

Arnold Wonders What Women Think About

Could it all be about hormones?

Arnold, a novelist, knew women thought—but he had no idea about what or how it was different from how men thought. He assumed women were concerned about careers and accomplishment, mating and having children, stability. At least, that is what women told him, what he observed. Perhaps more to the point, his plotting and dialogue for female characters never felt quite right. Yet reading female authors, he often found the same problem. Was it the audience they all wrote for? Did it want women portrayed a certain way? He did not understand. Life's questions go without answers—why grow old, why produce, why breed?

As a man, he often first saw a woman sexually. He looked at faces, chests, legs. He accepted women were often as smart or smarter. Often he was, at least initially, seeing only the physical—but even women concerned with the physical always seemed to have something in the back of their minds—the long term? Both sexes wanted one-night stands *and* long-term relationships. How could it be hormonal?

Arnold had been married ten years and was still confused by his wife. They had two children, she was devoted to them—but equally devoted to her work, which she arranged to do at home. Volunteering. Migraines. At times, waking to find her listening to a podcast, he was not sure how much she slept. Yet she had time to garden. Where did it all come from, the energy, drive, interest?

There is no neat solution to Arnold's questions—it is how life is. However, this is a story.

So, using an electronic procedure Arnold had his wife's brain waves copied into his own. Now their thoughts merged. Arnold woke feeling great but wondering about the future...and his surroundings were untidy...and there were so many troubled people at work, he should start lunches with them.

His questions remained far from answered. Arnold was no longer clear on how anyone thought, including himself. He continued to stumble through life, doing the best he could in a world he did not understand.

Could it all be about hormones?