

## Who Cheats And Why?

*A Loveology University Survey conducted by Leanna Wolfe, Ph.D.*

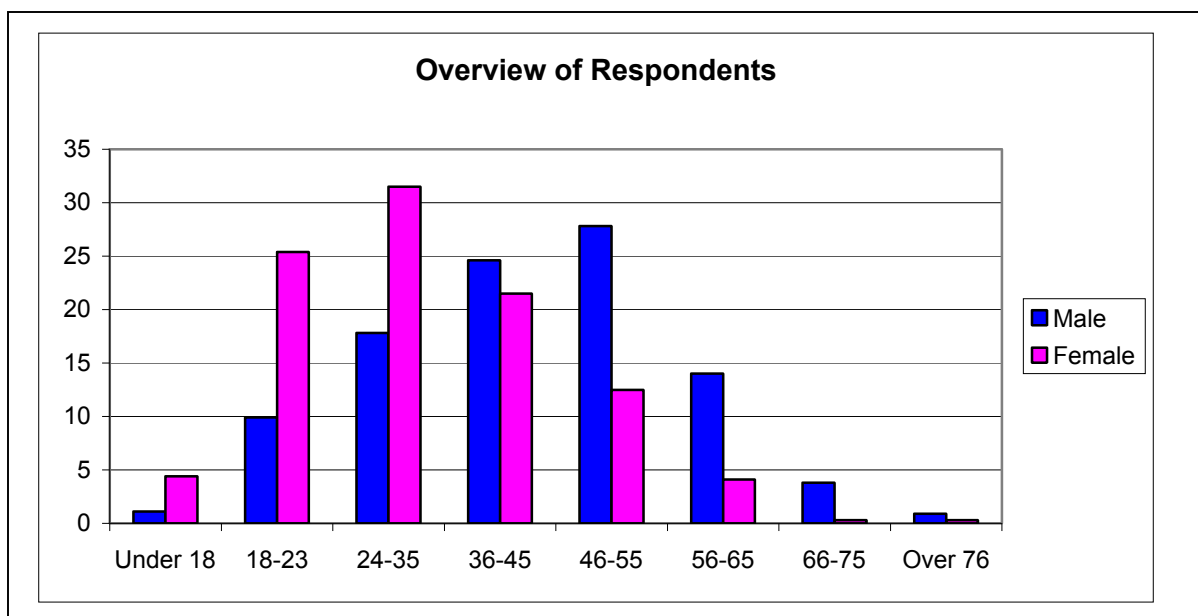
Between May 2008 and April 2009 1,055 men and women completed a 12-question Internet survey on cheating. Respondents were from Loveology University as well as students and associates of Dr. Leanna Wolfe. Participation was voluntary; no financial compensation was offered. Relative to recent random sample surveys on cheating, our survey attracted a very large percentage of people who had participated in the cheating triangle (being a cheater, cheated upon and/or a secret lover.) Random sample surveys report about 22% of married men and 14% of married women cheat while 67% of our male respondents and 59% of our female respondents who were either partnered or married report having cheated. Ultimately our survey allows a look into the beliefs and practices of cheaters and their secret lovers. Our most significant findings include:

- Females are most likely to cheat when they are younger (24-45) and males are most likely to cheat when they are older (36-55).
- Males are more likely to cheat and females are more likely to report being cheated on.
- 72% of people who cheat have also been cheated on.
- Younger cheaters (18-35) are most likely to cheat for attention.
- Cheaters over 36 are most likely to cheat in pursuit of sexual variety.
- Males seek the satisfaction of sexual desires and fantasies through cheating, while older females (over 56), especially, cheat for companionship.
- Males enjoy their cheating experiences more than do females; females often feel guilty and concerned about the man's spouse/partner.
- Older males (over 56) consider a sexless marriage (54%) and a spouse's inability to have sex for medical reasons (43%) acceptable reasons for cheating.
- Females, who have been cheated on, are more troubled by activities that engender an emotional connection than are males who have been cheated on.
- Males and those over 36 are most likely to regard cheating as a means to feel more alive.

- Excitement is more important to cheating males (58%) than cheating females (44%).
- Females and those under 35 are most likely to believe that people cheat because they can get away with it.
- The majority of cheaters between 18-23 (54.4%) and females (52.2%) contend that there are no acceptable reasons for cheating

## Overview of Respondents

Males 43%	Age Range:
Females 57%	17 & under—3%
61% have been cheated on	18-23—20%
59% have cheated on a partner	24-35—25%
57% have been a secret lover	36-45—23%
	46-55—19%
	56-65—9%
	66-75—2%
	76 & over—1%



