

Opinion

Donna and Jessica tango, too

A female columnist recently wrote that she and other women were most angry at Gary Hart because of the hurt his out-of-wedlock flings caused Hart's wife, Lee.



Lewis Grizzard

I can go along with that. All we had to do was look at Lee Hart's eyes as she stood steadfastly by her husband to see her agony. An observer noted in my earshot, "Hart's troubles ain't over. If he thinks the press hounded him, imagine the hell he's catching from his wife."

What I wonder, however, is why there hasn't been more said about the character and morality of Hart's partner

in the recent scandal, blonde and sexy Donna Rice.

You can't commit adultery by yourself. At least, I don't think you can. (It would be a good way to avoid AIDS if you could.)

It isn't that Donna Rice is some teenybopper airhead whom Hart charmed aboard the yacht Monkey Business.

The woman is 29 years old, she knew full well Gary Hart was married, yet she was clearly a willing participant in whatever relationship they had, and she shouldn't get off so easily.

There used to be a word for women like Donna Rice back when I grew up. The word was "hussy," as in brazen.

It was used to describe women who were fast, loose and high-toned, and who hung around in beer joints and roadhouses, chewed excessive amounts



of gum and knew all the numbers for the songs on the jukebox by heart.

I have an even better example of

what a hussy was, and, I suppose, still is.

My late Uncle Frank was an attorney. Once he was representing a man in a divorce case. In his summation to the jury he said:

"Ladies and gentleman of the jury, let it be known that while my client, a brave, patriotic American, was fighting for his country on the bald hills of Korea, this woman here — his wife — was seen dancing on table tops at Shorty's Truck Stop in Chattanooga, Tenn., eatin' boiled eggs and drinking beer from a can."

The jury ruled for Uncle Frank's client. What else could they have done?

Jessica Hahn got off without a lot of damage, too, after it was revealed the PTL Club was paying her to keep quiet about fooling around with evangelist Jim Bakker.

Bakker lost his job and his reputation

as a result, but Jessica Hahn got the money and notoriety she would have never gotten otherwise. She'll probably write a book and wind up on *Donna*.

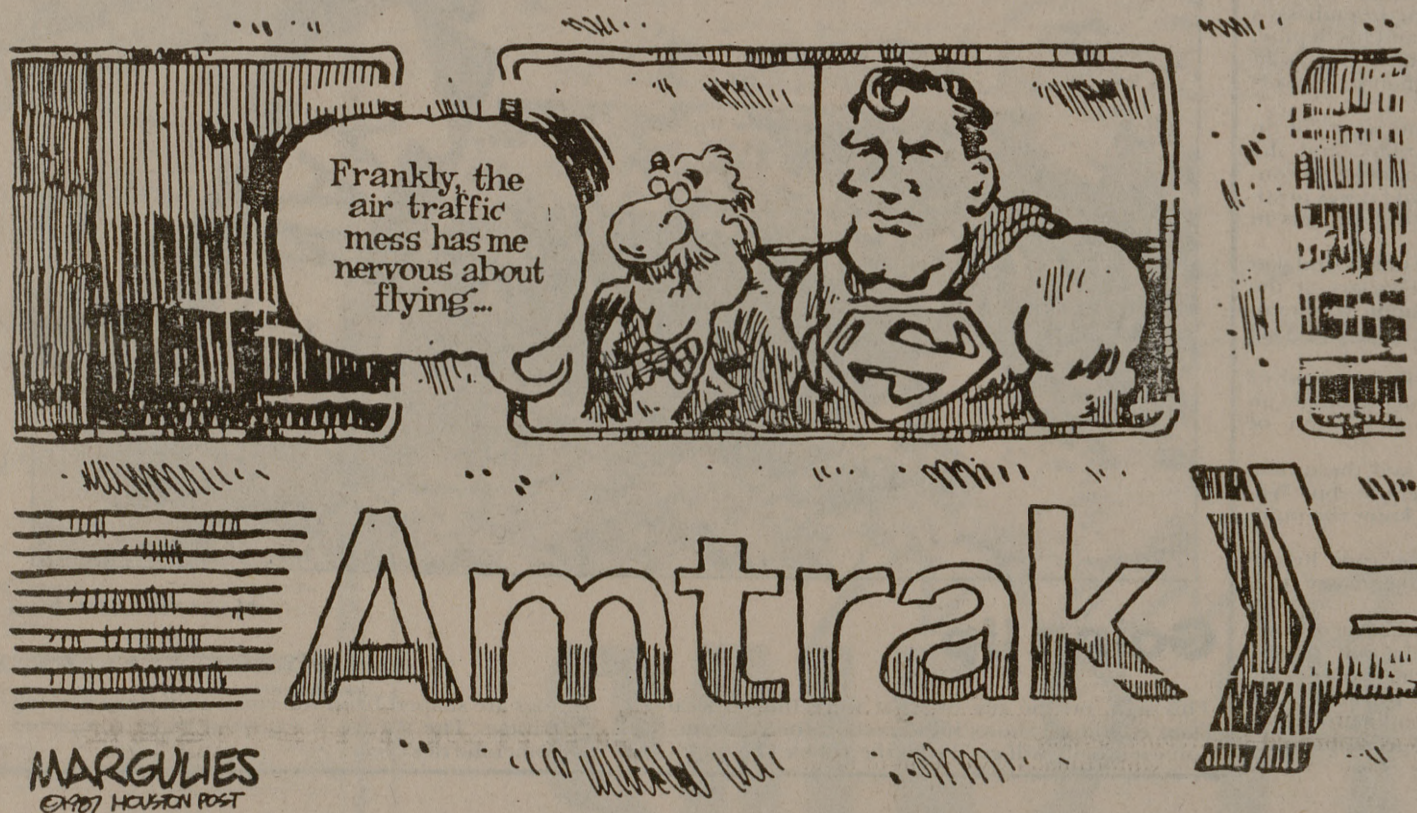
A reaction, or lack of reaction, on the other halves of the Hart and Bakker tangoes might be because we remain basically sexist society.

