

DAWN PORTER *shares...*

EACH WEEK, THE INTREPID JOURNALIST BARES HER SOUL

Who wants to be average anyway?

I have just discovered that the average woman is supposed to have slept with just four people in her life. Gulp! That makes me feel as though that is the amount of people I should have slept with. It isn't. I've slept with more. Does that make me terrible?

When I heard the statistic I called a friend who I know hasn't slept with that many people and asked her if she thought I'd slept with too many people. She insisted I had not and said the statistic actually made her feel inadequate. I ended up comforting her and reassuring her that less than average or not, I was sure she was a wonderful lover.

How can there be a real average, anyway? Sure, you can ask a bunch of women, who will probably lie, how many people they have slept with but no one's lives are the same so what does it prove? The amount of people you have slept with can depend on anything from the town you live in to the hours you work. If every woman with a sex drive could find the men they wanted, this average would be much higher. It's all relative.

I was single for most of my 20s so

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I would think it's obvious that I have slept with more people than my friends who were in relationships. It wasn't like I spent the whole time with my legs in the air as if I didn't care. I got my kicks, but I was also selective. During my late 20s I didn't get much action - let's call that my dry patch - but in my early 20s I did pretty well - let's call that my wet pa... oh, um... actually let's not - I was following my instincts, but none of my friends were the same.

Some were pretty consistent throughout their 20s and pulled all

the time, and others got hardly any sex at all. Then there were the girls in relationships who were faithful, and the others who were in relationships and cheated their pants off, sleeping with more people than us single chicks could dream of. We were all doing our own thing and what was working for us. There was no judgment, no comparing, we just did what we did. Then this 'average' pops up to make us all question how we have behaved. It seems unfair. When a man discovers he's slept with above the average number of women I can guarantee the last thing he does is wonder if he should have held back.

Women are more sexually liberated than ever before but there is still something hanging over us that makes abundant amounts of totally guilt-free sex quite difficult to achieve. What is it? Love, of course...

The problem is that when men are single they love a sexually adventurous and confident woman, but when they decide to settle

down they find it hard to do so with a woman who used to enjoy casual sex with men just like them. It's an impossible double standard and one that is unlikely to change any time soon, so what are we to do?

My conclusion? Men will be men no matter what we do, so we might as well do what we want and let them work it out themselves. I have decided to ignore the statistic and not feel bad about myself anymore. Who wants to be average anyway?

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Here's the thing...



I recently went to a lovely exhibition at the Wellcome Collection in London, called Identity. It was really interesting and documented nine fascinating lives, but it lost me a bit with one of their installations. Austin Powers actor Michael York's double-sided mirror. His little white plastic mirror from his house in Los Angeles. Sure, I get it, he saw himself in many ways but still - it's just a flippin' mirror!

EXTREME CAT-NAPPING

The other day I walked into my living room and thought my cat Lilo was dead. Look at the way she's sleeping. She was in such a deep sleep that even when I rubbed her she didn't move. When she did wake up she was totally cross-eyed and fell over when she walked away. I really must remember to stop putting Valium on her biscuits.