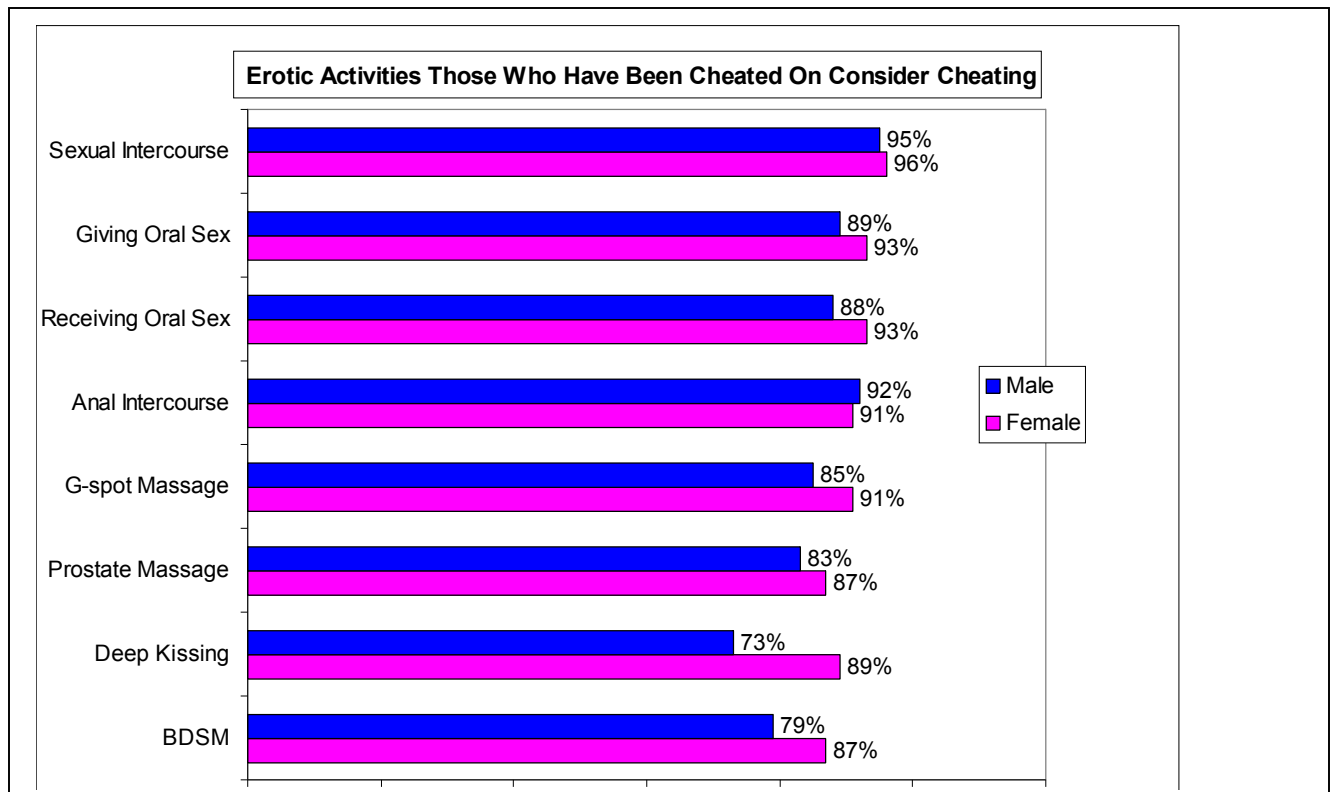
In that the survey was voluntary, it appears that those who chose to participate had strong feelings about and/or experiences with cheating. Noting that higher numbers of males over 35 and females under 45 report having cheated; this distribution is very much reflected in those who chose to participate.

## What is Cheating?

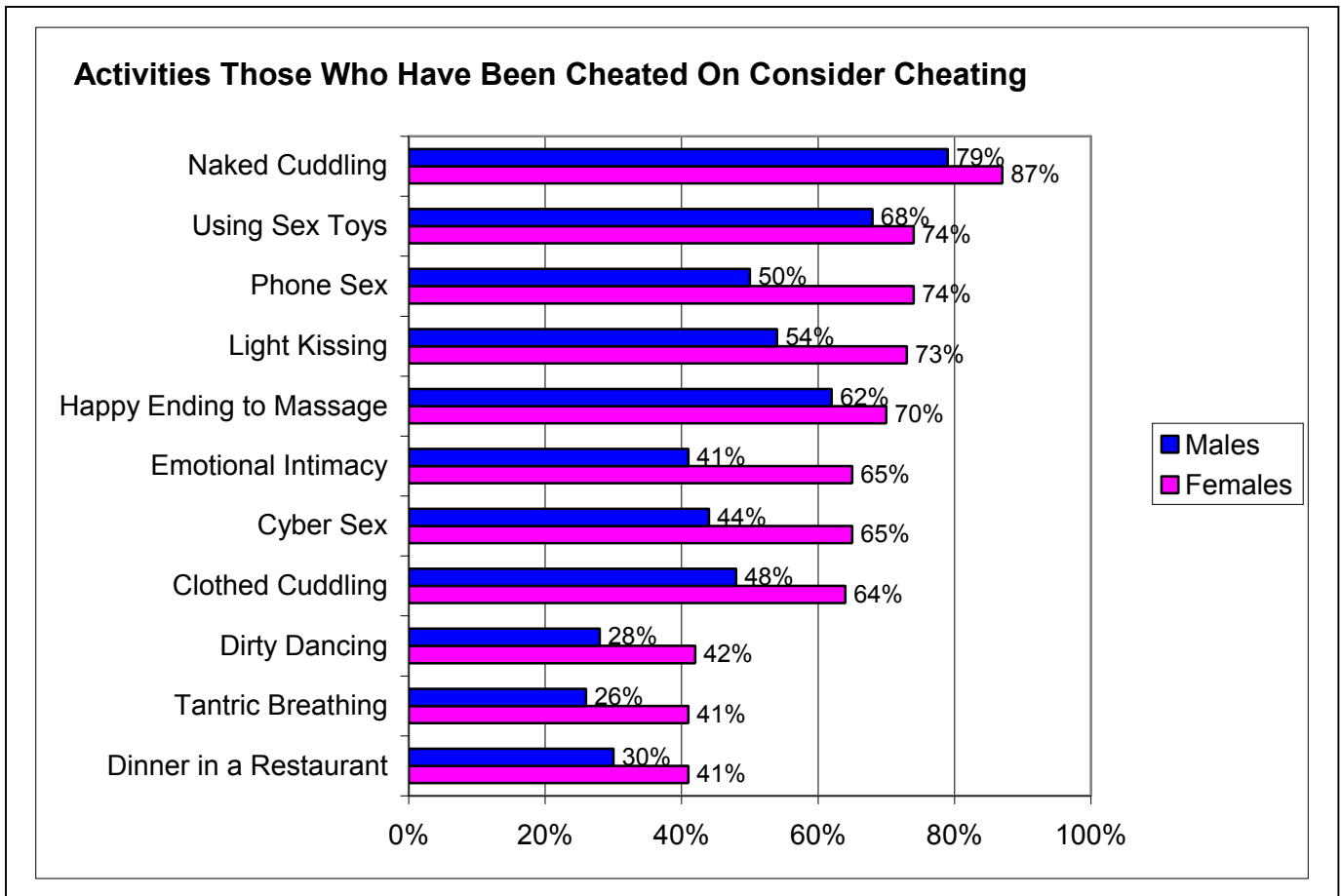
There was ultimately little variation regarding what were the top cheating activities. Activities that 90% or more of the respondents consider cheating:

