

Bikini-clad women make men impatient

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Images of sexy women tend to whet men's sexual appetite. But stimulating new research in the *Journal of Consumer Research* says there's more than meets the eye. A recent study shows that men who watched sexy videos or handled lingerie sought immediate gratification—even when they were making decisions about money, soda, and candy.

Authors Bram Van den Bergh, Siegfried DeWitte, and Luk Warlop (KULeuven, Belgium) found that the desire for immediate rewards increased in men who touched bras, looked at pictures of beautiful women, or watched video clips of young women in bikinis running through a park.

"It seems that sexual appetite causes a greater urgency to consume anything rewarding," the authors suggest. Thus, the activation of sexual desire appears to spill over into other brain systems involved in reward-seeking behaviors, even the cognitive desire for money.

"After they touched a bra, men are more likely to be content with a smaller immediate monetary reward," writes Bram Van den Bergh, one of the study's authors. "Prior exposure to sexy stimuli may influence the choice between chocolate cake or fruit for dessert."

The authors believe the stimuli bring men's minds to the present as opposed to the future. "The study demonstrates that bikinis cause a shift in time preference: Men live in the here and now when they glance at pictures featuring women in lingerie. That is, men will choose the

immediately available rewards and seek immediate gratification after sex cue exposure."

Do all straight men respond the same? Actually, no. Some men are highly responsive to rewards while others are not so sensitive, and the more reward-sensitive men are the impatient ones.

In fact, doing a task designed to inspire financial satisfaction reduced the bikini-inspired impatience, just as feeling full reduces food cravings. Men may want to be aware of bikinis' effects on their bank accounts and waistlines.

Source: University of Chicago

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