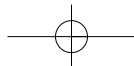
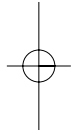
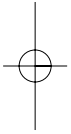




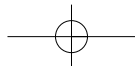
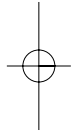
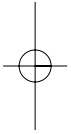
The MAN MANUAL





ALSO BY DR LINDA PAPADOPOULOS

Mirror Mirror: Dr Linda's Body Image Revolution



The
MAN
MANUAL

everything you've
ever wanted
to know about your man

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A Mobius Book

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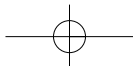
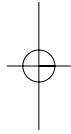
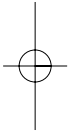
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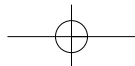
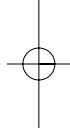
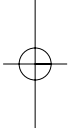
This book is dedicated to my father Andreas and my husband Teddy, the two most important men in my life . . .

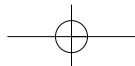
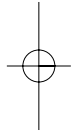
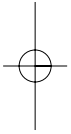
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WELCOME TO
The MAN MANUAL





WHAT EVERY WOMAN NEEDS
TO KNOW . . .

What do Ikea flatpacks, microwaves, home hair-dyeing kits and mobile phones all have in common? They all come with instructions. They all come with handy little booklets explaining how to get the thing set up, how to use it and, if all goes the way of the pear, how to fix it. Orange-juice cartons come with instructions just in case you can't work out how to open them. Beautiful embroidered silk shrugs come with instructions to stop you hauling them in a sixty degree wash with your manky bed sheets. (As if.) You can't even buy a packet of crisps without being told where to dispose of the foil bag once you're done. Nearly every investment you make in life, from a mascara to your first car, will come with instructions. It makes us feel assured, safe and in control. We know that the best-before date is on the lid, but it's nice to have a little note on the side reminding us. We know that we should stop at the entrance to a dual carriageway, but it's good to have it scrawled on the road just in case. CD players, frozen pizzas, trainers, printers, in fact pretty much everything you can think of that a modern woman would need in her

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life, comes with instructions. But there's one exception. There's one asset that we invest in with absolutely no guidance and no handy manual. Men. Blindly, we put time and effort into a relationship, often to end up completely baffled by the output. It's a fact. Men do not come with a manual. Until now . . .

Because that's exactly what *The Man Manual* is (in case the name wasn't enough of a giveaway): a handy guide to accompany that man you just picked up at the store, or at a bar, or at work, or at the laundry . . . (What do you mean, 'that would never happen'? Don't you remember those Levi ads?!) *The Man Manual* is a instruction booklet to exactly what is going on in that mind of his, and what you can do to make him come round to your way of thinking . . . sorry, reach a *compromise*. Often the way we deal with men and the little dilemmas posed by their behaviour is completely wrong, because we don't understand the problem in the first place. *The Man Manual* will help give you some insight into why these things are happening, and then go on to help you deal with them in a practical way. It's divided into three parts, which correspond roughly to the stages of a relationship: the beginning, the middle and the happily ever after (or the end!). But before we get to that stage, it's important to understand a few of the basics about men. And before we do that, we need to think about ourselves. Because understanding relationships isn't just about understanding how the boys work. It's about working out the motivation behind our own behaviour. A good way to do this is to take a look at our own experience of relationships. So, [insert your name here], this is your (love)life!

Let's start at the beginning. Ever since we dressed Barbie

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in her very best legwarmers and puffball skirt combo for her first date with Ken (come on, it was the eighties – even Barbie made fashion mistakes), women have appreciated the importance of a strong, healthy, romantic relationship. From the school playground, the rules of Kiss Chase encouraged an active, hungry pursuit of the perfect partner. OK, so perhaps it never materialised into the love of your life, but who can forget the moment of pride once you'd cornered gorgeous Jason from class 4C into a two-second snog in the sandpit.