Penile-Vaginal Intercourse	95%
Receiving Oral Sex	92%
Giving Oral Sex	92%
Anal Intercourse	92%

We did note that those who have been cheated on noted a wide range of activities that could be considered cheating. Females are much more cheating-sensitive to activities that could engender an emotional connection. Males begin to equal females in cheating sensitivity when the genitals are involved. The one area where males are more sensitive than females is anal intercourse.



Note that there are marked differences between women and men regarding their definitions of cheating for activities that do not directly involve the genitals (BDSM and deep kissing).



Note that there are dramatic differences between what females and males regard as cheating, particularly for activities that may engender an emotional connection.

## Secret Lovers

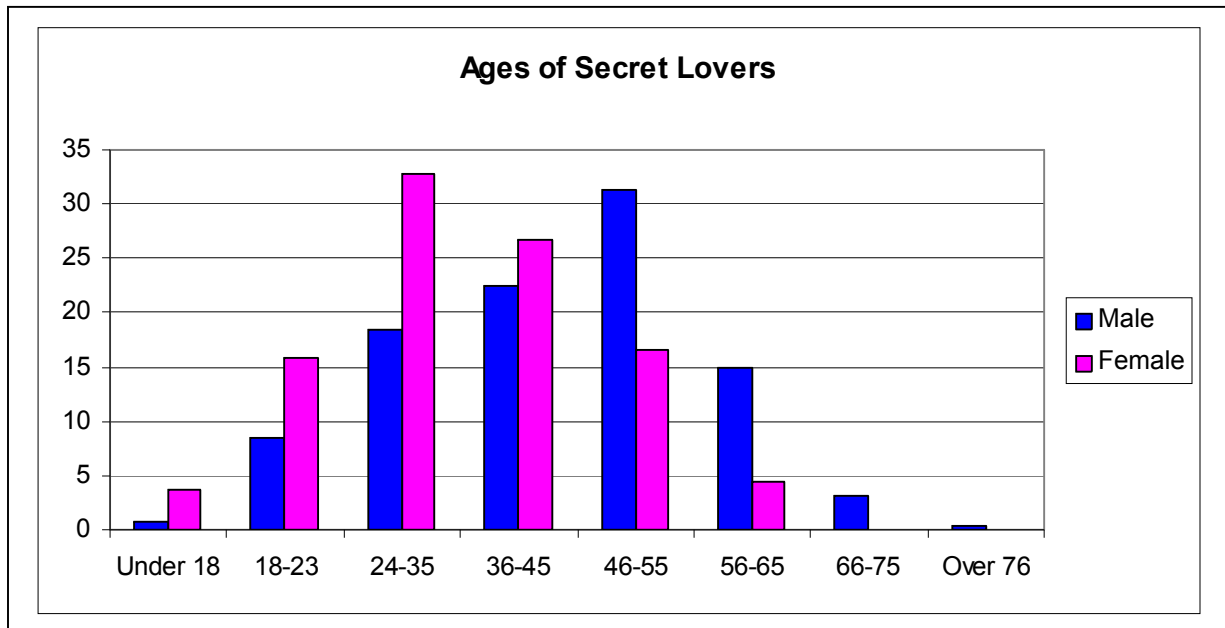
Over half of our respondents (n. 594) report having been secret lovers. On average the females become secrets lovers at younger ages than the males.

