

mx Flirt



Rocker Pete Doherty still amuses model Kate Moss, despite his drug addictions.

MIND OVER MATTER

Women have shown they prize brains and a sensitive disposition over brawn. CATHERINE JARVIE reports.

It seems beauty is not the guarantee to finding a mate it once was. Brains may finally have eclipsed brawn in the race to find a mate ...

For years, we've been fed the line that women are attracted to men with wealth and power – an alleged truth that's seriously reported on by research-driven social psychologists (who claim women are driven to such behaviour in their quest to give any potential offspring the best start in life) and gleefully reinforced in celebrity tabloids across the land.

Whether it's another insight into the bizarre life of the terrifyingly pneumatic US model Anna-Nicole Smith or endless back-biting about the gold-digging motivations of the soon-to-be ex Mrs McCartney-Mills, we've long become accustomed to the notion that this is a relationship status quo so inviolate that somewhere, surely, it must be quite literally written in stone.

The reality, however, is a little less black and white.

In fact, it's men who are more prone to the pursuit of a superficial "ideal," merrily parading the trophy girlfriend or trading the older wife for a younger, more malleable model as soon as circumstance allows (witness James Blunt's gobsmacked, "I can't believe my luck" face at being a whey-faced, skinny no-mark whose baffling musical success has given him an access-all-areas pass to that hallowed dating land entirely populated by supermodels).

However, women, like men, can – quite genuinely – be blinded in matters of love and lust, as research at a US university recently revealed.

While a perfectly formed pair of breasts might be all it takes to convince a disconcertingly large number of men that a future mate is up to the task of long-term

companion, a woman's blindness often works in reverse. A man's intellectual achievements, GSOH (good sense of humour) or simply a predisposition to be kind to animals and/or strangers is sometimes all it takes to transform a squat, balding geek into George Clooney in the smitten woman's eyes. Now, more women than ever wield economic power equal to – or greater than – that of their male counterparts. Women now also put their money where their mouth is and can show they prize brains and a sensitive disposition alongside (and often over) brawn.

Not that this makes it any less bizarre when these incongruous pairings turn up on the pages of glossy magazines.

But we can console ourselves that such couples are in it for the lovin' rather than the turn of his well-rounded pecs or the kerching of his bank account.

FIVE CELEBRITIES WHO'VE PICKED BRAINS OVER BRAWN

MARILYN MONROE & ARTHUR MILLER

It all had to start somewhere and what better example of intellectual might proving to be more than a match for physical beauty than the tale of the actor and the playwright? Monroe was the great beauty of her day and had her pick of dazzlingly rich, successful men. She chose

the sensitive thinker, instead, in the form of Miller, writer of *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman*, and the odd couple wed in 1956. The marriage might not have lasted, but she set the standard and proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that, for women, personality can trump it over looks.

DITA VON TEESE & MARILYN MANSON

And so to one of the most celebrated sensual beauties of the modern day. On the surface, burlesque superstar von Teese's marriage to the King of Darkness could merely be an extension of the allure of the whole rock star thing. But quite frankly bagging Manson doesn't have the same cachet as getting it on with a member of The Strokes (a la Drew Barrymore). Von Teese is on record as saying what she loves about Manson is the way he "gets her" – surely the best qualification bar none for being part of the Brains Over Brawn gang.

JULIANNE MOORE & BART FREUNDLICH

You can tell Julianne Moore really loves her hubby, screenwriter/director Bart Freundlich, because she keeps ending up in his movies (most recently in *Trust the Man*). Not that Freundlich is untalented, his sensitive, wordy, emotionally driven films are moderately well received by critics. It's just that the star of huge hits such as *Boogie Nights*, *Magnolia* and *The Hours* (who's had

three Oscar nominations) can cherry-pick Hollywood roles. Opting to work for a low-budget indie flick reveals a loyalty and dedication to her man that smacks far more of labour of love than career move.

EMMA THOMPSON & GREG WISE

The short, pithy biography of actor Greg Wise on an internet film site opens with the line, "Perhaps best known for being Emma Thompson's partner ..." Ouch! But Wise and Thompson have been together for more than 10 years, since their first meeting on the set of *Sense and Sensibility* (which she not only starred in, but also wrote), and to all intents and purposes the pair seems blissfully happy. Thompson had already done the marriage of egos thing with former hubby and fellow thespian Kenneth Branagh. Looks like second time round she got it right.

KATE MOSS & PETE DOHERTY

Well what other reason could the coolest chick in the world have for hanging out with such a loser?

He might have been teetering on the verge of rock star greatness when she met him, but Doherty has long since lost any semblance of credibility with a career that smells more of desperation these days. Still, La Moss seems determined to stand (and sing) by the man she remains quite clearly smitten with, despite his numerous well-publicised shortcomings.

■ SOURCE: www.handbag.com

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

DR BELLA



"During the Christmas season, it's not just Santa who's making an inventory about people's behaviour. We all are."

It's here. Champagne for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Office parties. Beach holidays. BBQs. The famous Australian Silly Season has officially begun. All bets are off and the streets are wild.

I've spent the last two weeks jostling between Sydney and Melbourne. And have I ever spied the glory of Aussies in fair dinkum revelry.

In Sydney: the standard botox blondes cocktail-ing it at Kings Wharf; line-ups at the David Jones Christmas display; waving fans at the Whitlams gig; Santa-clad surfers at Bondi, people in the parks with bare feet.

In Melbourne: diva carolers in the streets; happy men cricket-crazed; women walking with bouquets of flowers; the twinkling night on the Yarra.

I've crashed two office parties thus far. (And suggest you do the same. Nothing to it.) The most impressive was a finance do overlooking the Sydney Opera House. Besides oysters and a band, the company dished up a fortune teller and a tattoo artist. How many men woke up the next morning with Celtic designs atop their forehead and delusions of future windfall, goodness knows. At least the tattoos were temporary, but still...

Despite the holiday hoopla, this time of year brings intense emotions to life. You know the song: "He's making a list, and checking it twice; He's gonna find out who's naughty and nice." During the Christmas season, it's not just Santa who's making an inventory about people's behaviour. We all are. Unlike other holidays, Christmas heralds free time – a commodity many of us have little of. And free time (if not sullied by non-sobriety) equates to reflection. Of the year

behind us and the one ahead. Of ghosts of Christmas past. Of who we love and who we don't (and who we have to pretend to because they're family).

Studies show depression increases throughout November and December.

When people start tallying up their social relationships, they're often left wanting. Who's been there for you this year? Who's disappointed you? Surprised you? What relationships are working, and which, clearly aren't?

The holiday season involves sorting out affairs of the heart. Of making decisions, tidying up loose ends and releasing grievances.

Alexander Pope said it: 'To err is human; to forgive, divine.' (And I'm so happy the person I hurt this year decided to forgive me.)

According to Chinese tradition, The Year of the Pig is nigh. Pigs represent honesty, patience and peace.

Astrologically, this is good thing. It's not just us that are another year older, the world is too. It's time to care for it like we care for our loved ones. I'll leave it to John Lennon: "So this is Christmas, and what have you done? Another year over, and a new one just begun."

Year 2007 tip – Kiss more. Apparently German psychologists found that those who kiss their honey each morning: miss less work due to illness, have fewer car wrecks on the way to work, earn 20-30 per cent more a month, plus live five years longer than non-morning smoochers. Dr Arthur Sazbo says a morning kiss promotes a positive attitude. Imagine what the good doctor would say about a morning frolic?

– Best of luck in love
Dr Bella xxx

BTW

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