

CONTACTS:

For commentary on poll results and relationship issues:

**Dr. GARY LEWANDOWSKI, Professor of Psychology and  
Co-Founder ScienceOfRelationships.com**  
732-245-3240 (cell); 732-263-5476 (office)  
[glewando@monmouth.edu](mailto:glewando@monmouth.edu)

For information on poll results and methodology:

**PATRICK MURRAY, Monmouth University Polling Institute**  
732-979-6769 (cell); 732-263-5858 (office)  
[pdmurray@monmouth.edu](mailto:pdmurray@monmouth.edu) Twitter: @PollsterPatrick

Released:

**Monday, February 2, 2015**

## **NATIONAL: “NIGHT OUT ON TOWN” TOPS AMERICA’S VALENTINE WISH LIST**

*Most satisfied in relationships, but men seen as more  
likely to jump at one-night stand*

West Long Branch, N.J. – The overwhelming majority of Americans involved in a romantic relationship are satisfied with their situation, with many looking forward to a night out with their spouse or partner on Valentine’s Day. But the national *Monmouth University Poll* also found that most Americans believe that men would jump at the chance of having a risk-free one-night stand, while far fewer feel that women would do the same.

About 7-in-10 American adults are currently married (52%), living with a partner (7%) or otherwise in a romantic relationship (11%). Fully 58% of these lovebirds say they are extremely satisfied with their current relationship and another 30% are very satisfied. Moreover, 56% say that their partner is extremely important to their own overall happiness, and another 33% say their partner is very important. Married individuals are more likely to say they are extremely satisfied with their relationship (61%) and that their partner is extremely important to their happiness (60%), when compared with those who are not married – 48% of whom are extremely satisfied and 44% who say their partner is extremely important. There are few differences in this sentiment by gender or age.

“Relationships are a key source of happiness so it is encouraging that those in relationships report high levels of satisfaction,” said Dr. Gary Lewandowski, professor and chair of psychology at Monmouth

University whose research focuses on romantic relationships. “For those who don’t report being extremely satisfied, it is important to realize that good relationships take work.”

The poll asked those currently in a relationship about their Valentine’s Day plans. About 4-in-10 (42%) say they usually go out for Valentine’s Day, while 13% generally do something special at home. Another 10% say they do something special, but it changes from year to year. One-third (33%) say they do not usually do anything special to mark Valentine’s Day. There are no differences in these results based on current marital status. However, men (47%) are somewhat more likely than women (36%) to say that they usually go out for Valentine’s Day, while women (37%) are slightly more likely than men (29%) to say that they do not do anything special. About half (49%) of younger adults age 18 to 34 who are in a relationship report that they usually go out on the town, followed by 40% of those age 35 to 54, and 36% of those age 55 and older.

A night out on the town (40%) is the preferred option when those in a relationship are asked what they would prefer for Valentine’s Day. Another 26% say they would be happiest spending time at home with their partner doing a favorite activity, while 11% say they would be most pleased by planning a new and interesting activity, such as taking a class together.

One-in-five would rather have a gift. More of this group (15%) say a simple token like flowers and a card is fine, while 5% want something expensive, such as jewelry. Men (47%) are more likely than women (33%) to prefer a night out for Valentine’s Day, while more women (25%) than men (15%) say some type of gift would be ideal. Younger adults age 18 to 34 (21%) are more likely than those age 35 and older (6%) to say that planning a new activity would make them happiest.

“Couples should take advantage of any chance they get to date or have a ‘night out’ together,” Dr. Lewandowski said. “The trend that younger couples are more likely to do this is a little discouraging because doing new and interesting things is even more important in established relationships where the newness of being together has worn off. Saying you’re going to do something new can be anxiety provoking (‘What if you don’t like it?’), but research shows that these activities help you grow as a person, which improves relationship quality.”

Dr. Lewandowski added, “It is good to see that only a few respondents wanted an expensive gift. Recent research shows that spending a lot of money on things like engagement rings and weddings doesn’t bode well for relationship success, so de-emphasizing materialism in Valentine’s Day gifts is a wise move.”

Finally, the poll asked respondents whether they thought members of both sexes would have a one-night stand if the opportunity presented itself and there was no fear of getting caught. Fully 7-in-10 (71%) say that most men would jump at the chance while fewer than half (45%) believe that most women would be so inclined. There is no gender difference in opinion on this question – in other words, both

men and women feel that males are more prone than females to succumb to the temptation of a secret one-night stand.

Dr. Lewandowski said, “Though a lot of relationship research shows that men and women are much more similar than different, men’s greater likelihood of accepting a seemingly consequence-free sexual encounter is consistent with research showing that men are higher in sociosexuality, which means they are more easily able to differentiate between sex and love.”

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from December 10 to 14, 2014 with 1,008 adults in the United States. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.1$  percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, N.J.

