Twitter Thread by Darwin Does Dating



Darwin Does Dating
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“Hey DDD, men will sleep with anything? Right?■” Oh boy! That’s a view I’ve heard many times before. Like a lot of folk psychology, there’s a tiny kernel of truth■here that's blown way out of proportion. And I think I know what it is… [1/17]

First of all: There's a full spectrum of mating pickiness both sexes. Men so picky they never lose their virginity and women with unusually low standards. There’s a lot of noise and variation. Thus, we should be sceptical about neat black and white■claims about the sexes. [2/17]

That being said, there are often patterns to be found in the noise. Enough to draw some conclusions about the *typical* mating behaviour of each sex, but not enough to predict the behaviour of individuals with a high degree of accuracy. [3/17]

One of those patterns appears to be that more men than women “lower their standards” when it comes to sex. But, and here’s the important part, it’s in a particular context: short-term mating. [4/17]

Humans, by and large are pair-bonded mammals. From megacities to small bands of hunter gatherers, humans seek a special partner to fall in love■and share their life with. And as far as we know, this has been the case thousands (perhaps millions) of years. [5/17]

Because of this, humans are *really* picky about their long-term mates. Both sexes! We’re not like peafowl where one sex makes the effort■and the other chooses. If we were, then first dates would look very different… men all dressed up and women in their pyjamas! [6/17]

No, humans are quite picky and for good reason - investing in a relationship (and maybe children) is a big commitment. We want to make sure that we’re committing to the best possible person and that they’re just as devoted to us and not wasting our time■. [7/17]

But, here’s the thing… long-term mating, while a popular choice, isn't the only thing on the human mating menu. We’re capable of short-term, casual mating too. A strategy which may have provided its own evolutionary benefits – benefits which differed between the sexes. [8/17]

For women, short-term mating might have served to capture the attention of a particularly desirable man – a gateway to a long-term relationship. It may have also allowed them to benefit from accessing the resources and protection of multiple men rather than just one. [9/17]

But this strategy would have been risky to sexual health and reputation, and would have left some to raise a child with no paternal investment. Thus, women evolved to use this strategy cautiously, maintaining a high level of pickiness as they did so. [10/17]

For men, short-term mating served as a way of having sex without commitment; plain and simple. A no strings attached liaison might have led to him passing on his genes to future generations without the parental responsibility that usually accompanies this. [11/17]