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Finding real love, says this prominent psychologist, means abandoning often unrealistic emotional expectations

The Pitfalls of "Romantic" Love

Condensed from "FINDING INTIMACY" HERBERT G. ZEROFF

THE COLLAPSE OF LOVE, prolonged or sudden, sends couples into a tailspin. Hurt, angry and frustrated, one partner recoils and says the words that supposedly end a relationship: "I don't love you anymore." But contrary to popular belief and poets' immortal words, this sentence can signal the beginning of a solid bond, one in which intimacy is found.

I am not an enemy of romantic love. It makes us all feel good to both express and receive it. But it is frequently vaporous and empty, especially when combined with unrealistic hopes. Like paramours in a Russian novel, partners who pursue this fantasy never seem to find each other. Romantic love—often un-

Herbert G. Zeroff, director of the Marriage and Family Institute of Charlotte, N.C., has been a marriage counselor for 20 years.

requited and bittersweet—can confuse the real meaning of caring. Here's why:

"Love" is unrealistic. A scene with two lovers silhouetted on a beach walking hand in hand in the sunset conveys all the idealism of romantics. But people don't live together that way, except on holiday. Rather, they are at close quarters, where they can see each other's pimples, wrinkles and sags. The romantic vision only separates partners further, since they try to grasp a mirage rather than the real person. The dream must be relinquished in order to enjoy the real thing.

Even in 20th-century America, a nation known for its pragmatic genius, people are beguiled by the magic of love. But finding real love means abandoning the mystique of romantic love. What are the qualities

you enjoy in each other? Hold on to those as a basis of contact for both of you. The here and now can bring pleasant experiences. Then love takes on known realities, and liking, caring and sharing become part of intimate concerns.

Love expects too much return. Whether intentionally or not, "love" seduces couples into making serious demands. Jim loves Betty and can't understand why she wants to get away. "Why won't he leave me alone?" she says. "I can't do anything without Jim tagging along, and when I don't feel the same way he does, I feel guilty." It is easy to press the life out of another when one makes inordinate demands for affection. Even when such desires are reciprocated, they eventually become smothering for one or both companions.

Partners in marriage must allow space between themselves so that their relationship can breathe. Caring is letting go, not holding on. There is an undeniable balance in living together and, like the motion of a seesaw, one person alone can't make it work. The giving-and-receiving movement keeps it going. To feel special or important to a companion is the wish of most humans. But to be possessive to the point of paranoia is self-defeating.

Love wants unconditional acceptance. "Vickie doesn't understand me!" Frank shouted. Vickie sometimes refused sex or was a reluctant participant. Frank knew she didn't want relations as frequently as he did, but he couldn't tolerate her

indifference or lack of desire. What Frank didn't recognize was that he was expressing his exaggerated expectations that Vickie love and accept him unconditionally, and he attached this need to sex. Scared by emotional deprivation during his childhood, he hoped that Vickie would supply all that he had missed while growing up.

All of us feel that we'll find a partner who will give us everything we've missed in life. Love seduces us into believing that this fantasy will come true. But the most we can expect is a companion who is compassionate and understanding.

One of the important signs of maturity is the realization and acceptance of the fact that no one will ever fully understand. As a pair, you must enjoy and accept what you have, however imperfect, without always demanding more.

Love expects you to be a mind reader. Couples are fond of reading thoughts in one another's minds and expect their partners to intuit their moods. Deep down, this offends our integrity, love or no love. Yet it is practiced daily.

Karen greets Bill when he comes home from work and is insulted because he doesn't comment on her new hairstyle. Instead of asking, "How do you like it?" she expects him to notice it. Bill is equally irritated because Karen doesn't see that he's worried about a bad day at the office—without his saying so.

Unless couples learn to be direct about their feelings and desires,

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THE PITFALLS OF "ROMANTIC" LOVE

communication remains complicated and garbled. Partners stumble and fall over unspoken messages. Love must not tempt us into believing that mind reading is part of living together. Openness brings the cool relief of intimacy.

Love fosters subservience. Traditionally, males were indoctrinated to protect females. Like Superman, they were expected to leap tall buildings without ripping their leotards, to have a Humphrey Bogart poker face, and to be imbued with the aggressiveness of a Bengal tiger. But this imagery created havoc in marriages by setting up an imbalance. Like the Lone Ranger, men were supposed to be strong and quiet; like his sidekick Tonto, women were to follow, saying, "Yes, *hemo sabe*." Neither partner really felt like playing these roles, but both were nagged by the feeling that they had to.

All this was changed by the feminist movement, and today males and females are starting to accept the fact that they are human, with similar intellects, needs and emotions. Partners may not be equal in talents or tasks, but they are equal in their human needs. Once this is realized and fairness has been established, a gas will enjoy a sense of unity.

When either mate consistently puts himself or herself to the other as frail and helpless, both are heading for trouble. The only kind of love that works allows both partners to feel esteemed and important. When a mate cares, the strongest support is provided by a few words

and a willingness to listen, not by always doing something for the other.

Love refuses to change. "Why can't things be like they used to be? Why can't we go back to the way we were?" But all the pounding on the doors of time can't bring back one second of past intimacy. Unless companions live together in the now, they cannot live together at all.

Pat and Randy, a couple married two years, both busy with responsibilities and the challenges of unexplored careers, suddenly realized that their relationship had changed. Panic set in. Quick attempts were made to recapture that lost glow, but the feelings simply were not there. They grieved over the good times experienced in the past, and the demise of their love seemed like a death.

Many couples are caught in this bind, never realizing that transitions are not endings, and that new beginnings can follow. Close relationships molt, just as snakes shed skins. Once Pat and Randy let go of the past, they learned to enjoy each other again through a variety of new experiences. Enjoying the present permits a comfortable nostalgia for the old.

Love means I'm always right. Many couples expect me to judge whether they are right or wrong in certain specific contexts. Many of the issues presented are matters of personal preference, rather than those that are intrinsically right or wrong. Both partners are right in the way

they feel. Feelings cannot be argued, they can only be accepted or rejected.

Partners get in trouble when they fail to separate thinking from feeling. There can be no arguing about the way they feel, while ideas can be argued. Emotions are tied to self-esteem, and expressing understanding of another's emotions is the beginning of psychological equality.

How important is being right to you? Have you learned to allow your companion his or her feelings, even though you disagree, perhaps even violently, with the opinion expressed? Bonds are strengthened when couples can accept each other's feelings without being threatened. A mate is allowed angry feelings, differing opinions, other friends, or occasional thoughtlessness.

Trust each other's overall behav-

THE PITFALLS OF "ROMANTIC" LOVE

ior—all the gestures, thoughtfulness, words and deeds—to convey the caring that leads to intimacy. Real caring one for the other can be expressed without the need for the constant repetition of "I love you" as reassurance.

THESE REASONS why "love" creates problems in a close relationship indicate that it is unnecessary to intimacy. Human closeness comes naturally when it is not confused with or sabotaged by the abstractions of romantic love. When two people come together through kindness, tenderness, liking and caring, they can discover an intimacy that endures.

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Passionate Arousal?

Is Love at First Sight Just a Myth?

By ARTHUR J. SUDNER, The Chicago Sun-Times

Edie Pizaro sings of falling in love in sighting a stranger across a crowded room in South Pacific, but psychologist Bernard Murstein says love at first sight is a myth.

The love does not occur in an instant of intense communion, a flash of lightning or a surge of electrical current. The love that arises in those instances is a physical attraction, and while it often leads couples to marriage, it also contributes to the high divorce rate.

The love, Murstein contends, is a decision and, like most decisions should be made after carefully evaluating the pros and cons of a prospective commitment. Without adequate knowledge of the other person, it is difficult to choose wisely and well.

"My own research shows that the most important variable in influencing a love-and-marriage decision is the belief that one is understood," says Murstein, professor of psychology at Connecticut College, New London. "The next most important variable is the feeling that one understands the partner."

"Understanding takes time. A couple does not get to know one another in an hour, a day or a week. They are, in a short time, find that they are delighted, interested, impressed, amazed, amused or strongly attracted one to the other, but that is not the same as being understood and understanding."

Murstein has collected many case histories of tragedies resulting from marriages based on love at first sight. Sara and Sam, for example met on a blind date and were immediately drawn to one another. "Sara was a stunner, voluptuous, auburn-haired beauty, and Sam was tremendously pleased that she shared his love for string quartets. They married after a two-month courtship."

Sara soon observed a change in his attitude. She became more interested in food and less interested in sex. Finally matters came to a head one Sunday when now-31-

Sara stopped eating long enough to about. "Turn that damn radio music off. It's driving me crazy."

Murstein observes that neither Sara, the young man discovered that sex alone not only makes strange bedfellows but bedfellows of resentment.

In the psychologist's view, mutual understanding cannot occur in less than several months, and total understanding is impossible to achieve, probably even in a lifetime.

"A longer courtship might have led Sara to recognize that her sexual needs had resulted in an unrealistic appraisal of Sara's professed love of string quartets, he pointed out in the Journal Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality."

Most happily married couples, in his findings, describe their courtship as enjoyable but not really intense. Intense feelings seem to grow out of a continuing relationship. With the passage of time in a give-and-take relationship, couples come to like each other more.

There is mutual response to one another's needs, desires, interests and concerns. There develops respect, trust and an awareness of the other person as an individual in his or her own right.

"Some interesting perceptual changes occur as time goes on," he explains. "Perhaps the most striking is the change in judgment about the attractiveness of the partner. For example, when describing a loved person, the lover will actually see the person as much better looking than he or she may be. After people get to know each other, judgments of physical attractiveness depend more on the state of a relationship than on the slope of a nose."

If love at first sight is largely a myth, why has the belief persisted? Murstein offers these reasons: -Love at first sight is an important part of romantic love. We have been taught in fiction that romantic happens. Expectation perpetuates the myth. -It offers an opportunity for one in a condition of readiness to transfer a fantasized, idealized image of a husband or wife to a stranger.

-By feeling some emotion and labeling it "love" a certain dignity masks what should properly be called arousal. -It offers a chance to fall in love without accepting social responsibility. If a man leaves his wife or girlfriend because he has been hit by Cupid's arrow, people are willing to forgive him the supposedly has no control over a thunderbolt. But if he falls in love as a means of escaping an old relationship and seeking new excitement, few would find it acceptable.

From: The Los Angeles Times, March 7, 1984, Metro Section

Romantic Heroes Are Mere Escape Artists

By CHARLES McFADDEN

Walk into almost any bookstore of respectable size these days and you're certain to encounter the Romance Center. That's the place, set off by pink cardboard, where they display the hundreds of paperback romance novels that have become the hottest thing going in mass-volume book publishing.

The books range from the pristine, where the virginal heroine only gets kissed, to the steamier types, where there's lots of talk about heaving booms and creamy thighs. (You can tell the degree of explicitness by the cover illustration. Watch where the hero has his hands.) There's even a spinoff of inspirational romances for born-again Christians; one reportedly has sold 210,000 copies since last August.

