

Students simulate marriage without ring

By ALAN KILLINGSWORTH
Special Correspondent

Chuck Hybarger and Mary Lou Percy are going to be married.

There won't be anyone saying "I now pronounce you man and wife."

There won't be any reception after the wedding. There won't even be a honeymoon.

Chuck and Mary Lou are just playing the "Marriage Game," which the TAMU Sociology Department offers.

"The game is designed to come as close as possible to real marriage," says Al Miranne, instructor of the game. "It simulates marriage without the emotion."

There is no actual marriage in the game. It is merely a group of people getting together and experiencing the trials and tribulations of marriage through paper work and interaction. Such things as leisure, sexual gratification, finance, security, job advancement, esteem and material goods give the game a sense of reality, Miranne says.

The participants must first have the textbook which contains decision forms, leisure forms and value forms. These forms allow the person to record his values for inspection by the other members of the group.

"A majority of the session is spent in filling out these forms," Miranne says. "When they're completed, the couples can evaluate their compatibility."

Each session is equal to one

year of marriage and as the semester goes on, the couple will continue to evaluate themselves. They assign new values, make new decisions and allow new leisure time. This permits them to continue to test their compatibility and to keep track of their individual changes.

For example, if last year (last session) the man valued esteem more than anything but has now received it through his job ad-

vancement, he may now place leisure at the top of his value list. The same goes for the mate. If their values change enough to affect their compatibility, chances are they will look for another spouse.

This presents another problem — divorce. As in real life, the male pays alimony and child support. The wife also has to look for other means of support or another spouse. It all ties in

to make for a realistic situation.

The sessions also allow people the chance to compare values and hobbies outside of their married units. Although this interaction often leads to marriage or friendships between the couples, it may also lead to adultery.

At the beginning of the game, each person is given 200 sex gratification cards. A couple must exchange an equal amount of these cards in order to main-

tain a meaningful sex life. If the male is unable to exchange as many cards with the female as she wishes, the female might have to go elsewhere for the sex she so highly values. The spouses of the adulterers will also know of the hanky panky when it comes time for the card exchange and their mates have too many or too few cards.

"The game is very difficult to learn," says Miranne. "It usu-

ally takes three sessions for things to really get rolling."

Even though the participants really didn't understand the full gist of the game, the first session went very smoothly.

Why would a student want to become involved in an activity such as this?

"It's a chance for me to learn what the economic problems of marriage are," Hybarger answers. "It's not the real thing,

but anything will help."

Hybarger is a psychology major at TAMU and says he also enjoys witnessing the interaction and the way participants handle problems.

Percy, a biology graduate student, says, "You learn a lot about yourself and about other people. One discovers things about himself that he doesn't like. You stand back and say, 'Do I want to be this way?'"

Bigfoot samples inhuman

Suspected "Bigfoot" hair and fecal samples are under study and a researcher says they are not human and don't match familiar animal life.

Dr. Vaughn Bryant Jr., anthropologist-botanist, is analyzing the samples from the Pacific Northwest in what he believes is the first comprehensive study of such material.

A recognized authority of prehistoric diet, pollen and fecal analysis, Bryant says, "The hair and feces are definitely not of human origin. And they do not appear to be from the animal life that usually inhabits such areas."

Both samples come from areas of reported sightings of Bigfoot, also known as Sasquatch.

Other hair and droppings were found in areas of sightings during the mid-1960s, but subsequent analyses were never made public, notes Bryant.

The coarse hair, about 10 inches long, is white or light blonde in coloring. While contrasting many reports of brown or black covering, some eyewitnesses have said the more elderly-appearing of the animals have a gray or white coat around the head.

In shape, the fecal samples resemble those of bear, horse or cattle, but are significantly larger.

Although often explained away as bears, imagination or a hoax, the zephyrous creatures, based on sighting reports and footprint casts, may reach a height of nine feet and could weigh up to 600 pounds.

Bryant says his preliminary studies rule out just about every area animal on the hair angle except for a horse, which may have left tail or mane hair on the fence in Northern California where the sample was found.

The hair is the only sample of the two directly accompanied by a report of a sighting.

It was discovered when a hiker allegedly started a Sasquatch which hurdled a fence as it ran. The person sped to the fence and found hairs about where the Bigfoot had jumped.

The hair was sent to Ed Anderson, then a student at Washington State University and now a University of Manitoba anthropologist, who forwarded it to Texas A&M.

Bryant has ruled out wolves, deer, elk, moose or bear as the hair source because of length. No cattle were in the area either.

"Hair is species specific," he explains. "Ridges along the edge of the hair are a major key in determining what species a Bigfoot would fall into. I can tell you this — the hair is not human although there are some similarities in the ridges."

Size of the feces almost rules out the usual animals and again Bryant is definite the sample is not human.

TAMU researchers received the sample from Dr. Grover Krantz of WSU, an associate of Bryant's and another pioneer researcher in the study of the creatures.

The droppings were found lodged in a streambed and it is possible the sample may have been reduced or changed in shape by the flowing waters. Bryant thinks the condition of the specimen indicates it did not wash very far.

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