

# He Said, She Said Who's Scamming Who?

By Robert Tussey & Judith A. Habert  
Photos by Lisa K. Miller

*Are men really from Mars and Women from Venus, as author Dr. John Gray states in his bestselling book? Do men and women really see things that differently? If given the same question could their answers really be so different? At San Diego Woman we wanted to explore the differences between "them" and "us". Read on and find out how the sexes differ and then share your thoughts with us. Who do you agree with? What topics would you like to see us duke it out over in upcoming issues? No topic is off limits, so write me at [editor@sandiegowoman.com](mailto:editor@sandiegowoman.com). I can't wait to hear from you!*

## He Said...

Men cheat. Women cheat. It should be that simple. But the male is always demonized as the perpetrator of this evil. Fact is, if a man cheats – who is he cheating with... A WOMAN! Does this justify the infidelity? Absolutely not. But where is the moral responsibility of the female in this equation? Whether

3. The passion has fizzled
4. The fantasy has fizzled
5. Your ego needs a boost
6. It's payback time



30

she is single or married when she hooks up with a married or attached male, doesn't she have a responsibility too? Fact is, until the last ten to twenty years, men were (considered) more apt to have an affair. But these last two decades have seen a dramatic rise in the number of women cheating. In the book, *Intimacy After Infidelity* (Dr. Steven D. Solomon and Dr. Lorie J. Teagno), they state, "Our best estimates, which come from studies done in the last five to ten years, reveal that 45-50% of married women and 50-60% of married men engage in extramarital affairs at some point in their relationship." These are significant numbers.

Psychologist Dr. Nancy O'Reilly (aka Dr. Nancy) states: "Affairs are not uncommon. Women tend to keep these things to themselves, but there are signs that they're catching up to the guys." Catching up? Again, if men are cheating (50-60%), who are they cheating with???

Norine Dworkin-McDaniel states that there are six reasons women cheat:

1. Familiarity has bred indifference
2. You're leading parallel lives

Come on! Men have used every one of these and have been routinely chastised as being childish and immature for not facing the issues in the marriage head on and fixing them before having an affair. The old maxim 'if a man is in the forest alone and says something, is he still wrong?' comes to mind. On the issue of infidelity we cannot have a double standard.

All of this was fueled by an article in the *Union Tribune* by one of their female columnists who spent her whole article on John Edwards and his (now revealed) affair. Let's be clear, infidelity is wrong. Men in public office should be held to a higher standard, but so should women -and if you think that only men in office cheat you're not seeing the whole picture.

My point is that things have changed from the somnolent fifties where men were the bread winners and women were home-makers. And the attitudes need to change too. No one should cheat on their spouse or significant other – not in a perfect world. But the truth is we are all human and have weaknesses. ALL of us. Women need to own their part in the infidelity equation.

## She Said...

Okay. I totally understand where you are coming from with the fact that if a man cheats, unless he has decided to try some alternative lifestyle, he is in fact cheating with a woman. However, I have to add that I do think there is an inherent difference in men and women and the entire concept of infidelity. So of course you are thinking that this is a feminist belief based on years of hearing that men are dogs and cannot be trusted. But low and behold science has now proven that it is not purely scorned women making this claim. At the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, a behavioral geneticist, Hasse Walum led a study which found that there was a gene variant in two out of five men which proved that men are more likely to be devoted and loyal husbands when they lack this particular variant of a gene that influences brain activity: This is the first time that science has shown a direct link between a man's genes and his aptitude for monogamy. The study was done, not on humans of course, but on animals. Two species that look nearly alike: prairie voles and montane voles were involved in the study. The basis is that the first time a male prairie vole mates with a female, he forms a bond with her for life, breeding and raising successive litters. On the other hand, male montane voles think of sex as a series of one-night stands; they are loners and do not bond with females or

does however appear, at least in my mind, and the mind of a bunch of my friends who always agree with me (for fear of me exposing their innermost thoughts in the pages of this magazine) that men just seem to always be on the prowl. Take a hot looking woman and have her walk to the counter of Starbucks and watch the men pause mid conversation to stop and glare, smile and hope that they might catch her eye and maybe earn her phone number. I have never been with a girlfriend, even the most outgoing of the lot, and had them stop mid thought to gawk at a good looking man putting milk in his coffee. There is a difference. Maybe it is purely survival of the species and men are the pursuers so therefore the aggression is a necessary evil. Who am I to say? Most of us women just can't understand why, no matter how beautiful you might be, how willing to serve your man's every need, many of them still stray. Just the fact that someone even cheated on Halle Berry makes it hard as a woman to feel secure in any relationship. When trying to understand the phenomenon, and in varied discussions with my female friends, I think I finally understand it. Maybe I can clarify it for all of you women out there who can't understand the nature of infidelity. Well, I will give it a try. Women are really no different from men; what is different is our perspective. Picture this: you are in Nordstrom's eyeing that brand new Louis Vuitton bag that sells for \$1,200.00. You want



help raise offspring. The conclusion was that the only difference between these two species is the same gene variant that Walum studied. It was also shown that manipulating vasopressin receptors in vole brains can turn loner voles into devoted partners and fathers, and vice versa. Okay, so men are not voles, not most anyway, but there you go, a scientific finding about male monogamy. So maybe this study is a boon for the male of our species, a legitimate excuse for infidelity, "It wasn't my fault sweetie, I was just cursed with the gene!" Just what they need, another excuse!

Granted, getting back to the original complaint that the men have to be cheating with someone. I will give you that. And I honestly do think a big part of it has to do with women no longer staying home and now being out in the workforce. As such, they often find themselves sharing the corporate arena and benefits of it, such as half price drinks at happy hour after a hard day's work. So let's face it, with women out there more, they are more likely to meet men and be tempted than if their only sphere of travel was the grocery store and laundromat - it really is hard to get tempted while waiting for the spin cycle. It

it so bad, but can hardly afford such a downright extravagant item. So you dream about it, thinking how good it would look on you. Time passes and on another shopping trip, something amazing happens. You walk in and the \$1,200.00 bag has been marked down to \$6.00. You are about to pay for this find of a lifetime when the cashier, upon viewing your credit card, says, "I'm sorry but you can't buy this because you are married." A \$1,200 dollar pocket book for \$6.00 and you can't have it! Okay, do you feel it? That gnawing pain deep in your stomach. That Louis Vuitton bag was just ripped out of your hands. Well, that sick feeling is identical to the one that men endure when the cute little blonde at the office expresses an interest in some intimate activity with them, and they are forced to say no due to that pesky little "being married" thing. So maybe they say no the first time--I did say maybe--but after that, chances are that sexy blond is going home with your man. And let's face it; if that cashier didn't stop you, that bag would have come home with you too. See how easy men are to figure out? Just substitute sex for shopping and you too can understand men. Okay, so there I have admitted it. Women are weak too!