The fact is that romance—dizzy, glorious romance—is sweeping the country. Everywhere you turn, tall, blond heroes with broad shoulders and narrow hips are getting together on Page 266 with beautiful heroines whose masses of auburn hair tumble down to their soft shoulders.

Romance is fine, I suppose, but a problem looms. The heroes of these books are always perfect: tall, rich, handsome. Where does that leave men who are not tall and vaguely mysterious, and who aren't able to wear a crimson sash to work? We can't all be dashing blond surgeons, airline pilots or foreign correspondents, you know. Some of us are lucky to be short, dark tile-setters, accountants or salesmen.

Here's poor old Harry stumbling through his front doorway at the end of another tough day. His tie is askew; the button just above his belt is hanging loose. He wants to talk to his wife about the new line of plumbing supplies that seems to be going pretty well in Fresno.

But does she want to hear what Harry has to say? Ha! She has just spent two hours with Blake Loring, devil-may-care buccaneer who sailed the Dancing Cloud into the Arab harbor to rescue Hillythe Simpson from the clutches of the Moors. Poor Harry's not going to do well over the meatloaf tonight.

Harry and his fellow un-tall, un-dashing and un-rich males across the country are losing out in the pizzazz sweepstakes to imaginary adventurers whose sensuous hips hold promises of delight. Those guys are carefully crafted (usually by women

writers), and they're absolutely perfect every time. Every woman's dream. What it is is unfair competition.

Poor, you are saying by now. The modern American woman is much too intelligent to take her fantasies seriously, even if she devours the books. Women, you are pointing out, will continue to look fondly on short, pudgy Harry and his ilk—even if they long in their heart of hearts for Blake's expert, seeking hands to bring them to agonizing bliss while his eyes glow with their own fire.

Well, maybe. But even the keenest intelligence can be worn away under the steady pressure of all that glitter and romance. Blake Loring doesn't scratch his stomach, snore or complain that he can't find his shorts. There also are those who say that any comparisons are all to the good, because they might inspire America's legions of flabby males to straighten up and get with it. Those kinds of people also tell us that we should enjoy cold showers.

Face it, men. We've got to think of something or we'll all wind up wearing ascots, shaving every weekend and doing sit-ups to recapture a view of our belt buckles.

The solution is not to point out that some of the hair-up-in-curriers apparitions that you see rumbering up and down supermarket aisles these days aren't likely candidates to be kidnapped by the damned Moors in the first place. That would be childish. Blake Loring would never say a thing like that.

No, far-fetched as it may seem, our best hope probably lies in a continued recovery of the national economy, of all things. Remember, people who make it their business to know about such matters have said for years that the national desire for frothy romance accelerates when economic times get tough. It recedes when times get better. Escapism, and all that.

So start rooting for the gross national product. Throw a little money around. Take your wife to brunch and put a strawberry in her champagne. You might not singlehandedly boost the leading economic indicators by very much, but she might take a new look at the man she married.

And you and Blake Loring could exchange winks.

Charles McFadden is a writer in Sacramento who is fighting to hold onto a 34-inch waistline.

Beware of Prince Charming

If you talk to the first 15 divorced women you can find, young and old, and ask them why they got divorced, you are likely to hear the following reasons:

1. He chased other women.
 2. He drank too much.
 3. He couldn't hold a job.
 4. He spent all his time hunting and fishing.
 5. He spent all his time playing softball and basketball.
 6. He spent all his time with his buddies.
 7. He never budged from in front of the bar.
 8. He didn't want to be tied down by a wife and kids.
 9. He never wanted to do anything.
 10. He was selfish, a cheapskate and a rant.
 11. He beat on my head.
 12. He never talked to me or tried to communicate.
 13. He was a mama's boy.
 14. All he wanted to do was party.
 15. He did whatever he wanted.
- Those are serious accusations and you don't well imagine that, unless corrected, a divorce would come as no surprise. If you ask the same women what they were in the guy in the first place and why they married him, you may discover that a trail of traits that looked so great during the early days of courtship were nearly the same things that were cited as character flaws at the bitter end. Here are the reasons those same ladies gave for marrying the louse. Match the number and you'll

Dakota Kid

BY LYNN HUMMEL



see what I mean:

1. He was so charming.
2. He was the life of the party.
3. He was his own man, never beholden to anybody.
4. He was the rugged, outdoor type.
5. He was so athletic.
6. He was a man's man.
7. He was so well informed. Even watched Walter Cronkite.
8. He was so carefree.
9. He was so well adjusted and content.
10. He was so commanding.
11. He was so physical.
12. He was so quiet and reflective.
13. He was so loyal and close to his family.
14. He was a great dancer.
15. He knew his mind. He did his own thing.

What's the message here? Usually the handwriting is on the wall from Day 1. The few who read it are more motivated by chemistry than logic. They were sure they could change the guy once they got him alone.

So beware of Prince Charming. He may be exciting as a suitor, but a disaster as a husband. The No. 1 reason given for marrying a guy who turned out to be a jerk is that he was so charming. In truth, he never changed. He always was a jerk, but who was paying attention to a few irritating little personal habits?

So when you go shopping in the matrimonial market, make your pick like you were selecting a pair of shoes. Warmth, comfort, strength and consistency will outlast, outperform and outlastify color, style and gloss every time.

LOVE OR INFATUATION—WHICH?

The following list of questions has been prepared to help you define your feelings about a possible love relationship. There are no right or wrong answers. Indicate your answer to each question by answering "Yes," or "No," or "P."

- 1 Do you feel a close companionship without having to touch or talk to each other?
 - 2 Do you like to do things for each other?
 - 3 Have you been able to resolve a disagreement to the complete satisfaction of both?
 - 4 Do you look forward to sharing your new experiences or ideas with each other?
 - 5 Are you planning to reform your companion after you are married?
 - 6 Are you proud to introduce your companion to your friends?
 - 7 Is your companion a source of intellectual stimulation and an inspiration to you?
 - 8 Are you organizing your long-range plans around this person?
 - 9 Do you trust this person so that you do not feel uneasy or uncertain about your relationship?
 - 10 Is your companion's mental and spiritual self as attractive to you as his or her sexual charms?
 - 11 Do you find that you generally like the same type of people?
 - 12 Do you enjoy the same kind of activities?
 - 13 Are you sensitive to certain things that you must avoid saying or doing lest there be hurt feelings?
 - 14 Can you list specific personality characteristics about your friend that you like?
 - 15 Are you in accord in your attitudes toward having and bringing up children?
 - 16 Are you in agreement concerning the roles each will play in marriage?
 - 17 Do you have similar systems of values?
 - 18 Do you feel it a pleasure to work together?
 - 19 Are you united in your thinking as related to the purpose of life?
 - 20 Do you feel relaxed and comfortable with each other?
 - 21 Have you been pleased with each other in a variety of situations? For example: social, religious, and work activities—also in situations of stress and responsibility?
- From *Design for Family Living* by Wayne J. Anderson, © 1964 by T. S. Denison & Co., Inc. Used by permission.

America's Obsession With Beautiful People

From the moment of birth, good-looking people often enjoy big advantages—while less attractive individuals are penalized. An expert explains reasons for these attitudes, and what can be done about them.

Q Professor Berscheid, do beautiful or handsome people get preferential treatment because of their good looks?

A Yes. Society assumes that an attractive person is warm and responsive and sincere and has more potential for social, marital and occupational success. Attractive individuals are generally believed to be more sensitive, more kind, interesting, strong, poised, modest, sociable, outgoing and exciting. This stereotype of physically attractive people helps explain why they get preferential treatment in a wide range of situations. Beauty affects job opportunities, for example. Even when appearance has no conceivable relationship to a person's functioning in a job, the hiring decisions of experienced personnel consultants are significantly influenced by the applicant's physical appearance.

We have been conditioned to expect good behavior and performance from attractive persons. And we may think we get it. Our expectations about attractive people sometimes come true because our favorable treatment subsequently elicits from them the desirable qualities we predicted they would have. We also tend to ignore those traits that don't fit the stereotype.

Q Is this a growing problem in our society?

A I think it is. The importance of first impressions and one-time interactions between people is increasing because of urbanization, greater geographic mobility, frequent job changes and a rising divorce rate.

Since we more frequently interact with strangers, we more often judge others—and are judged ourselves—on the basis of first impressions that never get a chance to be corrected. Once these impressions are made, they are very difficult to overcome. Even if interaction continues, initial impressions set the course for what happens later.

So first impressions probably have become more important as our society has become increasingly fragmented. Since the turn of the century, the divorce rate has gone up over 700 percent. A child can't count on having the same set of parents for any length of time. We can't be certain of having the same marriage partner. People are thrown out on the dating-and-mating market at all ages—30, 40, 50 and 60.

We can't depend on having the same neighbors for any length of time, the same school friends, the same workmates or the same employer. As one result, people are more frequently assessed by others simply



Professor Berscheid, 45, a member of the psychology department at the University of Minnesota, is co-author of a forthcoming book, *Close Relationships*.

on the basis of their appearance because that's often the only information we have when we meet each other for the first time.

Q Are you saying that the old axiom that "beauty is only skin-deep" is not true?

A Based on many studies, we have to conclude that beauty is much more than skin-deep. Most of us, psychologists included, don't like to think that appearance makes an important difference in our lives. It is not a fact that makes us very comfortable.

When you start talking about personal characteristics that are genetically influenced—such as physical appearance, intelligence, race, sex and height—you immediately raise the specter of genetic determinism, which is anathema to our democratic tradition of equality. We Americans are very fond of the myth that everyone is born with equal assets and equal opportunities for survival and for living a happy and comfortable life. That simply isn't true, of course.

Q Why is there such an obsession with beauty in the U.S.?

A It always has been of some importance at all historical times, as Charles Darwin was the first to document in his studies of mate selection. In addition to social fragmentation, the current preoccupation with beauty may be due to the larger role the media play in our lives. Hollywood has always worshiped beauty, but now television holds before us 24 hours a day, every day, an extraordinarily high standard of physical attractiveness—one that may be too high, incidentally, for most people to achieve.

Advertising exhorts us to buy cosmetics and other devices to enhance our appearance. And we do, to the tune of billions of dollars. News announcers and game-show hosts who appear on our TV screens seem to be chosen in large part on the basis of their physical appearance. Even when they pan the football crowd or the studio audience, the camera stops and focuses on an attractive person.

Media consultants and political advisers know that physically attractive men and women capture more attention. And once they've got our attention, what they say is given more credibility and respect and tends to be remembered longer.

Television producers apparently know that viewers are likely to make a quick decision on announcers or performers based on that first impression and can switch the channel if they aren't immediately attracted by them.

Q Does that mean that less attractive persons will find it hard to enter jobs in the public eye?

