs. (2004). "Sexual Economics: Sex as Female Resource for Social Exchange in Heterosexual Interactions." *Personality and Social Psychology Review*. 8 (4), 339-363.

A heterosexual community can be analyzed as a marketplace in which men seek to acquire sex from women by offering other resources in exchange. Societies will therefore define gender roles as if women are sellers and men buyers of sex. Societies will endow female sexuality, but not male sexuality, with value (as in virginity, fidelity, chastity). The sexual activities of different couples are loosely interrelated by a marketplace, instead of being fully separate or private, and each couple's decisions may be influenced by market conditions. Economic principles suggest that the price of sex will depend on supply and demand, competition among sellers, variations in product, collusion among sellers, and other factors. Below you will find a few excerpts from the original article, which has been adapted to make the content accessible to a wider audience.

Why Is Sex a Female Resource?



- **The potential cost of sex for women (possible pregnancy, with pain and possibly death attending childbirth) is substantial.**

Even if the pleasure is quite high, the potential cost will be an incentive for the woman to hold back, and so the man must offer her some benefits to offset the cost. For a man, sex is all benefit with little or no cost (Symons, 1979).

- **Men display greater sexual motivation than women.**

Specifically, men think about sex more often, are more frequently aroused, desire sex more often, and rate their sex drives as stronger (Baumeister, Catanese, and Vohs, 2001).

- **Women act as sexual gatekeepers.** Cohen and Shotland (1996) computed correlations between when people thought sex should start in a given relationship and when they actually began having sex. For the hapless men, the correlation was not even significant ($r=.19$), indicating that their wishes and preferences were essentially irrelevant, whereas for women the correlation was very high ($r=.88$), indicating that sex occurred when they preferred. Thus, women decide when sex commences, and the man's role is to invest time, money, attention, commitment, and other resources until the woman is sufficiently satisfied.

What Is the Going Rate for Sex?

Sexual activities within a community are interconnected as part of a sexual marketplace. Sex is therefore not entirely a private matter between two consenting adults. Rather, sex becomes part of an economic system, just as the sale of a house is not purely a transaction between two parties but is tied in to the local economy and housing market.

The price of sex (so to speak) may vary widely. To commence a sexual relationship with a particular woman, a man may have to offer her a fancy dinner, a long series of compliments, a month of respectful attention, or a lifetime promise to share all his wealth and earnings with her exclusively. The price is negotiated between the two individuals in the context of the prices that other, similar couples set... Market forces will tend to stabilize this rate within a community (but not necessarily across communities). To illustrate, suppose a particular woman demands too high a price for sex, such as if she refuses to have sex until the man has promised to marry her and has given her an engagement ring. Her suitor may abandon her and turn his attention to another woman – but only if other women in the community will offer sex at a significantly lower price. If all the women in her community demand an engagement ring before giving sex, however, the man will be more likely to agree.



- **Act like buyers who want sex without spending too much**
- **Support initiatives that lower the price of sex**
- **May search for low-cost substitutes for sex, such as prostitution and pornography**



- **Act like sellers who want to get a high price for their sexual favors**
- **Support initiatives that raise the price of sex**
- **Usually oppose low-cost substitutes for sex, such as prostitution and pornography**

Each couple may negotiate its own price, but whether this price is a better deal for the man or for the woman depends on how it compares to the going rate within their community.

When Men Are Scarce...

“The woman’s sexual favors are not a fully renewable resource, and the woman will have some incentive to grant those favors sparingly.”

- **Females aggressively compete for male attention by derogating their rivals.** Most often, females aggressively compete for male attention by derogating their rivals. Women spread rumors that criticize their rival’s appearance or that accuse the rival of having many sexual partners (Campbell, 1995). The amount a man would be willing to give to have sex with a woman would differ depending upon how attractive and therefore desirable she is and depending upon her (perceived) sexual history. The woman’s sexual favors are not a fully renewable resource (her reputation is a non-renewable resource), and the woman will have some incentive to grant those favors sparingly.

- **Teen female pregnancy rates go up** (N. Barber, 2000). Women compete against each other by offering sex at a lower price in terms of commitment. This results in a more permissive sexual climate and an increased rate of pregnancy.