Males 56.7%	54% between 36 and 55
Females 57.1%	75% between 18 and 45

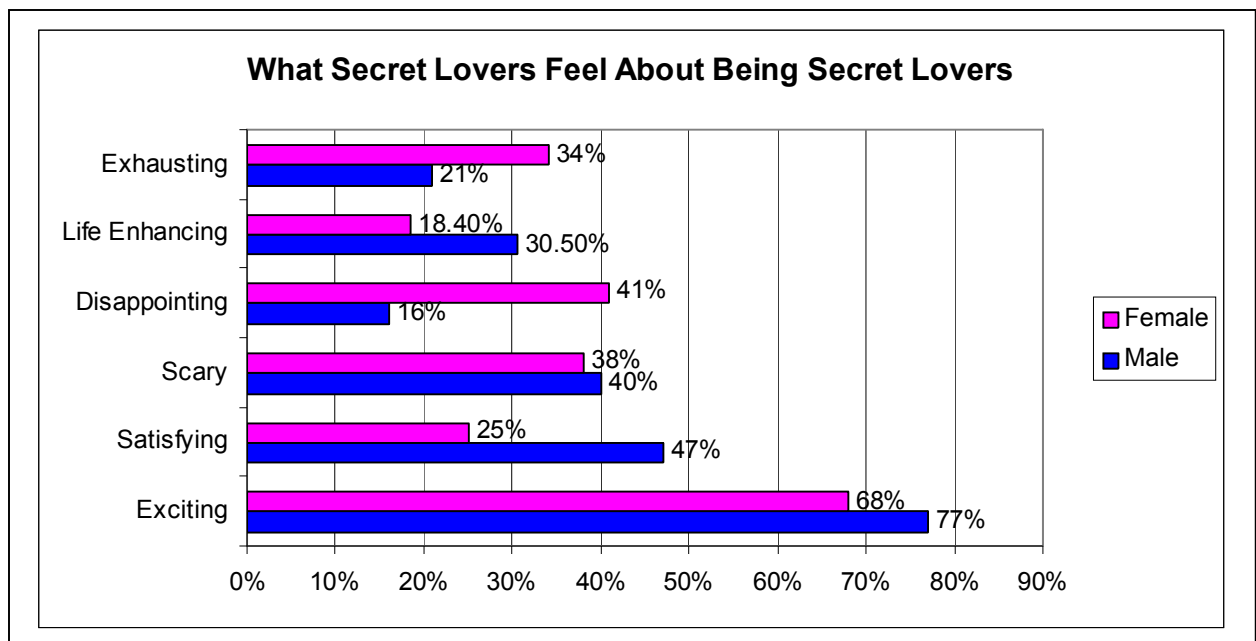
The males report many more positive thoughts about their experience than the females, for example:

*I enjoy the thrill of the chance of being caught by their (or my) partner. Male, 27*

*It is exciting while in the middle of the act, however, not long after, the whole thing ends as a disappointment for you are not the end-all-be-all to this person. Female, 25*



Note that females are likely to become a secret lover between 10 and 20 years before their male counterparts.



Note that there are often dramatic differences between the male and female secret lover experience. Females are more likely to feel disappointed, guilty and exhausted while the males are more likely to feel satisfied and view the experience as life enhancing. The strongest feeling for both genders, however, is excitement.

### Secret Lover's Comments and Reflections:

*It was frustrating knowing we could never be together out in the open, and I had feelings of guilt regarding this man's wife. Female, 29*

*The risk factor of getting caught or someone sneaking in and divulging what they saw makes it interestingly challenging. Male, 22*

*I didn't choose to fall in love with this guy—I can't help it. He's not happy about having feelings for me either but we are attracted to each other sexually and are friends. Female, 47*

*It was only about the sex. When she got emotionally attached I was done with it. Male, 38*

*It gave me different emotions it was exciting and a new experience to be "the other woman" yet I still longed to be the ONLY woman. Female, 17*

*It was sometimes surreal—like in a porn movie. Male, 38*

*I want to love and be loved by someone proud to be with me, to be hidden suggests shame and I will no longer put up with that in my life. Female, 57*

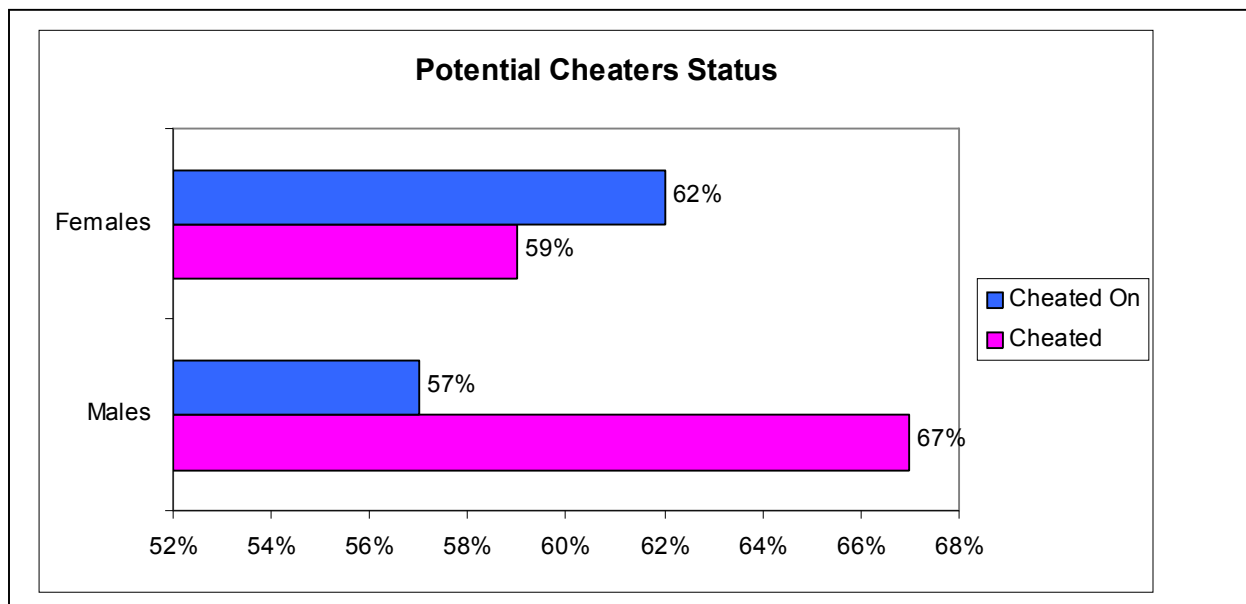
*I felt bad, because their other partner had never done anything "wrong" to me. I didn't want to lie to that other partner. I also didn't want to be responsible or associated with their partner getting blindsided or hurt. Male, 43*