A We all can hope not, since this will eliminate many talented people society can't afford to lose. But there's no question they are up against a social force that favors others, some of whom can't contribute as much. The wonderful thing about Walter Cronkite, for example, is that he looked like an ordinary human being. He and Harry Reasoner and other senior journalists may be "the last of the Mohicans," however. Not many of the new TV announcers look like anyone we might meet on the street.

The same is true for politicians. Politicians can be more sure that they will be seen than heard. No one has yet calculated precisely how many votes a bald head or a

could be elected in the "vision age. I doubt it.

Q How early in life does favorable treatment of attractive people begin?

A Virtually from the time the child draws a breath, studies are revealing. From infancy on, the treatment by mothers, fathers, nurses and teachers differs according to the level of attractiveness. Newborn infants that are independently judged to be attractive tend to be held, cuddled and kissed more than less attractive babies.

To take another example, the misbehavior of the unattractive child is regarded as evidence of a chronic antisocial nature, while a transgression on the part of an attractive child is thought to be a momentary aberration.

Teachers are prone to give attractive children more information, better evaluations, more opportunity to perform and more instruction. They think that such children are smarter and that their parents care more about their educational accomplishments.

Q Besides their looks, how are attractive children different from the less attractive?

A We don't yet know, because only recently did we begin to look for differences in how they're treated. We originally thought—hoped, to be more accurate—that children were immune from the effects we observed with adolescents and adults.

But more and more, psychologists suspect that unattractive and attractive children live in different worlds. They absorb from an early age the stereotype of who is pretty and who is homely. We did a study with nursery-school children who were rated by adults in terms of their attractiveness. We then asked the children to tell us which, if any, of their classmates they found "scary." They picked out classmates the adults had judged unattractive.

Q Should parents, especially children, be made to understand that they may be unpopular partly because of their unattractiveness?

A I think so. Knowledge is better than ignorance. People, children included, who understand what affects other people's treatment of them have a chance to do something about it—fight it, rise above it, go around it or otherwise deal with it. People who are ignorant don't have that chance, and they may never know what hit them.

When people deny the importance of physical attractiveness to children, the result can be bewildering. Also, unattractive children who are treated poorly because of it may wrongly conclude there is some flaw in their character or personality, which just adds to their burden.

Q Are people feeling themselves when they say they value social skills, intelligence, personality and good character in others more than physical appearance?

A There is seemingly a paradox in what people say they regard as important in their feelings toward others and what actually influences them. I don't think people deliberately and consistently lie on this subject. We know that people often can't identify the forces that influence their behavior, including their feelings toward others.

Much of the unawareness in this case probably lies in the incredible speed with which the human mind processes a bit



Preoccupation with beauty. "People are frequently assessed by others simply on the basis of appearance."

level can be discerned from a photo tachistoscopically flashed on a screen for a bare fraction of a second. Almost instantaneously, we conjure up a mental picture of that person's character.

With lightning speed, the human mind processes that information about the person's physical appearance against all the information held in memory about what physically attractive and unattractive people are like. So when we see a beautiful woman or a handsome man, in the time it takes us to blink an eye we see standing before us a good and kind and sincere person. The fact

that the individual is also physically attractive may seem incidental or just an irrelevant added bonus.

The mind works so fast that we're often not aware of where that inference of goodness and kindness came from or what information our mind used to reach that conclusion. And so we say we're responding to their character, not their appearance. We're not consciously lying. For those of us who have absorbed the stereotype about attractiveness, the effect may be virtually automatic and very compelling.

Q As women become more of a force in the workplace, will appearance become more of a factor in their livelihood?

A Less of a factor. For many years in this society, a woman's livelihood depended almost entirely on whom she married. Her economic security, her social status and the kind of life she and her children led depended very much on that marriage. And as long as men were choosing mates on appearance, then a woman's attractiveness played an especially heavy role in her destiny. Now more women feel that their brains count, too, and that their chances for a satisfying life depend more than before on factors other than physical attractiveness.

Q What does all this emphasis on surface beauty say about our values?

A The evidence is that we Americans delude ourselves by thinking that physical appearance isn't important in our lives. We cling to the idea that each of us at birth is dealt an equally good hand of cards to play—that appearance, intelligence, physical and mental health, and other genetically influenced factors don't make much difference in life. But they do.

Our Declaration of Independence says that each individual is created of equal value and worth as a human being. I didn't read anything that says we are all born with equal assets and opportunities. That certainly is not true of our physical features.

And I never read anything in there that said the child who is born with a deformity, the child who is born with a heart condition or who is born into poverty or has abusive parents has an equal chance with the child who does not have those handicaps.

The idea that pervades our society, as study after study has documented, is that we live in a just world where people get exactly what they deserve. The dark underside of that idea is our belief that if what they've gotten is misery, then they must have done something to deserve it since they started out equal. That is a cruel idea. But it is also a convenient one for those of us who were gifted with a better-than-equal chance: What it does is absolve us from responsibility for someone else's misfortune. □

Blurring the boundaries of gender

With his finely etched features, shrill, girlish voice and demure manner, Michael Jackson is one of the most sexually enigmatic figures ever to dominate the music scene. But Jackson is only the most visible of several major rock stars currently blurring the lines of gender. Nowhere was the wave of androgyny in pop music more vividly apparent than last February at the Grammy music awards in Los Angeles. A worldwide television audience of 65 million witnessed Earth, Wind & Fire's stunning performance of "I Wanna Dance with Somebody." Boy George, Culture Club's vocalist, Boy George, dressed in a varsity black satin gown, thanked America for knowing "a good drag queen" when it saw one. That behavior has provoked outrage in some circles: last week American evangelist Jerry Falwell denounced Jackson and Boy George as poor role models for children. But many North Americans have reacted with amused tolerance. Said John Martin, supervising producer of Canada's rock video pay TV service, MuchMusic: "These are terrific artists, all making very sophisticated statements."

Confusing genders in a familiar gimmick of rock musicians in the late 1970s, the unabashedly effeminate rhythm-and-blues singer Little Richard flashed his heavily made-up eyes at audiences and shook his flirty, bouffant hairdo while thrashing in full fasto. Then, in the 1970s, the swart-guarded David Bowie displayed a whole cast of androgynous characters, from searsed psychodelic aliens to grim, emasculated artists in suspenders. But the present return to androgyny seems to be the most pervasive to date.

Whereas the advent of video has made Jackson and Boy George living room fixtures, Linnex Jackson, both Boy George and Linnex have already appeared on the covers of leading U.S. magazines. Culture Club has sold over nine million albums in North America and now plans to launch a line of clothing, styled after Boy George's wardrobe. And meanwhile, a growing number of other artists have adopted sexual ambiguity as a prop.

Their appeal has stirred debate among cultural commentators, psychologists and parents. Last April, Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, removed all Culture Club records from its campus bookstore. But Kenneth Gadsden, a clinical psychologist at Toronto's Clarke Institute of Psychiatry who specializes in gender identity problems in children, sees no evidence to suggest that rock stars create gender confusion.



Boy George (above); Linnex: sexual ambiguity

Said Zacher: "When someone plays with their sexuality in a theatrical way, we enjoy it because it helps us to manage our own feelings about who we are." Dick Hebdige, British author of *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, feels that such artists fill a useful role in society. "They present a blank screen on which people can project any kind of fantasy," he said. "Boy George is very tongue-in-cheek camp in the British tradition of music hall. Michael Jackson, on the other hand, is pre-adolescent, like a Barbie doll with no genitalia."

Boy George gives off mixed messages about his sexuality, and Michael Jackson chooses not to identify of friend Diana Ross. But other performers are more candid about their motivations. Linnex, despite her mannish grey suits and short-cropped hair, exudes a guilty femininity through her appearance to be a visible hook to draw an audience. "I would be worried," Linnex told *Madonna's* "if this only appeal of Earth, Wind & Fire was some androgynous female stalker around onstage." Other women in pop music, including Canadian Carole Pope of Rough Trade and Jamaican-born Grace Jones, have struck tough, androgynous poses to enter the traditionally male domain of rock.



Linnex: sexual ambiguity

er, has produced titers among pop music observers. Marilyn wears his long blond hair brushed to one side and includes his measurements (56-25-36) in his biography. Marilyn's future is uncertain, but the continued success of trendsetters like Boy George seems assured. And even when his day has passed, Hebdige says that androgyny will persist on the pop music scene because "it answers a lot of needs and makes money at the same time." Added Martin, whose MuchMusic channel will begin airing rock videos around the clock on Aug. 31: "It's just good, wholesome fun." For a while, at least, sexual ambiguity is at the top of the charts.

—NICHOLAS JENNINGS

Is There a Superior Sex?

Condensed from *Playboy*
by DR. ROSS SMITH AND DIANE DE SIMONI

For every strength there is a weakness, for every advantage a disadvantage. Science is uncovering new evidence of the perils of Paul and the pangs of Pauline—the differences that make men and women complementary and necessary to one another

SCIENCE IS JUST beginning to understand why the bewildering strengths and weaknesses of each sex seem to come packaged together. Why a woman's immune system is more complex than a man's but more likely to attack the body it's supposed to protect. Why men, in general, are superior in math reasoning but are much more likely to be sexual deviants or psychopaths. Why women are strong in areas of communication but more often suffer from phobias and depression. And why there are more males at both ends of the intellectual spectrum—more retardates as well as more geniuses.

A full explanation of why men and women tend to be differently gifted and protected, and different-

ly at risk, has yet to be developed. But some important components are already known for sure.

Affair of the Heart. Let's start with heart disease. Forty-two million Americans have some form of heart or blood-vessel disease. This year about 1.5 million will have heart attacks; the majority will be men. "Aha!" men might say. "That's environment. Just wait until the same number of women start pulling the same weight we do. They'll soon be dropping like ninespins from the effects of stress, just as we are."

Sorry, guys. That's untrue on three counts. First, women in the work force are healthier in general than their non-salaried sisters. Second, women appear to be protected

against the most common form of heart disease by their natural sex hormones, the estrogens. And, third, they seem to respond to stress—chemically and behaviorally—differently from men.

So-called Type-A people—who have a chronic urgency about time and are hard-driving, competitive, extroverted and aggressive—are said to be particularly at risk from the damaging effects of stress. Studies show, however, that Type-A females, when solving work-related problems, don't show the increase in heart rate, blood pressure and adrenalin flow Type-A males do. Even when their overall health picture is the same, they don't have as many heart attacks.

Women tend to be put into stress by the emotional coloration of their lives—not by paper problems but by people and communication problems. When they experience setback, failure or emotional pressure, they respond emotionally or become depressed.

Why should there be that overall difference? Perhaps it has to do with the different evolutionary pressures. Men, the hunters and competitors for sex, were more likely to need elaborate stress mechanisms in the presence of danger; women, the nurturers and centers of social groups, were more likely to need fine-tuned emotional responses and skills.