And then there are the school discos. 'It doesn't matter if nobody asks you to be their date, darling,' assures your mum. 'It'll be fun to go with the girls.' No, Mum, it won't. It'll be about as much fun as getting dropped off in a van emblazoned with a 'Sad and Lonely' slogan, and wearing a dress sponsored by 'UglyandRepulsive.com'. Nothing compares to the desperate, sinking sensation as slowly every single one of your girlfriends is bashfully asked to the school social event of the year. You begin to regret unmercifully bullying that geek in maths, as even he manages to snag a date. You start to plan intricate methods of escaping the country – now, where does Dad keep the passports . . .

And then we hit the magical age of full-time jobs and full-time mortgage payments, or at least a hefty rent outcome. And suddenly summers are full of wedding after wedding, where of course we're put on the awkward left-over table with the children and that aunty with the bad breath. Or we find that 'nights out with the girls' increasingly become 'about the boys', involving argument-by-argument accounts of your friends' relationships. They try to muster up an interest in you, of course – 'So, how's

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work going then?’ – but once you’ve exhausted the office gossip you can’t help but feel that a summary of the outcome of your negotiations with a neighbouring firm is not quite what the girls were looking for. Dinner parties, birthday gatherings and the inevitable children’s birthday parties become perfect opportunities to reinforce the feeling that not only have you been left firmly on the shelf but that everyone else has emptied the shelf, turned the lights off and left the room.

We put ourselves through virtual torture to remedy the situation, enduring silent dates, excruciating matchmaking introductions and painful chat-up lines, but why? When we finally find a man who makes it past the first date, whose monobrow and naff dress sense we can overlook, we spend as much time trying to figure out what he’s thinking, why he’s thinking it and then as much time again trying to pretend we haven’t even thought about his thinking. We exhaust ourselves with creating the illusion of nonchalance, disinterest and aloofness only to check our voicemail sixty-five times a day and try to break into his email account.

Even once he’s firmly in our grip, once he’s become ‘the other half’, ‘my partner’, ‘him indoors’, we haven’t got it all sorted. Because then there is a whole new set of issues to be handled, a whole new list of arguments to be argued. From his page-3 ex-girlfriend, whose breasts keep popping up all over the place, to the scars on your feet from treading on his Scalextric, which he refuses to put away properly like a good boy – the fun is just beginning. He hates your dad, you hate his mum. He hates the way you spend, you hate the way he dances. He thinks using your toothbrush is acceptable, you think using his to clean the toilet is a

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suitable punishment. He wants to turn the spare room into a games room, you want to paint it pale yellow because in your head it's the new nursery. You want to get engaged, he won't even engage in a conversation longer than five minutes (particularly when the rugby's on). It makes you wonder why we bother.

WHY WE DO IT: THE THEORIES

So why do we? Why do we put ourselves through this catalogue of disasters? Why on earth would we want to hurl ourselves into arguments in pubs, bed and selected furniture stores? What makes us strive for relationships when they're so hard?

The Mating Game

Thousands of years ago, being an independent woman didn't really cut it. The fact is that hanging out by yourself, appreciating some 'me time', was all very well until somebody or something decided you were that evening's dinner. Once a great grizzly or a prehistoric diner decided you'd go brilliantly with a side of onion rings, no amount of throwing your hands up at Destiny's Child would save your bacon. 'Safety in numbers' had an entirely different meaning. Also, our predecessors figured pretty early on that the best way to survive as an enduring species was to reproduce. The more the merrier, and you weren't much good as a baby-maker if you were too busy sat on a rock criticising Caveman Colin's excess nasal hair, or fretting over whether or not he's been displaying 'commitment

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issues'. No, the point was to get together and make babies. Pairing up was essential to keep the species going. It wasn't a fun way to spend a Saturday evening or a dating game. It was a matter of survival, like sleeping, breathing and eating.

Evolutionary psychologists say that this primeval need to procreate is the real reason that we long for that special someone. Essentially, our purpose on this planet is to reproduce, and they say that this underlines our desperate attempts to find the perfect relationship. So, when we think we're looking for someone to put a name to that 'and guest' space on all our invitations, or just someone to choose lampshades with in Habitat, really we're scouting out a prime mating partner.