- **Women wear shorter skirts** (N. Barber, 1999). Wearing short skirts is analogous to advertising one's wares, as a way of stimulating demand for one's product. It fits the economic analysis to suggest that sellers advertise more aggressively when demand is low. Even though the sexual revolution occurred in the context of many positive changes for women overall, this analysis would still regard the change in sex itself as disadvantageous to women, insofar as one of their resources (sex) was devalued. Consistent with that view, polls and studies consistently found that women regarded the sexual revolution more negatively than men and had more doubts and regrets about it (Smith, 1994; Rubin, 1990). Thus, even though the sexual revolution has often been presented as a boon to women (and in some ways was), many women have recognized it as a costly sacrifice or as at best a mixed blessing.



**Akerlof, George A., Janet L. Yellen, and Michael L Katz. (1996).
“An Analysis of Out-of-Wedlock Childbearing in the United States.”
The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 111 (2), 277-317.**

This article uses game theory to construct models for determining how an increase in the availability of contraception and abortion paired with their decreasing cost effected a “technology shock” that changed sexual mores and inadvertently increased the number of out-of-wedlock births while decreasing the number of shotgun weddings. Consequent to the decrease in shotgun weddings, more single mothers found themselves raising children or making decisions about their pregnancies all alone, while more men refused to accept responsibility for their children and for the women they had impregnated. Below you will find a few excerpts from the original article, which has been adapted to make the content accessible to a wider audience.

Our technology shock theory posits two distinct models for why there are fewer shotgun weddings and more out-of-wedlock births now than there were before the introduction of cheap contraception and abortion on demand. The first model emphasizes the role of the new technologies in increasing the willingness of women to participate in uncommitted premarital sex. The second emphasizes the diminished sense of responsibility men feel to care for women who have passed up available contraception and abortion options.

Women’s Increased Willingness to Engage in Uncommitted Sex

The legalization of abortion, starting in the late 1960s, induced a large fraction of unmarried women, who were willing to obtain an abortion if pregnant, to engage in premarital sexual relations while forgoing the promise of marriage in the event of premarital conception. Similarly, the invention of the Pill and increased availability of contraception enhanced the willingness of unmarried women to participate in uncommitted, premarital sex by reducing the odds of a pregnancy in the first place.

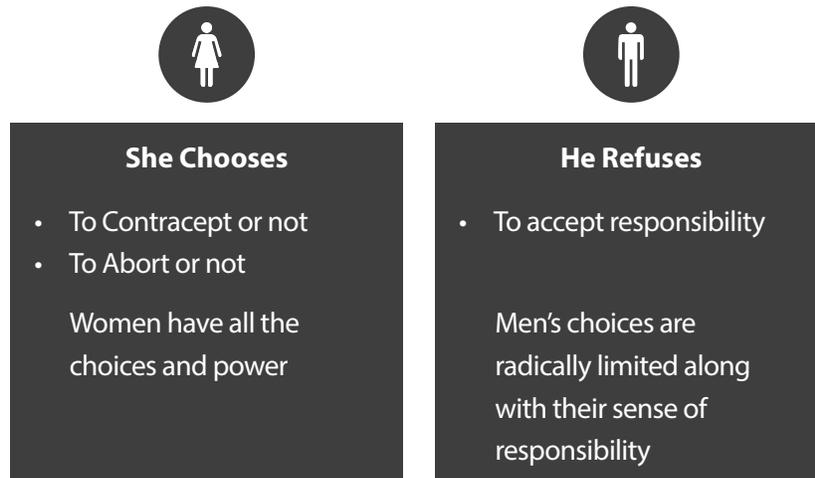
After introducing the “technology shock” of cheap contraception and readily-available abortion, the use of the Pill at first intercourse by unmarried women jumped from 6 to 15 percent in just a few years, and the number of abortions to unmarried women, which were less than half the number of out-of-wedlock births in the 1960s, grew tenfold, or more. Indeed, the number of abortions grew yet faster than out-of-wedlock births over the 1970s so that, by the end of the decade, unmarried women had 75 percent more abortions than out-of-wedlock births.

After abortion and contraception become easily available, there is a new equilibrium in which no woman – even if she wants children and marriage – asks for a promise of marriage.

