

The Sex Questionnaire

Commissioned by the Daily Mail August 8th 1999

Q: Who was your first girlfriend...?

A: Gwynneth Williams when we were six. I bought her eight Mars bars when sweets came off the ration in 1952 but she still wouldn't let me kiss her.

Q: Do you remember your first kiss...?

A: I didn't try again till I was 15 with Randy Ruth in Act III Scene II of "The Merchant of Venice" when I was playing Bassanio and it was down in the script. That's why I auditioned. We French-kissed in public for a week.

Q: Who told you the facts of life...?

A: Our biology teacher, a shy man in a suit. When we were 13, he did the life cycle of the rabbit and then at the end of the lesson said it was the same thing in humans. I guess that's why we sometimes behaved like rabbits.

Q: Were you able to discuss sex with your parents...?

A: They couldn't discuss sex with me. A book called "The Sex Factor in Marriage" by Dr Helena M. Wright, appeared by my bed when I was 16 but disappeared the night after. I think it was my Dad's idea to stop me spilling my seed on the eiderdown. I met Dr Wright when she was over 90. Still bonkers.

Q: Can you discuss sex with your children...?

A: Always. They are totally blasé. They have to be in a house containing seven thousand books on the subject.

Q: Does sex improve with age...?

A: You get out what you put in. If you lie back and think of England you deserve to be bored silly. I'm always amazed when people fail to understand that sex is an art not some dismal science. On the other hand, you do need to stay physically fit. I probably jog *in order to* have sex!

Q: Biggest turn-on?

A: Devious minds. I'm attracted to people who bluff and tantalise then get serious when I'm not expecting it.

Q: Biggest turn-off...?

A: Unpleasant voices or diction. I like just about anything else, including all the sexual scents.

Q: What's the worst chat-up line you've ever used...?

A: "Would you like to feel my thigh?" It still amazes me that I said this. But at least it worked and my partner (who responded) is still with me after 21 years. I only used it once, honest.

Q: Do you think men should always make first move...?

A: Of course not. It's wonderful when a woman says "Please lie down while I have an orgasm".

Q: Is it ever acceptable for men and women to be promiscuous...?

A: It's inevitable, but we should stop throwing away marriages *because* of it.

Q: Are men more promiscuous...?

A: No I think the statistics suggest that women are better dissemblers.

Q: Should prostitution be legalised?

A: It already is. What we need to do is de-criminalise its ancillary services such as advertising and the management of bordellos.

Q: Is current age of consent right...?

A: No because it suggests homosexuals have two years less common sense than the rest of us. I think most people of 15 are about ready for sex - some of 17 are not. If forced to choose, I'd vote for 15. We will be voting one day because Europe has about 10 different standards.

Q: Could you forgive partner if she had an affair...?

A: Yes.

Q: Have you ever taken revenge over an act of infidelity...?

A: No.

Q: Is there too much sex on tv...?

A: I'm not offended by explicitness. I'm happy to watch adults giving each other consensual pleasure. I just think male directors cut to the climax too quickly. I'm left protesting "But it's not like that! Where's the seduction?" Perhaps it IS like that for male tv directors?

Q: What's the most erotic film you've ever seen?

A: It was a home movie and I don't think it was ever given a title.

Q: Age of first sexual relationship?

A: I lost my virginity at 15 but had my first proper relationship at 18. She wouldn't let me make love to her completely for almost a year. I suffered with enormous pleasure and, twice a week, could scarcely walk home.

Q: Is sex different within a marriage?

A: I have no idea, I've never been married.

Q: Your most embarrassing sexual encounter...?

A: I'm not easily embarrassed but when I was young and foolish I once met a woman at 3 o'clock and made love to her at 4 o'clock. Her boyfriend turned up at 5 o'clock and called the police when she told him to b***** off. There was a bit of a fracas.

Q: Funniest sexual encounter...

A: Going to an early evening cocktail party at the Fourth World Congress of Sexology in Mexico City in 1980 only to discover an orgy in progress. I made my excuses and left.

Q: What's the most unusual place you have ever made love...?

A: In the middle of the B4027 in Oxfordshire at 6 am on a Sunday morning as a post-graduate student.

Q: How often do you have sex...?

A: That's a loaded question - with my partner about twice a week.

Q: Have you ever made love on silk sheets...?

A: Yes in Detroit with a wonderful woman called Doris - when I was young, romantic, good-looking etc

Q: Lights on or off?

A: I prefer candles.

Q: What do you like to do after making love...?

A: Explain yet again that men over the age of 40 have what's called a refractory period.

Q: Would you dress to please your partner...?

A: It has been known, yes.

Q: How many sexual partners...?

A: More than Anna Karenina but fewer than Anna Raeburn as quoted in this column.

Q: How often do you think about sex...?

A: All day long; it's work.

Q: What does partner find most attractive about you...?

A: My hands, my cooking and my ability to mend almost anything.

Q: Would you respect a person who agreed to sleep with you on the first date...?

A: Immensely. I am always polite to everybody.

Q: What do you feel about same-sex relationships...?

A: Personally indifferent but all love comes from the same source. I rejoice whenever people make love not war.

Q: Would you ever pose naked for a magazine...?

A: It's a little-known fact that I once appeared semi-naked in the New Zealand "Listener" when I went there to give evidence in an obscenity trial.

Q: Ever replied to Lonely Heart...

A: Yes, it was once my job to vet such adverts and I sometimes had to pretend to be interested to make sure all was legal. I still have a file or two.

Q: What effect does age-difference have on people...?

A: It doesn't matter after you're about 30. I went out with a wonderful woman of 56 when I was 32. But as I said in my column in "OK Weekly", Patsy Kensit (28) is far too old for Liam Gallagher (22).

Q: Who has sex appeal...?

A: Susan Sarandon, Pierce Brosnan, Cher, Richard Dawkins, Anne Hooper and Marina Warner.

Q: Most erotic book...?

A: The Illustrated Presidential Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, 1970.

Q: Do you believe in love at first sight...?

A: It's a fact but it's never happened to me. When I met my partner, it was hate at first sight. I think that's far more common.

Q: Do you ever wish you had been born a woman...

A: Sometimes I'd like a (beautiful) female body just to see what mischief you could get up to. But I have a strongly developed intuitive side, which is important to my counselling skills, so I probably get the best of both worlds. Within 100 years I'm sure we'll be able to choose our genders or "gender outlooks" at the touch of a computer button, anyway.