



Too smart to come?

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By Christine B. Whelan

It's tough being a well-educated woman with a career.

Last year we learned that women with **high IQs** don't get married – and that men would prefer to **marry their secretary** rather than their peer.

This year, **we learned** that if you make more than \$30,000 per year, work 35 hours a week or more outside the home or have a university-level (or higher) education you are more likely to cheat and get divorced, less likely to have children, unable to keep house, and somehow able to make your husband physically ill.

But this year also dealt smart women an even more gutting blow: A Canadian study found that smart women are also less likely to have **orgasms during sex**.

The study, published in the Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, found that better-educated women are more likely to have low sex drives and less likely to climax if they can muster the energy to get started. Some 48 percent of university-educated women report problems compared with 31 percent of high-school grads.

It's not the first time that researchers have correlated the inability to orgasm with advanced education: Even when I'd seek out some kinky light reading in my graduate school library, I'd find dire news on the topic. Sex in America: A Definitive Study (1994) revealed that while women like me were more open to inventive sexual positions, masturbation, and experimentation, orgasms weren't always on the horizon. Not only was I unmarriageable, but I was also fairly unlikely to enjoy the hard-won lovin' I could find.

Are smart women too uptight to enjoy sex? Do we overthink the primal act until achieving orgasm is impossible? Or are we just more honest about our sex lives?

In my new book, "**Why Smart Men Marry Smart Women**," I coined an acronym for all of us smart, successful single gals: SWANS – Strong Women Achievers, No Spouse. After reading these surveys, I wondered if we should amend that to "Strong Women Achievers, No Sex."

Before you quit your job, put your hair in rollers, and reinvent yourself as a sexy dumb honey, read on. I promise it gets better. Guys do make passes at girls who wear glasses.

I've been studying this topic for six years—and if I've learned anything it's that the media loves bad news for successful women. It turns out the reports on smart women and sex are no different. There's good news for SWANS and married high-achieving women: Smart women are just as likely to have great sex, get married, and have a happy family life.

The Sex in America study reported that educated women were less likely to say that they always had an orgasm during sex—but more likely to say that they sometimes did. And when you tally up the always and sometimes responses—and let's be honest, who has an orgasm from sex 100 percent of the time?—educated women were 10 percent more likely report having fun in the sack.

Just recently, an English study came out with some good news, too: Women with college degrees, professional jobs, and higher incomes reported a significantly higher rate of orgasms than other women. This confirms a 1999 report by the reputable Journal of the American Medical Association: Women without high-school diplomas were nearly twice as likely to experience low sexual desire when compared with college-graduate women. Of course, the media all but overlooked these data.

And let's not forget that little tidbit about more educated women being more sexually adventurous. At a recent "lingerie party" attended by East Coast graduate students, the hostess was amazed by the response. "She sold a record amount of sex toys at the end of the night. So much for stereotypes," reports one woman who attended. As another woman said, "We're above average in everything else, so why not this?"

With all this good sex, it's no wonder that for single women in their 30s, higher education is a bonus in the marriage market. According to 2005 Current Population Survey data—a nationally representative survey of 60,000 households commissioned yearly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics—there's a 75 percent chance that a never-married 30-year-old woman with an advanced degree will be a bride, compared with a 66 percent chance that a 30-year-old with a college degree or less will marry.

And men are more attracted to SWANS: According to a 2006 Harris Interactive study, 71 percent of high-earning or graduate-educated men said a woman's career or educational success makes her more desirable as a wife, 68 percent report that smart women make better mothers, and 90 percent of high-achieving men say they want to marry—or are already married to—a woman who is as or more intelligent than they are.

There's a high cost to the conventional wisdom that accomplished women are sexually repressed and don't get married. Not only can it be a self-fulfilling prophecy for single women today, but it sends a destructive message to the rising

generation of young women. Plus, all this bad news can be a buzz-kill in the bedroom—and we're too smart for that.

Christine B. Whelan is the author of "[Why Smart Men Marry Smart Women](#)" and has a Ph.D. in social history for Oxford University, England. She lives in New York City and would very much appreciate it if you'd buy her book. Visit her on the [web](#).