*Although I totally disapprove of cheating, I fell deeply in love with a married man who, for valid reasons, isn't going to leave his wife. We have now been lovers for nearly a decade. And the funny thing is, it works. Female, 58*

## Potential Cheaters

In that we queried regarding marital/relationship status, we were able to cull out people who were single or in open relationships (where opportunities for extra-relationship intimacy could be negotiated). 658 respondents comprising 62.3% of our sample fit this category. Of this group 45% were male and 55% were female. Considering the voluntary nature of this survey, a relatively high portion of the respondents had cheated and/or been cheated

upon. More males have cheated and more females have been cheated on, but only slightly.

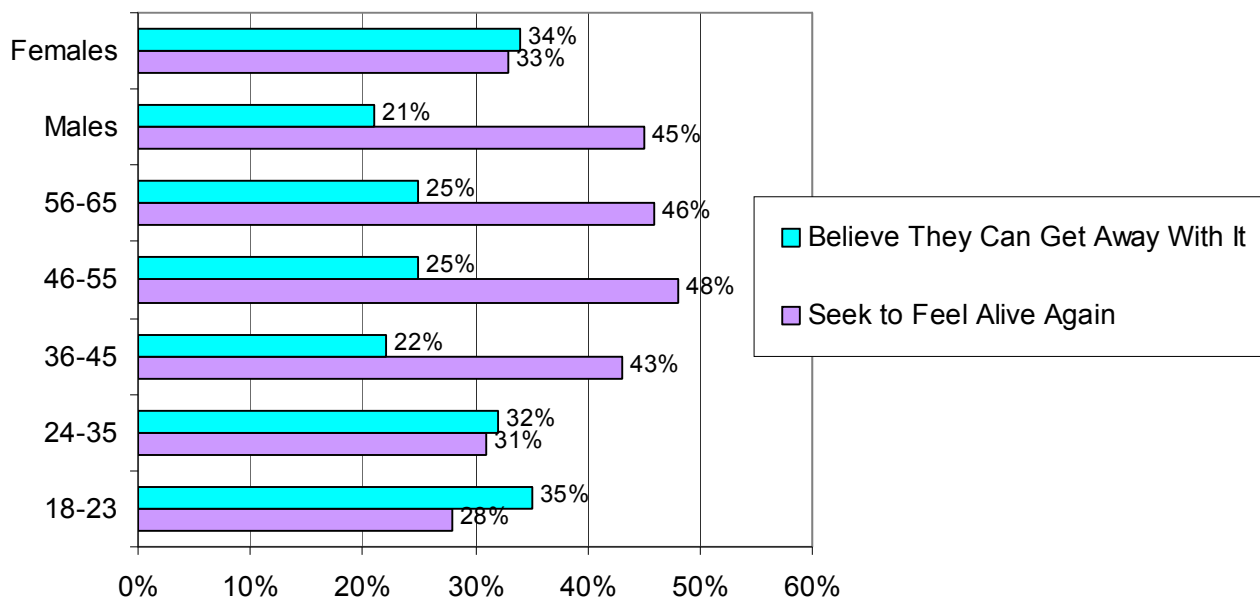


Amongst these potential cheaters, there were six activities that nearly 90% consider cheating:

Penile-Vaginal Intercourse	92%
Anal Intercourse	92%
Receiving Oral Sex	92%
Giving Oral Sex	91.6%
Mutual Masturbation	90.2%
G-spot Massage	89.9%

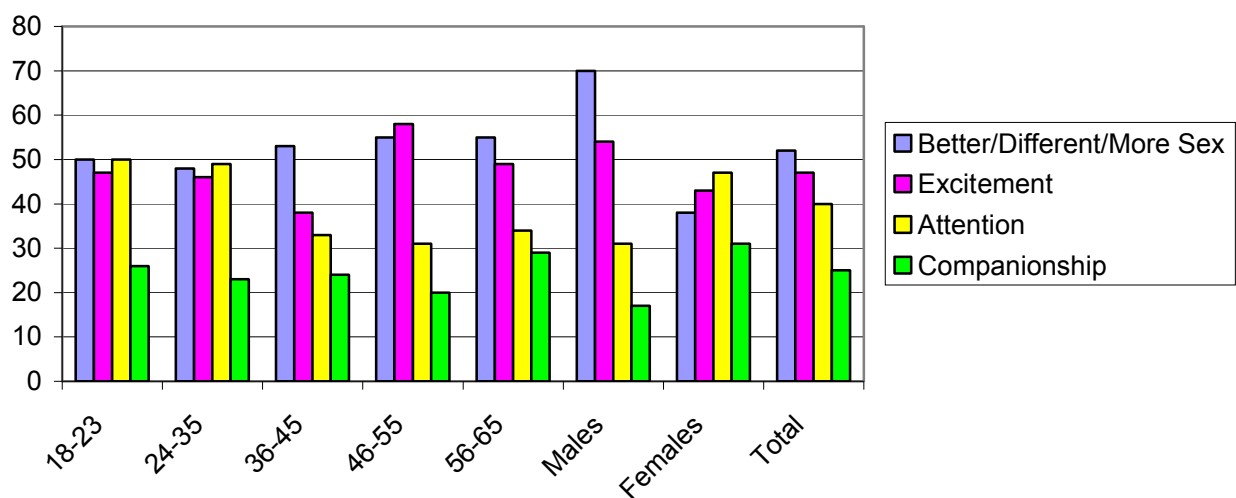
When addressing why people cheat, one-third of the females selected either, “they seek to feel alive again” or “they believe they can get away with it.” Nearly half of the males selected “they seek to feel alive again,” while less than a quarter selected, “they believe they can get away with it.” Respondents over 35, were most likely to claim, “they seek to feel alive again,” while those 35 and under are most likely to contend, “they believe they can get away with it.”

