



MOUNT HOLYOKE CLASS OF 1992

Fall Newsletter 2005

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AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT: We Met On The Internet...

By Lynda Vescio

When we graduated from MHC, uttering this phrase meant that you were either an overweight, middle-aged man with mommy issues who was expecting his foreign, teenaged bride to appear any day, or else you spent too much time in "chat rooms" and now plan to marry someone you knew only as "LookingforLove92".

Today, however, is a different e-landscape. Almost everyone I know who was not married by 25, regardless of age, gender, sexual preference, race, religion, fetish, experience, or any other category has tried internet dating at least once. A simple Google search for "singles" results in 18,100,000 sites in .11 seconds. Go ahead, try it! By the time this article is printed, it will probably be up to 18,200,000 sites.

With over 18 million sites, someone out there is trying this service. Internet dating site advertisements flood our in-boxes, pop ups, radios and televisions, and advertising only makes money if people are using the product. If you're single, you need us. We can help. We're here. We're everywhere. Why haven't you signed on yet? Want a different type of relationship, use our site. Want a different type of person, try us. Want a different type of service, we got it. We have the hottest singles. We have the smartest singles. We have the most singles. We have the richest singles. We have the most fetish-engaged singles. We have singles who have been abducted by aliens. We have singles who aren't even single.

So, now that we have established that internet dating is not just for Cliff Claven types and agoraphobics, I feel more secure telling you about my own experience. Yes, I, a Mount Holyoke graduate with a law degree, a former teenage model, having worked at a prestigious law firm, now working for the government, a home owner, a dog owner, a pool owner, a woman who has traveled, a woman with many friends, and a woman from a "good" family, yes, I have used internet dating. I'll give you a pause to gasp in shock and horror or to be thankful that it's not just you.

As a 20 year veteran of dating, I feel qualified, or at least entitled, to express my thoughts and opinions on this subject. I have tried just about everything in the dating arena more from a sense of adventure than of desperation and I have lived to tell the tales (and they are great tales). So, for those of you who, like me, are dating in the new millennium and are using all the technology available to you, and even for those of you who are married or just horrified at the idea of cyber love, I'd like to debunk a few myths, or fears, of e-dating. Then I'll pose a strategy for navigating this e-jungle of love. Yes, you can survive.

Myth #1: Only freaks join e-dating sites.

False. First of all, I joined an e-dating site. While I may not be what one would easily call "conventional," I don't think I quite fall into the "freak" category. Who have I met on these sites? A lawyer, a professor, a businessman, a marketing genius, a millionaire, a professional photographer, men from other countries, a bull rider, a veteran, a redneck, fathers, average guys, adult/professional students, body builders, doctors, hunks, dorks, tall men, short men, fat men, skinny men, smart men, funny men, serious men, philosophical men, sexual men, asexual men. I have met more types of men on the internet than there are places to eat green eggs and ham.

Myth #2: You can do better on your own.

False. At least, false for me. Who did I meet "on my own"? Let's briefly review my love history: a plumber who showed up to meet my parents with a big hole in his jeans right between his legs;; a lawyer who read the arts and leisure section of the NYT religiously so that he could quote the same three pieces of information all day to sound informed; a man who dumped me because he thought that I ate insufficient vegetables; a man who claimed that if you go anywhere near a pine tree on December 25 you cease to be Jewish; a southern ironworker whose grandfather still flies the confederate flag and who tried to trick a breathalyzer by drinking diet soda right before the test and my favorite, my ex-husband, who turned out to be an unemployed, drug addicted, abuser (and no, he wasn't even good looking).

To be fair, my adventures in e-dating have fared only slightly better on the sanity scale. I have met some very nice men who just didn't quite fit. On the other hand, I have met: a law professor who got into a fight with my stuffed snuffalupagos; a man who disclosed on what became our last date that his life goal was "to start a new country" (and the theory wasn't even workable); a man who did things with wooden spoons that make most men cringe and would make you never look at a Williams-Sonoma catalogue the same way again; and a man who needs "peace and harmony at all times."

In sum, nuts are everywhere, whether you meet them on the internet, at work, at a bar, through a friend (remember, "friends" often don't see the freakishness that comes out only when dating), at a convention, or anywhere else. Most of the people on internet sites have jobs, friends, go to conventions, and have probably been to a bar once or twice. It's all the same pool of people, and unlike real estate, it's not about the location of the meeting.

Myth #3: People can put up fake profiles.

This falls into the "duh" category. People can lie, whether it's orally, in writing, in person, in cyberspace, on the phone, over coffee, or while meeting your parents. Honest people will be honest anywhere and dishonest people will not. Here's a tip: if you show up and the person doesn't match their picture, walk out of the coffee shop. Otherwise, everyone should get the same shot at being trusted.

Now that we've established that there are freaks everywhere, that people can lie anywhere, and that trying to find one great person out of 18 million websites is a pretty daunting task. So what's a girl to do? After two decades, I finally came up with a strategy that works: just have fun with it, and when it isn't fun, end it. This strategy works particularly well with internet dating, from choosing the date to ending the relationship.

Tip #1: Get comfortable

Seriously. Dating on the internet means that you can sit in one spot, glass of wine in hand, with no make up on and wearing sweats (some things from my MHC days have apparently not changed), and decide what type of man you'd like to meet this week.

