

Modern romanticism

Students lose focus in search for perfect relationships

Columnist



Joshua Hill
 Sophomore
 English major

characters. People too often make the mistake of jumping into a relationship, before they know who they are.

The goal is to have a life-long relationship, a goal for which maturity is needed.

A second principle of courtship is to save marriage for marriage.

The abstinence movement has gained popular support recently as the only certain way to avoid venereal diseases and AIDS, but abstinence also makes the marriage relationship truly special. Ads promoting safe sex are appreciated, but they approach the issue as a science experiment. Sex is not just a physical activity.

A psychology degree isn't needed to know that old flames leave scar tissue. Douglas Wilson, in his article "Wake Up, Little Suzy," criticizes the modern dating system for encouraging "emotional promiscuity."

This term refers to the natural tendency to form emotional attachments to someone during the dating process, ties that bind people before they really know one another.

The courtship ideal is for people to preserve themselves, emotionally and physically, for their mates. Otherwise, both parties come into the relationship as damaged goods.

The third major part of courtship is the preservation of commitment.

Dr. Ted Stachowiak, associate director for the Student Counseling Service, said relationships have three different parts: intimacy, passion, and commitment. Intimacy is how well the people know one another. Passion is the "spark." Commitment is the decision of the will to stick with the relationship.

If dating is indeed practice for marriage, one of the key elements of marriage is not being practiced at all. In fact, the commitment element is severely weakened by the modern dating system.

"At the very least, this system is as much a preparation for divorce as it is for marriage," Wilson said.

Mark Day, head of Texas A&M Navigators and long-time relationship counselor, said dating can be used as a social activity, especially group-dating. But dating is a limited activity when it comes to finding a mate because people are putting their "best foot forward," being consciously or subconsciously dishonest.

Stachowiak said although

the painful trial and error system is necessary, every person is not an island.

Students can learn from older generations, from their parents' marriage, what is and is not desirable on both sides of the relationship.

The study of history and its principles is the key to not repeating its darker side.

The courtship system takes care of all areas of a relationship.

Unlike dating, courting cannot be done cold-turkey.

Males and females who have known one another through the same groups and interests over a long period of time are prepared for courtship.

By such time, intimacy should be well established. Discussion of more private matters can be discussed near or in a group of friends. A group of true friends should be the arena for discussion of any topic.

Passion does not have to be practiced; it's either there or not.

Commitment is an act of the will, not dependent on the other elements of the relationship.

Dating has been around since cars came to take kids from parents and has always been an abused freedom.

Courtship is true romance: pure partners, mature spouses, and people disciplined and unselfish enough to be real lovers.

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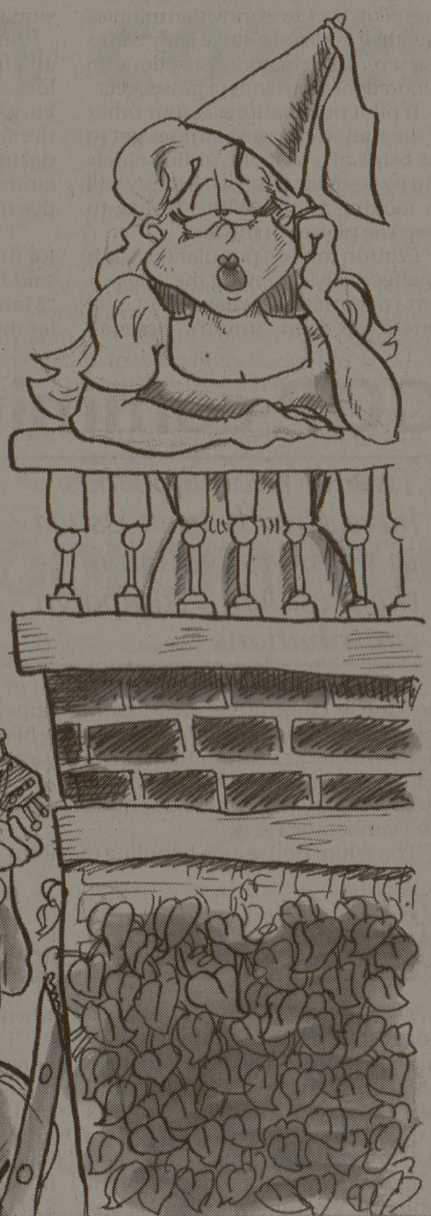
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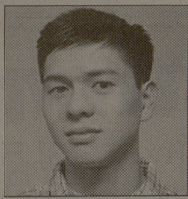
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Job competition creates bitter rivalry

Columnist



Travis Chow
 Computer science
 graduate student

• Suavus No Credentiali. This group is a close cousin to the brown-nosers, except they exhibit more pride and composure. Intimidation is their primary weapon.