Scientists working with male laboratory animals have shown that dominance (sexual success and the maintenance of a large turf) is associated with high blood pressure and hardening of the arteries—telltale signs of stress. But they've also found that the animals at the top of the heap have high levels of testosterone, the male sex hormone. And testosterone tends to increase harmful low density lipoprotein cholesterol, leading to hardening of the arteries—a problem in human males.

Math Gene. Let's move to an area in which women seem to be at a disadvantage: mathematical-reasoning ability.

"That's environment," women may say. "Girls are taught that math is for boys. They're given no encouragement." But in a December 1980 report and a follow-up in April 1981, two psychologists at Johns Hopkins University, Camilla Persson Benbow and Julian C. Stanley, suggested that there might well be biological differences in math-reasoning ability between males and females. "You have to understand," Benbow says, "that we didn't start out looking for sex differences in mathematical ability. The Johns Hopkins Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth conducted six talent searches between 1972 and 1979. We were looking for seventh- and eighth-graders with aptitude for mathematical reasoning.

"We found about 10,000 children, but we also found something that rather shocked us: far more boys than girls among our high

eight days before and during menstruation, it *seriously* affects the life of one of those four. Symptoms include increased incidence of asthma, epilepsy and migraine-headache attacks, as well as tension, memory lapses and loss of emotional control, and an increased inclination to crime.

Fine-Tuned Immunity. While men are not as subject as women to mood afflictions, it may be that

they are getting more of them from the whole sea of viruses and bacteria in which we swim. Certainly they don't produce as much immunoglobulin M—a blood protein important to the body's defenses—as women do.

The female's immune system is more complex than the male's in any case. Why? The answer is babies. For nine months, a pregnant woman has to support inside herself, and *not reject*, as she would a graft, a bundle of tissue that is antigenic to hers, because of the father's contribution to its genetic makeup. At the same time, she has to protect herself *and* this bundle of tissue against any infections. To do it, she must have inherited a more sophisticated immune system than any man's, one capable of finer tuning.

This advantage, too, has a disad-

vantage. Sometimes the female immune system becomes *over*-efficient and attacks the body it's supposed to be protecting. Women suffer much more than men from certain so-called auto-immune diseases—from such well-known ones as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus to even more mysterious ones, such as Graves' disease, in which the glands, the hormones and behavior can be affected.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY SCIENCE is uncovering unexpected news about our separate inheritances as men and women. The news is that who we are today is simply the current expression of our long history.

Women are still protected for the purpose of motherhood—whether or not, as individuals, they want to have children. Men are still geared to be hunters and sex seekers—whether or not, as individuals, they hunt and seek sex. Men are also less stable, more various than women.

Pluses and minuses—they belong together, making men and women complementary and necessary to one another. Neither is better, neither is worse. It is not a competition. We have to learn to understand that.

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IS THERE A SUPERIOR SEX?

We studied the boys and many of the significant that might account for the they—preparation and a likelihood, encouragement and so find no appreciable except the one in math-g ability. Since 1979, we've at another 24,000 children found the same sex difference this ability.

ow would love to find an mental difference that has overlooked. But she cites a up study completed on a of girls specially taught and y encouraged. And even e says, seems to have made fference.

this," says Benbow careful- agests that biological influ- ay account for part of the ce between the sexes in easoning ability after all. If a it's likely because females use their superior verbal abilities governed primarily brain's left hemisphere] in pproach to problems. Males ess dependent on context. e more abstract, more adept al-spatial tasks [abilities elled by the brain's right here]. Human males like to late things—from Tinker- the cosmos." She laughs. les are more dependent, communicative, more sensi- context and more interested le." Such differences, linked in organization, may help why members of one sex or

the other are over represented in certain professions.

Precarious Existence. For every strength, there is weakness. Men tend to be better at visual-spatial tasks, women at verbal tasks. But both are comparatively weak in the skill in which the other is strong.

If you've ever given a kids' party you know that girls develop faster and are more mature than boys. In fact, the very existence of males is more precarious than that of females right from the beginning.

Between 120 and 140 males are conceived for every 100 females. From there on in, it's downhill all the way. More males are spontaneously aborted during pregnancy, and although they retain a slight edge at birth—106 to 100—the decline continues. More males than females are born dead. Thirty percent more males than females die in the first month of life. And 33 percent more major birth defects are associated with males. By adulthood the ratio of men to women has become about equal—at a considerable cost to males.

One reason for this is that males have to go through more elaborate transformations in the womb. More can go wrong with them, and they are born less sturdy than girls. For example, the slightest brain damage—occurring during or after birth—can have a more debilitating effect on boys. Also, damage often affects their language skills in the left hemisphere, where boys are more at risk and in which they're

IS THERE A SUPERIOR SEX?

less well organized. Boys are four or five times as likely to suffer from language disabilities as girls; more likely to stutter (five to one); to be autistic (four to one); to suffer aphasia, or extreme difficulty learning to talk (five to one); and to have dyslexia—extreme difficulty with reading and writing (four to one).

Men commit almost all the violent crime. In the criminal psychopath, something may have gone wrong with the way the left hemisphere governs behavior. Scientists have recently found a constitutional predisposition, a genetic element, for several generally male disorders: hyperactivity, alcoholism and early-onset schizophrenia.

"The genetic studies have looked at what happens in adoption," says psychiatrist Pierre Flor-Henry, clinical professor at the University of Alberta, Canada. "Is there an increased risk that a child, even if adopted early, might follow the pattern of his real parents instead of that of his adoptive parents—in crime, hyperactivity, schizophrenia, and so on? The answer is yes. Nature, a predisposition, is at work in some way we don't yet fully understand."

Flor-Henry believes that the right hemisphere of the human brain developed in such a way that visual-spatial skills were linked in it to mood and movement, and the organization of the male right hemisphere became particularly pronounced. Flor-Henry thinks

that violent, antisocial males lack control of the verbal and social left hemisphere.

Females evolved in a more balanced way and developed verbal skills and controls in both brain hemispheres. That somewhat explains why women tend not to become psychopaths and violent criminals. Women, remember, tend to become depressed when under stress.

Phobic Females. Women are, in fact, at risk—just where males are strong. Every year, up to 20 million Americans suffer from depression; 60 percent of them are women. Of course, there *are* real environmental causes for depression. But that doesn't explain why so many more women than men are afflicted by a disorder that affects mood, movement and sex drive. Or why phobias—about heights, closed spaces, snakes and so on—cripple women at least twice as often as they do men.

"Depression and phobias often hang together," says Flor-Henry. "They attack the hemisphere in which the organization of the female brain is more precarious—the right hemisphere. And both seem to involve a genetic predisposition, just as many predominantly male disorders do."

Then there's premenstrual tension. British gynecological endocrinologist Katharina Dalton believes that premenstrual tension affects four out of ten women to some extent, and at some time in the

Question: It is my understanding that some women fail to enjoy sex because of weakness of the muscular structure in the pelvic region. Is this true? What can be done about it?

Answer: The late Dr. Arnold Kegel, professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at USC School of Medicine, accumulated considerable evidence to show that sexual response is inhibited in women whose pubococcygeal muscle was flaccid. He offered simple exercises to tone up the muscle, and reported remarkable results for women who had previously been inorgasmic. There are other causes for sexual dysfunction, obviously, but for women who are interested in learning more about this physical explanation, I suggest they read *The Act of Marriage* by Tim LaHaye (Zondervan).

Question: Since masculine and feminine sexual appetites differ, do men and women usually enter an extra-marital affair for different reasons?

Answer: Yes, men are more interested in the excitement of sexual intercourse, and women are more motivated by emotional involvement. This is why a woman often gets hurt in such an encounter, because the man loses interest in their relationship when his mistress ceases to stimulate him as before. Someone wrote, "Men love women in proportion to their strangeness to them." Although the word "love" is used inappropriately in that proverb, there is a grain of truth in its message.

Question: You stated that men and women are vastly different, not only with regard to cultural influences, but physiologically as well. Would you discuss these differences and their implications further?

Answer: Dr. Paul Popenoe, founder of the American Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles, has written a brief article on the subject you have raised. I will let him respond to the question, *Are Women Really Different?*

"One of the least acceptable parts of the Women's Lib and related movements is the attempt to minimize the differences between the sexes. The main thrust of their debate, or more correctly their assertions, is that such differences as exist are merely the result of differences in education and training, and therefore not basic. Since many of these differences, even if associated with education and training, have been maintained for a million years or more, it would indeed be surprising if they are not by this time deeply ingrained. But in fact, the sexes differ so markedly in ways that are not subject to change—anatomy and physiology—that it is a serious mistake to ignore them or to try to make them disappear by talking.

"Take a conspicuous difference, which is certainly not produced by education or training—the feminine function of menstruation. David Levy found that the depth and intensity of a woman's maternal instinct, her motherly feeling, is associated with the duration of her menstrual period and the amount of the flow. The extensive changes in the activity of her glands of internal secretion also produce marked differences in her behavior. In any large group of women of child-bearing age, 18% will be menstruating at any one time. Against this percentage, autopsies of women suicides find that 40%, 50%, even 60% were menstruating at the time they took their own lives.

"Dr. Katharina Dalton, in *The Premenstrual Syndrome* (Springfield, Ill., 1964) summarizes many studies of behavior change that show a large portion of women's crimes (63% in an English study, 84% in a French) are not distributed evenly over time, but clustered in the premenstrual period along with suicides, accidents, a decline in the quality of school work, decline in intelligence test scores, visual acuity, and response speed. In the United States, she calculated that absenteeism related to menstruation costs

Let me illustrate this interaction further. Suppose in earth, and the smallest act can reverberate for centuries. Every living thing interacts with every other creature on breathed by each of the dinosaurs of ancient times, contained at least three nitrogen atoms which were inhaled by Jesus Christ, Abraham Lincoln, Leonardo da Vinci, and Spiro T. Agnew. In fact, your breath also lived; literally, a portion of that same volume of air that you inhaled contains at least three nitrogen atoms deep breath of air and hold it for a moment. The air others. To illustrate this fact, let me ask you to take in a affect anyone else.

Question: Tell me why I shouldn't be totally free to do anything I want, as long as my behavior doesn't affect anyone else.

