

# Giving love a bad name

## When seeking companionship, men and women exhibit desperate behavior

What leads individuals to desperation? Finding a mate. Essentially, they are in search for an ideal partnership. When this search becomes particularly challenging, men and women often times resort to desperate tactics to inspire or enhance their search.

Both genders equally contain the ability to become desperate for partnership and sex. However, when a man is desperate, it is perceived differently than when a woman is desperate.

It is more acceptable for a man to be desperate. It almost takes on a different connotation. Unfortunately, based on social consciousness, sometimes it is believed women win the most desperate award.

This is an absurd generalization that is not representative of all women. It is a handful of desperate women who discolored the rest.

Not all women are so bothered by rejection or their need of companionship that they become hopeless.

Yet, every hour of every day, someone is soliciting through a want ad, paying for sex or going to other extremes to find a significant other.

These tactics are degrading and pathetic for both men and women. Popular tactics include his and her want ads, similar to, "six foot blonde aerobics instructor looking for a HOT HOT HOT polo jock in his 50s."

These want ads are highly desperate but extremely selective. The searcher should be disillusioned to how incredibly sexy this appears to a potential searchee. Modern-day mail order brides, a tactic controlled via Internet or magazine sometimes appeal to the loveless who see the romantic value in rescuing a timid creature from the depths of despair.

And there also is the age-old profession of prostitution often ventured when desperation persists.

This summer an event occurred that gave new meaning to hopelessness in finding a companion for both sexes.

This event illustrated just what lengths people would go to for bachelor parties and bouquets.

David Weinlick, a Minneapolis, Minn. resident set June 13, 1998, as his wedding date. However, he did not have an intended bride at the time.

As the date approached, Weinlick asked his friends to find a wife for him.

His pals devised a national search to interview women to become Mrs. David Weinlick. These women were to go through screening processes to marry a man they had never met.

Applications were printed and Web sites were designed to find the "lucky" girl. There were thousands of inquiries. These women completed their applications to parade through a pageant of sorts judged by a panel of 50 family members and friends.

This event caught local media attention, blossomed

into national attention and ultimately the selling of rights for a movie. Weinlick also was a guest on several talk and news shows, such as "The Today Show" and "CBS Morning News."

After careful consideration, the bride was chosen and Elizabeth and David Weinlick were married in front of 3,000 spectators and guests at the Chapel of Love at the Mall of America in Minnesota.

The Chapel of Love is conveniently located in a shopping center of gargantuan proportions (it is one of the largest in the world).

What about a man could make a woman this desperate? What about women could make a man this desperate?

The applicants' desire for married life landed them in an exploitative contest. Weinlick's desire for married life pushed him to senseless solicitation. The applicants subjected themselves to judgement by a point system. Weinlick and women voluntarily entered themselves into a sorry display of desperation, at the mall, nonetheless.

Perhaps there are a variety of reasons for this type of desperate behavior.

For example, according to a June 13 article printed in a Forbes poll in Time Magazine, 95 percent of British men

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ages 20 to 34 said they'd rather watch World Cup soccer on TV than have sex with the woman of their dreams.

This silly overtone of, "I am jock hear me roar," possibly frightens women and encourages them to desperately entice their partners to a match of roaring in the bedroom.

At this point both men and women are terribly foolish for this.

Regardless, in this day and age, individuals should wrestle with their need for companionship.

Succumbing to desperate measures only means losing your dignity. It is widely known that it is tough searching for people to meet and finding places to meet them. However, don't disrespect or degrade yourself by resorting to these options to find a mate.

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columnist



# Issue of church and state causes differences of opinion

Many times, in many different forums, it has been asserted that

Americans not only are complete idiots, but are arrogant idiots to boot. Although it is not the place

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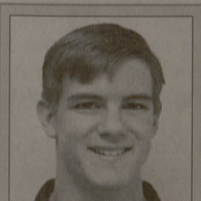
constitutional doctrine of separa-

tion of church and state. Ameri-

cans lack understanding about an

issue that cuts to the heart of

their daily lives.



CHRIS HUFFINES  
columnist

quately tell why they feel as they do.

The division between separationists and nonpreferentialists exists because of the wording of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution. It reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establish-

ment of religion." To the separationist, that means, in plain English, "Congress cannot and will not make a law that affects religion." To the nonpreferentialist, it means, "Congress cannot and will not make a law that in any way helps a religion at the expense of the others."

The more observant readers will have noticed the little problem with the duality of the word "establishment."

Now, the average American knows why his or her position exists as such, but he or she still does not understand why he or she holds his or her position.

Enter the Supreme Court, nine people paid to interpret the Constitution for America. The Court has, since the 30's, been not only liberal, but also separationist. Only with the Reagan nominees has the Court begun reversing itself.

So, like just about every other opinion Americans follow, the entire issue of separation of church and state boils down to the little donkey or the little elephant. The origins of the image of the arrogant, idiotic American are starting to become more apparent.

However, the Supreme Court has handed down more than a few rulings in the last few decades which have shed a little light on the issue while simultaneously muddying the water. The Supreme Court excels at that.

