

Review of The Value of Others, a book on relationships by Orion Taraban.

Taraban is already enormously popular. This review will do nothing to help him. Should I desire to make even a minimal contact with them, I would have to join [his private group](#) at \$99 a month. The people who pony up such money are men and women, I suspect mostly women, past their prime who are desperately looking for some sort of a relationship.

His YouTube videos, which you can watch for free, are more accessible and a better introduction than his book. He understands the use of video in the media age. Here are three of them:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yY8bkEfvGIM>

[Give Him the Money – Why Women Don't Share](#)

[I Don't Need a Man – How Women Use Men](#)

Taraban's thesis seems crass on the surface, but it makes absolute sense. There is a sexual marketplace in which men and women exchange unequal goods of comparable value. To every person can be ascribed a Sexual Marketplace Value (SMV), the aggregate of what they have of value to offer a potential partner. Things of value include money, time, good looks, fertility, sense of humor, kindness and so forth.

Markets exist because different people possess different things of value. The baker has bread, the butcher has meat, the dairyman has butter. Each benefits by trading with others. So with the sexes. Men have historically had money, power, prestige, connections and know-how. Women have had sex, fertility, good looks and effort they can devote to bearing and raising children, cooking and cleaning. Women exchanged sexual access and childbearing for being protected, supported, and given appreciation and attention.

Though modern women generally resent being objectified, by men's assigning a number to their sexual attractiveness, it is a fact that do exactly that. There are paradigms for assigning a SMV to a woman or a man. A key part of the mating game is to realistically assess what you have to offer as well as what is on offer from members of the opposite sex. Overestimate your own sexual market value and you will stay single; underestimate it and you will experience buyer's remorse after you consummate the deal with an inferior choice.

The modern age has complicated the issue. I addressed some of the reasons last month [in this video](#). Taraban focuses on others: the birth control pill and social media. We are both right. Whatever the causes, the effect is obvious:

- Men and women throughout the developed world are having less sex than ever before.

- Marriage rates have fallen drastically, and divorce rates shot up.
- Fertility rates are below replacement level throughout the developed world. [Half of replacement level](#) here in Ukraine. And, they are falling fast.

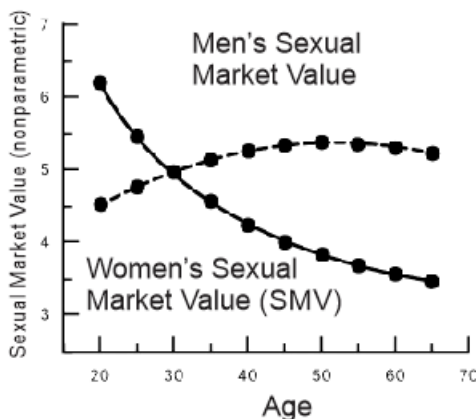
Different observers are prompted to advocate different courses of action.

1. Population bomb enthusiasts say good riddance to overpopulation.
2. Governments are trying (unsuccessfully) to raise birthrates, to keep from going broke. They need new generations of taxpayers and soldiers.
3. Women want advice on finding somebody to care for them. Material stuff in the present, and support in their old age
4. Men say they should give up on sex, which the more numerous high SMV women are not willing to offer on reasonable terms. They become [Incels](#), or [MGTOW](#), or gay.
5. Lastly, I, as the only progenitor in the last four generations of my family, want my family line to continue. I read the book because I want grandchildren.

With that introduction, here are the useful observations and advice from the book. First, players need to recognize the value of what their opposite numbers want, not how they value things themselves. Women highly value college degrees. Men are more interested in their looks, their personalities and their willingness. See the [first Taraban link above](#). Players need to understand that it is a game, and they need to know its rules.

Time is on the man's side. The things of value that a woman has to offer – her beauty, her remaining years of fertility and her health – all decline constantly in adulthood. Men, on the other hand, gain resources, experience, wisdom, status and the like through their fifties, after which the decline is only gradual. Men usually marry younger women. The French formula held that a man's bride should be half his age plus seven.

Men's SMV rises, Women's declines with time



This fact, [recognized by literature throughout history](#), has been forgotten in the age of feminism. Taraban writes that today's women put no priority on getting married, especially marrying young. He nails it with this observation. Women consider "acting feminine" to be demeaning.