Through their debonair demeanor, they attempt to hide their lack of credentials by discouraging competitors through pretension. Rico suaves move in slow motion, never maintaining eye contact. When their tactics succeed, the effects are devastating — especially when a qualified candidate thinks the job is already taken.

Others who see through the pretension easily trample over the unqualified suavus.

• Nervous Wreckus. These creatures are marked by their sweaty palms, unnecessary trips to the restroom and occasional clumsiness. Unlike the rico suavus and the brown-nosers, this group does not and cannot rely on their first impression to win the job. Despite their uncontrolled anxieties, they usually have competitive qualifications. Nervous wrecks may actually impress the recruiter since their behavior fulfill the recruiters' expectations of a rookie college kid. They should, however, learn to mitigate their anxieties because others will take advantage of this easily identifiable trait.

• Rambulus Capitus (a.k.a. talking heads). This group consists of individuals with diverse motives and backgrounds. The only distin-

guishing trait is their nonstop chitter-chatter about nothing. Bringing up irrelevant topics ranging from their dogs to the latest episode of Seinfeld, domination of conversation is their primary weapon. The talking heads are motivated by factors similar to the first three groups: smooching, lack of credentials and nervousness. Others, including the recruiter, view them as extremely disruptive.

• Credentiali Rex. These creatures rely on their resumes to open doors. They carry into the recruiting arena a sparkling set of credentials, usually including a breathtaking grade point ratio. Although they gleam at everyone else with confident eyes, their shortcomings with people skills frequently inhibit their long-awaited moment of glory. Their primary weapon is their silent but deadly maneuvers toward the on-site interviews. Others often try to mimic their confidence, but these imitators should realize their own selling points may lie elsewhere.

Every spring semester, eager employers and anxious students converge at the Career Center for a two-month session of intense courting. Companies woo students with the glamour of success, while Aggies fight with one another for the perfect job. In the midst of such thick competition, the five personalities described above will reveal themselves. When stress and ambition push us to the limit, we often reveal our "other side." Jeff Holloway, a senior business analysis major, shares his job-hunting experience.

"It's a jungle out there," he said.

People want three things out of college: a good time, a good mate and a good job. Unfortunately, we have over 40,000 students competing for the same peas in the pod. While the 12th Man spirit makes Aggies a team during football games, the one-man spirit of competition often brings out the worst in us.

At recruiting events, the competition for a good job transforms many Aggies into different creatures. For the benefit of both the underclassmen, who will seek employment, and the upperclassmen, who are already looking, provided below is a taxonomist's guide to these "creatures."

Under the family of college recruits are the genus species, each characterized by their behavior during career fairs, business dinners and interviews.

• Glutemus Maximus Smoochus. This distinct group is marked by their nonstop raises toward the recruiters and the institutions they represent. Complete memorization of company trivia is their primary weapon. As well-dressed individuals, they combine useless knowledge with a sustained smile to gain the recruiter's favor immediately. Although their tactics often backfire, the lasting impression they make sometimes gets them the job. Others view them as annoying and desperate.

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MAIL CALL

Valentine's Day has lost its true meaning

In regards to David Boldt's February 14th article, "Valentine's Day neglects the lonely":

Valentine's Day has always been and probably will always be one of my favorite holidays. You may ask how this could be considering the fact that at 8 years old, I certainly did not have a "significant other" to celebrate it with. Actually, I did what every other normal student in my elementary school did; I gave valentine cards to my friends. You know, friends...those people you love that have laughed with you, cried with you, fought with you and, still loving you, have come back for more. I can still recall the smiles and hugs I was rewarded with in high school. That's right, High School, when I gave valentine cards to my friends. I'm talking pieces of paper with lollipops taped to them...but given with a whole lot of love. That's what Valentine's Day was all about the last time I checked...love.

David Boldt is right about one thing. The privilege of having someone special is a gift from God which should never be taken for granted. Boldt says that for some students, "that warm, fuzzy feeling has yet to reach their hearts." Well maybe if they would stop whining and stop moping and start looking around, that feeling would reach their hearts. I doubt any Aggie at this campus lacks someone special in their life. Stop taking your friends for granted. Valentine's Day was set aside to celebrate love, not just love between a man and a woman, but love between friends and love within families. Both of these are also precious gifts from God which should not be taken for granted.

Carol Ann Kovach
 Class of '00

Laboratories provide education essentials
 Response to Kate Shropshire's Feb. 14th column, "Math, science labs waste students' time."

I thought I'd write in and express

some concern. Sure, Maple labs ARE totally worthless. I'll give ya that, but science labs? I'm not so sure. Science labs are tedious, and write ups suck, but I'd say it's a little hasty to be rid of them. All the science classes that I have taken have had completely mind-numbing lectures, and the Teaching Assistants and labs were where I really learned how all that stuff was supposed to work.

