

mxShagpile



Marriage act:
Funnyman Merrick
Watts ties the knot
with Georgie in
Adelaide in
February this year.

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?



“Sexual fantasies often reside in the realm of curiosity, from a desire to experience the forbidden or taboo.”

When the house is quiet and you're lying in bed, what images pull you over the edge? What do you fantasise about?

This week's airing of Miss Universe likely provided inspiration for many. While Miss Puerto Rico was fantasising about world peace, 20 million viewers may well have had other desires.

Fantasies are like a grown-up form of make-believe. The difference is, your make-believe friends aren't climbing trees with you any more. Instead, they are having orgies in your living room.

This can be rather confusing.

In fantasies, we play the role of director. We choose the location, the plot and primary fantasy figures and then orchestrate the sequence of events.

Unlike real life, every detail is within the control of the person fantasising. Make-believe friends do exactly what you want them to do. And they don't have headaches, PMS or beer guts.

Sexual fantasies often reside in the realm of curiosity, from a desire to experience the forbidden or taboo. But just because you have a fantasy doesn't necessarily mean you want to enact it.

For example, not only would it be impossible to fit a dozen Cuban men in your bed, would you have the stamina?

Sometimes fantasies are drawn from our past. Previous sexual encounters are remodelled, editing out such things as premature ejaculation or the fact she's not actually Lara Croft.

The range of erotic

imagination is infinite.

A benchmark study by Masters & Johnson listed the most common types of sexual fantasies thus:

Experimentation: Visualising experiences you haven't tried, such as starring in a porno, having sex in public or same-sex encounters.

Conquest: Commanding or forcing sex upon someone or having sex forced upon you.

Switching partners and group sex: Self-explanatory.

Watching: Observing others having sex or fantasising about your partner having sex with someone else.

Romantic encounters: Think Orlando Bloom, ladies.

I can hear the collective sigh of relief. Yes, dirty boys and girls, you are normal.

But how do you know when fantasies become problematic? That is, you can't get off without them.

Or they become obsessions that interfere with your thinking or behaviour.

Or they induce feelings of self-loathing and involve doing strange things while hanging from the ceiling in a black mask.

Or when they take up so much of your day you can't get your Dr Bella columns into the editor on time.

Truth: What fantasies do you secretly harbour?

Dare: Keeping in mind it must be consensual, bring elements of your fantasy into the bedroom.

Then again, perhaps it's time to direct some of our sexual energy towards world peace.

— DR BELLA

Memo to blokes:
when popping the
question, lavish can
end up corny. As
MICHELLE READ
explains, it's all about
getting back
to basics.

When hot-air balloons fall flat, treasure hunts get lost and even the bended knee seems passe, what is the perfect way to propose?

It's a moment dozens of people will ask about, and a story you might even tell the grandkids.

But proposing can seem almost as hard as finding the right person to spend the rest of your life with.

Worse than a job interview or public speaking, the marriage proposal is one of the most nerve-racking moments of many men's lives.

Even the usually verbose comedian and Nova radio host Merrick Watts found it tough to find the words to propose to his wife, Georgie.

Determined to ask the question without cliché, he found the right moment on a holiday to Japan.

"My wife eventually wore me down to get married with a technique she uses called nagging, so she so knew it was coming," he said.

"A couple of years ago we were in Japan staying at the Tokyo Park Hyatt, where they filmed *Lost In Translation*.

"On our last night we were in the bar where they shot part of the film.

"We had a nice meal and

a few drinks. The best way to propose is when you're drunk. Let's face it, you're not an Aussie man if you don't propose when you're drunk – and I just turned to her and asked if she would marry me."

For the man who tried to talk a mate out of his elaborate plan to plant an engagement ring in a clamshell to be found on a diving expedition, even getting down on one knee was a no-go.

"That's just so lame ... lucky it all worked out. If she said no I would have been pretty pissed off," Watts said.

Like Watts, forget proposing through complicated romantic gestures.

A few well-chosen words can make just as big an impression as a sports stadium announcement cliché, so concentrate on creating a lasting memory that reflects your personality and relationship.

Think about the things that characterise your relationship and tailor your proposal to suit.

Are you couch potatoes who love nothing more than a Sunday sleep-in? Bring your love a special breakfast in bed before giving her the ring.

Are you adrenalin junkies who'd rather be rock climbing, parachuting or skiing?

Get stuck into some action before popping the question at high altitude.

Are you both softies who like a bit of romance? A special meal, whether it's home-cooked comfort food, a picnic on a sunny day or your favourite restaurant, can be the perfect setting for the proposal.

Similarly, you could choose a setting that has some

meaning for you both – the place you first met or first kissed could be an ideal location.

Finding the right words shouldn't be too hard, as long as the phrases "I love you" and "Will you marry me?" are included.

Keep it short and simple, and be sure to time your delivery for a moment when your partner is not busy or stressed.

If you're lucky, you might not even have to ask the question – more and more women are following the lead of celebrities such as Pink and Britney Spears and popping the question themselves.

No doubt it's a trend many nervous men will encourage.

ROMANTIC LEAD

♥ Before Tom Cruise's couch-bouncing frenzy on *Oprah* and before baby Suri, there was the proposal atop the Eiffel Tower.

Cruise continued the circus surrounding his relationship with Katie Holmes (left) by proposing to her with a large diamond ring.

Cruise says he chose the setting, which coincided with his publicity tour for *War Of The Worlds*, because Paris was a beautiful and romantic city.

♥ Even the best-planned proposals can go awry, as Ben Stiller (above) discovered

when he proposed to Christine Taylor. Stiller surprised Taylor by decorating her house with rose petals and candles before getting down on one knee. Only problem was, he'd forgotten to slip the ring in his pocket. Fortunately, Taylor still said yes.



♥ Britney Spears broke with tradition to propose to her beau Kevin Federline on a flight from Ireland to New York. Federline wasn't so hot on the turnaround, however and said no.



♥ Punk pop singer Pink took the lead in proposing to motocross champion Carey Hart (above) in 2005.

Pink waved a huge sign reading "Will you marry me?" as Hart sped through a race in California.

On Hart's next lap Pink jumped up and down with another sign reading "I'm serious!"

Hart pulled off the track, forfeiting the race, to say yes.

WIN

Email us your own quirky or funny proposal tale (plus your name and address, not for publication) for the chance to win a 1kg Darrell Lea chocolate box worth \$54.95. Email talk@mxnet.com.au by Friday, August 25.



BTW

How to transform sexual fantasies into reality will be addressed next week. If you have any thoughts or questions about sexual fantasies, or if you want to share your Truth or Dare experience, write to me at drbella@mxnet.com.au. Your identity will remain anonymous.