Challenging Casanova: Masculinity in the 21st Century

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CHALLENGING CASANOVA

Beyond the Stereotype of the Promiscuous Young Male

Most people believe that men only have one thing on their mind: sex, namely, how often they can get it and with how many different women. This perception has become a staple of modern comedies, from “Porky’s” to “American Pie” to “Superbad,” and it’s what psychologist Andrew P. Smiler calls the “Casanova stereotype.”

In his new book the CHALLENGING CASANOVA: Beyond the Stereotype of the Promiscuous Young Male(Jossey-Bass; 9781118072660; December 2012; available in ebook format) Smiler argues that this perception is false. He dismantles the stereotype of boys as driven only by an obsession with having intercourse with multiple partners and calls for deeper growth and understanding of modern masculinity.

He says that society’s expectations of men are a, “self-fulfilling prophecy,” contributing to the idea that men are emotionally incapable of connecting with their partners. The result of these societal stereotypes is that men aren’t expected to achieve any type of deep emotional intimacy with their partners and that they are just physically driven.

Smiler says, “What most guys seek, and this seems to be regardless of sexual orientation or age, is people whose company they enjoy. People who appreciate them for who they are. They want someone who’s honest, who’s not going to tell your secrets and who’s loyal.”

CHALLENGING CASANOVA dares us to consider what might happen if we forgot everything we thought we knew about young men and began to accept the truth that men are largely interested in relationships, not endless one-night stands. It is the much-needed antidote to perceptions of male sexuality and is a must-read for all parents, teachers and all those who care about tomorrow’s young men and women.

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