



Virginity double standards hurt



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Everyone remembers losing his or her virginity.

Unfortunately, double standards leave men and women with different feelings about their looks after they lose their virginity.

According to a study from Pennsylvania State University published in the April issue of *Journal of Adolescence*, male students were more satisfied with their appearance after the first time they had sex, while female students were slightly less satisfied.

The study was based on students who had entered college as virgins, and used follow-up surveys to determine how their feelings about their looks changed after they had sex for the first time.

Traditionally, when a man loses his virginity, it is viewed as a confirmation of his manliness and sexual prowess. When a woman has sex for the first time, she is “deflowered.”

People think she should have resisted her own desires. Women are usually held responsible as the ones in charge of saying no and protecting their virginity, even though the decision to have sex requires two consenting individuals.

The pressure on a woman to say no and “hold out” are intense. After all, a man will never marry a girl that puts out, right? Why would he buy the cow when he can get the milk for free?

The same study found that it is significantly more common for women to report their first sexual experience left them feeling less pleasure, satisfaction and excitement than men, and more sadness, guilt, nervousness, tension, embarrassment and fear.

Women should not feel the need to hide their desire or be ashamed if they succumb to it and make the decision to have sex.

Before the sexual revolution of the '60s, it was common belief that women did not enjoy sex. They simply endured it for their husband's sake or for procreation. A proper girl never

engaged in premarital sex. Those who did were considered classless and dirty.

That sounds a little antiquated and ridiculous to our generation, but the “slut shaming” continues and the negative connotations surrounding sex are deeply ingrained in some women's psyche.

Double standards and gender stereotyping hurt both men and women. All men and all women do not fit neatly into generalized definitions.

Another aspect of the study showed that men feel worse about themselves than women as time increases between sexual intercourse.

During a dry spell, they feel less like a man.

If our society did view sex as the ultimate display of masculinity, men would not feel as bad about themselves.

This double standard encourages men to pursue sex like it is some game. We even refer to sex as “scoring.”

It makes men feel like less of a man if they are not having constant sex with multiple partners. They may feel ashamed about admitting they only interested in a monogamous, loving relationship.

Some men will demean women and use them as a means to prove their prowess.

The women used by the men feel hurt and may believe all men are pigs.

It is a vicious cycle that perpetuates double standards and hurts both sexes.

Not all men are pigs, women aren't passive playtoys and no one's sexual behaviors should be determined by their gender

Double standards are deeply ingrained into our society. We have to pay close attention to our reactions to avoid continuing them.

When we high five a man for “getting laid” but start a rumor about a woman for having a one-night-stand, we perpetuate double standards.

Sexual independence is not only about embracing our own desires, but also about not judging others for their sexual choices.

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