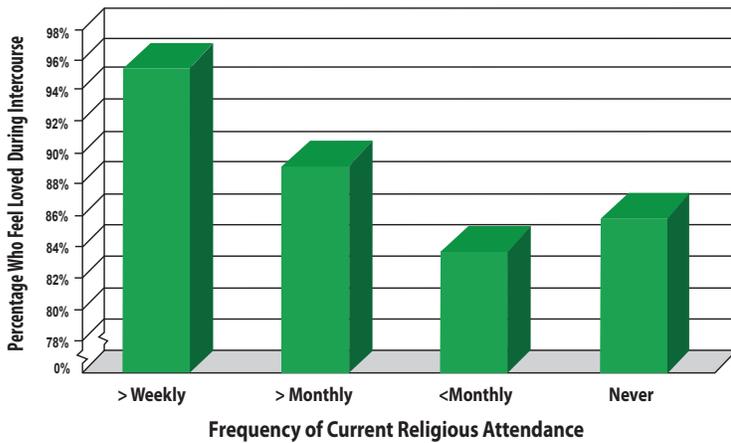


## Mapping America – Number 125

### “Feels Loved During Intercourse” with Current Sexual Partner by Marital Status and Religious Attendance

Percentage Who Feel Loved During Intercourse with Current Sexual Partner  
by Current Religious Attendance (adults aged 18-59)

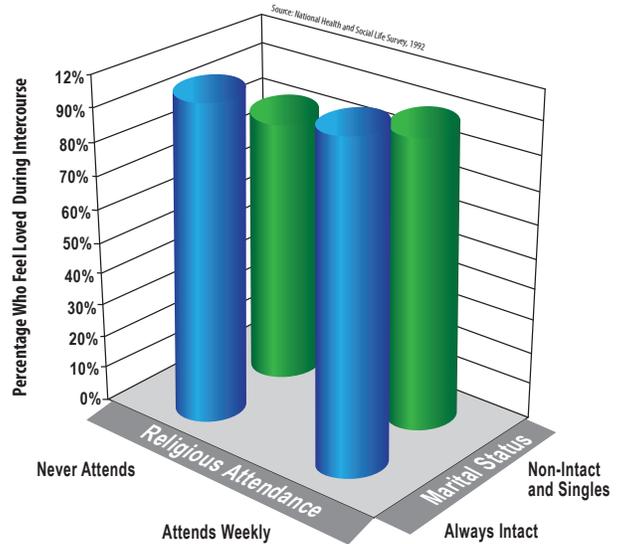
Source: National Health and Social Life Survey, 1992



Althea Nagai, Ph.D.

Percentage Who Feel Loved During Intercourse with Current Sexual Partner  
by Marital Status and Religious Attendance (adults aged 18-59) Combined

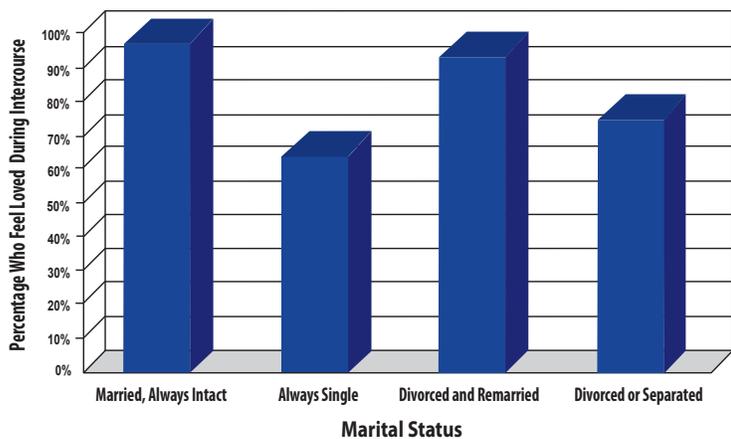
Source: National Health and Social Life Survey, 1992



Althea Nagai, Ph.D.

Percentage Who Feel Loved During Intercourse with Current Sexual Partner  
by Marital Status (adults aged 18-59)

Source: National Health and Social Life Survey, 1992



Althea Nagai, Ph.D.