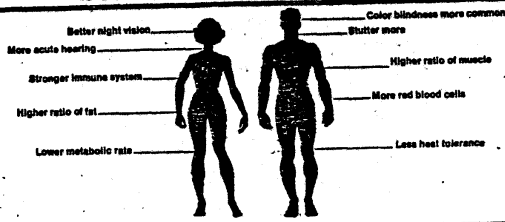
1. Man; metabolism slows down less.
2. She stands high temperature better than does in the 7:10 ratio.
3. Her vital capacity or breathing power is lower the menopause.
4. She varies from minute to minute; but she has much less tendency to high blood pressure—at least until after for men); blood pressure (10 points lower than man)
5. Woman's heart beats more rapidly (80 vs. 72 in the menopause).
6. In brute strength, men are 50% above women of men not at all.
7. Under wartime conditions, was increased from 10 to 12 hours; accidents of women increased 150% range matter. When the working day in British factories, under wartime conditions, was increased from Her constitutional viability is ingested strictly a long-cells, she tires more easily, is more prone to faint red cells). Since these supply oxygen to the body stability—she laughs and cries more water (20% fewer personal beauty. It also contributes to emotional in-

5. Woman has a larger stomach, kidneys, liver, and appendix, smaller lungs.

6. In functions, woman has several very important ones totally lacking in man—menstruation, pregnancy, lactation. All of these influence behavior and feelings. She has more different hormones than does man. The same gland behaves differently in the two sexes—this woman's thyroid is larger and more active; it enlarges during pregnancy but also during menstruation; it makes her more prone to goiter, provides resistance to cold, is associated with the smooth skin of relatively hairless body, and thin layer of subcutaneous fat which are important elements in the concept of

1. Men and women differ in every cell of their two sexes. Here is a quick rundown of a few:
2. Woman has greater constitutional vitality, perhaps because of this chromosome difference. Normally, she outlives man by three or four years, in the U.S.
3. The sexes differ in their basal metabolism—that of woman being normally lower than that of man.
4. They differ in skeletal structure, woman having a shorter head, broader face, chin less protruding, shorter legs, and longer trunk. The first finger of a woman's hand is usually longer than the third; with shorter legs, and longer trunk. The first finger of a man's hand is usually longer than the third; with shorter legs, and longer trunk. The first finger of a man's hand is usually longer than the third; with shorter legs, and longer trunk. The first finger of a man's hand is usually longer than the third; with shorter legs, and longer trunk.
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The difference (you thought you knew?) between men and women



Why can't a woman be more like a man—or vice versa? For one thing because, aside from the obvious ones, there are other physical differences discovered only recently in

WOMEN

- As infants, girls age in many ways more physically mature than boys and continue to mature at a faster rate during childhood. They walk earlier, get their permanent teeth sooner, and reach puberty at a younger age.
- Women may not be equal to men when it comes to speed or force, but they're better equipped by nature for activities involving endurance (such as long-distance swimming), says Dr. Estelle Ramey, professor of physiology and biophysics at Georgetown University Medical School. This is because their higher ratio of body fat provides a store of energy for extended exercise.
- It's harder for women to lose weight. The primary reason is that they have a six to seven percent lower metabolic rate, so they're not able to burn off calories as fast as men do. This is especially true after menopause, when the supply of estrogen, which helps the female body get rid of fat, is reduced.
- Women's hormones may give them a natural protection against heart disease during their reproductive years, according to data from the Framingham Heart Study.
- Women have more acute hearing in the higher ranges and better night vision.
- Women are less likely than men to be born with genetic defects, because they have two X chromosomes, while men have only one X and one Y. If a woman has a defective gene on one X chromosome, there's a chance she has a healthy matching gene on the other to offset the defect. But if a man carries a defective gene on his single X chromosome, it will be expressed, since his Y chromosome carries only the genes for maleness.
- Women have a stronger immune system, again because of their XX chromosome combination. Because disease-fighting (as well as disease-bearing) genes are carried on the X chromosome, having two X chromosomes gives women more disease-fighting genes than men.
- Women outlive men—by an average of almost eight years, according to the latest statistics.

studies of body chemistry. Here's what researchers have learned about how genes and hormones affect human development, health, even life expectancy. —E.A.M.

MEN

- From the very beginning, men seem to be less hardy than women. More males than females are miscarried or are stillborn; more males than females die in infancy.
- Compared to adult females, adult males, on the average, are five inches taller, about 25 pounds heavier, and the ratio of muscle to fat in their total body weight is greater. They have more upper body strength, throw better, jump farther, run faster.
- Boys stutter more than girls.
- Men are less tolerant of extreme heat than women.
- Men have more red blood cells, and their blood clots more readily than women's blood does. But this can work to their disadvantage in later years, putting them at higher risk for fatal strokes and other clotting ailments.
- Men have higher cholesterol levels than women from their mid-thirties through mid-forties. From the ages 45 to 64, the trend is reversed. But at the same level of cholesterol, men are more likely to die from heart disease.
- Men have a higher incidence of hypertension during most of their adult years, but women start to catch up from the age of 45 on. Still, the death rate from conditions associated with hypertension is higher in men.
- Among the genetic disorders that strike males almost exclusively are hemophilia and some kinds of muscular dystrophy. Color blindness is far more common in men.
- Throughout their lives, males are more aggressive, a trait thought to be related to the presence of the male hormone, testosterone.
- Boys have more childhood accidents than girls, and men are almost three times more likely to die from accidents than women. Among the reasons given are that males take more risks; in the case of automobile accidents, men drive faster and consume more alcohol.
- Suicide rates are higher among males.
- The leading cause of death in men over 45 is heart disease, followed by cancer. (In women in this age group, cancer is first and heart disease second.)

Taken from
"The Better Way" March 1980

THE STRONGER SEX

Research into the differences between the sexes shows that in many important areas, women come out ahead. These are some of the female advantages.

-Who's the stronger sex? If strength means endurance, women far surpass men. Females live, on the average, eight years longer (77.1 years compared with 69.3).

-Women develop heart disease, on the average, 10 years later than men -- and have actual heart attacks about 20 years later, according to the Framingham Heart Study, a long-term follow-up study of men and women in Framingham, Mass. But estrogen is *not* the reason, after all, says Dr. William Kannel, former head of the study. "We still don't know why women are better protected."

-Women have biological advantage in possessing two X chromosomes, says Dr. Barbara Migeon of Johns Hopkins University. Since chromosomes are responsible for transmitting hereditary characteristics, if a male has a "bad" gene on his single X chromosome, the trait is bound to be expressed, whereas the cells in a female have a "choice" -- which permits the effects of defective genes to be diluted or even corrected by normal ones.

-Women have more body fat than men and require fewer calories -- an advantage in times of starvation. Since fat can store energy for emergency use, women make better long-distance swimmers -- and experts predict women will soon be winning running marathons too.

-Women have better night vision than men.

-Women tolerate extreme heat better than men.

-Because of their more acute hearing in the higher ranges, women distinguish voices better than men do.

-Women recover twice as quickly from strokes and other brain damage. Many brain researchers think it's because the female brain may contain "speech centers" in both brain hemispheres.

-From the first baby talk throughout adulthood, women surpass men in verbal ability.

-Women consistently outshine men at tasks requiring fine motor coordination -- the kind of nimble finger movements necessary for typing, piano playing or neurosurgery.

-Baby girls recognize faces better than baby boys. And a survey showed that adult women were better at connecting the names and faces of old high school classmates than were men.

-Females of every age have scored slightly higher on tests of "empathy," recognizing or showing concern for another's feeling, notes psychologist Martin L. Hoffman of the City University of New York. -J.B.H.

Introduction to Psychology 7th edition
Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson.

Critical Discussion

SEX DIFFERENCES

"Girls are more fluent verbally; boys are better at math." "Girls can memorize well, but boys are superior in abstract thinking." "Girls tend to be passive and to seek approval; boys are aggressive and independent." You have probably heard these and other claims about psychological differences between the sexes. What is the evidence? Do males and females differ consistently in abilities and personal traits? And, if so, are these differences the result of biology or of social learning? A careful review of more than 2,000 books and research articles concludes that many common assumptions about sex differences are myths with no foundation in fact; but there appear to be some real and interesting psychological differences between males and females (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974).

Tests of overall intelligence show no consistent sex differences--in part because the tests are designed not to. In constructing intelligence tests, care is taken either to eliminate items in which the sexes are believed to differ or to balance items in which females have an advantage with those that give males an advantage. Tests of specific intellectual abilities, however, do show some sex differences. These differences, which are absent or negligible during childhood, begin to appear in early adolescence. For example, beginning at about 10 or 11 years of age, girls, on the average, outscore boys on many measures of verbal ability--vocabulary size, comprehension of difficult written material, and verbal fluency.

While adolescent males may lag behind in verbal skills, they tend, on the average, to be superior to females on tests of visual-spatial ability. Visual-spatial skills are involved in such tasks as conceptualizing how an object in space would look from a different perspective, aiming at targets, map reading, or finding a simple geometric form embedded in a more complex figure (see Figure 3-11). The mathematical skills of boys also appear to increase faster than those of girls after age 13, but the differences are not as consistent as those for spatial ability. Girls are about equal to boys when mathematical problems are given in verbal form; boys excel in dealing with numbers or geometric forms.

In talking about sex differences in verbal or spatial abilities, it is important to remember that we are referring to average differences over large groups of youngsters; some girls are better at spatial tasks than most boys, and

some boys are more verbally fluent than most girls.

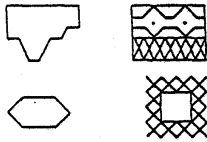


Fig. 3-11 Embedded-figures test
The subject must identify the simple figures
in the more complex ones.

Because sex differences in these abilities do not emerge until adolescence, it seems reasonable to conclude that they reflect differences in training and social expectations. After all, girls are usually encouraged to develop interests in poetry, literature, and drama; boys are expected to be more concerned with science, engineering, and mechanics. This is undoubtedly part of the story, but it is also possible that sex differences in ability may be based on biological differences that do not appear until the nervous system reaches a certain level of maturation--namely, puberty. This possibility seems most likely for spatial abilities. In a study of youngsters aged 10 to 16 years, late maturers were found to be better at visual-spatial tasks than early maturers, regardless of sex; and the older the youngster at the onset of puberty, the better his or her performance on spatial, relative to verbal, tasks (Waber, 1977). Since females, on the average, mature earlier than males, rate of physical maturation may be an important determinant of sex differences in spatial ability.

In terms of personality traits, most studies have found surprisingly few differences between the sexes, particularly during the early years. Little girls are not more dependent than little boys, as is commonly believed, nor are they more sociable. Toddlers of both sexes seek to be close to their parents, especially when they are under stress; and they seem equally willing to leave their parents to explore a new environment (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974). Differences in sociability show up only to the extent that boys during the elementary grades tend to play in "gangs," whereas girls are more apt to get together in groups of two or three.

The one area in which observed sex differences are consistent with popular beliefs is aggression. Boys are more aggressive than girls starting at about age two--when children first begin to interact in social play. This is true in a wide range of settings and for almost every culture that has been studied. Boys are not only more physically aggressive than girls, but also more verbally aggressive; they are more likely than girls to exchange verbal taunts and insults--often as a prelude to physical aggression.

