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Venus & Mars

Every week Cosmopolitan's very own Venus & Mars give their take on the most talked about love, sex and relationships stories. See where the his 'n' hers views clash, collide and occasionally complement each other.



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Are women happier than men?

Seeing the three Mamma Mia actresses bouncing up and down singing ABBA songs like there's no tomorrow prompted a survey that revealed that women are happier than men. But is Venus really the happier sex?

Mars: NO

This is typical. A bunch of women go to see another bunch of women singing ABBA songs and larking about on a Greek island and suddenly it's official - women are happier than men. Full stop. End of story.

Now I've no wish to rain on anyone's parade (well, maybe just a sprinkle) but how can Venus be so certain that she's really having a better time of it than Mars?

Bouncing up and down on Meryl Streep's bed singing 'Dancing Queen' may indeed be a fun way for a bunch of girlies to spend their evening. But it's not the only fun in town. It's just that when guys enjoy themselves we don't have to shout it from the rooftops. We just get on with it.

It drives women mad that they can't fathom our fun.

How can we possibly be enjoying ourselves when all we are doing is sitting on a riverbank with a fishing rod or watching the cricket or supping a pint?

Where are all the bells and whistles?

Women are obsessed by the fact that they are multi-taskers. If they are not simultaneously working, gossiping, accessorising and redecorating they have to check that they're not actually dead.

According to the Venus Happy Police, multi-tasking proves that women are being more stimulated, have more options and are so bursting with choices that it's a miracle they don't explode.

It all sounds very wearing and just a little bit desperate.

Why must women run about so? What's with this compulsive need to always be doing things? And why so many things?

Is Venus really getting the deep level of satisfaction that Mars gets from just settling down to do one simple task and to keep on doing it until it's well and truly done?

According to the Happy Police as soon as Mars passes 30 he's on his way to becoming a Grumpy Old Man. But it's all to do with perception.

Can anyone tell whether a rhinoceros is happy? No.

Its expression doesn't change. It stares, it blinks. It never cracks a smile. But on the inside it may be having the time of its life.

It's the same with Mars. We may appear to be simply sitting on the sofa, arms crossed, fixed gaze, watching episode after episode of The Wire without any communication with the rest of the world. But let me tell you, on the inside we are on our island paradise, singing our own private Mamma Mias like there's no tomorrow.



Venus: YES

Do you ever get the impression that men think women are never happy? "Stop nagging me!", "Are you in a mood again?", "What you crying for now?" they cry. Poor mites. There they are trying to lead their fun-filled stress-free lives (football, sex, beer and Nintendo) and then we come along with our miserable ways (talking, tidying, trying to get to sleep) and ruin it all.

But, do you hear these nagging/moaning/crying accusations being levelled at any old Venus? No. I think you'll find Mars only seems to pick up on these 'unhappy' tendencies in Venus when he actually embarks on a relationship with her. The 'nagging' comments slip in usually around the time the honeymoon period wears off. In other words when Mars has stopped trying to impress her and has started behaving like... well, Mars.

If they then go on to move in together, Mars finds himself having to scold Venus even more often for her whinging ways (though of course it is only when he braves it up the aisle with her that she can be crowned with her official status of "The Nagging Wife").

Isn't there a pattern forming here then?

If I were to understand how to use Powerpoint would I not be able to plot an impressive line graph that shows a direct link between Venus's apparent unhappiness and her time spent with Mars?

Is it a coincidence that the scene in Mama Mia mentioned earlier doesn't have any men present? That the women are single?

What's more, do you ever hear Venus telling off a fellow Venus for crying and nagging? No. Why? Because women are more sensitive? No. Because when girls get together on their own they're not crying or nagging, they're jumping up and down on beds singing ABBA and celebrating the joys of girlhood.

Footnote: Venus would like to apologise for any extreme anti-Mars opinions in this week's column, but would also like to remind the reader that she has only recently been dumped. Just to update the reader, she is now living alone with her laptop in Barcelona, having the time of her life... "DANCING QUEEN, YOUNG AND FREE..."