According to evolutionary psychologists, the other reason we strive to be half of a couple, in addition to mating, is just because deep down we still possess the basic need to be around others. To an extent that no other species demonstrates, humans are social beings who need to be around one another. It's one of the reasons that solitary confinement is considered a pretty tough punishment. OK, when in a busy supermarket on a Saturday afternoon, surrounded by your fellow human beings shouting, screaming and swearing, it might seem like a preferable choice, but in the long run humans crave company. It's why we talk about having somebody to grow old with. It's why so many love songs lament loneliness and being alone. Humans need to be with other humans. And this need, coupled with another basic need, to reproduce, is the reason that evolutionary psychologists claim that we long for relationships.

WELCOME TO *THE MAN MANUAL***The (Peer) Pressure's On**

Ever felt like you're surrounded by love, romance and sickly-sweet couples? Perhaps you've sat down to enjoy a loaded BLT at lunchtime to find yourself greeted by a sexy, skinny couple writhing around all over each other in the name of a new Gucci perfume ad? Or perhaps you've left a family gathering, battered into a state of mental breakdown after a barrage of questions that begin 'How's the love life?', 'Any wedding bells yet?' or 'So, is there a special someone yet?' According to social psychologists, these seemingly daily occurrences are the type of triggers that persuade us that we should be striving for a relationship.

These psychologists say that the world around us convinces us that we are only valid if we are part of a couple. And anybody who's ever been single has felt that pressure. It might be because of the ticket-seller at the cinema. It's a Thursday night. You can't persuade anyone to come and see the new Brad Pitt blockbuster so you decide that, after all, the point of the cinema is to watch the film and why do you need someone to go with anyway? You play your rubbish Power Ballads Sung By Men with Bad Mullets compilation CD on the way to the cinema, and you sing along with Michael Bolton et al because there's no one to tell you not to. Empowered, liberated and emboldened you stroll up to the ticket booth. 'Just one ticket please!' you demand, head held high. Then it begins, the fifteen-year-old serving you first of all asks you to repeat yourself. So you do. Then, still convinced you would never be so stupid and sad to go and perve on Brad on your own, he begins to check behind you for the signs of a man, or at least a couple of girlfriends. Nope. Suddenly, that single self-confidence begins

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to drain away. And there's no sympathy from the smug couples surrounding you, who are also baffled by your odd predicament.

And it doesn't get any easier once you make it into the film. Because nobody can name a romantic comedy where the end result isn't a blissfully happy couple. Even action films usually try to incorporate a little ill-fated love between a gangster's moll and a guy from the wrong side of town. In movieland, happiness equals being with someone, whether that manifests itself as a big romantic wedding scene or a life-threatening gesture of lifelong devotion. No wonder that every time you walk out of a cinema you feel like declaring your undying love for someone, even if it's the damn car park attendant.

Social psychologists would also use the advertising industry as further evidence for their theory that it is the outside world that conditions us into thinking we need to be in a relationship. Strangely, the cynical bunch don't quite believe that a shower gel can turn you into a love god who will be worshipped, or that a certain chocolate bar can lead to cosy nights in with a male model by a log fire. The fact is that most adverts operate along a set narrative: if you buy this product, you will be more attractive to the opposite sex, and therefore you will have your pick of the bunch, and therefore you will find the perfect partner, and therefore you will become complete. Lucky you. And all for the price of a lip gloss.

And those who don't buy into the race for a man? Sad. Lonely. Bitter. To say the least, of course. Just as the media portrays the happy glow of coupling in an established and predictable way, it also portrays single girls in a rather tried-and-tested manner. You can be scatty, snivelling and

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searching, à la Bridget Jones, or the alternative is feisty and fast – think Jordan, who is consistently portrayed as a rather cheap, sad example of what will happen if you just can't settle down. If you're not prepared to slot neatly into the couple box, then, ladies, these are your options. If you're going to go it alone, then you're going to have to develop an affinity for neurotic diary writing, or PVC knickers and furry dancer's boots.