Clearly, social learning has a lot to do with the expression of aggression. Many parents believe that a boy should be able to fight for his rights, and a boy has all kinds of aggressive models (in books, television, and movies) to show him how. Girls on the other hand, are expected to get their way by more subtle means. In view of such social conditioning, it seems reasonable to assume that girls have the same potential for aggression as boys but inhibit its expression for fear of punishment. Some psychologists believe that this is the case (Feshbach and Feshbach, 1973). Others believe that, although social expectations and role models influence the expression of aggression, females are by their biological nature less aggressive (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974). They point to the fact that girls show less fantasy aggression than boys. If girls are suppressing hostile impulses because of fear of punishment, such impulses might be expected to occur in fantasy or in "safe" situations. But even in an experimental situation where aggression is expected and encouraged--the subject is instructed to administer electric shocks to a "learner" whenever the learner makes a mistake--males tend to administer longer and stronger shocks to their victims than females (Tikley and Viney, 1969). These findings do not suggest that females have a lot of "bottled-up" aggression waiting for a safe outlet.

In their survey of sex differences, Maccoby and Jacklin discovered that males and females are alike in more respects than is commonly supposed. Among the differences found, some may be the result of social learning and others may reflect biological predispositions. But even those differences that have a biological base can be modified by learning. For example, girls who initially score lower than boys on tests of visual-spatial ability can equal the boys scores with practice. And certainly girls can be taught to be more aggressive, while boys can learn to modify their aggressive responses.

In rearing their young, societies can accentuate what they believe to be innate differences, or they can choose to encourage in both sexes the characteristics most useful for their particular society.



The streets have become home to thousands of San Fernando Valley young people.

"Rat Pack" Youth: Teenage Rebels In Suburbia

Most come from good homes, but their defiant and aimless ways keep parents and schools on edge.

CANOGA PARK, Calif. Fifteen-year-old Mike kept coming home late. One night, his father stepped on him so hard that one of the boy's eardrums was shattered. Now, he lives with other teenagers, shuffling between different homes, sometimes sleeping in cars, all-night gas stations or even in caves.

Upset over a curfew imposed by her parents, Karen, 13, stayed away from home for two months, calling from time to time but spending most nights with friends in garages, closets or on the roof of a restaurant.

Jim, 17, has missed more than 60 days of school this year, attending classes only to see friends. His mother and school officials have all but given up.

In these and countless other examples, teenage rebellion has turned into family warfare in the San Fernando Valley suburbs north of Los Angeles. A social cauldron of more than 1 million residents, the area is known for its fast-talking Valley girls and as the home of rock star Michael Jackson. But its latest phenomenon is the growing number of incorrigible youngsters who have lost complete control of their lives—much to the consternation of their parents.

Reflecting a trend seen in many

American suburbs, as many as 30,000 troubled youths from middle and upper-middle-class families are wasting their formative years, authorities say, killing time in discos, video parlors, shopping centers and other hangouts.

A decade ago, many of them would have been locked up. Now, because of changes in the law, they are virtually immune from prolonged arrest for incorrigibility and truancy. In effect, they exist in a social and legal limbo that acknowledges their rights yet considers them half-children, half-adults.

Upset with their parents and tired of school, many of these teens band together, substituting peers for family. Police describe the activity as "rat packing." If parents attempt to exercise control, such youngsters may leave home for days, weeks or months, sup-

ported for adult fees, says psychologist Richard Ussick, a former juvenile-probation officer. "Yet they think they are. It's a scary prognosis." Few similarities. Police say that there is no typical description of these rat packers. Some are abused; some are abusive. Many have learning disabilities; others are gifted. Some dress punk style, others conservatively.

They come from two-parent homes as well as households headed by a single divorced parent. Many simply are angry. They are upset over parental restrictions or are hurt that parents, busy with their own concerns, don't seem to care.

Blond, clean-cut Jess, 16, resembles a teenager from the 1950s. But last year, he left home for two weeks. "Everybody seems like they're running away from home at my age," says Jess. "They get in fights around the house or they aren't doing well in school. Maybe it gets physical, and then the kids threaten to leave and the parents say, 'Go ahead!'"

Adult-teen conflict is almost as old as mankind, but the growing number of Valley families at a complete impasse concerns juvenile authorities. Two West Valley police stations and a social-services office each get about five calls daily from upset parents of incorrigibles asking for police intervention or for foster homes.

At Canoga Park High School, computers produce daily lists with the

Discos are a favorite connection point—even on school nights.



Some "rat packers" stay away for days at a time, sleeping at the homes of friends or in trucks, service stations or caves.

names of more than 100 long-term absentee students.

Social workers refer to youngsters such as Mike, whose father gave him the ear-shattering blow, as "throwaways." The father drinks, according to Mike, and has become so frustrated that he no longer can cope with his son. So Mike rat-packs with friends and whiles away hour after hour at Phases, a popular teen disco in Canoga Park. There, despite the blaring music and flashing lights, he finds a measure of serenity.

"Do you have a ride? Do you need a place to stay?" friends ask him as he sits

at a table near the dance floor. Mike explains that he is staying with a friend who works at an all-night gas station. Tomorrow they're going "shopping." He explains: "What you do is try on a new pair of pants, put your old ones on over them and walk out."

Mike is by no means the only rat packer who uses discos as connection points. Even at midnight on a Wednesday, some 200 teenagers might be congregated at such places. Many more flock to the clubs on weekends.

One disco regular, 18-year-old Judy, says: "People are really caring, here. We were just talking about how neat it

would be if we had our own house and could have all our friends there."

Judy recently left her parents' home for good and moved into a friend's apartment. Her parents, she says, use to tell her what she was thinking instead of asking. Her father hit her. But at the disco, friends offer her places to stay and money for food.

"Money is no problem," adds a girl whose mother threw her out when she shaved her head several months ago. Although disco addicts don't brag, she boasts: "I can make \$50 a day taking kids for change. Sometimes \$100. There are more rich kids than there are

"Runaways," "Throwaways," "Bag Kids"—An Army of Drifter Teens

California's San Fernando Valley isn't the only suburban staging area for troubled youths.

Across the nation, growing numbers of young people from comfortable homes are being labeled "runaways," "throwaways," "push-outs" or "bag kids." For example—

In Chicago, many of the estimated 4,000 homeless youths who wander the streets are from affluent suburbs.

The Denver suburbs were shocked when a 14-year-old boy pleaded guilty to stabbing his mother. His lawyer says the woman, a successful real-estate broker, "ignored him until the pressure blew him up."

Kentucky police recently picked up a 14-year-old suburban Atlanta girl who had been missing for three days. She had run off with a 20-year-old man.

In Greenwich, Conn., The Youth Shelter has seen its case load rise by almost 25 percent since 1981, mostly with youths from the homes of well-paid professionals.

Typical of problems reported by local authorities is the case of Samantha Wood of Stamford, Conn. She was 16 years old when her mother threw up her hands and asked the state to take over. "I was going out all night, drinking, getting high and not going to school," says Samantha, who eventually was expelled.

For eight months, she attended a private school and rehabilitation center in Hartford. Then, she ran away to New York to live with friends and wander the streets. Now 19, she's living at home again and hoping to go back to school.

Says Samantha: "It's hard growing up." Merry-go-round. Near the nation's capital, in the suburbs of Montgomery County, Md., counselor John Boston of Parents and Children Together sees a lot of "CINS kids"—children in need of supervision.

"They're on a merry-go-round," says Boston. "Sometimes, when brought back home, they come in the front door and go right-out the back."

Veteran police officer Larry Mook of Westland, Mich., a suburb of Detroit, believes that girls now skip to rebel and become truant more than boys, with problems beginning early as age 12.

Wide range of actions. The fees these youngsters use to act out or get back at parents range from refusing to do homework and skipping classes to runaway episodes.

"They start out spending the night in a friend's house and then may wind up in a garage or a Salvati Army clothing bin," says Paul Hendriks, a counselor who handles about 300 local runaway cases a year on Chicago's posh North Shore. His program has achieved good results by sometimes placing youths in foster homes for short "cooling-off periods."

Typically, psychologists and counselors describe incorrigibles as self-centered and withdrawn. Many suffer from low self-esteem and an inability to communicate.

Frequently, a youth's problems are the symptom of a troubled family, new report by the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services estimates that 40 percent of the nation

grow, many are fighting... Tough Love, a national... port group for parents of troubled teenagers, has setup several chapters in the Valley.

Twice each week, for example, members of a West Valley parents' group meet to discuss Tough Love's non-sensate philosophy and to help each other. "We believe in mental abuse," a Tough Love group leader tells parents. She explains that teenagers who come home after curfew should be locked out and suggest tapping three quarters to the door with the phone numbers of Tough Love homes where youths can spend the night. "If you let them back in right away, they'll break your home as if it a hotel," she says.

"The only answer," Dennis Poucher, head of the Canoga Park Tough Love chapter, sums up the group's philosophy: "My house, my rules." His group claims a 90 percent success rate with more than 1,000 parents over the last three years. "This is the only answer for a certain type of family," says Poucher, whose daughter Leslie, 19, was a chronic truant and runaway from age 16.

Such groups may be the only alternative for many families. The major count-down program for incorrigibles, a foster-home program, is rarely used because juveniles must agree to be placed. Los Angeles County, with a population of about 8 million, has only 38 foster-home beds designated for incorrigibles.

Most private family-counseling programs are costly and unequipped to deal with the range of problems facing families, say authorities. "These children are falling through the cracks," complains Sheila Fulton, director of the Juvenile Justice Connection Project.

The project does thorough assessments of youngsters, looking at their entire physical and mental states. Then, staff workers refer clients to appropriate professionals—doctors for medical problems that cause youths to be disruptive, or psychologists and teachers for learning problems. About 1,000 youngsters are being helped.

Without more focus on the problem, authorities fear that the rat packers, like troubled youths in many suburban areas, will become tomorrow's criminals or consign themselves to aimless lives. Ill-prepared for a complex society, they may pass on a confused legacy to their children. Warns psychologist LeCassick: "We may even have a worse generation on the way." □

By STEVE L. HAWKINS



Los Angeles police round up a group of truants. Some are students attend classes only to see friends.

ties speculate that parents are stricter with them, which causes some of them to rebel. Heidi, who just turned 16, ran away 11 different times when her mother demanded that she be home by 8 p.m. and refused to let her see her boyfriend. "I just didn't have any freedom," Heidi says.

Despite the anger and rebellion, many teens do not make a complete break. Robert claims to still love his father even after coming to blows with him. Rat packers often call home to tell parents where they are or drop in to pick up possessions and talk. One girl, estranged from her parents, made it a point to call on her mother's birthday.

For parents, the absence of a problem child often is a mixed blessing. Some welcome the relief from continual bickering. Others panic. Recall one mother with tears in her eyes: "Half of you says, 'I hope she's all right.' The other half says, 'I hope she is miserable enough to come home.'"

"Just wasting time." Tired of the ongoing conflict with his son, one Valley father has decided to buy the youth a car and allow him to quit school and get a job—on the condition that he attend night classes. Says the father: "He's just wasting time now in school."