Brendan Hannigan
 Class of '98

While I can not speak for the math labs, I can assure you that in chemistry, that is not the case.

True, in the real world, there are instruments that make life easier. However, these instruments are meaningless without a background in the concepts they represent. If one does not know what the end-point of a titration looks like or means, then the instrument has served no purpose. Also, instruments break and the what? One would be in terrible trouble in the could not do anything by hand. And, what if no one was educated in the "by hand" methods, who would be able to develop new equipment?

I believe chemistry labs are vital to a college education. For some, they may only serve as a reinforcement of concepts learned in lecture. But, for others, the possibilities are endless. So, ignore the goggle marks on your face and give lab a chance. You may be surprised by what you learn.

Terra Dassau
 Graduate Student

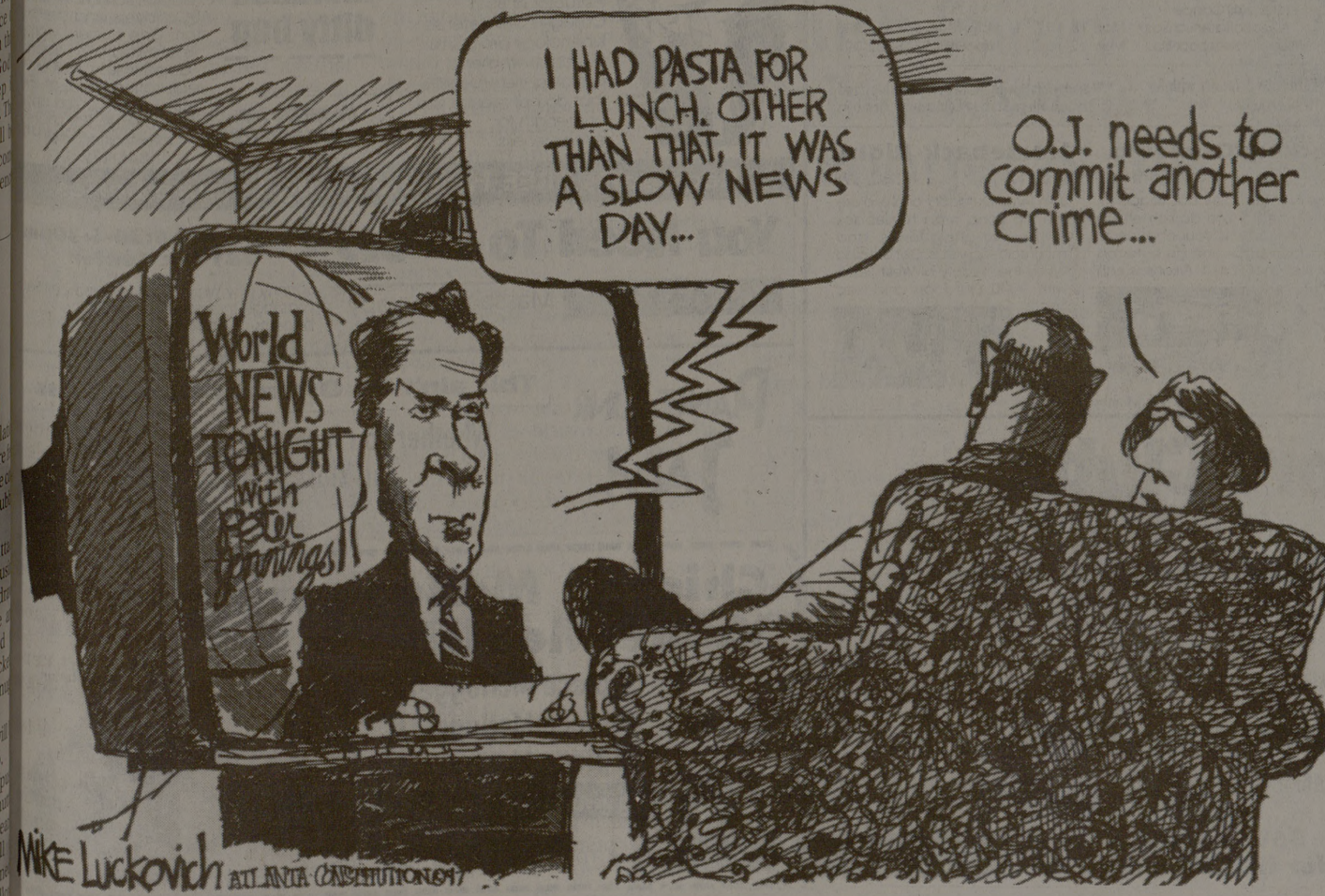
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