

How a Woman Can Know if a Man Truly Loves Her

If asked to name one of the world's most foremost novels on relationships between men and women, Jane Austen's [*Pride and Prejudice*](#) would undoubtedly be in the running. Indeed, Mr. Darcy has somehow become synonymous with the idea of a perfect gentleman.

But while Austen-mania grips modern culture, its decorum does not. Modern day Lizzys would never dream of treating their suitors so formally as to call them "Mr. Darcy," nor would modern day Mr. Bingleys refer to their partners as "Miss Bennett."

The abandonment of formality through the disuse of last names is not necessarily a bad thing. What is a bit surprising, however, is the fact that many of today's young couples don't even bother to know each other's surnames until well into their relationship.

Such was the revelation in a recent *Wall Street Journal* [article](#) by Nicole Hong. According to Ms. Hong, the age of Tinder and hook-ups leaves little room for individuals to dig deeper and get to know their latest date. As such, the party who enquires about the surname of his or her date is expressing a sure sign of long-term interest:

"Many millennials say asking directly for a last name on a first date feels awkward, and signals too obviously they intend to scour the internet for biographical information. Others say that downloading a date's entire digital footprint—armed with the full name—can stop a relationship from developing organically.

'The less I know, the better,' said Brendan Krick, 25, a comedian in Philadelphia. 'Everyone is so lame on the

internet.’ Just seeing that a woman liked ‘a bunch of bands that suck’ on her Facebook page could be a deal breaker, he said.”

With such attitudes, it’s really no wonder that millennials are having a terrible time finding a suitable mate and [settling down](#). They’re looking for love alright, but the thing that they perceive to be love (i.e. sex) is not really love at all.

C.S. Lewis described this best in his chapter on Eros in [The Four Loves](#). According to Lewis, true, genuine, growing love focuses on the individual first:

“Very often what comes first is simply a delighted pre-occupation with the Beloved – a general, unspecified pre-occupation with her in her totality. A man in this state really hasn’t leisure to think of sex. He is too busy thinking of a person.”

In other words, the true lover will want to investigate and know all about the object of his affection. That includes – and at the most basic level, too – her name, first and last.

Lewis then goes on to explain how sexual desire is the exact opposite of this true, genuine form of love:

“Sexual desire, without Eros, wants it [the sexual act], the thing in itself; Eros wants the Beloved.

The thing is a sensory pleasure; that is, an event occurring within one’s own body. We use a most unfortunate idiom when we say, of a lustful man prowling the streets, that he ‘wants a woman.’ Strictly speaking, a woman is just what he does not want. He wants a pleasure for which a woman happens to be the necessary piece of apparatus. How much he cares about the woman as such may be gauged by his attitude to her five minutes after fruition (one does not keep the carton after

one has smoked the cigarettes). Now Eros makes a man really want, not a woman, but one particular woman. In some mysterious but quite indisputable fashion the lover desires the Beloved herself, not the pleasure she can give."

As the *Wall Street Journal* article makes clear, we've completely reversed this process.

There's a lot of discussion these days about consent, sexual assault, and the feelings and attitudes of those involved. To outside observers, the various stories coming out of the #MeToo movement signify that women are uncomfortable with such quick, sexual relationships, but occasionally go with the flow and don't object... that is, until later.

These women seem to recognize all too late that they have been used and that their alleged lovers really weren't interested in them as individuals, but in the pleasure that they can bring. Perhaps the frustration that these women are expressing stems from the fact that they want to be loved, to be known and admired as a person, not a sexual object.

Of course, such feelings are considered quaint these days. Puritanical. Quite impractical.

But are they? If Americans want true, genuine love to return to society, must we, as Lewis implies, reject the short, uninterested, one-night-stand approach to dating and marriage, and instead return to the measured, interested, long-lasting pursuit of the individual before we even entertain the thought of the marriage bed?