Social psychologists say that friends can also be part of the machine that persuades us that we need to be in a relationship. When everyone you socialise with appears to be attached to someone else it can be hard. It takes guts to be the only single person at a dinner party or to arrive at a wedding reception alone. And it can be a soul-destroying moment when you realise that your friends actually feel sorry for you. Sure they tell you that they admire your single lifestyle, but every now and then you can tell that they'd never swap their comfy sofa on a Saturday night for your raucous nights out on the town.

So, in short, social psychology argues that rather than being a basic need or urge, in fact being in a relationship is something that we are conditioned to think we need. The world around us convinces us that we need to date and eventually become a couple with somebody, anybody.

It's All About Sex . . .

The biological perspective has a far more straightforward explanation for our desire to be part of a couple. According to the biologists, our need to be a 'him and her' is not about pressure from our parents or about bullying from society. It's not even about longing for companionship. No,

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they say it really is as basic as a need for sex. As humans we all possess a sex drive to some extent and in some form. Our attempts to be with somebody else are simply an attempt to fulfil that sex drive. And in a crude sense, aside from hanging around dirty nightclubs with dirty men, having a serious relationship is the surest way of guaranteeing that physical contact. Psychologists say that the pursuit of that kind of pleasure is part of a healthy human attitude. However, men and women can view it very differently.

Research has shown that when pursuing a relationship and, more specifically, sex, women are often craving the emotional connection that it can bring. So, the minute just after, when he looks so helplessly into your eyes before he falls asleep, or the gentle stroking of your hair in the morning – that's what the girls are after. Conversely, with the boys it's far more about the physical contact. Hair stroking and deep, powerful speeches about everlasting love and your undying commitment to him (admittedly performed in your underwear) are probably rather lost on him immediately after the deed itself.

Most women have experienced this fundamental difference in the way men see sex first-hand. Some of us have felt the rather disappointing realisation that, actually, that amazing, bonding, soaring connection you just made in the bedroom didn't mean quite the same thing to him. And you know it didn't mean quite the same thing to him because while you lay awake reflecting on it for hours and secretly wondering if it was just the tonic you needed to move your relationship forward, he's fast asleep, snoring at a volume that is threatening to cause a seismic earth tremor. Lovely. And more than that, the experts have found

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much the same thing. The makers of Viagra have completely abandoned their attempts to prove that the male impotence drug can have the same effect on women. Because, you see, we're just more complicated. Scientists have found that in men arousal always leads to desire, so libido can be improved by improving a man's ability to get an erection. Makes sense, right? Yes, but in women the link between arousal and desire is far more complicated. We can be physically aroused yet, mentally, more psychological factors come into play. Physiologically, our body reacts to sex in a far more complicated fashion, and psychologically it does too. This could explain why fewer than half as many women are likely to have extramarital sex as men. We simply find it harder to divide sex and our emotions.

So, the biological perspective asserts that we look for relationships because we need to communicate physically with others. The manner in which we seek relationships and the attitude with which we view them can be greatly affected by external influences. For example, if your family has taught you that sex is wrong and dirty, then you may well have problems feeling that you have the right to an active and enthusiastic sex life. Equally, if your man has been brought up in a family that does not show physical affection, then he might find it hard to bridge the gap between that non-contact and sex.

BASIC BIOLOGY: THE MALE

An understanding of the male body explains a few psychological features of the male mind. So, ladies, if you would

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be so kind as to turn to page one of your textbooks, let the lesson begin. Let's start at the top.

The Brain

The male brain is entirely different from the female brain. For example, take multitasking. We can all remember a time when we've cooked the evening meal, plucked our eyebrows and put rollers in, while selecting an outfit. Meanwhile, he can't answer a question as simple as 'What time is it?' because he is 'concentrating' – on washing a tomato! Baffling. Likewise, we manage to type a letter to the bank while speaking to his mother on the telephone. You could put him in an empty room with your mother, with no other distractions, and he'd still struggle to concentrate on exactly what she's saying. And there might actually be a genetic reason for this, although you probably shouldn't let him in on this nugget of information – he'll be citing it for years to come as an excuse.

