



Case Study 2

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939)

Steve is sitting at a restaurant table waiting for his date to come back from the ladies' room. As he waits, he imagines what the rest of the evening will be like. The restaurant they are eating at is one of those little Italian places with red and white checkered tablecloths and candles in Chianti bottles. A violin player strolls around the tables while playing romantic music. Steve considers that these types of restaurants always work well for him. His date would be charmed by the atmosphere and begin to feel romantic. This would allow Steve to make his move, and typically, he and his date would end up at either his apartment or hers for a night of great sex.

Steve is 38, of Italian-American descent, and single: a bachelor by choice, but his friends worry about his happiness. They wonder if Steve is unable to form a long-term relationship, that he has a fear of commitment and an addiction to sex and the passion that marks the beginning of relationships. They also wonder whether Steve's strained relationship with his mother is at least partly to blame for his behavior. Steve's mother, while caring for his physical needs, was not openly affectionate and did not give Steve the demonstrative affection and loving interaction he craved. They wonder if his anger toward her and her negligent behavior toward Steve is being manifested as anger toward women in general.

Steve has been a flirt ever since puberty. In high school, he had a reputation for insincerity. Girls were attracted to him; he was handsome and spent a lot of time and money on his appearance. Unbeknownst to his friends, however, Steve secretly feared that he was unattractive, so he did whatever he could to improve his looks.

The girls he asked out always had a good time on their dates, but it soon became known that he would always pressure his dates for sex, and, in many

cases, tell them that he loved them to convince them to have sex. He was also rumored to have made one girl pregnant and then claimed that it was not his child. To his close male friends, he said that she was not going to tie him down, that "there were too many women and not enough time." This pattern of relationships continued during college. He would date women, have sex with them a few times, and then break off the relationship. He estimated that by the time he was 21, he had had sex with about eight dozen women. He bragged about this among his male friends.

After college, and through the present time, Steve also continued to form relationships with women that were based on sexual attraction and nothing more substantial. One by one, he watched his male friends settle down and commit to one woman. Every time this happened, he would express astonishment and disbelief, stating that his friends were being duped and that no one would make him live with one woman for the rest of his life. When women agreed to go out with him or go to bed with him, Steve felt attractive and no one was going to take that away from him. In fact, Steve secretly feared that no woman would find him attractive enough to marry. He believed that these women went out with him initially to get a free meal and would soon want to break up with him when someone better came around. So he broke up with them first.

His friends believed that Steve's latest sexual interest, Diane, would be the one he would marry. She seemed to be all that any man could hope for. She was pretty, smart, caring, and had a good sense of humor. Steve had been dating her for a longer time than he typically dated women, and his friends thought that he was finally growing up and settling down. As it turns out, the relationship lasted longer than usual because she was reluctant to have sex with him. She finally did after a couple of months when she was convinced that Steve really loved her and was not just using her for sex. Unfortunately, Diane should have trusted her initial instincts. Steve broke up with her after they had sex on three different occasions.

His present date was a woman he met at the gym where he worked out. She was very attractive, with a great body. He used to date women he met at work, but after someone accused him of sexual harassment, he decided to no longer date women from work. He was angered by the specific accusation and the hype associated with sexual harassment in general. A man just couldn't follow his instincts any more without the possibility of losing his job. At least he could still meet women at other places.