This chart looks at the number of adults who feel loved during intercourse with their current sexual partner at the extremes of four demographic quadrants.

These four quadrants are derived from combining two sets of marital statuses (always-intact vs. non-intact\* and singles) and two sets of religious attendance (high vs. low).

The individuals occupying the four corners (or four extremes) of these quadrants are:

The always-intact married individual that worships weekly;

The always-intact married individual that never worships;

The non-intact\* or single individual that worships weekly;

The non-intact\* or single individual that never worships.

(\* The non-intact group consists of divorced or separated and divorced and remarried individuals.)

## Feels Loved During Intercourse with Current Sexual Partner

Adults aged 18 to 59 in intact marriages who worshiped weekly were most likely to report feeling loved during intercourse with their current sexual partner, according to the National Health and Social Life Survey (1992), the most detailed analysis of sexual behavior in America.

**Religious attendance:** Those who worshiped weekly were most likely to report feeling loved during intercourse with their current sexual partner (95.7 percent), followed by those who worshiped less than weekly but at least monthly (89.3 percent), those who never worshiped (86.1 percent), and those who worshiped less than monthly (83.8 percent).

**Marital status:** Those in always-intact marriages were most likely to report feeling loved during intercourse (97.7 percent). Feeling loved decreases among those in non-intact family structures and singles: 94.5 percent of those who were divorced and remarried report feeling loved during intercourse; 75.1 percent of those who were divorced or separated report feeling loved; and 64.8 percent of those who were always single report feeling loved during intercourse.

**Religious attendance and marital status combined:** Those in intact marriages who worshiped weekly were most likely to report feeling loved during intercourse (98.9 percent). Those in intact marriages who never worshiped (96.4 percent), those in non-intact family structures or who were single who worshiped weekly (89.4 percent), and those in non-intact family structures or who were single who never worshiped (80.8 percent) were less likely to feel loved during intercourse with their current sexual partner.

## Related Insight from Other Studies

Even individuals engaged in premarital sex place high value on the importance of feeling loved and needed by their partner, as one survey of 249 college students found.<sup>1</sup>

A study that examined the proposition that love promotes commitment in relationships found that the experience and display of love was correlated with actions taken to build commitment within a relationship, such as constructive conflict resolution during times when the relationship was threatened.<sup>2</sup> Delaying commencement of sexual relations until marriage further promoted feelings of commitment for couples. Another study of 2,035 married participants found that only 16 percent of couples waited until marriage to have sex. However, of those participants who did wait, 22 percent rated the stability of their marriage higher and their satisfaction with the relationship was 20 percent higher than the couples who did not wait.<sup>3</sup>

Patrick F. Fagan, Ph.D. and Althea Nagai, Ph.D.

*Dr. Fagan is senior fellow and director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI) at Family Research Council.*

*Althea Nagai is a visiting fellow at Family Research Council.*

- 
- 1 Janell Lucille Carroll, Kari Doray Volk, and Janet Shibley Hyde, "Differences Between Males and Females in Motives for Engaging in Sexual Intercourse," *Journal of Sexual Behavior* 14, no. 2 (1985): 131-139.
  - 2 Gian Gonzaga, Dacher Keltner, Esme Londahl, and Michael Smith, "Love and the Commitment Problem in Romantic Relations and Friendship," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 18, no. 2 (August 2001): 247-262.
  - 3 Dean Busby, Jason Carroll, and Brian Willoughby, "Compatibility or Restraint? The Effects of Sexual Timing on Marriage Relationships," *Journal of Family Psychology* 24, no. 6 (December 2010): 766-774.

Marriage and Religion Research Institute / Editor: Patrick F. Fagan, Ph.D. / Managing Editors: Julia Kiewit and Anna Dorminey

Please feel free to make additional copies of this resource. We only ask that you comply with standard norms of attribution to the Family Research Council and to the Marriage and Religion Research Institute.

WWW.MAPPINGAMERICAPROJECT.ORG



MARRIAGE AND RELIGION  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
801 G STREET NW  
WASHINGTON DC 20001  
800-225-4008  
WWW.MARRI.US

MA13E05