

## A touchy subject

# Feeling out the situation



### Guarneri String Quartet

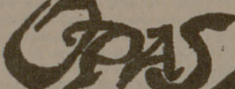
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Presented by



This is the first in a weekly series of articles dealing with a touchy subject, breast-petting. The series is written by Douglas W. Kirk, a Battalion staff writer and a graduate student in psychology.

Picture the perfect romantic setting in your mind. You have just had dinner, a little wine and a short drive up to a quiet hillside on a moonlit evening. You pull the car to the side of the road and turn off the engine and while clicking the lights off you readjust your position in the seat so as to better see your girlfriend.

Then, ever so slowly your finger outlines figure eights on her back which get successively larger until they lead your hand under her arm. (Bell sounds in your head.) There was a book you read once that said that the proper method to determine if a girl was interested in breast-petting was to approach from her back, under her arm. If she was not interested she would gently press her arm to her side, stopping your advance. But, on the other hand, if she was interested in the

experience, her arm would move, allowing your hand to proceed further.

Suppose that this evening, your girl's arm moves away from her body, freeing your hand for additional exploration. You continue your attack and in a few moments you reach your goal. And, of course, the bell sounds again.

A little voice speaks in pathetically argumentative tone, "But whatever for? Just why would you want to touch her breasts? They are nothing but modified sweat glands; a composite of skin, fat, and mammary gland tissue."

So, you have reached your goal—but whatever for?

This question certainly appears to be a valid one when considering the observation that no other animal known to the author engages in any similar or comparative behavior regarding the mate's manipulation of the female's breasts. Why is man different? What is it about man that makes 91 per cent of a college sample population (both male and female) respond that they enjoy breast-petting? Is there something more to breast-petting than meets the eye, or ah, meets the hand?

A questionnaire was designed containing 70 questions attempting to assess the nature of human breast-petting behavior. Questions were asked regarding the first breast-petting experience, moral feelings toward that experience,

moral attitudes toward the activity in general, later petting experiences, the attractiveness of breasts, permissibility of petting, and other related topics.

The questionnaire was distributed on the Texas A&M campus in December 1974. There were seven distribution points. Volunteer subjects were allowed to pick up test booklets and response sheets and return them anonymously any time during the data collection phase of the study to seven pickup boxes. Responses were also mailed to the experimenter.

A total of 221 response sheets were returned. This sample was then divided into male and female categories and subjects were thrown out of the study according to a random-number table until a population of 100 females and 100 males remained.

The analysis is based upon these 200 volunteer subjects. Demographic data appears in Table 1. All subjects reported being heterosexual.

Table 1: Demographic Data

	Males	Females
Sex	100	100
Mean Age (Yrs.)	19.25	18.95
Classification		
Freshman	39	47
Sophomore	32	28
Junior	15	15
Senior	14	8
Graduate	0	1
No Response	0	1
Mean Weight (Lbs.)	163.69	123.28
Mean Height (Ins.)	71.02	63.54
Majors Represented	43	41
Most Common Majors		
Pre-Med	10	9
M.E.	6	7
Pre-Dent	5	6
Pet. E.	5	5
Bio	5	5
Socio	5	5
Undeclared	5	5

Ninety-eight per cent of the males and 85 per cent of the females indicated that they enjoyed breast-petting. The extent of this enjoyment is presented in Table 2.

"gross". Not all subjects responded to this question. Some of the girl's responses rang of this tune:  
"Thought it was going to be a big step, anticipation, prove my sexual

Table 2: Extent of Breast-Petting Enjoyment (%)

Extent	Males	Females
I like it more than anything	2	1
I like it a lot	72	37
I like it but won't go out of my way to do it	20	40
I have no feelings toward it	5	11
I don't care for it	1	6
I don't like it at all	0	3
I dislike it more than anything	0	2

The sample of females cited 102 reasons for enjoying breast-petting and 14 reasons for not enjoying it. Men gave 119 reasons why they like it but only two reasons against it. Generally, affirmative feelings towards the sport include sexual or emotional gratification. Others mentioned appreciation for it since it lead to further activity, closeness, fun, trust, and so forth.

Non-enjoyment was caused by either moral or personal convictions. For instance, one man said, "Breast petting is okay, but you can't fall in love with and marry the breast of a girl. I need a girl who cares emotionally and fulfills emotionally, not just sexually. I'd love a wooden box if it would love me. A body can't bring me happiness."

freedom."  
"The relationship might proceed physically further than I wanted."  
"Nervous that I may chicken out."

"Had read about it, but didn't think that kind of thing would ever happen to me."  
"I was curious as to why guys were attracted to a breast."

"It was a no-no, lightning would strike you."  
"Didn't realize that people did it on dates. Naive — if I did, I probably would have been shocked at that age." (16).  
"Trouble — how could anyone enjoy that!"

"Was afraid to because I was ashamed that they were so small. I felt it wasn't morally wrong if you

cared about the guy."

"Apprehensive, fearful of rejection, fear of partner's fears my interest in sex only. Mental — planning my moves so as I can tell if she is responsive and accepting."

"I believe that there is absolutely nothing wrong and that it would be, and was satisfying and that no matter what I was told I would continue to do it because it was enjoyable, and something that is enjoyable can't be wrong even if it is supposedly a sin according to religious orders."

"No bad feelings about trying it and I couldn't wait for first chance."

"Scared, I didn't know what to think."

"Maybe if I do something for her, she might do something for me."

"I saw nothing wrong with it, and always looked forward to the day when I could say that I played with Miss X's..."

"Thought it was dangerous spiritually."

"I wanted to do it real bad."

"Always heard it was nice and always wanted the chance to try."

"All I could think was 'get some'."

"Rather prudish, preferred invitation verbally."

"It was spooky but not too involved."

"Felt very mature, secretly 'experienced'."

"My partner was very good to me."

"Felt bad about it, though I enjoyed it."

"Weird."

"Felt guilty because I had gone against God's will for a Christian."

"I liked it more than I expected!"

"It's a beautiful thing between the right partners who really care for one another."

"It was terrific — but you'd never tell anyone you did it — especially not your folks."

"Enjoyed slightly but embarrassed to admit."

"I liked it, but still didn't think it was right."

"Thought I should and could stop there, but didn't want to."

"Felt dirty for awhile but then accepted it as normal."

"It was something different besides kissing."

"Felt gross, slutty."

"Noticed I was still alive."

The men seemed to feel that breast-petting was acceptable and enjoyable. Twenty-three per cent said it was okay, 18 per cent liked breast-petting, 14 per cent reported it was enjoyable, 12 per cent wanted more breast-petting, 8 per cent said it was satisfying and 5 per cent thought the first experience was great.

Four per cent felt it was bad, one respondent was embarrassed, one was uncertain about it, one didn't care and one had no thoughts. Not all males responded to this question. Some of the men reported:

"Very happy, felt strong attachment to partner, happy to have pleased her. Some moral fears set in later."

"Felt a satisfaction of finally touching a girl's breast because you were not supposed to."

"Figured it was great, why hadn't I tried it sooner?" (He was 17)

"I was glad to say that I played with Miss X's..."

"I justified why I approved of it."

"I thought it was good, but I felt a little guilty."

"Curiosity somewhat satisfied, lust also somewhat satisfied."

"I couldn't understand her rejection of me after the experience, guilt plagued both of us."

"Excited since I had finally done it."

"A bit shaky, but knew I enjoyed it."

Enjoyment of the first experience is reported in Table 4.

Survey results indicated that the males tended to enjoy the first experience more than the females.

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