

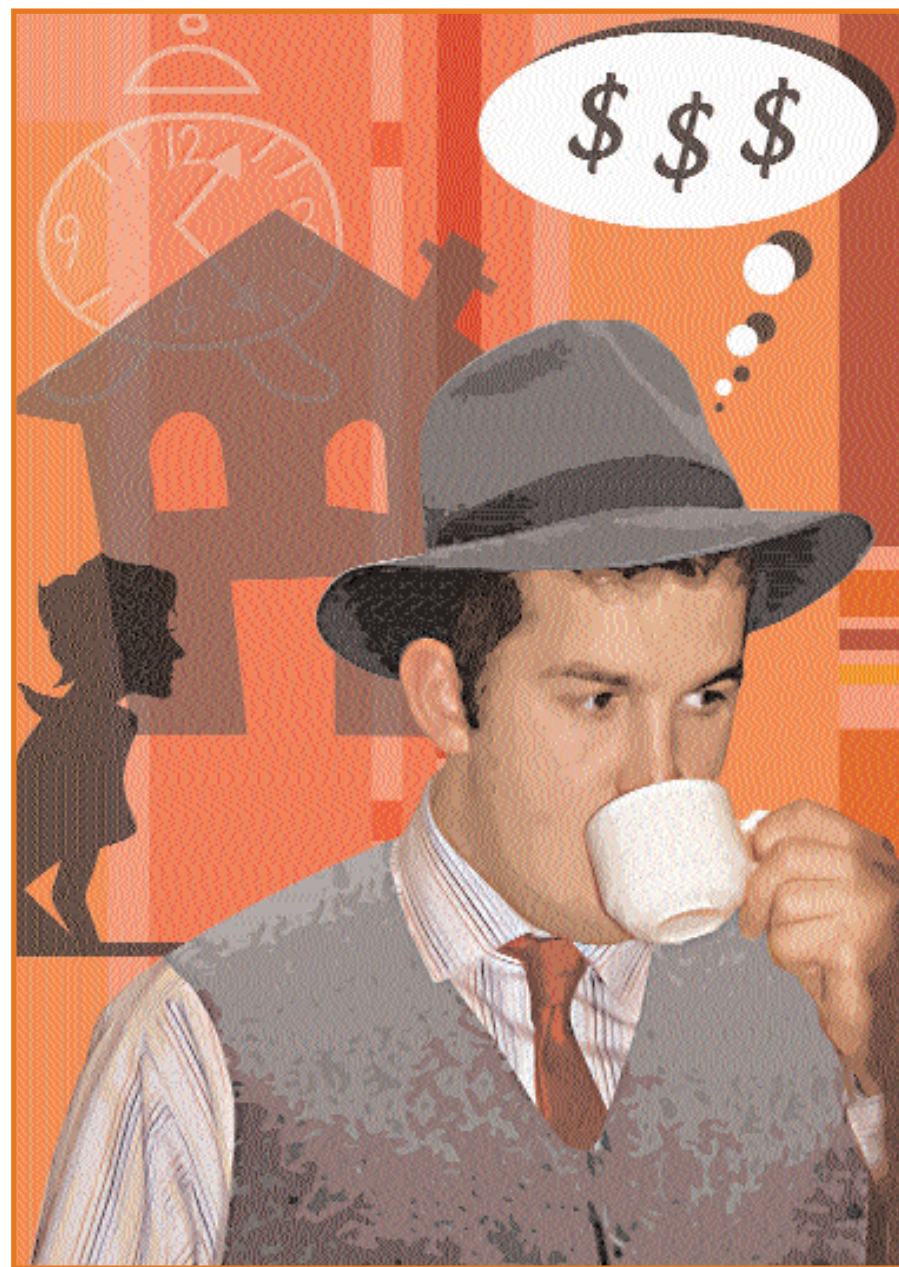
# MEN DISH ON WOMEN & MONEY

***Knowledge About Money Is 'a Turn-On' and Other Surprising Findings Uncovered by Our MAKING BREAD Survey***

By Gail Harlow

**'S**ome fellows look at the eyes . . . some fellows look at the size . . . some fellows look at the clothes . . . first I look at the purse." In June of this year, **MAKING BREAD** took an informal survey of 31 men of all ages and income levels around the country to uncover their attitudes about women and money. Surprisingly, to a man, they might as well have been humming the lyrics to Smokey Robinson's R&B classic, "First I Look at the Purse." All of them agreed that they found women who are knowledgeable about money "a turn on."