### Potential Cheaters Top Reasons For Why People Cheat



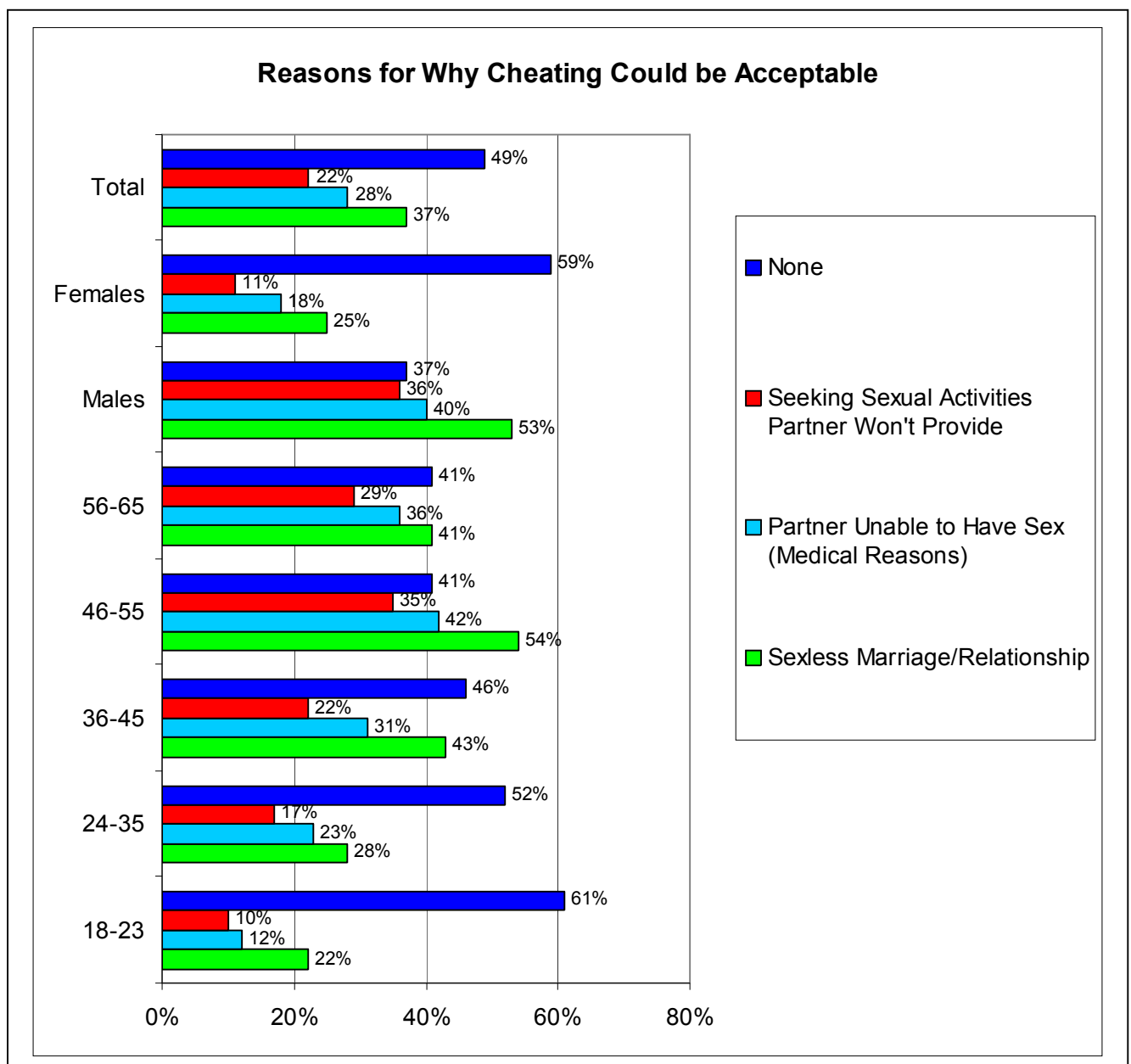
When queried about the possible benefits of cheating, *better/different/more sex* was the top reason for males (70%) while *attention* was the top reason for females (47%). *Excitement* was the second most chosen reason for both males (54%) and females (43%). Baby boomers (58%) and their Generation Y offspring (46%) valued *excitement* more than the generally more conservative Generation Xers (38%). Companionship was rated as the least important benefit for both males (17%) and females (31%). Those over 56 rated it a bit higher (29%) than younger respondents.

### Potential Cheaters Reasons for Cheating





While nearly half of our respondents (49%) and the majority of females (59%) contend that there are no acceptable reasons for cheating, males have many sex-seeking reasons to justify cheating. Younger respondents expect more sexually from their marriages than do older ones. Over half of those 24-35 and 61% of those 18-23 do not believe that there are any acceptable reasons to cheat. Over half of males and those 46-55 consider a sexless marriage/relationship to be a reasonable condition for cheating. Over a third of males and those 46-55 (baby boomers) consider the pursuit of sexual activities a partner won't provide and a spouse's inability to have sex due to medical reasons to be acceptable reasons to cheat.



