



Staff photo by Eric Evan Lee

Half-time dates

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Men's voices more pleasing

Profs study 'ideal' voice

PHOENIX — Many women lower their voices as they try to succeed like men, say two Arizona State University professors — both women — who have researched "ideal" voices.

The professors questioned 387 college students from ASU and, to compare cultural effects, the Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara in Mexico.

They found the U.S. male has it easy. His ideal voice is almost a carbon copy of what those surveyed think of as ideal for all people, both male and female. It is low in pitch, medium in volume and somewhat slow.

These same people think the ideal female voice is medium in pitch and soft in volume.

So how does Jane Doe sound like an ideal female and sound ideal at the same time?

"I can choose," said Banisa Saint Damian, co-author of the

study with Carol Ann Valentine. "I can either confirm gender expectations and be medium in pitch or I can lower the pitch and maybe harm my voice."

The professors said U.S. voice preferences already show in women, broadcasters, who sound more and more like men.

"We're creating a new breed, a new ideal for woman going into the media," said Saint Damian. "Their looks are feminine but the sounds are slightly different than the ideal female voice. She's a cross breed. So we have a new image."

The researchers expect the public image to carry over to the public.

Valentine said recent articles say women's voices already are becoming like men's, just as regional dialects and accents are giving way to the homogenized speech of the media.

"The notion is that women are modeling their voices after

the women they see and hear in the media, as opposed to mothers, aunts and neighbor women," Valentine said.

In business settings, women have found they should lower their tone to get ahead, she said.

Ironically, just when the woman wants to sound most in control, her body works against her.

"The voice box is a muscle," Valentine said. "When you're nervous it tightens up. At the time we want to sound most knowledgeable and credible, our voice betrays us."

She said a man's voice may go up and still be in the "okay range," but "Women start at the top of the range and go up from there."

On the other hand, a woman can lower her voice too much.

"If a male lowers his voice to approach the ideal, it doesn't occur to anyone to write in that

the voice offends them," Saint Damian said. "When a female announcer sounds as if she has lowered her voice she doesn't sound feminine."

Also, if a woman speaks louder to conform to the general ideal voice, she may be suspect-

Soviets stay tough; deployment nearing

United Press International
NETHERLANDS — Western officials predict scant prospects for success at the Geneva talks on intermediate nuclear forces and believe the talks will collapse as a result of U.S. deployment of missiles in Europe at the end of the year.

Diplomatic sources said the Soviet position at Geneva appears to have hardened. They said Moscow now expects the deployment of cruise and Pershing-2 missiles to go ahead, and the Soviets are likely to walk out of the talks in protest.

A senior British official said the reactions of Soviet leader Yuri Andropov to Western proposals at the talks were "amazingly superficial," and that the Soviet negotiating position consisted almost entirely of "rhetorical ploys" to retard deployment.

Paul Nitze, the chief U.S. negotiator at Geneva, told NATO legislators at the North Atlantic Assembly in the Hague last week that there had been virtually no movement on the Soviet side since the talks began 22 months ago.

Nitze agreed that the three modifications to the basic Soviet position put forward by Andropov looked "potentially significant." These were to balance Soviet SS-20 intermediate-range missiles against the British and French nuclear arsenals, to count warheads instead of launchers as the United States wanted, and to "liquidate" missile systems made in excess by any agreement.

However, when the resulting practical consequences are examined, one finds little change in substance," Nitze said. "All variations of the Soviet position

would result in the same four principal outcomes as the original: A large SS-20 force in Europe, no countering NATO SS-20 deployments in the eastern U.S.S.R., and a drastic reduction in U.S. aircraft in Europe.

"This would leave, and is intended to leave, the U.S.S.R. as the only nuclear power on the European continent," Nitze said.

Western diplomats said there is no negotiating flexibility on the Soviet side as there was last summer when Nitze went for "walk in the woods" near Geneva with his Soviet opposite number, Yuli Kvitzinsky, and drew up the outlines of an agreement to be submitted to both governments. As Nitze noted, that initiative fell on "infertile ground."

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