Research has shown that men have a less efficient version of the gene that controls how easily we can switch our attention. And as well as genetic evidence there is also a school of thought that suggests that his inability to multi-task springs from ancient history, years before the phrase had even been invented. When primeval females watched the children, organised the community and threw another pterodactyl leg on the fire for hubby when he came home from hunting, they probably didn't describe it as multi-tasking. But that is exactly what they were doing. Meanwhile, her mate's objectives were far more straightforward. Find, chase, kill, carry, eat. This history, although it doesn't bear much resemblance to modern life (well,

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apart from the bit where he comes home and wants to eat), could have a big impact on the way men still function today.

The Heart

Let's move down a little now, so on to the heart. Now, for all their macho bravado and boy talk, everybody can spot a man who is genuinely in love. All right, you might have to wrestle with him to make him actually say those three little words, but deep down you know he's smitten. There's a common misconception that men just aren't as emotional as women. After all, he doesn't cry at pictures of starved puppies, he didn't look even remotely moved when Scott and Charlene finally made it down the aisle in *Neighbours*, and getting him to talk about his feelings is like asking a footballer to talk about fine art. However, it's not that men don't feel the same emotions as us. It's just that they feel less comfortable expressing them. So perhaps he had a little snivel in his room about Kylie and Jason – OK, so he probably didn't. But when it comes to more serious matters he feels emotion just as strongly as you do. Evolutionary psychologists argue that the difference in communication is because women, historically, have always had more opportunity and, incidentally, time to talk about their feelings. (Chitter chatter about your deepest insecurities doesn't sit well with a race to see who can spear the biggest boar.) This has developed into a culture where children are told 'big boys don't cry', and, perhaps consequently, suicide rates are highest amongst young men. Women have been socialised into expressing their feelings far more readily than men. So, when you feel

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that he hasn't told you he loves you enough times in one day, rather than blaming yourself or him, it makes more sense to just remember and accept these basic links between emotion and gender. You'll know how he feels because he'll find other ways of showing you.

The Arms

Now, let's move down and out a little to the arms. Pay careful attention to these because hundreds of years ago those arms were used to protect, to hunt and to guard. Now, they're more likely to cook a fried-egg sandwich (for himself) or hold a video game controller for hours and hours on end. And now, of course, you're more than capable of providing for yourself, thank you very much. Traditionally, men have been providers and protectors: guarding the family, who are raised by the mother. A pattern was established whereby people were assigned roles depending solely on their gender. If you were a man, you were handed a spear and told to go find food, no matter how fast it runs. If you were a woman, you were used as a breeding ground for nine months before beginning the task of rearing your children. And this pattern continued until relatively recently.

The suffrage movement was one of the first initiatives to challenge these historic stereotypes. The feminist movement of the 1960s took things a little further, boasting groups such as the National Organisation for Women. And finally, in the early part of the twenty-first century, women are playing on a field that is more level than ever before. Women and men are free to go to the same places, do the same jobs and earn the same amount of money. So

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where does this leave the boys? Every part of his history tells him he should be providing and protecting. But how can he provide for you if you're earning twice as much as he does? And how can he protect you when you don't even want him to open doors for you? This shift in gender-assigned roles can cause conflict because we are socialised into believing that certain situations are desirable, even normal. This puts unrealistic pressure on you and him. You feel guilty about your success because your mother thinks your man should earn more than you, and he feels like he isn't fulfilling his duty to you because he always felt that he would provide for the woman in his life. Dealing with and challenging these norms can be an essential part of any relationship.

The Stomach

Now down to the tummy. He probably prefers you to call it his 'stomach' because it sounds more muscly, so we'll go with that for argument's sake. This area symbolises the relationship men have with food and their bodies. The chances are that whether he is the proud owner of a tight six-pack or a rather more rounded keg he's probably fairly happy with his body. While you squint, squirm and make mock-vomit noises in front of the mirror, he strolls past, has a quick glance, pats his hairy, wobbly little gut and grins, before polishing off the takeaway you deprived yourself of earlier. Men really do have a much healthier relationship with their bodies than women. Again, this is largely due to the way we have been socialised. For years, women were valued solely for the way they looked, and we were subjected to some pretty unrealistic role models.

