

# **‘Would you have sex with a stranger?’ Men and women respond to the question WAY differently.**

In a recent article, *Psychology Today* [compared](#) multiple cross-generational studies that surveyed college students to find out how likely they would be to have sex with a total stranger. The results might surprise you.

Surveys showed an overwhelming majority of men said they would have sex with a stranger. Women respondents were less enthused. In fact, two separate studies failed to find a single female respondent who’d say she’d have sex with a stranger.

[One study](#), conducted in 1989 by Florida State professor Russell D. Clark and professor Elaine Hatfield of the University of Hawaii, found that 75 percent of men would sleep with a stranger versus 0 percent of women.

In 2010, Danish researchers Hald and Høgh-Olesen reached a similar conclusion—the only difference being 59 percent of men said they would have sex with a stranger (100 percent of women still said no). At roughly the same time in France, a scientist named Guéguen [ended with slightly different results](#): 83 percent of men (not just students) agreed to sex, while just 3 percent of women did. ([A 2011 study](#) found that women were more inclined to sleep with a stranger—18 percent—if the person was a celebrity, compared to 74 percent of men who answered yes.)

Some researchers proposed possible reasons for why almost all women say no to having sex with a stranger, including fears of physical safety, accidental pregnancy, STDs, and social stigmatization.

Men might be less inclined to fear some of these things. Social stigma, for example, is something women may fear much more than men, since society has tended to treat sex as a conquest for men and shameful for women.

On the other hand, the differing results could stem from genetic differences between men and women. As *Psychology Today* [points out](#),

*Cognitively and emotionally, men are more likely than women to have sexual fantasies involving short-term sex and multiple opposite-sex partners, men perceive more sexual interest from strangers than women, and men are less likely than women to regret short-term sex or “hook-ups.”*

*Considering sexual fantasies, men are much more likely than women to report having imagined sex with more than 1,000 partners in their lifetime (Ellis & Symons, 1990).*

The idea that men might be less reluctant to engage in recreational sex with a stranger is a theory buttressed by behavioral science. [Studies have shown](#) that men are much more likely to pay for sex than women.

Whatever the reasons, multiple studies reached the same conclusion: men are much more receptive to the idea of sleeping with a stranger than women.

What do you think? Do the differences stem more from nature or more from nurture?