For such families, the police and most government social agencies offer little help. Before 1977, when California law was changed, teens were jailed for incorrigibility. After investigations found that many actually were confined for longer periods than were youths who committed crimes, public mood shifted toward separating rebellious teens from convicted criminals.

Today, youths described as incorrigible can only be placed in locked facilities for a matter of hours in most cases. "Incorrigibility has become a family

Tough Love brings parents and youngsters together for counseling sessions.

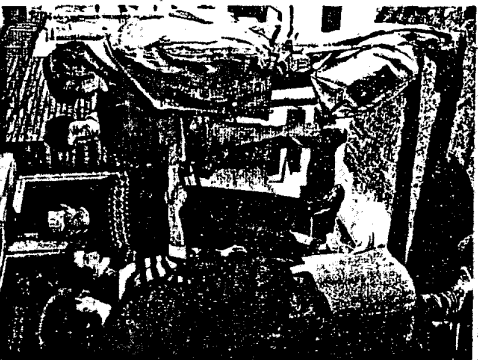


spend large chunks of time alone. Oth- at children tither with reapparents or are virtually abandoned by their own parents in divorce situations. One Valley probation officer cites the example of a mother who asked the county to take custody of her 13-year-old daughter who did not get along with her divorced woman's new male friend.

"This is my chance at happiness," the mother told authorities. Frequently, though, responsible, well-meaning parents are the victims of confused youngsters who seem to enjoy the sense of power and adventure they derive from running away and keeping parents on edge.

"I just want to be able to go out when I want," says one girl. "I'm a ruin, but I still have rights. It's not like we have to prove anything to these glorious figures that are our parents."

More than half of the Valley's incorrigibles are females. Juvenile authorities



In Chicago suburbs, teens at odds with parents stay temporarily in foster homes.

ally, she was smuggled into closets while parents were at work. Sympathetic parents of friends often provide food and shelter for troubled teens. After hearing stories—true or apocryphal—of violent arguments and abusive parents, adults often take the side of teenagers without talking to the parents. For example, 14-year-old Josh's mother still is fuming at a neighborhood woman who gave him shelter during two recent weeks away from home.

"She watched Josh throw me across the lawn, then she let him get in her car and drove away," recalls the mother. Besides vandalism and petty theft, taking drugs and alcohol are prime pastimes for many wandering teens. Says Josh, "You name it, I've probably taken it, except cocaine." Karen's odyssey ended when she landed in juvenile detention after taking five hits of "purple pyramid" (LSD) and "freaked out" with hallucinations that people were trying to kill her. A girl who took drugs with her still is in a mental hospital.

Why are so many youngsters from "good" families going astray? In many cases, psychologists say, parents are to blame. Some, pressured by the demands of making a living or climbing the career ladder, neglect their children. Authorities cite a growing number of latchkey youths who must

prevent the prolonged incarceration of noncriminal minors. Attorney David Steinbart, consultant to the National Council on Crime and Delinquency in San Francisco, says there are not enough sophisticated services even in large cities to cope with the problem.

Scarcely of money. Peer counseling with trained youths addressing the family problems of other youths, has been successful in the San Francisco Bay area, says Steinbart, but funds for such programs are scarce. Money is tight, too, for temporary shelters. Nationwide, there are just 500 shelters with a capacity of 6,000. One center in Tucson turned away more than 16,000 children last year.

Yet June Bucy, executive director of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, says that 85 percent of youths who receive counseling and other help from shelters eventually find long-term living arrangements that enable them to turn their lives around.

In Texas, some school districts have tried to nip problems in the bud by insisting that youths go to their classes. The Houston Independent School District allows five days of absences each

Another girl, 15, got the boot when she defied her parents with a wild-colored punk hairdo. Deditly managing cigarettes, she claims that she can't fear for her safety any more. She slides a knife out of a small vest pocket but admits: "I'm still careful to hitch a ride with."

Across the Valley, the Sherman Oaks Galleria is one of several shopping malls that are meeting places for other on drifters. Almost invisible among a busy shoppers, these youths roam around the fast-food restaurants and snack stands who appear to be at ease. One boy who says he hangs out at the Galleria accepts a hamburger from a friend who panhandled change

Standing near the entrance to McDonald's, Mark, 17, recalls how his father kicked him out of the house for being unruly. For the past two years, says he's lived in the homes of 15 different friends, circulating back and forth. "It's easy," says another youth, "as long as you know when you're being a parasite."

The Galleria is where 13-year-old arena muntered the courage to run away from home. For two months, she went about half the nights with new friends at "squats"—the beach, empty buildings, garages and on the roof of a six-food restaurant. Other nights, she slept in the homes of friends. Occasion-

million homeless youngsters are "snowed away," compared with 29 per cent four years ago. "Very conservative," says Henderson. "Very conservative." Mom or Dad is "sizing or pulling" and throwing the kid out of the house.

Sometimes there's too much freedom, as with latchkey kids. Other children are overindulged. Still others are doted by ambitious parents who want or expect too much. Retired Colorado Judge Marvin observes that neglectful parents with their own lives give youngsters material goods instead of attention. "That's what these kids seem to be reaching out for but can't find—a ring of time rather than just getting things."

Initials no more. Whatever the reasons, parents with unruly youngsters find themselves at a loss for solutions. Most states followed the federal government's lead in 1974 when it ended the decriminalization of incorrigible offenses such as truancy and runaway. To insure the continued of federal funds for youth projects, states changed their laws to

Listening to the judge might help

DEAR ABBY: As a captain in our local police department, I have witnessed countless tragedies due to drug-related crimes, suicides, etc.

You ran an extraordinary column entitled "Listening to the Judge" back in July 1972. That column was not only a public service, it might have saved a few young lives.

I hope you will run it again. If you do, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

CAPT. STANLEY J. JANUS,
LACKAWANNA POLICE DEPT.
LACKAWANNA, N.Y.

DEAR CAPTAIN JANUS: I agree. It's worth a rerun, and here it is:

(The lecture from Judge Alfonso Sepe was given to a 17-year-old Florida boy as he sentenced the youth to one year in the county stockade and four years' probation. The boy had pleaded guilty to possessing hallucinogenic drugs. He also had been charged with violence toward a Miami Beach police officer.)

"Do you know who is going to serve that year? Not you; your mother and father will serve that year."

"That is what's wrong. THEY get sentenced. They get sentenced for a lifetime."

"You serve a year. Your body is in the stockade for a year, but their souls are tormented for a lifetime. Why? Because you are a selfish, spoiled boy, that's why."

"There is no punishment in the world that I could inflict upon you that could in any way compensate for what you are doing to your mother and father. I have not spent five cents raising you. I didn't know you from Adam. But your mother and father have put their lives, their hearts, their sweat, their money and everything else they have into bringing you up. And now they have to sit in this courtroom and listen to a total stranger who had nothing to do with your upbringing scold you and put you in jail."

"This is at a time when phony kids your age are



Dear Abby

ABIGAIL
VAN BUREN

yelling, 'You adults have your alcohol, we want our drugs; you have polluted our water and our air, you have polluted this and that,' and all the rest of the garbage that comes out of your mouths. "Meanwhile, you put yourselves above everybody else. I feel sorry for you."

"I want you to think of this for one year, and the reason why I say it:

"If you are sick, a doctor will treat you and he won't be on drugs. The lawyer who represents you won't be high on drugs, and the people in whose custody you'll be won't be on drugs."

"Your astronauts are not on drugs, and your president is not, and your legislators are not."

"And your engineers who build the bridges that you drive across and the tunnels that you drive through are not on drugs, and those who build the planes that you fly in and the cars that you drive are not."

"Neither are those who build the bathrooms that you stink up with your lousy, rotten drugs."

"None of them have been on drugs, and this is because of people like your mother and father."

"But in the world of the future," Sepe went on, "the same may not be true. Teachers, doctors, lawyers, legislators — products of the new drug-oriented generation — may well be high as kites."

"You won't know whom to send your child to, or whom to trust your life to."

Sepe sighed and closed the case file.

"Let's see what kind of world you leave to your children," he said, "before you talk about the world that we left to ours."

THERE WASN'T TIME

BY ERMA BOMBECK

TIME. It hangs heavy for the bored, eludes the busy, flies by for the young and runs out for the aged.

Time. We crave it. We curse it. We kill it. We abuse it. Is it a friend? Or an enemy?

We know very little about it. To know it all, to know its potential, perhaps we should view it through a filter called memories.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, Mama was going to read me a story and I was going to turn the pages and pretend I could read. But she had to wax the bathroom and there wasn't time.

When I was young, Daddy was going to come to school and watch me in a play. I was the fourth Wise Man (in case one of the three got sick), but he was having his car tuned and there was no time.

When I was young, Grandma and Granddad were going to come for Christmas to see the expression on my face when I got my first bike, but Grandma didn't know who she could get to feed the dogs and Granddad didn't like the cold weather and, besides, they didn't have the time.

When I was older, Dad and I were going fishing one weekend, just the two of us, and we were going to pitch a tent and fry fish with the heads on them. But at the last minute he had to fertilize the garden and there wasn't time.

When I was older, the whole family was always going to pose together for our Christmas card. But my brother had ball practice, my sister had her hair up, Dad was watching the Colts and Mom had to mop the kitchen. There wasn't time.

When I grew up and left home to be married, I was going to sit down with Mom and Dad and tell them I loved them and would miss them. But Hank (he was our best man and a real clown) was honking the horn in front of the house, so there wasn't time.

Newsday, Field Newspaper Syndicate, 1971, pp. 288-289.

CAT'S IN THE CRADLE

WORDS AND MUSIC BY
HARRY AND SANDY CHAPIN

My child arrived just the other day;
He came to the world in the usual way.
But there were planes to catch and bills to pay;
He learned to walk while I was away.
And he was talkin' 'fore I knew it, and as he grew he'd say,
"I'm gonna be like you, Dad,
You know I'm gonna be like you."

CHORUS: And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon,
Little boy blue and the man in the moon.
"When you comin' home, Dad?"
"I don't know when,
But we'll get together then;
You know we'll have a good time then."

My son turned ten just the other day;
He said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad, come on let's play.
Can you teach me to throw?" I said, "Not today,
I got a lot to do." He said, "That's okay."
And he, he walked away,
But his smile never dimmed, it said, "I'm gonna be like him, yeah,
You know I'm gonna be like him."

CHORUS: And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon,
Little boy blue and the man in the moon.
"When you comin' home, Dad?"
"I don't know when,
But we'll get together then;
You know we'll have a good time then."

Well, he came from college just the other day;
So much like a man I just had to say,
"Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for awhile?"
He shook his head and he said with a smile,
"What I'd really like, Dad, is to borrow the car keys;
See you later, can I have them please?"

CHORUS: And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon,
Little boy blue and the man in the moon.
"When you comin' home, Son?"
"I don't know when,
But we'll get together then;
You know we'll have a good time then."