As Tyler Vander Van, a 20-something single student, put it: "A broad intelligence is



dead sexy." A 50-something gentleman added, "I am attracted to intelligent women, whether it's in the area of money knowledge or any other endeavor." Pete Sanchez, another 20-something single student, threw in his two cents' worth: "I think that every woman I'm interested in should know about money and the economy." And if you're still not convinced, listen to 20-something, single, college grad Alex Manganini: "I am very attracted to smart, fiscally responsible femmes." Not that any of us needs another reason to get serious about our money management, but this insight into what men find attractive is fascinating.

**'I am very attracted to smart, fiscally responsible femmes,' said 20-something Alex Manganini.**

Another counterintuitive finding of our survey: earning more money than your man is not a turn-off. "I'd be doing back flips," responded a 40-something married man, when we asked, "How would you feel if your wife or girlfriend earned more money than you?" That question elicited a rousing chorus of "great (and she does)," "more power to her," "I hope she does. More importantly, I hope she loves what she's doing," and other affirmatives across all age groups, including this more philosophical comment from 50-something franchise owner Michael Shebak: "The capability to earn money isn't an equalizer, nor does it provide a position of power in true, loving relationships." Only one man we buttonholed said he would feel uncomfortable if he weren't the primary breadwinner of his family unit: "If my wife earned substantially more money than me it would seem like she was supporting me, and I could not let that stand," said Alex Manganini.

These are only two of the surprising findings of our poll. Below, we reveal more clues into the mysterious workings of the male mind.

## **GOOD FEMALE BOSSES, WHO SHOULD PAY ON THE FIRST DATE & OTHER ENLIGHTENED OPINIONS**

When we asked, "Do women make effective bosses? Would you mind working for one?" only John, a 40-something married man, said, "I don't think they make effective bosses." Most agreed that women "make good bosses, and I wouldn't mind working for one." Many, in fact, told us that they currently do or have in the past "worked for some good female bosses." Others indicated that "it's not a gender thing. I want to work for a competent individual." Clothes apparently make the woman for 20-something single stu-

dent Bradley Schmidt, who offered this comment: "Women in

business suits are hot! If she knows what she's doing, I won't care."

As for whether or not to take a stand on female financial independence by offering to pick up the tab on your first date, nearly a third of our respondents said they would become "more attracted" if their date "offered to pay." Nearly two thirds would feel the same whether their date offered to pay or not. Only a minority said they would be "less attracted" to her.

When asked about differences in the way men and women spend their money, most agreed that both sexes are spenders, but they drop their dimes on different things. "Men buy toys; women buy clothes. I know



Michael Shebak, holding granddaughter Hailey.

several men who shop way too much," said 20-something Derek Porter, who is single and works in the insurance industry. "Men shop for the outdoors; women buy things for the house. I know men who are shopaholics," admitted a married, 50-something systems engineer. Others confess to being shopaholics themselves, though Tyler Vander Van commented that "the only men I know who are shopaholics are metrosexuals—and they usually resort to sale items."

Photo courtesy of Michael Shebak

## WHO'S THE BETTER INVESTOR, WHEN THEY'D PROPOSE, DO THEY EXPECT US TO STAY HOME WITH THE KIDS, & WHAT THEY THINK WOMEN REALLY WANT

Perhaps their male egos got the better of them when we asked, "In your experience, who saves more money and who invests more wisely, men or women?" Nearly half answered that men invest better. Typical was 50-something retired divorcé Tony Mazza's answer: "Women save more; men invest more wisely." Wrong! In fact, according to the National Association of Investors Corp. ([www.better-investing.org](http://www.better-investing.org)), women's portfolios outperform men's by 1.4 percent. As for saving, while our intentions are good, because we earn less, we tend to save half as much as men do. "At this moment in my life, nobody saves effectively," commented 20-something single student Tim Calkins.