In this equilibrium if any woman did ask for such a promise, her partner would leave, and she would lose the relationship. A move to this no-commitment trap is likely to reduce welfare for all women. In this example, the gains from the advent of abortion and contraception accrue totally to the men.

Men's Diminished Sense of Responsibility

By making the birth of the child the physical choice of the mother, the sexual revolution makes marriage and child support a social choice of the father. In the words of a contributor to the *Dads' Rights Newsgroup*, "Since the decision to have the child is solely up to the mother (see *Roe v. Wade*), I don't see how both parents have responsibility for that child. When one person has the decision-making power, they alone have the responsibility to provide and care for that decision."



The partner's degree of empathy and willingness to marry after a pregnancy is discovered may decline once it becomes apparent that the woman herself did not use contraception reliably or was unwilling to obtain an abortion. A man may also refuse to commit to a woman because sexual partners engaging in short term relationships (which wide-spread contraception seems to encourage) are likely to enjoy less intimacy with their partners, reinforcing their unwillingness to marry.

Why There Are Now More Single Mothers (and Fewer Adoptions) Than Before



- **Unmarried women who want to keep their children find it increasingly difficult to make (and also to enforce) a contract in which marriage was promised in the event of a pregnancy.**



- **Unmarried women who choose not to contracept or to abort their children typically want to keep them.** It is, then, no surprise that, despite the very large rise in sexual participation, the number of agency adoptions was halved from 86,000 to 43,000 in the five years following the introduction of abortion, or that 1970, the year of our shock, was the peak year for adoptions.



- **The stigma attached to out-of-wedlock childbirth has gradually eroded.** Even the name of the phenomenon has been changed over the last fifteen years: children born out-of-wedlock are no longer referred to as “illegitimate.” In former times high school students would quit school in the event of pregnancy. In 1958 the high school completion rate of mothers who became pregnant at seventeen or younger was 19 percent. By 1986 it was 56 percent. Reduction in stigma provides an additional reason why women who, in previous times would have put up their baby for adoption, choose to keep the baby instead. In 1970 most children whose mothers did not get married in the first three years after their birth were put up for adoption (commonly by relatives). In contrast, by the late 1980s about two-thirds of these babies were kept by the mothers.



Love 3.0 Study Guide Questions

<http://www.austin-institute.org/research/media/love-3/>

- 1. What are the ostensible benefits of a polyamorous relationship according to Jim, Lisa, and the main couple in this animation?**
- 2. What are the drawbacks of polyamory?**
- 3. How could children be affected by their parents' failed marriages or polyamorous relationships?**
- 4. The image of marriage as a closed circuit appears several times in this animation. How can the "closed circuit" be perceived negatively? How can it be perceived positively?**
- 5. Is there any way to avoid the marriage "rut," or the feeling of being trapped in a marriage? If so, how? If not, how can couples persevere through the hard times so that they can enjoy even greater intimacy once they have passed through difficulties?**
- 6. What problems with modern marriage is polyamory supposed to address?**
- 7. Does polyamory adequately address these problems? If so, how? If not, why not?**
- 8. How would you respond to people who say the following:**
 - a. Monogamous marriage is outdated and should be replaced with something newer, fresher, and more exciting.
 - b. The only reason why polyamory isn't more widespread is because our society has unfairly stigmatized polyamory and has idealized monogamy.
 - c. Humans are not made for monogamy, and proof for this statement can be found in the animal kingdom and in other cultures that allow for polygamy and polyamory.
 - d. Marriages may be more stable if marriage partners sought stimulation outside of the marriage. This stimulation might come in the form of sex with someone else. A couple could, for example, simply entertain polyamorous thoughts without acting on them.
 - e. Each couple should be allowed to decide for themselves what makes them happy. Conversations about what relationships are best for a stable society or for children should not inhibit the couple's freedom to choose their own happiness.

Love 3.0 Study Guide

<http://www.austin-institute.org/research/media/love-3/>

1. What are the ostensible benefits of a polyamorous relationship according to Jim, Lisa, and the main couple in this animation?

