

On gender differences in expectations of thinness, and the impact on guys who live in their parents' basement

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090715-01

July 15, 2009



Raymond Chen

At dinner a few years ago, one of my friends brought up a study (which I can't find, so who knows if it's actually true, but let's assume it's true for the sake of the story) that examined the effect of gender differences in expectations of thinness. One of the factors that the study considered was sexual orientation, and they found that homosexual men were, on average, thinner than their heterosexual brethren, and conversely that heterosexual women were thinner on average than their homosexual um, what's the female counterpart to "brethren"? In other words, the conclusion of the study was that the pressure to be thin depends not so much on your own gender but rather on the gender of the person you're trying to attract. If you want to attract a man, you are more likely to be thin. Like I said, whether what is now a thirdhand report of the study's conclusions is true isn't important to the story. It just served as a catalyst for this snippet of conversation that ensued. Deborah: "I can see that. My friend Eleanor [not her real name] is a tall, beautiful Asian woman, and she says she won't date guys unless they have a bit of a pot belly." Me: "You do realize that you just instilled hope into the hearts of thousands of guys who live in their parents' basement?"

Sorry guys, I didn't ask for Eleanor's number.

[Raymond Chen](#)

Follow

