

**Jim VANCE**

## Mall marriage

*Man seeks spouse through interviews*

**VANCE is a senior physical and health education major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

At the Mall of America last week in Minneapolis, a great problem of our society was made into a mockery. It was a wedding. But it was a wedding that showed the common feelings of marriage. I wasn't in attendance, although reports say there was a packed mall to view it, but I imagine it went something like this:

Minister: "Do you, David Weinlick, choose...uh, what is your name ma'am?"

David: "Yeah, what is your name?"

Elizabeth: "My name is Elizabeth Runze."

Minister: "Well then David, do you take this woman, whose name you do not even know, to be the woman you commit to for the rest of your life?"

David: "Sure! Why not?"

Minister: "Do you Elizabeth, choose David to be your one true love?"

Elizabeth: "Well, sure. I mean the flyer said he was a clean-cut guy with good credit, so I figure he's good enough."

Since the debacle in Minneapolis, I have heard everyone laud how romantic, interesting and entertaining the event was. You see, David decided a few years ago he would be married June 13, 1998. Well, that day came close, and Dave didn't even have a girlfriend. So his friends decided to auction him off at the mall.

They put out flyers, which really did speak of his good hygiene and credit, and what type of woman he would like. His friends reviewed the applications and then chose from six women who were at the final event.

Romantic? Perhaps.

Big mistake? Definitely.

What he has done is take our consciousness level of love and relationships, and dropped it down a notch. This marriage will not last.

I have worked with many troubled young kids, and it seems most all have one common trait — they lack a strong family unit. I just hope these two don't have any children before they get divorced.

Probably the best thing that could happen would be for this marriage to fail, and for the world to see it. People will then see it takes a lot to get married and raise a family. If everyone took this couple's attitude, we would only have more divorces. We will have more single-parent homes. We will have more troubled youths.

Thanks, David and Elizabeth, for showing us it doesn't take much of anything to start a family.

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**Haney's VIEW**



**Erin HANSBROUGH**

## Can I help you?

*Servers not for customers to abuse*

**HANSBROUGH is a junior news-editorial, women's studies and Spanish major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Like millions of other American women, I live to serve. Hold your horses, there, cowboy. I'm not about to cook you breakfast. I'm talking about being part of the service industry, that bright bastion of employment providing low pay and few benefits to a work force populated predominantly by women. Of course men exist in this industry, too, and suffer some of the same problems associated with it. But women still fill the majority of the "serving" positions, and face problems our male counterparts don't.

Some fools think women gravitate to these positions because of our natural desires to nurture all those who step within our reaches. For those who believe that, we have on special today a reality check. Please ask your server for details about the inaccessibility of high-paying jobs with good benefits, especially for those of us with vaginas and/or non-white skin. In the meantime, I've got a plate full of myths and misconceptions to address regarding the treatment of those waitresses, receptionists, cashiers and sales clerks who keep businesses running with a friendly smile.

■ **Consumer misconception**

one: The server is both inhuman and superhuman, able to perform at maximum capacity with little personal discomfort. Nothing you do or say really bothers the server, who is desperately happy to be where she is — I mean, she's still smiling, isn't she?

■ **The reality:** A server is not a whipping girl. Her job description does not entail suffering on behalf of the cruel, cruel world outside her workplace. Many consumers have the idea that, beyond help and accommodation, a server also provides a receptacle for frustration, grief and impatience. Besides criticizing a server's performance, many consumers go on to gripe about any number of things. It is amazing to me how many people are eager to make racist, sexist and homophobic comments to me, simply because I'm in a position to listen to them, and I'm not supposed to talk back. I'm serious when I say this ruins my entire day at work.

■ **Consumer misconception two:** Your presence in a place of business automatically entitles you to personal information about the servers. Ask them about their lives, ask them about their families, ask them about their grooming habits. Go on, this is your talk show! Your server is so glad you asked!

■ **The reality:** Don't misunderstand. I really like making personal contact with customers, and have made a lot of friends from these types of situations. Friendly people really do make my jobs worthwhile. But

there is a line to be observed. Sometimes asking a server about her personal life will add stress to her job. A good guideline to follow is this — don't ask a server anything you wouldn't feel right asking a stranger on the street.

■ **Consumer misconception three:** All female servers are heterosexual and are waiting to be rescued from their mundane reality by a kind, male consumer.

■ **The reality:** Obviously this doesn't apply to all consumers. Not everyone mistakes their server for a mail-order bride. But there is a contingency of men out there who need to be made aware of this fact. Again, when in the workplace, servers don't usually have the freedom to respond to a customer's advances as they might in a "civilian" situation. Even if a worker is interested, she might be put in an uncomfortable position while working. And if she is not interested, she's going to be upset. Don't put yourself on the receiving end of the server's wrath!

If we all play nice and don't taunt, torture or harass the help, we will all have a much nicer service-industry experience. Being a cashier and a waitress has, if nothing else, made me a nicer consumer and restored my faith in karma. Rude customers receive the worst service, no doubt about it. And above all, at the end of the day, I can laugh and remember that, in reality, I only serve to live.