...In the first case, the majority of people in the West are inundated with the tenets of ideological feminism from a young age. In the case of girls, this often takes the guise of disincentivizing behavior that conforms with traditional gender roles and encouraging behavior that aligns with postmodern social mores. Femininity – one of the few goods that men cannot secure more cheaply and easily from other men, which makes it a trait that men highly value in women in the sexual marketplace – has increasingly been considered a shameful relic of a benighted past.

And therefore

...Many believe they won't ever want to start a family – and, in any case, they have "plenty of time" to change their minds. When these women turn 18 years old, they roughly fall into one of two camps: either they prioritize short-term relationships and "having fun," or they heavily invest in their education and career. Either way, women often inadvertently squander a propitious moment.

That propitious moment being the peak of their Sexual Market Value, the time at which they are most attractive and have the most years of fertility in front of them. But they don't know it! Their feminist mothers will certainly not tell them. What about their fathers?

This segues into the second significant obstacle faced by modern women: the decline of the role of the father in the mate selection process. If most young women are either in school or having fun during their years of peak attractiveness, then they will largely be surrounded by young men who are doing the same. Unfortunately, due to factors that we'll discuss later in this chapter, most men don't become "husband material" until their 30s, at least. As a result, many young women are simply not exposed to qualified bachelors: stable, successful men who are prepared to start a family and offer a suitable lifestyle.

This issue was largely avoided for several reasons when fathers played an active role in their daughters' courtship process. First, fathers could leverage their social networks to bring their daughters into contact with competent, successful men who were looking to settle down. This was the function of events like debutante balls, wherein young women were officially introduced to "society," and interested parties could be appropriately vetted after making their intentions known. Second, fathers could dissuade non-serious suitors for their daughters' affections from active pursuit. "What are your intentions with my daughter?" was a question that most young men would have needed to be prepared to answer back in the day.

Which is the reason for this review. I am such a father, of girls five and eight years old. I have been encouraging their wardrobes of frilly princess dresses and so on. Taraban's Chapter Seven is entitled "The Importance of Attractiveness in Sexual Relations." His first paragraph is:

A special form of power is particularly relevant to sexual relationships: attractiveness. In any given sexual relationship (and in many non-sexual relationships), more attractive players are more likely to get more of what they want. They also have a relatively easier time across all three phases of a relationship. They are more likely to stand out from their competition – so they are targeted more quickly and frequently in the attraction phase. They can command more advantageous terms for themselves – so they fare better in the negotiation phase. And they are more likely to retain their relationships (if they so desire) – so they are more secure in the maintenance phase, as well.

The lumberjack couture of the women I met twenty years ago as a graduate student at the University of Maryland was decidedly unsexuctive. It echoed their verbal hostility: "We don't need you. We don't want you. You toxic rapist." The good news, I suppose, is that whatever degree of sweetness, girlishness and style I am able to engender in my daughters should make them stand out.

Taraban tells the reader in his introduction that almost all of the points he makes in the book will be controversial, with many strongly arguable. The book's great value is that it frames the argument. The quibbles which follow are merely matters of my own opinion, as a guy who came of age before the sexual revolution and has three marriages and more liaisons behind him than he would ever confess to his wife.

My first quibble would be the strength of the male sex drive. I consider it to be more socially conditioned than animalistic. We guys tolerated being virgins in high school. It was only a few years later, when all the other guys seemed to be getting some, that we felt a strong urge to keep up by getting some ourselves. Same with oral sex etc. Not a strong compulsion, just that it became the thing to do. Taraban advocates, in the videos linked above, that a woman offer a man vast sexual variety. In my opinion, good company and willing sex are enough.

Furthermore, chastity has always commanded my respect. Each of the three women I married made me wait. Made me prove myself before getting intimate. I complimented my wife on how well she played the game by [The Rules](#). We talk about how to encourage our daughters to be chaste and discreet.

Taraban seems to downplay female libido. My observations are that "men like sex" but "women like sex when the man is right, the mood is right, and the time is right." However, given those three conditions, women seem to derive more pleasure from it than men. There is power in being able to please your woman. They know how rare that is.

Second quibble would be that Taraban does not sufficiently emphasize the importance of the primordial drive to reproduce. While marriage and children may somewhat elevate our social status,

it is under no circumstance enough to offset the expense. Children become an intimate part of a marriage. Yet they are hardly mentioned in the book.

Those quibbles being stated, it is an excellent book. Nonetheless, the quality and accessibility of Taraban's YouTube videos is such that I would advise anybody interested to watch a few before buying this book. The book will then give you the context that holds together the sharp, well-argued points in the individual videos.

Graham