(Possible answers include: Polyamorous relationships allow people to fully express themselves sexually; they prevent couples from feeling boxed in; they encourage couples to communicate more deeply about their feelings and desires; they are freeing; they build trust because romantic partners know when, where, and with whom their loved ones are hooking up; they encourage honesty; they deconstruct outdated and patriarchal notions of “belonging to one another;” they allow committed couples to experience the “thrill” of dating new people; they take the pressure off the couple to be “everything” to each other.)

2. What are the drawbacks of polyamory?

(Possible answers include: Polyamorous couples will most likely begin to feel jealous of their partners’ extramarital affairs; open, polyamorous relationships require that the couple constantly re-negotiate their relationship (a never-ending DTR talk); polyamory destabilizes the marital commitment; “secondaries” can become “primaries,” and one spouse could leave the other; polyamorous individuals internally compare themselves to their partners’ other lovers, resulting in increased psychological insecurity; polyamory de-emphasizes the uniqueness of the intimate relationship between two spouses; polyamory gives couples an “escape hatch” by which they can avoid the depth that comes when a couple struggles through hard times together; polyamory treats human beings as if they were disposable, pleasure machines that can be dispatched when something more exciting or more pleasurable comes along; polyamory is hard on kids, who may grow attached to their parents’ extramarital lovers or who may be shaken by the revelation that their parents’ relationship isn’t as exclusive and permanent as they thought it was; children of an extramarital liaison may not be embraced by both members of the married couple.)

3. How could children be affected by their parents’ failed marriages or polyamorous relationships?

(Note to discussion leaders: If your discussion group doesn’t explicitly talk about the effects of polyamory on kids when they discuss question #2, it might be good to follow-up question #2 with question #3. It is very important for people to consider how a polyamorous couple’s decision to pursue sexual satisfaction and novelty may affect others.)

4. The image of marriage as a closed circuit appears several times in this animation. How can the “closed circuit” be perceived negatively?

(Possible answers include: The closed circuit makes people feel trapped; it can become monotonous; it stunts personal growth.)

How can it be perceived positively?

(Possible answers include: The closed circuit provides security; it prompts spouses to search for and discover new depths in each other; it combats the notion that people are disposable, pleasure machines; it opens and expands through all life's ups and downs; it helps a couple to remain committed to each other.)

5. Is there any way to avoid the marriage "rut," or the feeling of being trapped in a marriage? If so, how? If not, how can couples persevere through the hard times so that they can enjoy even greater intimacy once they have passed through difficulties?

(Note to discussion leaders: The answers to this question will hopefully draw upon people's personal experience, so we will not venture to propose any possible answers here.)

6. What problems with modern marriage is polyamory supposed to address?

(Possible answers include: Modern marriage is unstable; it participates in an outdated, patriarchal frame of mind that insists that women "belong" to men, or to phrase it somewhat more progressively, married individuals "belong" to each other; people get bored in monogamous marriages; marriages sometimes become sex-less and unstimulating; marriage inhibits an individual's ability to fully express him/herself; a person can feel trapped in a marriage that no longer excites him/her; married people fail to communicate all their feelings and desires to their spouses; resentment between spouses can grow when one person or both people feel trapped and unfulfilled.)

7. Does polyamory adequately address these problems? If so, how? If not, why not?

(Note to discussion leaders: Our belief is that polyamory does not adequately address these problems, but since this question is open-ended and may elicit all types of responses, we have noted a few possible answers you may receive. Possible answers may include:

Yes:

Polyamory prevents married people from becoming bored with their sexual life; if they are able to avoid boredom, they are more likely to remain with their spouses.

Polyamory keeps a person from feeling trapped and/or "owned" by another. Preventing these feelings results in that person's greater happiness.

Polyamory can improve communication between spouses because they are constantly forced to talk about their relationship.

No:

Polyamory encourages a person to continually seek superficial pleasures with many people instead of deepening his/her intimacy with just one person.

Polyamory does not build trust and intimacy but instead it spreads jealousy and division between spouses and could make marriage partners feel insecure about how they stack up to their spouse's other lovers.

Polyamory weakens the exclusive, loving relationship that children need to see between their parents if they are to be secure themselves.

Polyamory sidesteps the sacrifices that every married couple must make and instead allows a person to avoid the maturity that comes with sacrifice.)

