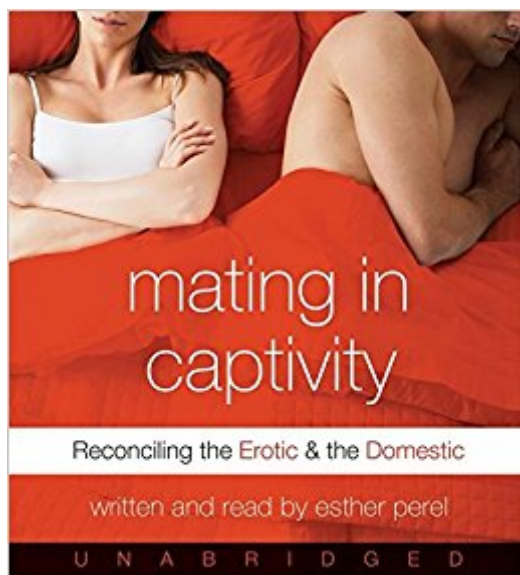


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# Mating In Captivity: Reconciling The Erotic And The Domestic



## Synopsis

Why does great sex so often fade for couples who claim to love each other as much as ever? Can we want what we already have? Why does the transition to parenthood so often spell erotic disaster? Does good intimacy always make for good sex? Esther Perel takes on these tough questions, grappling with the obstacles and anxieties that arise when our quest for secure love conflicts with our pursuit of passion. She invites us to explore the paradoxical union of domesticity and sexual desire, and explains what it takes to bring lust home. In her twenty years of clinical experience, Perel has treated hundreds of couples whose home lives are empty of passion. They describe relationships that are open and loving, yet sexually dull. What is going on? In this explosively original book, Perel explains that our cultural penchant for equality, togetherness, and absolute candor is antithetical to erotic desire for both men and women. Sexual excitement doesn't always play by the rules of good citizenship. It is politically incorrect. It thrives on power plays, unfair advantages, and the space between self and other. More exciting, playful, even poetic sex is possible, but first we must kick egalitarian ideals and emotional housekeeping out of our bedrooms. While *Mating in Captivity* shows why the domestic realm can feel like a cage, Perel's take on bedroom dynamics promises to liberate, enchant, and provoke. Flinging the doors open on erotic life and domesticity, she invites us to put the "X" back in sex.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Developed originally from an article she wrote on "erotic intelligence," psychotherapist Perel's first book sets forth a thesis for today's couples that is as revelatory as it is straightforward. Languishing

desire in a relationship actually results from all the factors people look for in love and marriage: grounding, meaning, continuity. Partnerships are supposed to provide "a bulwark against the vicissitudes of modern life," Perel notes, and in one person we turn for all the emotional connections that the greater society (church, community, family) can no longer provide. Habit and certainty kill desire, yet how to live comfortably with the elements of unpredictability and risk that are necessary for healthy eroticism? Perel supports her nicely accessible work with case studies of couples both heterosexual and gay, spanning all ages, with kids and without, in an attempt to cure what ails their sex life. Some of the proposals Perel recommends for rekindling eroticism involve cultivating separateness (e.g., autonomy) in a relationship rather than closeness (entrapment); exploring dynamics of power and control (i.e., submission, spanking); and learning to surrender to a "sexual ruthlessness" that liberates us from shame and guilt. In short, Perel sanctions fantasy and play and offers the estranged modern couple a unique richness of experience. (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

• Her advice is refreshingly counterintuitive. • (Salon.com) • Mating in Captivity...articulates a poignant and unacknowledged modern crisis for the first time. • (The Evening Standard (London)) • An elegant sociological study, complete with erudite literary and anthropological references. • (Daily Telegraph (London)) • A charming blend of wit and wisdom...this book will give you a fresh perspective on long-term love. • (Gold Coast Bulletin (Australia)) • Well argued points written with considerable eloquence. • (Jerusalem Post) • This is a brave book...refreshing. • (The Times Higher Education Supplement) • So honest it hurts. • (Irish Times) • An excellent book, full of provocative prose and entertaining case illustrations. • (Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy) --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

I think there is tremendous value in Perelman's insight that intimacy--marked by safety, closeness, and familiarity--and desire--marked by space, mystery, and risk-taking--are two distinct things. They not necessarily be opposed for many of us (thank God), but they are not the same, and need to be cultivated differently if we want to have a long term relationship marked by both loving security and erotic passion.

I started listening to Esther's podcast which I loved and wanted to read her book as well. Her alternative views and unusual relationship advice is really mind-altering. Super interesting things to

keep in mind if you're in a relationship. I thoroughly enjoyed this - to be frank it was kind of life-changing for me. Great read.

An honest and relevant exploration of human sexuality in relationship to monogamous relationships. Clever, insightful and well delivered - this book is a must have for those who wish to create certainty and passion within their intimate relationships.

The book deserves credits for opening up candid discussions on several subjects. However the attempt to build the argument based on 'American' culture v.s. 'European' culture failed due to the crude simplification which omitted many facets of the different cultures and it is misleading.

This book will open your eyes and challenge you to rethink relationships and the standard narrative that exists in many societies.

I saw her TED talk a couple of times. Perel is hilarious and very smart. I loved every chapter, especially the stories used for illustration ( I tend to dislike psychology books with patient stories). I especially liked the fact she's a foreigner in the US and shows the foreign perspective.

Loved her insights and her thoughts about the power dynamics of Eros, and how they need to be regularly evaluated in committed relationships. America isn't as open minded as perhaps Perel, or a lot of people, would like it to be... But she suggests pushing through that towards more self honesty regarding not only our emotional but sexual/passionate lives is the real key towards sustaining desire. I highly recommend for singles or couples!

This book will tell you the scenario of a bunch of different couples which is a great method because it allows you to notice little things in each story that is relevant to you. I don't think there is a couple out there that is exactly like me and my wife but being able to get many different points of view allows me to identify with them all in some way. The biggest thing I got out of this book is that others feel the way I do and she gives many things to try and talk about in all the situations.

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