

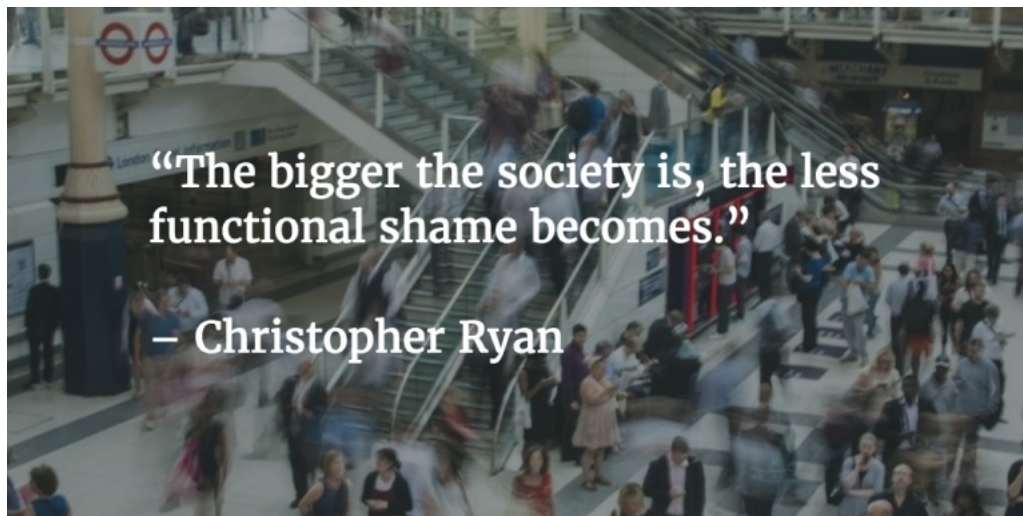
Sex At Dawn Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/sex-at-dawn-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *Sex At Dawn challenges all conventional views on sex at once by diving deep into our ancestor's sexual history, the rise of monogamy and delivering starting points for thinking over our understanding of what sex and relationships should really look like.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Have you ever considered that you are most likely to read books whose message you already agree with? For example The 4-Hour Workweek was right what I wanted to hear, and I'm assuming that's a big part of the reason why I read it in the first place.

Sex At Dawn argues against monogamy, and the person who I heard about it from, also does. I'm at the other end of the spectrum, which makes reading this uncomfortable for me, but that also means I'm learning.

Christopher Ryan caused a whole lot of trouble with this one in 2010, but he also got a lot of people to think.

Here are the 3 things I think about most:

1. Agriculture marked the beginning of monogamy, and not in a good way.
2. Women want sex just as much, but are conditioned to play it down.
3. Our bodies have evolved to thrive in sexual competition.

Let's start asking some questions!

Lesson 1: Monogamy first rose with agriculture, but not in a good way.

The switch from our ancestors' sexual "sharing is caring" mentality in their hunter-gatherer-tribes occurred once we started to settle down and farm our own food.

Ryan argues this was hurtful to two things:

1. Our diet
2. Our sex lives

Before we'd just eat whatever we find, and thus naturally have a high variety of foods and nutrients. But once we started mass producing the same few things, we took a toll on our health.

Similarly, since hunter-gatherers didn't settle, they didn't own much, neither possessions, nor "people" in the form of long-term partners.

Now, for the first time in history, there was a difference between rich and poor.

Those who had more land, or a bigger farm, were more prosperous. The tendency to try and own as much as possible brought out greed and jealousy in humans.

Since the men did all the farming, the women lost their gatherer jobs, and were now stuck taking care of the children. It now became important for men to know "the children they own", in order to pass on the prosperous life they had built to them.

The only way to make sure was to get a woman to stay with him, which ended up in public scrutiny of women who had sex with different partners, violence against women and, of course, marriage.

Lesson 2: Women want sex just as much, but are conditioned to play it down.

Simultaneously to the creation of marriage and the family, the notion arose that women's libido is lower than men's.

Because of men's high testosterone levels and their (especially today) often competitive behavior around women, the message we receive in public and the media is that women are prudes and less hungry for sex.

That's wrong.

Studies have shown that **women's libido is just as strong, and a lot more complex,** than men's.

When both hetero- and homosexual women and men were shown erotic videos while their arousal was measured by checking how much blood flowed to their genitals, all groups were aroused equally.

Women's sexuality seems to be more fluid, however, as they were aroused by a much bigger variety of images, for example even monkeys having sex.

Interestingly, when asked to describe their arousal, the majority of the women in the study played it down. Further proof that our society encourages women to be less sexual and that the expectation is for them to be prudish.

Sadly, we've gotten to a point where a lot of women comply.

Lesson 3: Our bodies are made for sexual competition.

This is getting long, so I'll be brief. Here are a few quick facts that hint at our bodies having evolved for lots of sex with many different partners:

1. A man's testicles are stored outside the body for optimum sperm temperature and conservation.
2. The shape of the penis is for high sperm precision.
3. The thrusting motion during sex might be a way to try and "pump out" other men's sperm.
4. Sperm has chemicals in it, that protects the first few drops from other men's sperm.
5. Men are taller than women, because women prefer their sexual partners to be taller.
6. Women moaning loudly might be a call to attract further men to try and fertilize them.
7. Women take longer to orgasm and can have sex longer to maximize potential partners for a successful impregnation.

Interesting?

Yes.

Weird?

Hell yeah.

But interesting nonetheless. Especially because there's also scientific research to show our bodies have evolved for monogamy.

I guess which one you believe is up to you. Which brings me right back to the first paragraph and to the question: When you read these facts, what do you think?

And, more importantly even: Is that just what you want to hear?

Sex At Dawn Review

I do not agree with the message of *Sex At Dawn*. But that doesn't mean I didn't learn from it. However, in spite of it mainly promoting polygamy, it also makes some amends. The book does say we must not confuse sex and love, since they are 2 distinct things.

Loving a single person more than anyone else is possible, but that doesn't align your sex drive to only be aroused by that person. Similarly, just because an affair is exciting, that doesn't make it true love.

Maybe the most important point of the book is this: **Don't take sex so seriously, see it as the biological impulse it is and respect that your sometimes odd sexual behavior is a remnant of the past.**

I was fascinated by the findings about the evolution of our bodies to have sex a lot and with different partners, as it completely contradicts the evidence found in *Why Is Sex Fun*, which point to our bodies evolving for monogamy, not against it.

Highly recommended you read both summaries (and then lie down for a while).

I also suggest you read the summary of this book first, because the topic is very controversial. It's worth investigating a bit, before taking the plunge.

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- How many sexual partners our ancestors had
- What the Romans thought of monogamy
- Why it was important to not know who the father of the child is
- How casual sex kept our ancestors relaxed
- The 1% DNA difference between us and chimps
- Why we often confuse love and sex
- What can happen if your testosterone levels are too low
- The societal antidote against all these problems

Who would I recommend the Sex At Dawn summary to?

The 22 year old, who sticks together with his high school sweetheart against all odds, the 42 year old eternal bachelor, and anyone who questions their sexual behavior.

[Learn more about the author](#)

[Read the full book summary on Blinkist](#)

[Get the book on Amazon](#)