8. How would you respond to people who say the following:

a. Monogamous marriage is outdated and should be replaced with something newer, fresher, and more exciting.

(Answer: Just because something is newer and more exciting, that does not mean that it's better. Many times, older methods of production, behavior, etc. are far superior to novel methods. Take, for instance, farming and food production techniques. More and more studies are revealing that modern methods for growing corn, wheat, and other crops may actually harm people through the introduction of GMOs, pesticides, etc. In response to these findings, farmers and other producers are returning to older techniques because what was older has proven to be better. Couldn't the same be true of marriage? Monogamous marriage doesn't have to change in order to combat the marriage crisis people are facing in Western nations. Research proves that monogamous marriage produces very desirable outcomes. Our destructive and hedonistic attitudes toward sex and our adolescent, selfish behaviors are what need to change if marriage is to experience a revival.)

b. The only reason why polyamory isn't more widespread is because our society has unfairly stigmatized polyamory and has idealized monogamy.

(Answer: There are good reasons why society has idealized monogamy. According to a 2012 study conducted by Joseph Henrich, Robert Boyd and Peter J. Richerson, monogamous relationships: 1) decrease the crime rate, 2) decrease intra-household conflict, 3) reduce spousal abuse and promote greater equality between the sexes, 4) increase parental (especially paternal) investment in children, 5) reduce the child mortality rate, and 6) decrease cortisol levels in children. See "The Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage" in the supplementary sources section for more detailed information.)

c. Humans are not made for monogamy, and proof for this statement can be found in the animal kingdom and in other cultures that allow for polygamy and polyamory.

(Answer: While they share many physiological similarities, human beings and animals are not the same. Unlike animals, human beings can choose to act morally and to follow reason, which is a higher standard. While it is true that the majority of human societies throughout history have been polygamous or polyamorous, it does not follow that polygamy is the model for marriage that we should willingly choose, nor does it follow that polyamory is the model for relationships that we should willingly choose. What is naturally best for humans is not identical to what happens most often. That slavery has historically been a common human practice is not a justification of slavery. Likewise with polygamy. In fact, the true history of polygamy shows it to be especially bad for women and children.)

d. Marriages may be more stable if marriage partners sought stimulation outside of the marriage. This stimulation might come in the form of sex with someone else. A couple could, for example, simply entertain polyamorous thoughts without acting on them.

(Answer: Brain scans have revealed that there is an intimate connection between thinking something and doing it. Take, for example, the golfer who imagines himself surveying the ground at a particular hole, taking a swing, and then watching his ball as it rolls onto the green. Imagining himself performing all these actions triggers the same parts of the brain that light up when the action is performed. In a similar way, entertaining thoughts of adulterous activity, even when those thoughts are not immediately acted upon, lights up the activity

centers of the brain and habituates the mind to take less and less offense at actually committing those acts. The bridge between thoughts and action is a smooth and easy one to cross.)

e. Each couple should be allowed to decide for themselves what makes them happy. Conversations about what relationships are best for a stable society or for children should not inhibit the couple's freedom to choose their own happiness.

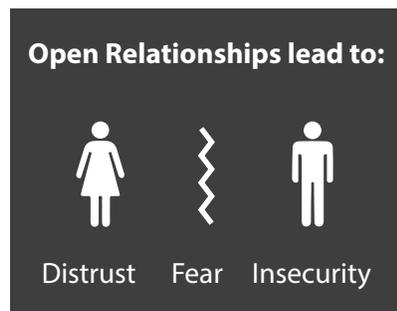
(Answer: Of course the good of society and children should restrict the personal decisions a couple makes! No man (or woman) is an island entire of itself, John Donne wrote, and current studies in ecology are showing exactly how connected every organism within a system is. Every time a new element is introduced into a system – a physical environment, a marriage, a family, a society – that new element affects all the other organisms within that system, for better or for worse. Many times adults rationalize their behaviors by stating that their actions will only be hurting them, that their children will be unaffected, or that the relative health and stability of their marriage operates independently of everyone else. This is simply not true. Our decisions, even decisions about our personal happiness, inevitably ripple out and affect others, and when we close our eyes to these effects in order to pursue our own selfish pleasures, we demonstrate the heights of reckless egotism.)