THE MAN MANUAL

Men have always been valued and assessed predominantly for their achievements and their successes, so the way they look has consequently been less important. Admittedly, recent years have placed more emphasis on male vanity, and the boys have had a few media-marketed role models of their own, take the Chippendales or Peter Andre's nineties six-pack. But in general, looks have always been less important for men, so they don't feel the same pressure as women to look perfect.

Body image can be important within a relationship if there are massive differences in how you each feel about your bodies. He might not understand why you insist on making love with the lights off, or why you burst into tears every time he makes a joke about your 'cuddly tummy'. (When will they understand that we do not, repeat, do not like words like 'wobbly', 'cuddly' or 'squidgy'?) Also, the way we feel about how we look is inextricably linked to our general self esteem, and this can have a big impact on how we conduct ourselves within relationships.

The Crown Jewels

Next, on to that boxer area. And no, you can't just scoot back a few pages and reread the 'Brain' section. We can look back to our ancestors again to explain a little bit about how his 'other brain' works. Ancient man cottoned on to the fact that the survival of the species was heavily dependent on reproduction. Therefore, sowing seeds all over the place was the way forward. Putting all your eggs in one basket or seeds in one field was not the most efficient way of ensuring you produced numerous offspring. Therefore, random sex with random women kept the

WELCOME TO *THE MAN MANUAL*

species going without the hassles of what evolutionary psychologists call 'pair bonding'. If you zoom forward a few thousand years, getting every girl that they sleep with pregnant might sound like a young man's worst nightmare. In fact, for most of them it is. But the basic urge to spread the seed is still there, even if the desired result is different. It is just an ingrown feature, like the urge to provide or the urge to spend every Sunday down the pub with his friends. But don't let that be his excuse for flirting with every female within ten metres or ogling page 3 with an enthusiasm that you're sure is unhealthy. If he points to *FHM* and cites genetic make-up as his justification for a rather, ahem, *crowded* lovelife, then suggest that the species has evolved, and if he disagrees then perhaps he would like to revisit some other ancient caveman rituals. Like wearing animal print. (And we're not talking Gucci here . . .) And catching his own dinner. (It's slightly more testing than popping to Waitrose or waiting for you to rustle something up.) And administering foot rubs every night. (OK, so we made that one up, but try it, you never know . . .)

However, this could conflict with the way you see sex. Men typically attach less emotional importance to sex and view it in a far more functional manner. This can be great for getting a sense of reality and taking the pressure off both of you. But if he sees it as just sex when to you it's something more, then it can be disastrous for your self-esteem. To you, sleeping with him for the first time might be a symbol that you trust him and are willing to let him into your life a little more. And that's great, but not if to him it's just another notch on his seriously eroded bedpost.

THE MAN MANUAL

The Feet

And finally, we move on to the feet. Big, smelly, hairy and the best metaphor there is for his commitment issues. Because those feet can make the difference between him digging his heels in and staying put, or doing a runner and sprinting away from any sign of commitment. It is common for men to have problems with commitment. We've all encountered that man who won't hold hands in public. Or the man who won't call you his girlfriend even though you've been going out for three years. Or the man who doesn't think snogging girls in nightclubs is cheating, as long as you don't find out about it. It's easy to think that men just want to have their cake and then eat it, but there are actually some deeper reasons for his fear of commitment.

Commitment means different things to men and women. Bachelorhood has long been glamorised and dressed up to be sexy, stylish and the epitome of a cool, single lifestyle. A long-term girlfriend who you refer to as 'snookums' doesn't really fit into this picture. Conversely, being a single young female, or worse a single aging female, has always had an entirely different stigma attached to it. Bridget Jones has always been seen as a little bit of a laughing stock in her desperate attempts to snag a man. The boys got James Bond, we got snivelling, diary-obsessed Bridget. For women, commitment is about gaining something; for men, committing can often mean losing something. And this can cause major disagreements about where your relationship is heading.

So there you have Diagram A: The Male. And we've pointed out a few of his weird and wonderful features.