

Who takes care of the alpha male? Taboos, myths, masculinity, and male sexual health

Like other higher primates, human beings use their libido not only to perpetuate the species, but also to maintain social bonds and to develop deep relationships of affection. Human sexuality represents this set of behaviors in relation to the satisfaction of sexual desire as part of each individual's personality, as a basic need and an aspect of each person that is inseparable from other facets of life. It influences thoughts, feelings, actions and interactions and, therefore, physical and mental health.

Even if we consider that the patriarchal family pattern, structured around the alpha male, is currently changing, it still significantly influences many men who, through their identity behavior, not only cause damage to others, but especially to themselves. I am referring more specifically to the implications of the social imaginary about male sexual identity caused by the tensions arising from wanting to maintain traditional standards and the possibility of living other ways of being a man.

This situation is related to the existence of many myths and taboos about human sexuality. Sexual taboo is part of the moral sphere and is based on prejudice and the prohibition of certain sexual practices for social, political or religious reasons (e.g., masturbation). The sexual myth, on the other hand, is a fantasy, a mistaken idea about human sexuality (e.g., penis size) Figure 1. Faced with a lack of scientific information, explanations arising from common sense are disseminated as truths. This misinformation has the potential to cause serious damage to the quality of life. The good news is that myths and taboos are social constructions that vary with time and social geography, and therefore can be suppressed over time. If we want to confront these symbolic impasses, efforts must be made to create an environment that affirms and promotes sexual health, as well as a liberating sexual education that doesn't repeat oppressive patterns to imaginary alphas.



Figure 1. MOESIA INFERIOR, Nicopolis ad Istrum. Septimius Severus. AD 193-211. Æ Assarion (18mm, 3.83 g, 2h). AV KAI CE CEVHPOC, laureate head right / NIKOPOLI TWN PROC IC, ithyphallic Priapus standing left, pointing downward with right hand at his characteristic attribute, left hand on hip. Mouchmov 987; Varbanov 1789.

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