Love 3.0 Supplementary Sources

Kennedy, Eliza. (2015, June 25). "When an Open Relationship Comes at a Price." *The New York Times*. Online.

In this short and engaging article, Eliza Kennedy chronicles the harm her pursuit of other love interests caused in an open relationship with her college boyfriend. Committed to the principles of personal freedom and love without constraint, Kennedy's boyfriend encouraged her to experiment with other people, only to find himself feeling jealous, disdainful, and insecure. We encourage you to read the entire article, which can be found at <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/28/style/when-freedom-comes-at-a-price.html>.



My boyfriend was committed to living his life according to strict intellectual principles, and for him, personal freedom was paramount. Love could not require constraint, foreclosure or deprivation. He argued that even though we planned a future together, we should always permit each other to do as we pleased, including dating other people.

I had no wish to shackle anyone to me, especially not the person I loved best. I didn't want to concede — by being possessive, by demanding fidelity — that my love was anything less than capital-T True. If an open relationship was necessary to prove how well I loved my boyfriend, I was happy to comply.

Marriage isn't the place to sample and explore, as I did in college. But even here, romantic love is more complicated than in the old children's rhyme. It's still an experiment — in trust, understanding and communication. Like any experiment, it could fail. There are no guarantees. As a wife and now a mother, I see that giving my heart to just one other person may be the riskiest way to love of all.



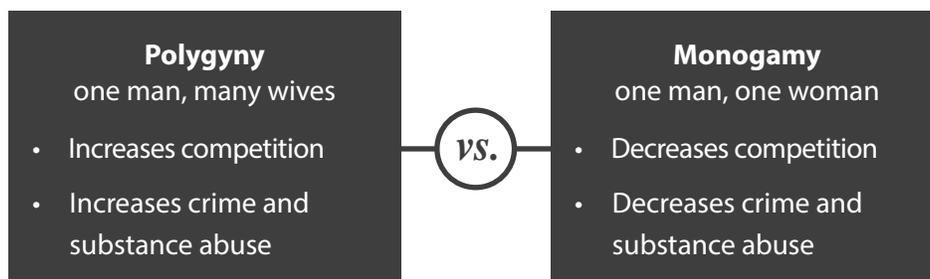
**Henrich, Joseph, Robert Boyd, and Peter J. Richerson. (2012).
“The Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage.” *Philosophical Transactions of
the Royal Society*. 367, 657-669.**

This article develops and explores the hypothesis that the norms and institutions that compose the modern package of monogamous marriage have been favored by cultural evolution because of their group-beneficial effects—promoting success in inter-group competition. In suppressing intrasexual competition and reducing the size of the pool of unmarried men, normative monogamy reduces crime rates, including rape, murder, assault, robbery and fraud, as well as decreasing personal abuses. By assuaging the competition for younger brides, normative monogamy decreases (1) the spousal age gap, (2) fertility, and (3) gender inequality. By shifting male efforts from seeking wives to paternal investment, normative monogamy increases savings, child investment and economic productivity. By increasing the relatedness within households, normative monogamy reduces intra-household conflict, leading to lower rates of child neglect, abuse, accidental death and homicide. While this article does not deal with polyamory per se, it does offer a convincing defense of monogamy by presenting many of the benefits that can come from monogamous relationships. Below you will find a few excerpts from the original article, which has been adapted to make the content accessible to a wider audience.

