



Mystery men: James Bond is legendary proof that dark-triad types are just as attractive in fiction as they are in reality.

Daniel Cleaver

Mr Wickham

Alfie

Rough appeal

There are two sides to every story but there are three sides to the bad-boy psyche. All of them should send women running in the opposite direction, says ELIZA BERN



IT'S a phenomenon that has led to the creation of a flock of clichés.

Nice guys finish last.

Treat 'em mean to keep 'em keen.

And now we have the walking, talking, tweeting, celebrity cliché of Rihanna and Chris Brown.

But it turns out that there is a science behind the notion that women are drawn to men who will, one way or another, cause them pain.

Human rights lawyer Arsalan Iftikhar is not the only person to have recently expressed surprise that Rihanna remains chummy with Brown.

But it turns out Rihanna may not be able to help it, because it is in her genes to like such men.

Many people have done their own research in the field of why not to date a bad boy, picking up the pieces of their own or a friend's broken heart.

Often they pull themselves together, only to fall again for the same type of man.

Dr Peter Jonason from the University of Western Sydney says the issue lies in the genes of the bad boy. This is where you can find the "dark triad", a cocktail of three personality types: narcissistic, Machiavellian and psychopathic.

None of these traits make for warm, fuzzy, happy ever-

FAMOUS BAD BOYS

FICTION

- **Don Juan**
- **Bond, James Bond**
- **Daniel Cleaver (*Bridget Jones's Diary*)**
- **Mr Wickham (*Pride and Prejudice*)**
- **Alfie (from *Alfie*, played by Michael Caine in 1966 and Jude Law in 2004)**

afters, but, when they come together in a man, something strange happens.

The self-obsession of narcissism, the thrill-seeking behaviour of the psychopath and the deceitful, exploitative nature of Machiavellianism equal sex appeal.

Unattractive as the combination might appear on paper, Jonason says women often equate it with masculinity and the ability to father strong, healthy children.

Intuition fails

It's a false equation, however, because dark triad men are not family fellows.

They tend to seek exploitative, short-term, self-gratifying relationships.

At a primal level, these men are raising their chances of

FOR REAL

- **Casanova (the 18th century inspiration for Don Juan)**
- **Chris Brown**
- **Russell Brand**
- **James Hewitt**
- **Charlie Sheen**
- **Colin Farrell**
- **David Boreanaz**
- **Mick Jagger**

passing their genes on to the next generation.

So how does a nice girl spot a dark triad, without a detailed psychological assessment?

They are "the rock stars, the dudes with the smouldering eyes at the bar, the strong, silent types", says psychologist Dr Nando Pelusi in *Psychology Today*.

"The template can morph, but the assessment is the same — the guy's got genes that make women weak in the knees, and the power and confidence that signal them," Pelusi says.

James Bond is the perfect example, Jonason says.

"He's clearly disagreeable, very extroverted and likes trying new things — new women, killing people."

Even if he's not physically dangerous but more of a charming, fun-loving rogue, a

dark-triad type can be so in love with his own social power that he will use and manipulate a lover for his own gain.

Is he aware of the consequences of his actions?

Probably not, Jonason says. "Having concern doesn't work out for them. They have a whole tool box of things that will help them be successful and empathy is not in that tool box."

It's not all bad, Jonason adds. These super powers of manipulation can help them get out of a speeding ticket or get a job they want, for example.

"It's about success. Everyone has some undesirable traits but we learn how to use them."

Happy endings?

If you do fall for a bad boy, don't expect him to change.

"We are not purely slaves to our genes but it takes a considerable amount of effort to overcome them," Jonason says.

So what becomes of the nice guy? Does he really finish last?

UK evolutionary psychologist Dr Gayle Brewer says that while women tend to like cads for flings, they usually settle down with more caring types.

Pelusi agrees: "The scoundrel gets the girl, but not for long. His roguish behaviour wins out. Either he moves on or she gets exasperated with his impulsiveness and pulls away."