I've been since retired, my son's moved away;
I called him up just the other day.
I said, "I'd like to see you if you don't mind."
He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time.
You see, my new job's a hassle and the kids have the flu,
But it's sure nice talkin' to you, Dad,
It's been sure nice talkin' to you."

And as I hung up the phone, it occurred to me,
He'd grown up just like me;
My boy was just like me.

CHORUS: And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon,
Little boy blue and the man in the moon.
"When you comin' home, Son?"
"I don't know when,
But we'll get together then, Dad,
We're gonna have a good time then."

ASK, DON'T TELL

BY NARDI REEDER CAMPION

HOW WONDERFUL when a conversational stone we throw out starts an avalanche of response; when our interest and concern open a wide path of another's personality. How wonderful -- and how rare! So often we feel shut out, unable to establish real contact. Yet, by learning the magic power of asking the right question at the right time, we unlock the floodgates of communication.

This exciting idea was first presented to me by the principal of our school. "Our ten-year-old son Russell pretends to be listening," I complained. "But later I find he didn't hear one word I said."

Miss Markham smiled, "Don't tell him, *ask* him," she said.

"Ask him what?"

"Well, what do you think he'd like to talk about?"

I paused to mull it over -- and suddenly it dawned on me that Miss Markham was using that very technique on me! Her apt question had engaged my attention completely, and it had me thinking about the problem as I never would have if she had spelled out an answer.

Ask, don't tell -- it sounded too simple to be of any real value. Still, I could recall instances of too much "telling," repeating ideas until the children dialed out. I decided to try a few experiments.

I didn't have to wait long for an opportunity. When our 15-year-old daughter goes out for an evening we clash with clock-like regularity. I usually tell her, "Be in by eleven, Cissa." She moans, "But Mother, *everybody* stays out until 11:30." And we are off on a collision course.

This Saturday, I tried Miss Markham's advice. I simply asked, "What time do you think you'll get back?"

"Oh," she said, "I'll make it by eleven all right."

I almost fell over. I felt as though I'd been pushing against a door that was already open. Communication hadn't

exactly flowed forth, but that one small question averted our usual head-on crash and it left the door open between us.

Encouraged, I started asking questions right and left.

At first I ran into a number of blank walls. Some questions, I discovered, come equipped with built-in answers. No sooner had I asked our high-school senior how the spring dance was, for instance, than I knew what his answer would be.

"Okay."

"Want to tell me about it?"

Toby shrugged, "Not really."

End of conversation, if that's what you can call it.

Happily, my husband opened up much more freely. When he came home from work, instead of "What did you do today?" I tried, "What was the most interesting thing that happened all day?"

"The cost-control meeting."

"Cost-control? What's that?"

He eyed me somewhat skeptically, but started off, "Well, cost control is a sensitive area." And away he went. Ten minutes later he suddenly stopped. "You're not listening."

"But I want to hear about your work," I insisted.

"Don't try to bluff it." He laughed. "You're not all that crazy about cost control."

Clearly I had a lot to learn about the art of asking questions.

As I brooded over this, a picture suddenly flashed before my mind's eye. I was a young girl again, all dressed for my first formal dance, and my mother, who grew up in the southern-belle tradition, was counseling me, "Try to get your beau to do the talking, my dear. Most men can't resist a girl who asks leading questions and pays rapt attention to their answers.

"The feminine asking role goes all the way back," she said. "It probably accounts for the Queen of Sheba's dazzling conquest of King Solomon. You remember in the Second Book of Chronicles it says she 'communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions.'"

What, I asked myself, did the Queen of Sheba know about the art of asking questions that I didn't?

I consulted a friend and a neighbor, the great preacher Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick. He thought a minute and then said, "I suppose the secret, if there is one, is to realize that questioning and listening are inseparable. The asking of good questions represents listening on its highest plane, and that of course can never be faked or turned on -- it must come from within. I believe it's the quality of attention that makes all the difference."

A QUESTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Some questions seem to close more doors than they open, while others lead to a real dialogue. Test yourself on this list by checking the good ones, and marking the poor ones zero.

1. What did you do today?
2. Would you explain that to me?
3. How was the game?
4. How do you feel about that?
5. Is something the matter?
6. What would you have done?
7. Do you love me?
8. Why did you say that?
9. Oh, really?
10. For instance?

For the questions recommended as aids to conversation, see note at end of the article.

That evening, instead of eager-beaver questions, I waited for my husband to start our conversation. After years of plunging right in, this took a little doing, but I managed to keep quiet. At first there was a long silence, then he said, "I'm working on a new committee at the plant..."

As he talked I had no difficulty appearing interested, for I was -- simply because what he was talking about was so

important to him. After he finished he smiled and said, "You know, it's encouraging to have you listen to me like that." What a rewarding moment!

To make someone feel that you want to hear more fully what he thinks -- this is an invaluable gift. John F. Kennedy was famous for the incisive questions he asked and the way he listened to replies. Robert Saudek, who conferred with him at the White House while producing *Profiles in Courage* for television, later told friends, "He made you think he had nothing else to do except ask you questions and listen -- with extraordinary concentration -- to your answers. You knew that for the time being he had blotted out both the past and the future. More than anyone else I have ever met, President Kennedy seemed to understand the importance of now."

The phrase, "the importance of now," struck me like lightning. Suddenly, I realized I had just been playing games with my family. If I were serious about trying to communicate with them, I would have to watch keenly for every fleeting chance -- asking the right question at the right time -- instead of trying to create moments artificially.

I decided I had, by trial-and-error, learned a number of things. I sat down and made a list.

RX FOR GOOD QUESTIONS

- Take every possible chance to ask a searching question, then keep quiet. (When you're talking, you're not learning anything.)
- One thoughtful question is worth a dozen inquisitive ones. The prod-and-pry approach makes people clam up.
- Questions that come close to the other person's true interest get the best answers -- provided you are interested too.
- Be prepared to wait. Sometimes a long silence can be more rewarding than another question.
- In every case, the quality of an answer depends on the quality of attention given by the questioner.
- Questions must spring from honest inquiry, not from at-

think

LOVE, MARRIAGE, CHILDREN --
AND SECURITY

BY HENRY C. LINK

tempts at flattery or efforts to manipulate the other person's thinking.

- Questions that deal with a person's *feelings* are more provocative than those that deal with *facts*.

My list seemed all right, but something was lacking. It was Toby who supplied the missing ingredient. He came downstairs one night after studying and announced, "I think Hamlet's an idiot."

"Why?"

"Because he's putty in his mother's hands."

I asked him to explain, and he launched into a diatribe that was the beginning of a long, often heard dialogue. We started out with Hamlet and ended with a lively discussion of the whole mother-son relationship. It was one of those rare and wonderful interludes when communication flows like wine.

The next morning at breakfast I said, "I enjoyed your conversation, Toby. Yet when I asked you about the spring dance, you gave me the old deep freeze. What was different last night?"

Toby grinned. "Well," he said, "you weren't just leading me on. For once I knew you really cared."

There, I submit, is the essence of true communication: "You really cared." Only a listening, loving heart has power to penetrate the coat of armor that encases us all.

Answer to Questionnaire: The odd-numbered questions are poor because they are conversation-stoppers, usually answered by one or two words. The even-numbered questions are good because they call for thought-provoking answers that can send the conversational stone rolling and start others.

Raising Kids, Berkley/Reader's Digest, 1981, pp. 197 - 201.

If you had to choose one of the following -- an interesting job, an independent income, a happy family and home life -- which would you choose? That question was asked of a cross section of husbands and wives. Eighty percent answered: a happy family and home life.

A happy family life is probably the principal factor in the security of adults -- as it is in the security of children. Much has been written about marital security. Yet most discussions of what makes a happy marriage place little emphasis on the necessity of having children. Wars can come, jobs can go, money can run out, but if father, mother and children stand by each other, hope and happiness may survive.

In my experience with unhappy couples, the one most apparent cause of unhappiness is their unwillingness to have children, or their prolonged postponement of parenthood. They do not want children until they can afford them, or the wife wants to keep on working until they can buy a home. In their quest for security before having children they risk the chance of not having any security at all.

The case of one young husband who was worried about his marriage is not uncommon. "We seem to be drifting apart," he told us, "and for no reason that we can see." He and his wife had agreed before marriage, six years ago, that she would keep her job until his salary was up to a certain level. He was still short of the mark. He was now 31 and she 28.

For six years they had defied their natural desire to have children. For six years they had said, in effect: "We can live without the risks of children until we can have children without risk." They did not realize that meanwhile they had probably lost the very security they were working toward.

1. 1981 BY HANNE - CATHY WALK

Man has concocted many theories and notions about marriage, among them the theory that each couple has the right to decide whether to have children. Regardless of theories, the chief purpose of sex and marriage is children. This is a law of human nature which cannot be defied with impunity.

Having children is a physical process but the experience is a spiritual one as well. It involves continuous self-sacrifice of many kinds, possibly even the sacrifice of immediate financial security. It is through the choice of spiritual values, where they conflict with material values, that true security is to be found.

Probably the most popular as well as the most dangerous theory about love is that it is something one falls out of as well as into. This ignores the truth that love, no matter how it starts, is something that must be consciously created. Lasting love depends on permanent sex compatibility, and when the experience of sex is subordinated to the birth and care of children it takes on a new spiritual significance. This is the basis for true and lasting love, a continuous process of creation and self-sacrifice centered around raising a family.

One of the most important studies of marriage is that by the late psychologist Lewis M. Terman, formerly of Stanford University. The results were published in his book *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness*. Of all the influences that determine a happy marriage probably the four most important are:

- Being eager to have children.
- Having parents who are happily married.
- Having a mature character and effective personality.
- Being religious and of religious parents.

Sexual compatibility alone is not regarded by psychologists and sociologists as a major factor. The reason is that such compatibility is something that has to be achieved, and its achievement depends on the four factors just mentioned.

Lack of money has often been given as a principal cause of marital unhappiness and divorce. And yet the higher the

income, the higher the divorce rate. Obviously, people without sufficient money to indulge their whims, their impulses, their selfish desires, must of necessity make greater efforts to overcome their difficulties. These difficulties often prove temporary and so the couple remain united and regain their happiness. Thus financial insecurity may be a help in achieving marital security.

Having a child is the final and strongest pledge of a couple's love for each other. It is an eloquent testimony that their marriage is a complete one. It lifts their marriage from the level of selfish love and physical pleasure to that of devotion centered around a new life. It makes self-sacrifice rather than self-indulgence their guiding principle. It represents the husband's faith in his ability to provide the necessary security, and it demonstrates the wife's confidence in his ability to do so. The net result is a spiritual security which, more than any other power, helps to create material security as well.

The Way to Security by Henry C. Link, Doubleday & Co. Inc.,
1951, pp. 292 - 299.

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