Reduces Crime

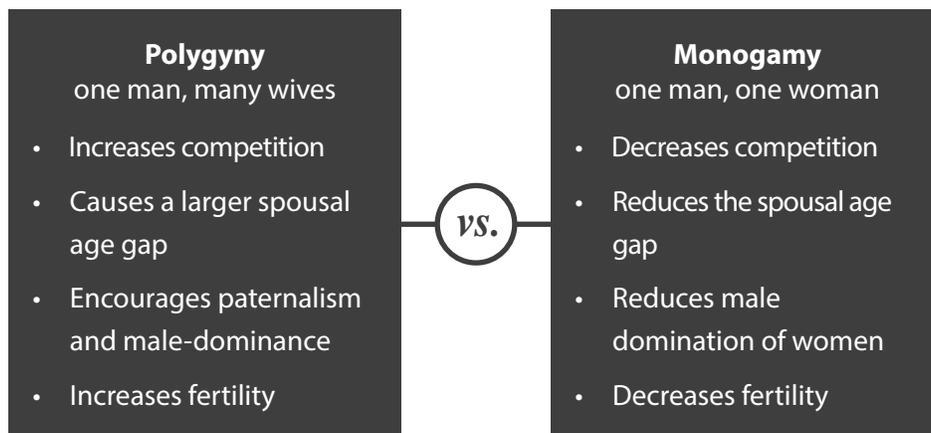
Faced with high levels of competition and little chance of obtaining even one long-term mate, unmarried, low-status men will heavily discount the future and more readily engage in risky status-elevating and sex-seeking behaviors. This will result in higher rates of murder, theft, rape, social disruption, kidnapping (especially of females), sexual slavery and prostitution. As a by-product, these men will probably engage in more substance abuse...By contrast, normative monogamy drains the pool of low-status unmarried men resulting in lower rates of social ills, including reduced rates of crime, social disruption and substance abuse.

Cross-sectional data shows that marriage reduces a man’s likelihood of committing a crime by 35 percent. For property and violent crimes, being married cuts the probability of committing a crime by half. When men are divorced or widowed, their crime rates go up. Analyses also show that ‘good marriages’ are even more prophylactic than average marriages (though marrying a criminal wife has the opposite effect).



Provides A Healthier Domestic Situation for Women

Polygynous marriage increases competition for wives, as married men remain on the marriage market. This increased competition drives down the age of first marriage for females and increases the spousal age gap. Once adolescent girls and young women become wives, older husbands strive to ‘protect’ their young wives from other males (guarding the paternity of any offspring) and dominate household decision-making. More competition also motivates men to seek to control their female relatives (e.g. sisters), as demand for wives increases. This results in suppressing women’s freedoms, increasing gender inequality and stimulating domestic violence. Women’s loss of influence on household decision-making and their lower age of marriage results in higher fertility. By contrast, normative monogamy diffuses the pressure to bring younger brides into the marriage market, and thereby reduces the spousal age gap, male efforts to control (‘protect’) women, gender inequality and total fertility.



Produces a Safer Environment for Children

“Living in the same household with genetically unrelated adults is the single biggest risk factor for abuse, neglect and homicide of children.”

Children whose parents are in polygynous relationships suffer higher rates of:

— **abuse**
— **neglect**
— **stress**
— **poor health**
— **mortality**

From health psychology, a comprehensive review of psychological studies concludes that children from polygamous families experience higher incidences of marital conflict, household violence and family disruptions than do children of monogamous families. Much empirical work in monogamous societies indicates that higher degrees of relatedness among household members are associated with lower rates of abuse, neglect and homicide. Living in the same household with genetically unrelated adults is the single biggest risk factor for abuse, neglect and homicide of children. Stepmothers are 2.4 times more likely to kill their stepchildren than birth mothers, and children living with an unrelated parent are between 15 and 77 times more likely to die accidentally.

Converging with these ideas is long-term research in the Caribbean, which shows how different household compositions impact cortisol levels (a stress hormone) in children. Children in nuclear families with only genetic parents showed the lowest cortisol levels. By contrast, children in households with distant relatives, stepfathers and half-siblings showed the highest cortisol levels of any household composite in the sample. This suggests that the children of polygynous households will run higher cortisol levels owing to the presence of unrelated mothers and half-siblings.

In Africa, diverse studies show that, relative to children from monogamous households, children from polygynous households risk diminished nutritional status, poorer health outcomes and elevated mortality. According to a nineteenth century North American study, while wealthy men had more total offspring and longer reproductive careers (33 years for wealthy men compared to 22 for poor men), the children of poor men had better survival rates for their children to age 15. For poor men, 6.9 of their offspring (per wife) survived on average to age 15, while for wealthy men only 5.5 of their offspring (per wife) survived to age 15. This is amazing, given that the poor men had less than 10 percent of the wealth of the rich men, and the rich men had significantly more total offspring (including those that did not make it to 15).