We howl and scream at Hart and Bakker because they are — or were — powerful men. But we ignore the partners as merely a couple of brags who were nothing more than sex for our villains.

And where does Jim Bakker's Tammy Faye, fit into all this? Not to be told. The FBI recently ordered take off all her makeup, and guess they found underneath all that

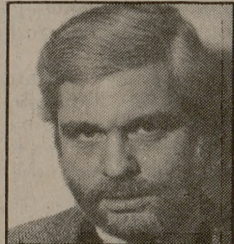
Jimmy Hoffa.

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Political facelift doesn't disguise Jackson's past

The cosmetics of politics have produced a new Jesse Jackson. Like the new Richard Nixon who seemed to come from right out of nowhere, or the new Gary Hart whose lust this time around was supposedly limited to restructuring the American economy, Jackson has reappeared with the political version of a face-lift. Behold the new candidate.



Richard Cohen

And the political community has responded with surgery of its own, a lobotomy. The rhetoric of Jackson's last campaign has been forgotten. The empathetic hug he gave PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has been purged from memory; the dash to Cuba in the middle of the 1984 campaign has been forgotten; and so, too, it seems was Jackson's moral collapse in the face of the anti-Semitism of political ally Louis Farrakhan. No mention of this from Louisiana Gov. Edwin Edwards, who has hinted he may endorse Jackson.

Much of this history, some of it repugnant, is supposedly obliterated by Jackson's standing in the polls. With the collapse of Gary Hart leaving a vacuum in the Democratic Party, Jackson has moved into the number-one spot. In all

polls, including some in Iowa, Jackson runs ahead of his rivals. We are told, explicitly or by suggestion, that it would be racist not to concede that Jackson is the front-runner.

And so, for what it is worth, he is. But it ain't worth much, and racism has nothing to do with it. The polls now measure little more than name recognition. (Some in the political community attribute Sen. Paul Simon's relatively high standing to the "Graceland Factor" — voters confusing him with the singer of the same name.) Of course, some of the reluctance to acknowledge Jackson as the front-runner has to do with race — although not necessarily with racism. It is simply not likely that a black person will be elected President in 1988. Acknowledging the reality of racism is not in itself racist.

But Jackson has handicaps that have nothing to do with race. He has never held public office of any kind. Presidential nominees almost always have been elected to lower office, and even those who had not, such as Dwight Eisenhower, had a record — in Ike's case, an unsurpassed one — in public service.

Jackson provides us with no standards by which he can be measured. His administrative abilities are basically unknown, and what we do know apparently doesn't say much for him: His various organizations, Operation

PUSH in Chicago, for instance, were hardly run with IBM-like efficiency, although self-help, community-based organizations almost never are. Jackson's 1984 campaign can be seen any way you want. It was either the most disorganized presidential campaign in American history or a Herculean effort by a candidate who had never attempted anything like it before.

Such a record — or lack of one — would handicap any candidacy. But in Jackson's case, it is a mere trifle. It is the record he has that is most troubling. Time and again he has marred what would otherwise be a refreshing and challenging political ideology with statements and actions that are repugnant. He is right, for instance, in maintaining that in the Middle East the Arabs, particularly Palestinians, have a case. But he goes too far. Surely the PLO has to be dealt with, but not haggled. It remains the killer of Leon Klinghoffer, among others.

Jackson vexes. Almost alone among the Democratic candidates, he combines passion and charisma. He is saying necessary things about both rural and urban poverty, and in foreign affairs his emphasis on human rights and justice is refreshing and quintessentially American. He is attempting to broaden his appeal and that, too, is good and healthy. But he is not someone new on the scene. We are under no obligation, either because polls proclaim him number one or because he has issued position papers galore, to forget what he has said and done.

For all presidential candidates, character is the paramount issue. Jackson is no exception. His toleration of anti-Semitism may have been a one-time mistake, and there are suggestions Jackson is trying to make amends. But a long campaign awaits all the candidates. Time, not polls or short memories, will determine if Jesse Jackson is a new and wiser man, or just cutting his clothes to suit this year's political fashions.

