

25 myths of dating, sex and marriage debunked in new book

May 11 2016



Binghamton University psychology professor Matthew D. Johnson is shown.
Credit: Jonathan Cohen/Binghamton University

How we feel about ourselves and those we love depends in large part on the assumptions and expectations we hold about romantic relationships.

It turns out that many of our beliefs about intimate relationships aren't backed up by science. In his new book, *Great Myths of Intimate Relationships: Dating, Sex, and Marriage*, Binghamton University psychology professor Matthew D. Johnson debunks 25 of the biggest myths out there.

"People assume that they know how relationships work. It feels like love should be intuitive and not something that can be studied scientifically. Not so!" said Johnson. "Scientists have learned a lot about [intimate relationships](#) - much of it counterintuitive."

In *Great Myths of Intimate Relationships*, Johnson challenges and demystifies many of the misperceptions and stereotypes surrounding attraction, sex, love, internet dating, [marriage](#) and heartbreak. For example, he debunked the following:

- Opposites attract
- Having children brings couples closer
- Men have a stronger libido than women
- Having access to innumerable online profiles of potential partners increases the likelihood of finding Mr. or Ms. Right
- Children raised by other-sex couples are better off than children raised by same-sex couples
- Premarital counseling or relationship education programs prevent discord and divorce
- Good communication is the key to a happy relationship
- Men are from Mars, women are from Venus
- Couples who are "matched" by online dating services are more likely to have satisfying relationships
- Living together before marriage is a good way to determine whether you're with the right person



GREAT MYTHS OF INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Dating, Sex, and Marriage

MATTHEW D. JOHNSON

WILEY Blackwell

Great Myths of Intimate Relationships: Dating, Sex, and Marriage was published by Wiley-Blackwell in May 2016. Credit: Wiley-Blackwell

Take the myth that living together before marriage is a good way to determine whether you're with the right person. Johnson said that this finding often surprises people.

"People think that it makes sense to do a trial run. 'Let's see how well we get along when we're living together.' What could be more intuitive, right? But, it turns out that living together before engagement increases the chances of dissatisfaction and divorce down the road. Why?" Johnson asked rhetorically. "The current thinking is that couples who

move in together for convenience may end up drifting into marriage instead of making a purposeful decision to get married. For example, maybe a couple is already spending several nights a week together and they don't see the reason to write two separate rent checks every month, so they move in together. Then, they're living together for a while and their family starts asking: 'When are you two getting married?' Pretty soon the inertia of their relationship pulls them into marriage as opposed to making a deliberate decision to marry."

According to Johnson, science has much to say about intimate relationships. "For decades, researchers like me have been studying what makes relationships healthy and what makes them dysfunctional. I wrote the book to emphasize the empirical findings on [romantic relationships](#)."

Great Myths of Intimate Relationships: Dating, Sex, and Marriage was published by Wiley-Blackwell in May 2016.

More information: [eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTit ...
ctCd-1118521285.html](http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTit...ctCd-1118521285.html)

Provided by Binghamton University

Citation: 25 myths of dating, sex and marriage debunked in new book (2016, May 11) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-05-myths-dating-sex-marriage-debunked.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.