Ensures Greater Investment by Fathers in Their Children

While allowing the resources of richer men to be distributed among more children, the net effect of polygyny on male parental investment will often be to reduce the average investment per child. Normative monogamy provides increased opportunities for low-status males to marry, save and invest for the long term. The labor and talents of these would-be risk-taking criminals (and/or substance abusers) are instead channeled into long-term investments in family and child-rearing (reliable economic productivity).

Why Monogamous Relationships Are Better

- 1 Reducing the pool of unmarried men and leveling the reproductive playing field decreases crime.
- 2 Instead of engaging in risky status-seeking endeavors, low-status males would be more likely to marry, thus becoming risk-averse and future-oriented.
- 3 Instead of seeking to attract additional wives, males would make long-term investments and attend to their offsprings' security.
- 4 Reduced demand for brides would increase the age of first marriage for women and gender equality.
- 5 More personal security and less crime would mean that many more individuals could shift to investing in long-term payoffs, including businesses, apprenticeships and education.
- 6 Strong normative monogamy supports democratic rights and civil liberties. The spread of normative monogamy, which represents a form of egalitarianism, may have helped create the conditions for the emergence of democracy and political equality at all levels of government.



Gottman, John M. and Nan Silver. (2015). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work: A Practical Guide from the Country's Foremost Relationship Expert* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Harmony Books.

Dr. Gottmann's bestselling book is a must-read for all couples, both those who are struggling and those who simply wish to strengthen their marriages. Based on years of clinical research into the way happily married people interact with each other, Dr. Gottmann emphasizes the importance of developing and sustaining spousal friendship, letting your spouse influence you, dealing constructively with marital conflict, and creating shared meaning. In this book, Gottmann pairs practical advice with valuable exercises designed to help couples put his principles into practice. If conventional marriage advice hasn't been working for you, if you feel that practicing basic conflict-resolution isn't enough, or if you want to avoid the common pitfalls that lead to divorce (which Gottmann claims he can predict with over 90% accuracy), you will find pages of clinically-proven, down-to-earth wisdom in this book. For a more detailed look at specific problems married couples face, read Gottmann's second book, co-authored with his wife, Dr. Julie Gottmann, [10 Lessons to Transform Your Marriage](#) (2006).

“Getting couples to disagree more ‘nicely’ might reduce their stress levels while they argued, but frequently it wasn’t enough to pump life back into their marriages.”

The advice I used to give couples earlier in my career was pretty much what you'd hear from virtually any marital therapist at the time – nothing but the same old pointers about conflict resolution and communication skills. But after looking squarely at my own data, I had to face the harsh facts: getting couples to disagree more “nicely” might reduce their stress levels while they argued, but frequently it wasn't enough to pump life back into their marriages.

The right course for these couples became clear only after I analyzed the interactions of spouses whose marriages sailed smoothly through troubled waters. Why was it that these marriages worked so well? Were these master couples more intelligent and stable, or simply more fortunate than the rest? Could whatever they had be taught to others? It soon became apparent that these happy marriages were never perfect unions. Some couples who said they were very satisfied with each other still had significant differences in temperament, interests, and family values. Conflict was not infrequent. They argued, just as the unhappy couples did, over money, jobs, kids, housekeeping, sex, and in-laws. The mystery was how they so adroitly navigated their way through these difficulties and kept their marriages happy and stable.

It took studying hundreds of couples to uncover the secrets of these emotionally intelligent marriages. No two marriages are the same, but the more closely my research team and I looked at happy marriages, the more evident it became that they were alike in seven telltale

ways. Happy married couples may not be aware that they follow these Seven Principles, but they all do. Unhappy marriages always come up short in at least one of these seven areas – and usually in many of them. By mastering these Seven Principles, you can ensure that your own marriage will thrive. You'll learn to identify which if these components are weak spots, or potential weak spots, in your relationship, and to focus your attention where you most need it.



“Sonnet 116” by William Shakespeare

One of Shakespeare’s most famous sonnets, this poem speaks of love’s incredible endurance.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth’s unknown, although his height be taken.
Love’s not Time’s fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle’s compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.



Austin Institute for the Study of Family and Culture
1611 West Ave
Austin, TX 78701
512-368-4213
info@austin-institute.org

Website: www.austin-institute.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ATXInstitute
Twitter: www.twitter.com/atxinstitute

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