*The questions referred to in this release are as follows:*

(\* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Are you currently in a romantic relationship with someone?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
Married	<b>52%</b>	54%	51%	20%	70%	64%	71%	46%
Living together	<b>7%</b>	8%	7%	13%	6%	3%	11%	6%
In a relationship	<b>11%</b>	10%	12%	26%	5%	3%	9%	12%
No relationship	<b>28%</b>	27%	30%	40%	17%	30%	9%	36%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>1%</b>	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%

*[The following questions were asked only of those currently in a relationship.]*

2. How satisfied are you with your current relationship – extremely, very, somewhat, not too, or not at all satisfied?

	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP		GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
		Extremely satisfied	<b>58%</b>	61%	48%	54%	61%	54%	60%	57%
Very satisfied	<b>30%</b>	29%	32%	33%	27%	25%	33%	32%	29%	30%
Somewhat satisfied	<b>8%</b>	6%	12%	8%	7%	14%	4%	6%	9%	7%
Not too satisfied	<b>2%</b>	1%	5%	2%	2%	5%	0%	2%	0%	3%
Not at all satisfied	<b>2%</b>	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>1%</b>	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%

3. And how important is your partner to your overall happiness – extremely, very, somewhat, not too, or not at all important?

	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP		GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
		Extremely important	<b>56%</b>	60%	44%	58%	54%	53%	60%	53%
Very important	<b>33%</b>	31%	38%	32%	33%	33%	31%	36%	35%	32%
Somewhat important	<b>8%</b>	5%	15%	8%	7%	11%	7%	6%	4%	10%
Not too important	<b>1%</b>	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Not at all important	<b>1%</b>	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>1%</b>	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	3%	0%	2%

4. Do you and your partner usually do anything special to mark Valentine's Day? [IF YES: Do you usually go out to dinner or some other event or do you usually stay in to celebrate the day?]

	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP		GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
		Yes, usually go out	<b>42%</b>	40%	45%	47%	36%	49%	40%	36%
Yes, usually stay in	<b>13%</b>	14%	12%	12%	15%	12%	11%	16%	18%	11%
(VOL) Yes, but it depends	<b>10%</b>	11%	5%	10%	9%	6%	10%	11%	9%	10%
No, nothing special	<b>33%</b>	34%	31%	29%	37%	25%	38%	34%	28%	36%
(VOL) Not together long enough	<b>2%</b>	0%	8%	2%	2%	6%	0%	1%	0%	3%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>1%</b>	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%

5. Looking ahead. If you had to choose just one Valentine's Day gift, which of the following would make you the happiest an expensive gift like jewelry, a simple gift like flowers and a card, having a night out such as dinner or a show, planning a new and interesting activity together such as taking a class, OR spending some time together at home doing a favorite activity? [OPTIONS WERE ROTATED]

	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP		GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
		Expensive gift	<b>5%</b>	5%	7%	4%	7%	6%	5%	5%
Simple gift	<b>15%</b>	15%	13%	11%	18%	8%	15%	19%	9%	17%
Night out	<b>40%</b>	42%	33%	47%	33%	38%	39%	42%	46%	37%
New activity	<b>11%</b>	9%	15%	13%	9%	21%	7%	6%	9%	12%
Stay home	<b>26%</b>	25%	30%	23%	30%	20%	32%	24%	27%	26%
(VOL) Other	<b>2%</b>	2%	0%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
(VOL) Nothing/Don't know	<b>2%</b>	1%	2%	0%	2%	3%	1%	2%	0%	2%

[The following questions were asked of everyone.] [QUESTIONS 6 and 7 WERE ROTATED]

6. In general, do you think most MEN would or would not have a one night stand if the opportunity presented itself AND there was no fear of getting caught?

	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP			GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	None	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
		Would	<b>71%</b>	61%	85%	81%	70%	72%	83%	71%	60%
Would not	<b>21%</b>	29%	13%	13%	24%	19%	13%	22%	28%	21%	21%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>8%</b>	9%	2%	6%	6%	9%	4%	7%	12%	5%	8%

7. In general, do you think most WOMEN would or would not have a one night stand if the opportunity presented itself AND there was no fear of getting caught?

	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP			GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	None	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
		Would	<b>45%</b>	37%	54%	55%	45%	45%	55%	47%	33%
Would not	<b>45%</b>	53%	41%	36%	44%	47%	38%	45%	54%	44%	46%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>10%</b>	11%	5%	9%	11%	8%	7%	8%	14%	4%	10%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from December 10 to 14, 2014 with a national random sample of 1,008 adults age 18 and older. This includes 677 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 331 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone, in English. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, education, gender and race based on US Census information. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points (unadjusted for sample design). Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

<i>POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)</i>			
27% Rep	49% Male	32% 18-34	66% White
42% Ind	51% Female	36% 35-54	12% Black
31% Dem		32% 55+	15% Hispanic
			7% Asian/Other

	MARGIN OF ERROR										
	TOTAL	CURRENT RELATIONSHIP			GENDER		AGE			CHILD IN HOME	
		Married	Other	None	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Yes	No
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1,008	611	138	252	496	512	208	325	470	228	771
<i>moe</i>	3.1%	4.0%	8.4%	6.2%	4.4%	4.3%	6.8%	5.4%	4.5%	6.5%	3.5%

###