In *Lemon vs. Kurtzman* (1971), Chief Justice Burger stated, "Some relationship between government and religious organizations is inevitable. ... Fire inspections, building and zoning regulations and state requirements under compulsory school-attendance laws are examples of necessary and permissible con-

tacts. ... Judicial caveats [warnings] ... must recognize that the line of separation, far from being

a 'wall,' is a blurred, indistinct and variable barrier depending on all circumstances of a particular relationship."

In *Engel vs. Vitale* (1962), Justice Douglas said, "The First Amendment leaves the government in a position not of hostility to religion but of neutrality."

These two statements would lead the reader to believe the role of the government is to simply interact with religion only when it absolutely has to, to benefit individuals and society.

In this case, the reader would be correct. In *Lemon vs. Kurtzman*, the Court originated a three-pronged test. If a law (1) has a secular purpose, (2) has a primary effect that neither advances nor inhibits religion and (3) does not unnecessarily entangle government with religion, it is OK constitutionally. Otherwise, it gets struck down.

This test takes the issue outside the realm of just the government and the church and instead reviews it in the light of how separation of church and state affects society.

This review can be difficult, but it takes the issue outside of the knee-jerk universes of the separationists and nonpreferentialists.

Where the reader wishes to draw the line of entanglement, primary effects, and the other points of the issue is the reader's own business.

However, by examining the issues, not with the rose-colored magnifying glasses provided by the Democrats and Republicans, but with his or her own two eyes, the reader can come to a conclusion that is uniquely his or her own, end equally, if not more, valid than the party lines.

It is not coincidence that this thinking requires humility and intelligence, not arrogance and idiocy.

Americans have, for 40 years, shared a common dream of eliminating stereotypes by empowering those who are degraded by them. It is time to begin thinking and eliminate this one.

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# Media's lack of ethics erodes integrity, professionalism

Every time a newspaper is opened, a magazine is read, or a newscast is shown, the public places its trust in the media's hands.

This trust seems to be increasingly eroding, though, fueled by the discovery of numerous cases of unethical practices within major media organizations.

The most alarming of these is the story reported by both CNN and Time that claimed that U.S. commandos used a highly potent nerve gas to kill American defectors on a mission to Laos during the Vietnam War.

The story was retracted after CNN hired media attorney Floyd Abrams to investigate its report that came under attack by the Pentagon and Vietnam veterans. CNN admitted "serious faults" in their coverage and said their "system of journalistic balances broke down."

CNN and Time had collaborated on the story for the recently launched TV newsmagazine bringing the two forces together, entitled "Newsstand." The nerve gas story was heavily hyped by CNN, partly because CNN/USA President Richard Kaplan was pushing "Newsstand" as a way to improve poor ratings for the station that is facing increased competition from other 24-hour cable news outlets.

That drive to merely boost ratings amid fierce competition may

begin to explain why a story that was researched for eight months could culminate in the firing of the senior producer, April Oliver, another producer and the reprimanding of the reporter covering the story, Pulitzer Prize winner Peter Arnett.

Although Arnett was the main reporter for the nerve gas story, part of his defense was that he contributed little to the story. He said Oliver and others did most of the background work for the story, noting that he was in Baghdad during the time it was being researched.

In fact, he did not write any of the Time magazine article on the mission, although it carried his byline along with Oliver's.

His chief duty was to ask scripted questions on camera of people involved who already had been interviewed.

Since when do journalists blindly walk into a story that others have pieced together for them?

That is a perfect example of why journalists are losing their credibility, and it is just one in a sequence of journalistic missteps that have been occurring lately. Boston Globe columnist Patricia Smith, who was a Pulitzer Prize columnist, was fired after it was discovered that she fabricated some of her work.

New Republic associate editor Stephen Glass was fired after he confessed that he fabricated part of a story. The New Republic said 27 of his 41 columns in the past three years contained embellished material.

What has led to this degeneration of journalistic integrity? Besides the obvious problems that can come from leaving the back-

ground research to others (as Arnett found), there are other faults that lie within the structure of the media itself.

Journalists today are faced with a barrage of competition. The Internet and cable TV have created more media outlets, but the audience numbers have stayed the same. Also, business mergers have resulted in incestuous relationships between magazines and television shows. The "Newsstand" show on CNN for instance, works with the magazines Fortune, Entertainment Weekly and Time.

What sets the CNN story apart from the rest is that the nerve gas report could not necessarily be considered fabricated.

According to Abrams, the journalists involved deeply believed the story. Oliver still defends the report as being true, even after being fired.

It does not appear to be a malicious effort by the media to misinform the public. Instead it seems as if journalists are trying in earnest to uncover injustice and scandal in order to score a journalistic coup and in the process are sacrificing their credibility.

Considering all this, why should the public trust the media? Because the media carries the responsibility of informing the public in the most fair way possible, it would be a disaster for society to not be able to rely on journalists.

The CNN retraction should serve as a wake up call to the field of journalism.

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