

We're all rookies at the dating game

BY CHEYENNE CARMACK

Being a woman gives me the advantage of being able to admit when I'm wrong, and the ability to recognize that I can't be an expert on everything.

Furthermore, in relation to dating, I have only learned one thing: I know absolutely nothing.

Even when I think I'm beginning to understand some small portion of the male way, I'm thrown a curve ball and sent back to the batting cage to pout and refocus.

Millions of dollars have been spent researching and exploiting the obvious, as well as the more discreet, differences in men and women.

The only thing that I've gotten from scanning even the best sellers is this:

Women really are from Venus, and men from Mars, or at least completely diverse planets; and in the dating game everyone is a dummy.

"Dating is a mind game -- the person you like always likes someone else," said junior Amber Thacker.

Still, there are people who claim to be way ahead in the love game. To those people I can only say, "Lucky you," or better yet, "Way to go, Slugger!"

Honestly, though, if you've ever broken up with someone, experienced self-inflicted embarrassment, or suffered due to unrequited love, you're not exactly batting 1.000.

You're not alone. I'm still in the pee wee leagues.

"I know I'm not an expert -- my relationships show it," said junior Cassie Sowder.

Peyton Rogers, another RCHS junior, agrees that it's impossible to be ahead in the dating game.

"People are always getting hurt," she said.

This is where the gender gap becomes evident and confusing.

Sophomore Rhonda Nottingham blames it on communication skills.

"[Guys and girls] are just on different wave lengths," she said.

The February 2001 issue of YM backs up Nottingham's belief.

"Guys are dumb when it comes to deciphering girls' actions," Der-

rick Lang told the teen magazine in their monthly column, "Wise Guys."

Males and females alike agree that mixed signals, mind games, and gender-based mishaps occur on a regular basis, simply due to different thought patterns and communication methods.

Freshmen Rachel Childress claims that girls play more mind games than guys.

"I don't think guys are smart enough to play mind games," she said.

While senior Thomas Coffey attributes the nu-

merous male-female conflicts to lack of explanation and openness, he also feels that girls are often fickle and moody.

"One day [girls] are hot, one day they're cold," Coffey said. "Plus, I know a girl who is talking to someone just to make someone else jealous!"

"You don't know what to think," he said.

Some RCHS students feel that the line is not drawn by gender, but by individual people.

"People are different -- not just guys and girls," said senior Eric Poynter.

"You can't be an expert at dating. Every person is different and you never know what to expect of another person," said senior Josh Lyons.

The blind are leading the blind.

Either luck or fate have to be to blame for the fortunate souls who do find a person to hang out with and feel connected to.

"Every now and then we get lucky and find someone who actually likes us too," said Thacker.

Aside from a major breakthrough in "guy speak" or "girl gab," or perhaps Cupid's accidentally successful aim, we can only rely on two known facts:

Practice makes perfect, and you miss 100% of the shots you don't take.

Besides, there are no Babe Ruths in the dating game -- only rookies looking for some playing time.

"You can't be an expert at dating. Each person is different, and you never know what to expect of another person," said senior, Josh Lyons.

That doesn't mean that you're stuck in the dugout

BY JOE CLARK

Ladies, since the beginning of time you have often wondered what exactly it is going on in the male mind.

On the other hand, guys tend to think that they know anything and everything about females, when really we don't know the first thing.

Let's be honest. When it comes to dating we could use all the help we can get. Thanks to *Dating For Dummies*, a some RCHS students, I may have some helpful hints that could be of some assistance.

FLIRTING

When people flirt with one another is when they tend to mess with each other's minds the most, throwing them in all different directions, with no compass to find their way back.

According to *Dating For Dummies*, flirting is a sincere appraisal of what you really like in the opposite sex. However, many guys misunderstand flattery for flirting.

"Guys interpret everything a girl says toward them as flirting," says freshman Tara Barnette.

When a guy tells a girl she has a nice shirt, generally she takes it as a sincere compliment, only thinking the guy is really sweet and nothing else.

However, when a female tells a guy he has a nice shirt, he immediately takes it as flirting, later telling all his friends how much that girl wants him.

Of course, he also stretches the truth by saying how the girl complemented him by saying how well the shirt looked on his fine body.

Even though it can come off wrong it's still a big part of all relationships and the base of starting a new one.

"NOTICE ME"

If you're trying to get someone's attention, perhaps for a Saturday night date, there are a few simple procedures you can use to grab their attention.

Beyond any doubt you need to show you're interested in them,

according to *Dating For Dummies*.

Pay attention and show you have at least some common interests that may spark that special relationship.

"Start talking to them a lot, and show up to meet them unexpectedly," says senior Warren Whitaker. "It surprises them and shows a definite interest."

Locking eyes is also a casual way of showing

you're paying attention to them. Catch those quick glances during a conversation. It makes that person know that you are paying attention to them rather than drifting off.

"As long as they don't stare at me too long. It makes me think they are some type of psycho-chick," says junior Chris Kirby.

So don't stare too much. It may turn them away. Also, use their name often -- but not too much, because you may come off as obsessive.

GETTING ATTENTION

Now, if for some odd reason you can't get that person to pay attention to you, it's time to change games. You need to let them know you're interested in them.

Back to flirting. It's the easiest way of getting someone to notice you. For example, go out of your way to see that special someone.

You can even use the oldest tricks in the book: notes, candy, and flowers. Guys usually use this one but I don't see anything wrong with females getting candy for guys. It's food, so you can't go wrong there.

Most people tend to think you should just come out and tell some-

LUANN By Greg Evans



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one how you feel.

"Don't hide anything. Just tell them how you feel," says freshman Alicia Nicley.

"I don't tell them," says senior Tara Abney. "I find out if they like me first. Keep it a secret. It's the better way out."

Just make sure not to lead them on with false hopes. There is no need in waiting for something that isn't there.

DON'TS

Let's talk about the don'ts of dating. There are those things that both sexes have in common that turns people away. For instance, poor grooming habits is a big turn off. Everyone likes their date to be neatly dressed and clean.

"A guy has to have clean nails," says senior Brittney Owens.

Senior Heath Payne believes that girls have got to have clean teeth.

"And don't even get me started on body odor," he said.

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"Truly loving another means letting go of all expectations. It means full acceptance, even celebration of another's personhood." - Karen Casey