Tip #2: Get ready to Shop

Step one is to pick a site. Personally, I like a broad range of men so I go for the more general sites. But, if you know you want a particular religion, gender, race, or some other category, just add that **Internet, continued page 2**

EVERY CLASSMATE OUTREACH UPDATE

We continue to plug along at reaching out to every member of the Class of 1992, though the pace has slowed somewhat. Amazing how life can sometimes overtake ambitious projects...

Nevertheless, before the class' 15th Reunion in 2007, we hope to have been in touch with all of you.

Have ideas or updates that you can't wait to share with us? Let us know! Contact Class President Erin Ennis by email at ellenis@earthlink.net, or by regular mail at 109 C St SE Apt 1, Washington, DC 20003

ANNUAL FUND FISCAL YEAR ENDS ON HIGH NOTE!

Visit us on the web at www.MHC1992.com. Sign up for our quarterly e-blasts to learn the latest news from the class and your classmates!
New This Quarter: Laura Althoff, Diva, better halves and babies, babies!

We are delighted to report that Mount Holyoke's Alumnae Annual Fund ended the year on a very positive note. A total of \$7.5 million was raised from 43% of alumnae. This is the second highest total in the history of Mount Holyoke's Annual Fund - a truly remarkable achievement. We join the College in thanking each and every one of you who made a gift to the 2004-2005 Alumnae Annual Fund. It is only through the generous support of thousands of alums like you that this kind of success is possible.

For our part, the class of 1992 raised a total of \$21,250, with 28.6% participation. When compared to last year's totals, we were just slightly ahead in dollars (\$20,791 last year), but slipped a bit in participation (33.5% last year). Overall, though, this is an impressive showing and we should all feel very proud of the combined contribution our class made to the success of the Alumnae Annual Fund. Again, we want to thank all of you who made gifts for your

terrific support. We especially want to offer our deep gratitude to our stellar team of class agents, whose dedication and perseverance throughout the year helped make all of this happen. We couldn't do it without your help - thank you!

With the new fiscal year underway, we are busy working with the Development Office on ways to make this year even more successful than last. Watch your mailbox for information on how you can be a part of our success this year. We look forward to being in touch with you in the coming months to keep you informed of our progress.

If you are interested in becoming a class agent, would like to make your gift now, or have any questions/comments, please feel free to contact either one of us anytime. We would love to hear from you. Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Alicechandra Fritz & Amy Grohman

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word to the search. Once I get into the site, I just check off the qualities I'd like the man to have today. It could be different than yesterday, and it might be different tomorrow. But today, these are the qualities in a date that I'm in the mood for. Hit "search" and let the sales representative bring you your choices.

Take a look at the prospects. Do you like their appearance, style, how many of the things you asked for do they have, what are the potential flaws in the fit? Most sites offer you a way to "flirt" without having to talk, a type of "cyber wink" that just lets the person you know you're interested in trying them on. If you're feeling really brave, you can send them a real e-mail with questions and information.

Tip #3: Meet before Meeting

Next, get to know them a bit in writing. When you're e-communicating, you are in control of how much information you give out. You can keep your e-mail address secret and use the site's e-mail, and you don't have to give them your phone number or real or last name unless and until you're comfortable. Imagine trying that in person: "Hi, I'm LRV and I'd like to meet up to talk to you over the next few weeks to see if I like you, but I'm not going to give you my number, last name, or any other identifying

information."

Meeting in writing is actually an advantage over meeting someone in person. You can think about what you want to say. You can see if someone is literate. You can ask questions that you might feel are too forward in person. Best of all, at ANY point, you can end it by hitting "delete match" or "block profile." It's a lot harder to walk out of a coffee shop the minute you realize it isn't going to work.

Tip #4: Click him away, and start over

Once you do meet in cyberspace, you are still in control. If you like them, you can move from e-communication into the real world. If you don't, they're gone at the click of a button. No hard feelings, no need to "explain," no mess, no stress. Ok, so I window shopped, I tried a few things on, nothing I really liked, so I'll go shopping again if and when I feel like it, on my own timetable. Truly, it's a very convenient system.

The moral of the story is this: "meeting someone" is the same regardless of the venue of the original meeting. The most important thing, in this dating veteran's opinion, is to get a good story out of it and never, ever have any regrets. Regrets are a waste of time, time which could be spent emailing a potential date.

And if you do get a great story or get discouraged, email your friends, or me. We've all been there.

ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION ALUMNAE STAY PROGRAM

The Alumnae Association has kicked off a new program to help Mount Holyoke students with housing when they are traveling for internships and job interviews. The program is designed to assist students pursue to pursue their goals by alleviating the burden of finding a safe place to live when they travel to unfamiliar places and to offer them the opportunity to connect with MHC alumnae.

The expectation of the program is simply to provide free housing to MHC students who are traveling for academic and/or employment-related business like internships, job interviews, mentoring, etc. Alumna participating in the program offer free temporary housing to an MHC student for the amount of time that is suitable to the alum. Nothing more is expected.

Based on information provided via a short registration form, a brief profile of participating alumna's housing information will be published on the Alumnae Association's website, but no contact information will be published. MHC students will browse through these profiles and then complete a request form indicating which profiles would fit their needs. The Alumnae Association will review the form and put the student and alumna in touch with each other.

If you are interested in participating in this program, links to the registration form are available on the Internet at www.alumnae.mtholyoke.edu/item.cfm?id=423 or contact Maya D'Costa at mdcosta@mtholyoke.edu or c/o Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College, 50 College Street, South Hadley, MA 01075.



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