

# Opinion

## 15 easy ways to improve your love life

*Editor's note: Mike Royko is on vacation. This column first appeared Dec. 6, 1978.*



Mike Royko

A sex advice magazine that I've never seen has sent me a publicity announcement about 15 ways we can improve our "love life" in the coming year. This list was compiled for the magazine by a woman identified as a "therapist."

I've heard a lot of interesting suggestions on ways to improve one's love life. But never from a magazine therapist. I usually hear them in the bar where I occasionally stop on the way home. So I stuffed the magazine list in my pocket and took it there with me to hear how some of the regulars would react.

"I have a list of 15 ways to improve your love lives," I said. "A magazine sent it to me."

Cicero Charlie looked up from his beer and said, "Is there anything in there about where to find a good divorce lawyer cheap? No? Then it can't help me."

I began reading the list.

Item One: Sleep in satin sheets.

"I tried that once," said Bernie, a city worker. "They're slippery and I kept sliding off the bed. The noise woke up the guy downstairs and he told me that if I kept it up, he'd punch me out. I don't see how getting punched out is going to help my love life."

Item Two: Tell your lover what you love about him or her every day.

After a few moments of thought, Little George said: "Assuming that means my wife, since I don't have a lover, what I love about her is that she does a good job shoveling snow. I have a bad back, see. But even if I didn't have a bad back, she'd do it anyway because she's strong as a bull. But I can't tell her that every day because it doesn't snow every day."

Item Three: Arrange to meet your lover in a singles bar and pick each other up.

Chester the car salesman said: "That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. If I went to a singles bar, what would I want to pick my wife up for? In fact, why would anyone want to pick my wife up?"

Bernie the city worker said: "But if you went to a singles bar, who would pick you up?"

Chester thought about that and said: "Yeah. So we might as well stay home and order out for a pizza."

Item Four: Brush and wash each other's hair.

"Not me," said Little George. "I read about a guy who let his wife wash his hair. One day she got his whole head down in the water, and she didn't ever let him up. She said she just wanted to be sure it was well rinsed, and she beat the rap."

Cicero Charlie said: "My wife won't trust me that close to her with a blunt instrument like a brush in my hand. Not if she's smart, she won't."

Chester the car salesman said: "I'll be honest, we do something like that now. I got two hair pieces, and sometimes she drops one of them off to be cleaned. But it's not something that turns us on. She won't even touch it. I have to put it in a plastic bag first. She says it reminds her of a rat."

Item Five: Make love blindfolded

Warren the bartender said: "That's the most dangerous idea I've ever heard. You start chasing each other around the bedroom blindfolded and you could fall out the window without your pants on. And if you didn't break your neck, the neighbors would think you're a weirdo."

Item Six: Describe your favorite sexual fantasy in explicit detail.

That brought a response from Norbert the Norwegian, who had been listening quietly as Norweigans often do. "Believe it or not, I once did that with

my wife. I described this favorite fantasy I had down to the last bead of sweat."

"Was it a turn-on?" asked Chester the car salesman.

"No," said Norbert. "Just the opposite. She didn't talk to me for a month. The fantasy was about three of her girlfriends."

Item Seven: Wear erotic underwear.

"I'll start wearing erotic underwear," said Cicero Charlie, "when Sears, Roebuck starts making long winter underwear that's erotic."

Little Ernie said, "You could always buy their regular long underwear and have it dyed black."

"What would be erotic about that?"

"Well, you'd look something like a Navy frogman. You could jump out of the bathtub at her."

Item Eight: Don't wear underwear at all.

"I think it's indecent not to wear underwear," said Chester.

"Even at home in bed?" asked Little Ernie.

"That's right," said Chester. "What if there was a fire and you didn't have time to get dressed? How would you feel running out of your house without any underwear on in front of the firemen? And would you want firemen seeing your wife that way?"

"No," said Little Ernie, "they'd probably go on strike."

"My mother always told me to wear clean underwear," said Norbert Norweigan. "She said that in case of an accident, you don't want to be embarrassed at the hospital."

Item Nine: Give your lover a massage.

"Yeah, I wouldn't mind giving wife a massage with my foot," said Cicero Charlie. "With both feet and my boots on."

Item Ten: Send your lover letters on perfumed stationery, or letters in unexpected places.

"My wife leaves me notes on kitchen table," said Chester. "They things like: 'Take out the garbage.' 'Drop off the cleaning.' But she does put perfume on them. Maybe I'll leave her a perfumed note saying: 'Take the garbage yourself.'"

We skipped the rest of the items, cause some of them were too lowly respectable bar.

"Who made up that list?" asked Cicero Charlie.

"A lady therapist."