Dan Winter: Ready to debate feminists on the subject of equal pay.

something, single, pre-med student. The fact is, however, that women still earn 76 cents for every dollar men earn. "If it were up to me, men and women would be paid equally," offered Tyler Vander Van, tacitly admitting that we aren't at parity yet.

Would they be willing to relocate if their wives or significant others got a better paying job elsewhere? "Yes, and I'd expect the same of her," said a 40-something divorcé. Fully half, in fact, would quit their jobs and follow their wives to a new locale

without hesitation, with the rest couching their answers in qualifiers: "Depends on the type of work I'm doing," "if it made family and financial sense," or if there were "options for me in the new location." Only one admitted, "probably not."

The romantic notion that young lovers can get by on love alone may be disappear-

ing. When asked, "If you were head over heels in love but didn't have more than a dime to your name, would you propose—or wait?" more than half of our respondents said they would definitely not rush in where angels fear to tread. "If you're both head over heels in love, you're not going anywhere. Why wouldn't you have the financial stability to make sure that something can work," said very practical 20-something Jake Taber. "I would wait. From a practical standpoint, one should be prepared to meet financial obligations," said a married man in

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Many of our respondents were similarly misinformed on the subject of equal pay. When asked, "Do you think women are discriminated against in terms of pay or promotions?" nearly half thought not. "In 2005, no," observed a 40-something man who wished to remain anonymous. "Promotions, I would say yes. They aren't discriminated against in terms of pay as much as some would say," said Bradley Schmidt.

"I'm sure it happens, but not nearly as severe and as often as feminists would like you to think," commented Dan Winter, a 20-

## MEN DISH ON WOMEN & MONEY

To get at men's attitudes about women and money, during two weeks in June 2005, **MAKING BREAD** conducted an informal survey of men of all ages from coast to coast. We asked the following questions. Use this survey as a starting point for discussions about how money fits into your current relationship.

1. When I say the phrase "women and money," what's the first thing that comes to mind?
2. Are you attracted to women who are knowledgeable about money? Or is that a turn-off?
3. In your experience, who saves more money: men or women? Who invests more wisely?
4. If you are on a first date and she offers to pay and won't take no for an answer, do you:
  - a. Become less attracted to her?
  - b. Become more attracted to her?
  - c. Feel the same about her?
5. What are the differences, if any, in the ways men and women spend their money? Do you know any men who are shopaholics?
6. If you were head over heels in love, but didn't have more than a dime to your name, would you propose—or wait?
7. How would you feel if your wife or girlfriend earned more money than you?
8. Do women make effective bosses? Would you mind working for one?
9. Do you think women are discriminated against in terms of pay or promotions?
10. When and if you have a family, do you expect your wife to:
  - a. Stay at home to take care of the kids?
  - b. Continue to work full time?
  - c. Work part-time until the kids are grown?
  - d. Become the family breadwinner, while you stay home to take care of the kids?
11. Would you quit your job and relocate if your wife got a good job offer in another state?
12. What do you think women look for in a guy: Money? Looks? Success? Or something else?
13. What's your biggest money-related fear?
14. Do you find it difficult talking about money with your wife or girlfriend? If so, why?
15. Would you marry a woman for her money?
16. What's the most fun you've had with money?



Photo by Stockbyte

## 'Women look for the alpha male,' said one 40-something married man. 'Sincerity and a true heart,' answered another.

his 50's. "If you're confident about your love, it might behoove you to wait for a more financially secure time," agreed a 20-something single student.

But romance isn't totally dead: 20-something Brian, a single legal assistant, would "propose, because money doesn't matter." A married account manager in his 40's said, "If I knew she felt the same about me, I'd propose."

**W**hat happens when love and marriage lead to balancing jobs and a baby carriage? The majority, across all age groups, agreed that "it would be her decision" whether to be a stay-at-home mom or continue working full or part-time. Most also would consider being the stay-at-home parent, with one 40-something divorcé confiding, "I have been a stay-at-home dad. Two incomes are nice, but money isn't everything."