## Potential Cheaters comments:

*Personally, lying to me is a deal breaker, and since cheating is doing something and lying about it, it's a deal breaker. Yes, I've cheated but it was a long time ago and I've learned since then. If I am tempted to cheat I know the relationship is over for me. Female, 37*

*I think if someone is going to cheat, they should break up with the person they are with. It isn't right or fair to their partner. Male, 43*

*Cheating is one of the only ways to be truly happy, romantically. Not one single person can ever provide every quality that you seek. Female, 19*

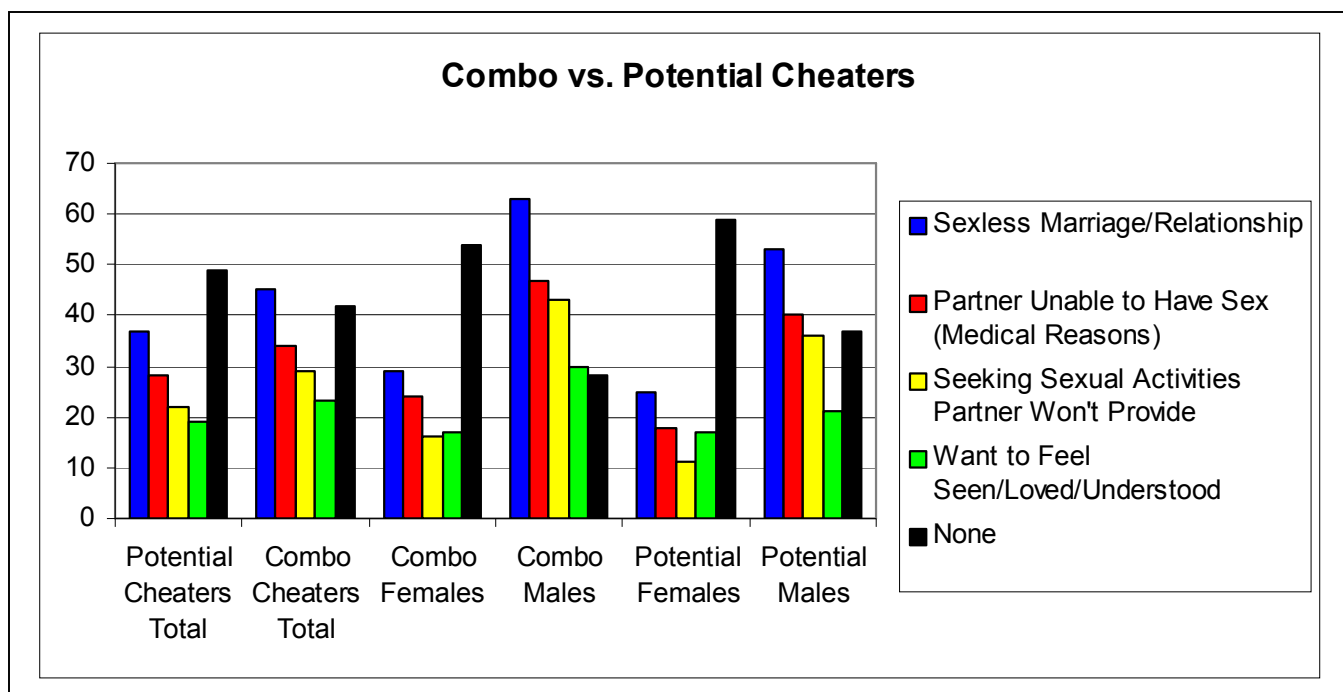
*I don't think that cheating is the worst thing that one could do to their partner. I see cheating as an opportunity to learn about each other. Traditional monogamy to me is silly. There are far more important things to worry about. Of course unprotected cheating to me is a deal breaker. Male, 25*

*My lovely wife and I both had cheating partners previously and had been divorced prior to meeting and becoming friends. We have been happily married for almost 30 years, have 12 lovely grandchildren and always put family first. Openness and honesty has been the key to a loving and caring relationship. Our first marriages were built on passion; this one is built on friendship. It's too bad that most of the time people have to find this out the hard way. Male, 63*

## Combo Cheaters

Considering that 72% of those who cheat have been also cheated on, we wanted to compare the views of this “veteran” group (n. 440) with our potential cheaters. Male combo cheaters tend to be older than female combo cheaters and are better represented here than in the total survey population. Males find more acceptable reasons for cheating (e.g. being in a sexless marriage; seeking sexual activities that their spouses won't provide or are physically unable to engage in) than females. Females are more likely to seek companionship and attention through their cheating, while males are most likely to cheat for sexual variety, excitement and to feel seen, loved and understood. Ultimately our combo cheaters found more reasons to cheat

than our potential cheaters with combo males topping all with 63.5% reporting that a sexless marriage/relationship is an acceptable reason to cheat.



Ultimately what we see here is that those with cheating experience are more likely to espouse justifications for cheating. Combo males' reasoning is slightly more robust than potential males' reasoning for conditions under which cheating ought to be acceptable. Likewise combo females' reasoning is just slightly more affirmative about cheating than that of potential females.