"Yeah? That woman needs help." Copyright 1987, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

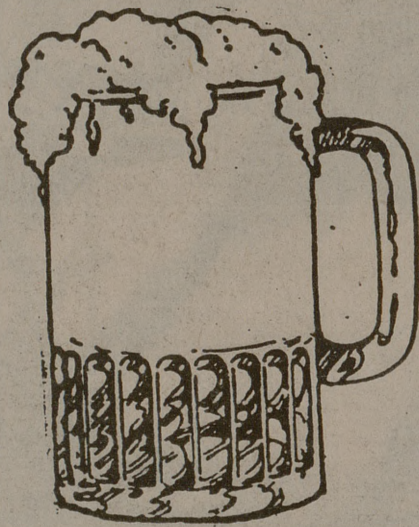
## Aversion to beer creates stigma for native Texan

Many people don't consider me a real Texan. It really doesn't matter that I was born here, specifically on Galveston Island. It doesn't matter that I have only left the state on rare occasions, vacations and such. I am not a real Texan because I don't drink beer.

Lee Schnexneider  
Guest Columnist

I guess beer goes along with the Texas mystique. You know — cattle, horses and cowboys. But I wonder how many cowboys of the Old West, after riding the range all day, came back to a chuck wagon with a cooler filled with cans of Bud Light. And of course there is the other analogy; Texans love football, people drink beer when watching football, so therefore Texans love beer. Or is it the other way around?

I have heard the sermons of the beer-preachers, who have been trying convert me to their ways for years. You'd be surprised how many friends of mine still pour me a drink from a pitcher and give me a glass of that foul brew. When I remind them I don't drink beer, they accuse me of being from out of state. Even worse, they accuse me of being a Northeasterner. They lecture me on what it is to be a Texan. You must drink beer, like cowboy boots, and be willing to die for Texas independence. So I guess that makes me only two-thirds Texan. But when I tell them I like whiskey, they seem to calm down a bit.



I guess it comes from my father; he rarely drinks and doesn't like most beer. So there was never any in my house when I was growing up, which is strange, because he worked at the Falstaff brewery in Galveston for ten years. But considering how Falstaff beer tasted, that's not surprising.

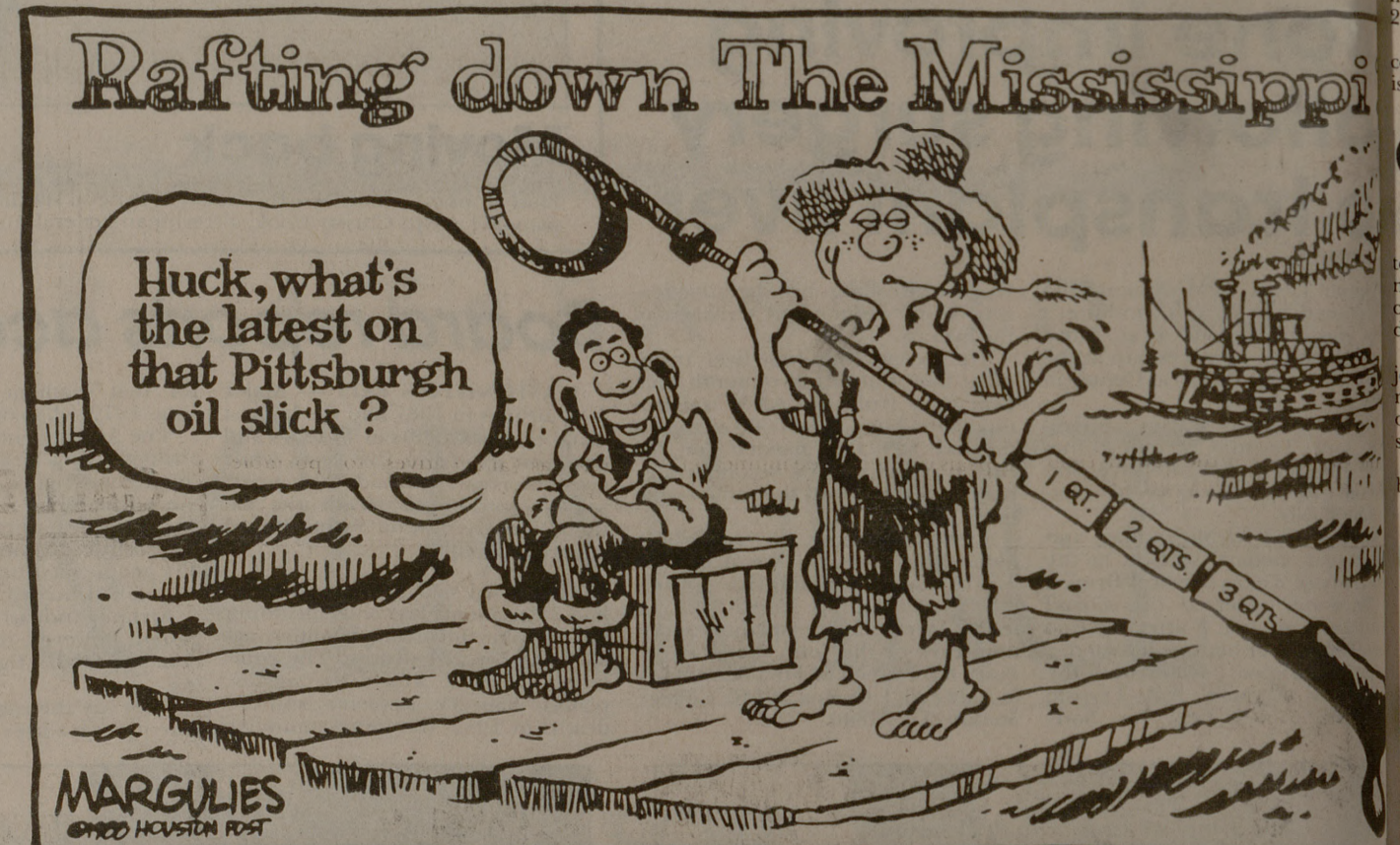
They say that beer is an acquired taste. I guess I just never acquired it. And why do I think beer tastes so bad? Well, when I was in high school, I did experiments with alternate energy sources. Alcohol fuel was one of them. Honestly, I wasn't making the stuff to drink. I didn't know how to get those killer impurities out, and we used the excess to remove stains from concrete. But I remember the smell of the mash fermenting, and I don't drink stuff that tastes like a science experiment smells.

