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Quebecers fool around more than most: poll

MONTREAL (CP) – There are more cheatin' hearts in Quebec than in the rest of Canada, suggests a wide-ranging survey of sexuality in the province.

"It's part of our Latin roots," Jean-Marc Leger, president of the Leger and Leger polling firm, said Wednesday.

"Seventeen per cent of Quebecers say they have cheated on their spouses, but the figure is substantially higher among high-income earners between the ages of 35 and 44," Leger said.

The telephone survey of 1,000 Quebecers also shows that 44 per cent of respondents have been "tempted" by infidelity.

Leger said at a news conference that the true infidelity figure is somewhere between 17 per cent and 44 per cent. He put the rate of fooling around elsewhere in Canada at about 13 per cent.

The findings of the survey – which explores everything from fantasies to the frequency of friskiness – have been published in a 126-page book titled *The Sexual Habits of Quebecers.*

Yet the figures contained in the poll are often at odds with the popular wisdom that Quebec is a distinctly sexual society.

Canada's Gallic lovers make love on average 7.4 times a month, says the survey. That compares with a national average of 7.1 that was reported in a Maclean's-CTV poll published earlier this month.

The Maclean's-CTV survey also reinforced the folklore that the province is more sexually open than its neighbours: Quebecers were more positive about masturbation and registered less discomfort with infidelity.

Much of the Leger and Leger poll, however, suggests that Quebec is not quite the Sweden of North America.

Louise-Andrée Saulnier, a Quebec City sexologist who wrote commentaries for the book, said she was surprised that the poll shows 15 per cent of Quebecers either believe or are unsure whether masturbation leads to deafness.

"There's still an enormous amount of guilt surrounding masturbation," Saulnier said.

Regarding sexual fantasies, only about 50 per cent of those polled said they experience such things.

Asked where they made love most often, about 88 per cent of respondents cited the bedroom, while 2.9 per cent said "everywhere."

Other indicators in the survey commissioned by the Quebec magazine *7 Jours* pointed to a more energetic sex life.

The average period of time spent on foreplay was clocked at nearly 28 minutes. Being in love, though, cut down on the activity: those not in love with their partners reported an average of 35 minutes, as against 26 minutes for love-birds.

And the time duration of sexual relations averaged 46.2 minutes. (Curiously, male respondents reported the encounter lasting three minutes longer than did females.)

About seven per cent reported having sexual activities with more than one partner at the same time.

More than 48 per cent of respondents said they'd tried homosexual sex although only 4.4 per cent said they have been sexually attracted to a member of the same sex.

Romance rated big in the poll, with about three-quarters of Quebecers claiming to be in love.

Yet the province's Romeos and Juliets reported higher incomes and higher levels of education.

"It's not just a matter of the heart, it's also a question of money and education," Saulnier said.

The survey, conducted Sept. 10-19, is considered to be accurate 19 times out of 20 with an error rate of 3.1 per cent.

NOTE: The title *The Sexual Habits of Quebecers* does not currently (February, 1995) appear in the University of Waterloo Library catalogue, or in Whitaker's *Books in Print 1994*, or in *Canadian Books in Print 1994.*

The article EM9401 reprinted above is used in Chapter 1 of the STAT 231 Course Materials and in Figure 2.19b of the STAT 332 Course Materials.

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