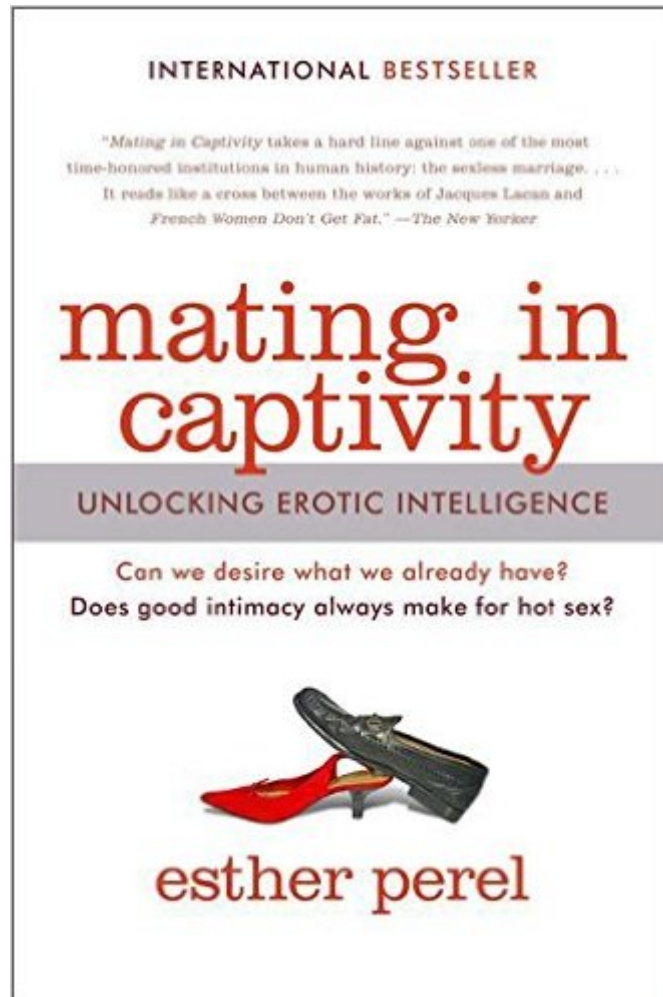


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# Mating In Captivity: Unlocking Erotic Intelligence



## Synopsis

One of the world's most respected voices on erotic intelligence, Esther Perel offers a bold, provocative new take on intimacy and sex. *Mating in Captivity* invites us to explore the paradoxical union of domesticity and sexual desire, and explains what it takes to bring lust home. Drawing on more than twenty years of experience as a couples therapist, Perel examines the complexities of sustaining desire. Through case studies and lively discussion, Perel demonstrates how more exciting, playful, and even poetic sex is possible in long-term relationships. Wise, witty, and as revelatory as it is straightforward, *Mating in Captivity* is a sensational book that will transform the way you live and love.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Everyone knows that familiarity breeds contempt. Especially if familiarity comes with a wedding ring attached. A book about sex in marriage --- now there's a thin book! But here comes Esther Perel to suggest that we --- men and women alike --- have it wrong. Good sex doesn't have to end when the hormones cool. Lust doesn't have to devolve into companionship. You can be a mom and a sex kitten. And as for "intimacy"....in the bedroom, a little goes a long way. Who is this wild woman? A therapist in New York who's been working with couples and families for two decades. Belgian-born, Holocaust survivor. Married (to her original husband). Two kids. Speaks eight languages --- including common sense. Not for Perel a how-to book of ridiculous exercises you can practice to rekindle the passion you once knew. If she had her way, you'd never consult a manual again. You might, however, write a dirty letter about all the hot things you'd like to do to your partner --- or that

you'd like done to you. Or maybe you should start two e-mail accounts just for the sexual dialogue between you and your mate. But she's the mother of your child! But he's the guy who only gets his kicks from online porn! Perel has heard all that. Many times. She's not fooled --- underneath those smart New York rationalizations are hearts that still want to believe in hot sex with someone you know. The problem, she says, lie in the unspoken assumptions of most marriages. Like: To love is to merge. Wrong. Merging is what happens when you see the Other as your security. That's death to sex. Good sex requires a spark. A spark requires a gap. Cross the gap, feel the sizzle. No gap? The best you can hope for is a cuddle.

Esther Perel's *Mating in Captivity* is a book for helping marriages that are going well in every way but sexuality. The author wisely notes that the expectations of modern marriages are such that one's spouse is to fulfill one in every way. She posits that good sex and companionship exist on a continuum of tradeoffs between closeness and distances. The strength of this book is that it is thought-provoking. The challenge of this book is that its ideas are the author's, backed up by her experiences with her clients alone, with a narrow focus on a single topic. Being a graduate student in sociology, I will admit a bias for the likes of John Gottman's work in part because it's based on social science research. Perel's research is not - its subjects are her clients, and selected accordingly. Another reviewer writes that Perel uses the word "perhaps" very often - she does. This book is full of speculation and opinion. Clinician based research means that her ideas work well for her clients - as far as she knows - but anyone who has sought a therapist knows that it can be very difficult to find a therapist that one works well with. Would she be a good match for you? Maybe, maybe not. Her writing is good, and there are a couple "aha!" moments in the book. She discusses how sex is viewed in contradictory terms, and that women in particular struggle with the baggage of being "good" and being sexy. She argues that lovers need to rediscover the creativity that led them to pursue their spouses in the first place, and to think of them more as lovers and less like the wife or husband-role with the cultural baggage that comes with this. In the introduction, Perel writes that she uses the word "marriage" to refer to "all long-term emotional commitments".

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