Do they "find it difficult talking about money" with their wife or girlfriend? "At times I feel insecure, if they seem more money-wise than me," admitted single student Pete Sanchez. "I don't really have problems talking about money with significant others," said Tim Calkins, also a single student in his 20's. "That said, were I on a first date and some girl interrogated me about all my financial information, I can't imagine sharing too much." But most agreed with this married 20-something who had no problem discussing financial matters with his wife: "We share the same goals and values related to saving, spending and plan-



'Men buy toys; women buy clothes,' says Derek Porter.

ning for life's events."

When we asked them what they thought women looked for in a man—"money, looks, success, or something else"—we got an interesting mix of responses, clearly reflecting their own relationship experiences. "I'd like to think wit, charm and a great sense of humor, but that doesn't seem to be the case," commented 20-something, single, admissions representative Jake Taber. "Most look for a guy who is driven and motivated," said 20-something student Dan Winter. "Women look for the alpha male," agreed a 40-something

married man. "Character," responded another married man. "Sincerity and a true heart," answered a 40-something, married account manager.

Would they marry for money? "If I married into money, for the money, I'm constantly on the job. No, thanks," explained Jake Taber, and two-thirds of our respondents agreed with him. "Of course, the money would be nice, but a successful marriage is based on much more than that," said 20-something single Alex Manganini. In the minority was a married 20-something who answered: "Sure, let's be honest here. Right?"

### **MEN'S BIGGEST MONEY FEARS—AND THE MOST FUN THEY'VE HAD SPENDING THEIR DOUGH**

"Making it," responded a 40-something man who clearly loves his work, when we asked, "What's the most fun you've ever had with money?" Many recalled travel or vaca-

tions. "Going to Las Vegas," said student Bradley Schmidt. "Learning how to fly," responded a married 50-something. "Using it to provide unexpected pleasures for my family," answered Paul, a married investigator in his 40's. "Buying a house," responded another. And then there's Tim Calkins, who quipped, "One time I filled a bathtub with large denominations and let the sweet cotton paper brush against my skin."

**B**y far the biggest money fear men will admit to is "not having any" or "losing it. You know, the stock market heading south or the house burning down." "Eating dog food," said another. "Paying for college," answered a married lawyer in his

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40's. "Not having enough to give my children the same lifestyle I had," said Derek Porter, who at the moment is still single. "Not being able to help my adult daughters if and when they need it," was the prime money worry of a 40-something divorcé. "Taxes" troubled two others. "Having my credit card declined" was the primal fear of a married account manager in his 40's. "That I will die with some," worries Jake Taber. "When I retire, I want to do the things that I never had time for when I was younger. I want to see the world—and then I want my last check to bounce," he explains.

While the poll uncovered some encouraging signs of the times in terms of men's attitudes about women and money—men comfortable as stay-at-home dads and okay

with wives who earned more money than they do, for instance—when we asked them to play a little word-association game, their answers revealed how far we've come and how far we still have to go. Asked "When I say the phrase 'women and money,' what's the first thing that comes to mind?" 50 percent of them gave flippant, negative answers, and many of those respondents were younger. "Golddiggers," responded two men in their 20's. "Shoes and clothing," said two others. "Trouble," said another. "Frivolous shopping," answered yet another. "To get one you need the other," answered Avi Lazar, a single man, also in his 20's.

Fewer than one-sixth of the gentlemen we questioned gave the phrase a positive

spin—for example: "Wealthy women," "executives," and "women making money."

**"O**prah," was Tim Calkins' answer—and he's got a point. Worth \$1.1 billion and ranked 514 on *Forbes* magazine's list of the world's richest people last year, she is a role model for independent women with money if there ever was one. We should all aim to carry a purse that size. □

Gail Harlow is the Founding Editor of *MAKING BREAD*. Assistant editors Danielle Bullen, Nicole Pugliese and Emily Shebak interviewed our respondents.

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