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Confessed mail-order junkie collects catalogs

I guess it all started when I sent in my cereal boxtops and 25 cents for a combination whistle-Green Hornet adjustable decoding ring with a hidden compartment for messages. At least, I think that's what it was.

Annette Austin
Guest Columnist

I must have been about 8 at the time, and that would have been my first mail-order purchase.

I don't think "mailing lists" had been invented yet, but I'll bet someone, somewhere, kept all those names and addresses, and when the computer age gave birth to mailing lists, the names and addresses of thousands of one-time 8-year-olds floated to the top of the list.

Today, 40 years later, I am still ruing that long-ago day. As is my postman, I'm sure.

Or my current postman. My mail probably has worn out about a dozen by now, and there doesn't seem to be any end in sight to the loaded mailbags. On a lark or a dare, I don't quite remember, beginning on Jan. 1, 1986, I saved all of the mail-order catalogs I received for one year.

That first day, there were 11 in the mail addressed to me at the office and another four in my mailbox at home. The year was off to an auspicious start.

On some days, believe it or not, I received only one. And there were even a few when I got none.

When the year ended, the boxes and cartons and sacks of catalogs were gathered together and counted — 709. Not the 14,729 I expected, but 709 catalogs makes for a respectable (and hefty) stack of magazines, large and small, square and oblong, full color and black-and-white. They run the gamut, from clothing to calendars, Christmas ornaments to cheesemaking.

Keep in mind, there are only specialty catalogs, not those put out by the large national department stores that we associate in our minds with catalog shopping. No Sears, no Wards, no Spiegel catalogs. Just the "specialty" ones.

It is obvious how it works. Mailing lists, I mean. For example, I ordered from one company a jigsaw puzzle showing King Ludwig's Castle in Bavaria in the wintertime. Beautiful aerial photo of the snow-encircled castle.

Somewhere, in the innards of someone's computer went the notation: "Annette Austin, Killeen, Texas, jigsaw puzzle" and my name and address went on a list of other puzzle fiends who had ordered by mail. That list then was sold to a jigsaw puzzle company which markets by catalog, and here came one more catalog whizzing my way.

That was a corker, by the way. It was full of intriguing puzzles, boasting fascinating and beautiful pictures and paintings and many with a very high degree of difficulty. For example, one puzzle had 15,000 pieces and came packaged in five parts that could be worked separately and then put together, or could all be dumped together for a stupendous challenge. The biggest challenge would be finding a place to work it — completed, it was 8 feet long!

But how in the world did I get on the mailing list of Northern Hydraulics Inc.?

I was flipping through this company's catalog when it arrived in the mail,

curious to say the least. I noticed single flange hubs are only \$11 each. Seems like a good price, except I wouldn't know a flange hub if it hit me on the nose. How did Northern Hydraulics find me?

Another fascinating catalog came way from Exeters. It is full of interesting items, such as a pogo stick for adults which sells for only \$99. Since the time I was on a flat and level bowling alley lane I fell and broke my leg in two places, I can just imagine what it is like to pogo stick that would go north and south.

There is a company called Hammacher Schlemmer. I love the name of this company, just the sound of it, and if I played golf, I would order items from their catalog, just to pay respects.

It is an intriguing item called The Schmeckenbecker Putter.

"This standard size golf putter is equipped for every occasion. A built-in compass helps you find your way on the rough, a candle illuminates the hole after dark; a rabbit's foot gives you luck; a level helps you read greens; an inch tape measure eliminates arguments over 'gimme' putts and an air horn commands silence or speeds up slow golfers. Has nonslip rubber handle and 4-inch head. \$39.95 postpaid. Unconditionally guaranteed."

Another catalog I enjoy is that put out by Sormani Calendars Inc. They came floating through the mail and really caught my eye with its unusual calendar topics: American opera companies, classic quilt designs, clouds, carousels, Albert Einstein, Guatemalan weavings, whales and artists ranging from Matisse to Monet from Gauguin to Renoir. Unfortunately, I can use only so many calendars — and I had already bought the new Star Trek calendar for the coming year, so I put the Sormani catalog away with a sigh.

Star Trek comes first.

Speaking of Star Trek, there's a whole industry out there for Trek and closet Trekkers. Books and collector's plates, patches and T-shirts, models and magazines designed, written and built and made for the Trek fan. Other sci-fi and/or fantasy television programs and movies past and present also are producing their own paraphernalia, but Star Trek seems to be holding onto its lead in the trade. For example, Intergalactic Trading Co. offers blueprints of a Klingon Starship, U.S.S. Enterprise and United Federation of Planets caps, Star Trek uniform patterns, patches and more along with "The Avengers" T-shirts, "Dr. Who" playing cards and "Rings of the Lost Art" posters.

But just about the the single most intriguing, most original, one-of-a-kind never-before-seen-in-stores specialty item I've ever seen was in a catalog buried somewhere in that stack of magazines, and I can't remember the name of the company.

The item was a leather pouch with perfectly balanced, computer-designed, uniformly colored and weighted skipping stones to take on your next picnic to the lake — a perfect gift for a member of today's throw-away disposable society.

An item whose only purpose is to throw away.

Annette Austin works for the Daily Herald.

The Battalion

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