I can tolerate beer in low doses with limes, or in drinks like boilermakers and Dr. Peppers. (Not the soft drink Dr Pepper, but a mixed drink where you drop a shot glass filled with flaming amaretto and Barcardi 151 into a glass of beer and as soon as the fire is extinguished you chug the whole ungodly mess. Supposedly it tastes like the soda water Dr. Pepper.)

I didn't really notice the beer prejudice that much in high school, but in college it became immediately apparent, especially since college students are perpetually poor, and beer is the cheapest thing with alcohol in it short of Mad Dog 20/20. And I do have to bring my own alcohol to keg parties instead of mooching beer off the hosts.

To show you just how disloyal I am to this Texan beer-drinking concept, I christened my Aggie senior ring by downing a pitcher of red wine coolers. I guess my excommunication papers from the governor will be coming soon.

Lee Schnexneider is a senior journalism major assistant editor for At Ease.



## Congress should not reduce funding for the space station

With two recent hardware failures occurring on the space shuttle booster, coupled with severe budget cuts in the proposed space station program and sagging public confidence in NASA, it seems that America's space program is stymied. Myopic opponents of the space station argue that the \$8 billion, 10-year project is expensive and unnecessary. They fail to see that the space station is justifiable on long-term economic, strategic and political grounds.

John MacDougall

Every day the shuttle sits idle on the ground; the United States is losing its competitive edge in space technology to the Soviet Union. Without a space station and an operational shuttle to support it, the U.S. space program will be overshadowed by the Soviets' efforts. The Soviets successfully have operated several versions of space stations for a few years and recently returned a cosmonaut to Earth after a record-breaking stay in space. They have cleverly used their lead position in space as a publicity tool to promote international space cooperation in preparation for the "International Space Year" in 1992. The Soviets see the value of a space station not only as a vehicle to help bring about scientific achievements, but also as a magnet for polarizing public opinion by utilizing the station as a celestial United Nations.

While the Soviet bureaucrats have been enjoying good press about the Mir station, Japan has been working hard to

create its own space program. Japan hopes to manufacture products in space. By year 2000, the Japanese government plans to spend more than \$40 billion to commercialize space. They already have successfully launched rockets from Japan. If U.S. space station funding goes through the Japanese will build a space-processing module that will be attached to its U.S. and European counterparts.

What the Japanese are beginning to understand, and what many Americans have known all along, is that — in the long run — space exploration pays off. Historically NASA research has led to great advances in science and technology. Many of these achievements have been incorporated into "spin-off" items we use every day. These include Velcro, aerodynamic automobiles and planes, home insulation, speedy semiconductors and calculators. And the list goes on.

Space is a long-term investment. Though some of the benefits are tangible in the short run, in terms of dollars and cents, many others are immeasurable in the long run. Because of this, a cadre of politicians wants to torpedo the space station. Congress, slashing programs from the budget, is stalking programs that currently lack popularity or strong partisan support. With no solid backing from the Reagan administration the space station went through the funding shredder in December. The House and Senate appropriation committees axed the space station budget to \$425 million in 1988, \$300 million less than NASA originally requested. Some expect the cuts to delay the space station by at least a year, and who knows what reductions are in store for fiscal 1989.

Washington dealmakers could jeopardize the entire space station program if they decide to cut the budget from Congress and the administration, in attempt to reduce the federal budget deficit, will exact a high toll from American people — their national pride. It seems like centuries ago when Americans looked to their space program as a symbol of national achievement. President Kennedy gave the mandate to reach the moon by the end of the '60s. We did it and a lot more, somewhere along the way, many Americans became distracted. We are so overwhelmed with the threat of nuclear rising unemployment, huge deficit war in Central America and the on Wall Street that we have become short-sighted.

Our nation mourned when our astronauts perished in the Challenger two years ago. But our dreams of space exploration haven't vanished with the death of the shuttle. The space station once again give us a chance to look the stars with pride. It is in the national interest to fully fund the estimated billion it will cost to complete the station during the next ten years. By the 1990s, the space station could be operational — manned 24 hours a day, 365 days year. The station will ensure that America maintains its competitive lead in space technology. The space station will pay the United States and lies back by providing facilities for searching and experimenting with technologies that one day will benefit mankind.

John MacDougall is a graduate student and a columnist for The Battalion.

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