## Older Cheaters

Finally, we examined the responses of our respondents that are over 56 (n. 115). Of this cohort, 74% fall into the baby boomer demographic. Here we found that the males had the most robust reasons for cheating. 54% consider a *sexless marriage*, 44% the *desire for sexual activities their partner won't provide* and 43% a *spouse who is unable to have sex for medical reasons* acceptable reasons to cheat. Females in this cohort are most likely to cheat for *companionship* (52%) while 72% of the males would cheat for *better/different/more sex*. And as for why they believe most people cheat, their answers parallel the rest of our respondents with 51% of the males contending

that people cheat *to feel alive again* and 40% of the females claiming people cheat because *they believe they can get away with it*. Ultimately, what we see here is that a majority of older males consider cheating to be a reasonable means to access sexual activity that is no longer taking place in their marriages, while older females would be most likely to cheat to access the companionship that is missing in their marriages.

## **Comments on Cheating:**

*A huge piece has to be - when, how, why would you lie, deceive, keep secrets, etc. AND TO WHAT DEGREE. I value transparency . . . so any lie or deceit would be cheating, whereas any particular intimate behavior probably wouldn't . . .* Male, 60

*I think that cheating is wrong but, much to my surprise, have found myself doing it... I would not have believed I would ever even be tempted, or think it right to give in to temptation, but a bunch of things changed and surprise surprise!* Female, 41

*I have cheated to find a better partner, without letting go of the security of having at least some kind of partner.* Female, 37

*I cheated on my wife for a long time, made excuses and bullshitted myself, but I still don't understand why I did it. I was unhappy with my marriage and too big a coward to end it. I just kept on lying to myself and those around me.* Male, 64

*There can be extenuating circumstances in any relationship that can lead people to cheat, but I don't believe in it. If you have to lie, something is very wrong. We have an open relationship because we believe that no one person can satisfy another's every need, and that everyone is capable of loving deeply more than one person. Also, sex and love are VERY different, and the idea that you should f\*\*\* ONLY the person you love is silly.* Female, 47

*I haven't been married but I do have friendships with amazing looking married women whom I flirt with all the time. I wouldn't violate anyone's territory so to speak but I can see why people would "cheat" if they found something or someone better and think they could get away with it.* Male, 48

## Conclusions

Our findings offer windows into the perspectives of people who have cheated, who maintain cheating relationships, whose partners have cheated on them and who have been secret lovers. While 49% of our respondents contend that cheating is wrong, nonetheless 63% report having cheated. Their viewpoints on what is cheating, their feelings about having cheated and/or being a secret lover and the circumstances in which cheating would be acceptable vary according to gender and generation. Males, Baby Boomers and their Generation Y offspring find the most satisfaction with cheating, while females and members of Generation X report higher levels of discomfort. Females who have been cheated on consider a wide spectrum of emotionally bonding activities to be cheating, while males largely contend that only activities that specifically engage the genitals are cheating. The majority of females and those under 35 contend that there is no acceptable reason to cheat, while males and those over 36 consider sexless marriages/relationships justification for cheating.

# Cheating Survey

## 1. Introduction

At Loveology University we're exploring contemporary definitions of cheating. When does a kiss violate a relationship agreement? Can falling in love without engaging in physical pleasuring be considered cheating? We want to know what you think! Do note that the information you share here will remain completely anonymous; your personal answers will be disclosed to no one.

## 2. Cheating Survey

1. Has someone ever cheated on you?

Yes

No

I'm Not Sure

2. Have you ever cheated on a partner?

Yes

No

3. Have you been someone's secret lover?

Yes

No

4. If you have been (or are) a secret lover, how did (or does) it feel? (select all that apply)

Exciting

Disappointing

Satisfying

Exhausting

Life Enhancing

Does not apply

Scary

Other

Other (please specify)

# Cheating Survey

5. Which of these activities would you consider cheating? (If done without a spouse/partner's consent/knowledge.) Select all that apply.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flirting                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber Sex                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Penile-Vaginal Intercourse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting for Dinner in a Restaurant      | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Sex                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> G-spot Massage             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partner Dancing                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Intimacy (no physical activity)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Prostate Massage           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Viewing Pornography                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tantric Breathing                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Vaginal fisting            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Going to a Strip Club                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothed Cuddling                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Anal fisting               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dirty Dancing                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Naked Cuddling                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Anal intercourse           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving a Massage with a Happy Ending | <input type="checkbox"/> Using sexual toys (vibrators, dildos, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> BDSM                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Light kissing                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving oral sex                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep Kissing                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving oral sex                             |   |

Others (please specify)

6. Why do most people cheat?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> They believe they can get away with it | <input type="checkbox"/> They are so smitten, they can't resist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> They don't want to lose what they have | <input type="checkbox"/> They seek to feel alive again          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> They've fallen out of love             |   |

7. If you were to cheat, what would you most be seeking?

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better/Different/More Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> Wealth             | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Looks                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Companionship      | <input type="checkbox"/> Ego Boost     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Intelligence       | <input type="checkbox"/> Attention     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wit                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Connections/Access | <input type="checkbox"/> Excitement    |

8. Can people in open relationships cheat?

Yes

No

Explain

# Cheating Survey

9. What reasons would you consider acceptable for cheating? (select all that apply)

- Get even with cheating partner/spouse
- Sexless marriage/relationship
- Interested in sexual activities that spouse won't provide
- Want to feel seen/loved/understood
- Spouse/partner is unable to have sex (medical issue)
- Seek impetus to leave unsatisfactory relationship
- None

10. Tell us your sex.

- Male
- Female
- Transgender

11. How old are you?

- 17 and under
- 18 - 23
- 24 - 35
- 36 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 56 - 65
- 66 - 75
- over 76

12. What best describes your relationship status?

- Single
- Married
- Living with a Lover
- Living Separately from my Lover
- Open Relationship(s) (Polyamorous, Swinger, etc.)

13. Your Comments?