

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The numbers are rising so fast that we have run out of the body bags that are required for the burial of cholera victims. We now use bin linings."

Health official Tendai Musanhu on the dire cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe. Page 12

DOUBLE TAKE » EVOLUTIONARY BENEFITS

The look of love?

Women and men score equally when it comes to recognizing romantic sparks between others, a U.S. study says

BY PHILIP JACKMAN

You're sitting in a restaurant and there's a couple at a nearby table who seem to be on their first date. How interested is the man in the woman, and vice-versa?

Traditional wisdom would suggest that a woman observing the dating couple would be better able to make an accurate judgment about this than a man.

Well, it's not true, according to research at Indiana University. It turns out that men and women are equally good at judging a man's interest in a woman and equally bad at assessing a woman's interest in a man.

The study, published in the January issue of the journal Psychological Science, focused on the ability of observers to judge romantic interest between others because this has evolutionary benefits when it comes to finding a mate.

"The most obvious advantage would be to see who's available in your current environment," Skyler Place, a doctoral student in psychology and lead author of the study, said in a phone interview from Bloomington, Ind., yesterday.

"If you can tell that someone is terribly taken by the person they're currently talking to you might not want to waste your time with them."

It's also useful in getting an idea of who's most popular in your social group, he said, and that information can be important in determining whom you want to interact with in the future.

"I'm a guy and if this other guy's not having very good luck with that woman and I think he's as attractive as me, then maybe I shouldn't waste



Men and women score well in judging a man's interest in a woman. Judging a woman's interest in a man is a different matter. PHOTODISC

my time [on her]," Mr. Place said.

For the study, 28 women and 26 men of college age watched videos of couples interacting on speed dates, when singles meet a large number of people in brief one-on-one conversations.

Each participant in the study watched 24 videos, all with different men and women, and then rated whether the man seemed interested in the woman and vice-versa. Their judgments were then compared with the forms filled out by the speed-dating couples indicating whether they were interested in the person they had just met.

The speed-dating sessions all took place in Germany. None of the Indiana observers could speak German, so they had to make their judgments based on tone of voice, body language, eye contact and other non-verbal cues.

"On average we found across the 24 different dates that both men and women observers were equally good at predicting male interest."

However, they didn't do so well at predicting female interest.

So why are women more difficult to read?

One possible reason, said Mr. Place, "is that evolutionary theory predicts that the women should effectively be ... taking longer to show their true interest than the men because they have higher risks involved," owing to the potential for pregnancy. They therefore need to make sure that the man they choose is the best one for them.

"Sometimes the best way to do that might be to not show your interest towards a man immediately and instead kind of force him to tell you more about himself," said Mr. Place.

"In a speed-dating environment, you would expect to see these effects dramatically, with the women trying to get the men to be more straightforward, while they themselves remain more coy," Mr. Place said in a statement. "Though the pace is faster than a typical first date, the strategy remains the same."

INSIDE INFORMATION

» BY PHILIP JACKMAN

Your guide to today's Globe

A culture clash at the doctor's office

Some immigrant physicians find that having their credentials recognized is not the only barrier.

Take the example of Kamelia Elias, Margaret Wente says. She's the Egyptian doctor in Winnipeg who refused to take a lesbian couple as patients because her religion condemns homosexuality. She is one of a growing number of immigrant medical professionals whose beliefs and backgrounds clash with Canadian ways.

COMMENT, A15 »

Time to retire a Super Bowl myth

The popular view is that the biggest event in U.S. pro football is usually a dud.

And the popular view is quite wrong, David Naylor says. Sunday's cliffhanger win by the Pittsburgh Steelers over Arizona was the fifth time in the past 10 years that the Super Bowl has been decided in the final seconds of the game.

GLOBE SPORTS, R7 »

Felix Mendelssohn, man of mystery

Was he a classicist or a romantic? Was he a good husband or a man with well-hidden secrets?

Such questions about the hugely popular composer who died at 38 may never be answered, Colin Eatock writes. But in the year ahead, concerts and events around the world will celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth and shine a spotlight on his life and work.

GLOBE REVIEW, R1 »

Leaving the rat race and hitting the road

Some Canadians have found a way to work less, travel more and live debt-free.

In British Columbia and throughout the United States, a small but determined group of parents with school-age children are selling their heavily mortgaged homes to buy RVs and hit the highway. Many are "road schooling" their children while pursuing on-the-fly careers in construction, website design or entertainment.

GLOBE LIFE, L1 »

Things getting nasty

The economic downturn is turning downright nasty in Europe, Eric Reguly writes. Protests and strikes are spreading as workers in hard-hit economies fight for the dwindling number of jobs, reflecting a brutal economic reality at odds with some official forecasts.

REPORT ON BUSINESS, B1 »

Take our online poll

Are you considering a no-gift party for your child's next birthday?

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Toronto -4/-17, Light snow
Ottawa -9/-18, Mainly sunny
Montreal -10/-17, Mainly sunny
Halifax 0/-10, Ice pellets

Full Weather Coverage L5

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PRISONERS

Detainees at Guantanamo seeking to come live in Canada

BY KATE HAMMER

With the pending shutdown of the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay, six detainees have applied for resettlement in Canada, including three Uyghurs who have been cleared of all charges.

Their lawyers hope that a changed political landscape will help them, and the Toronto-based refugee organization that is sponsoring them says the step could earn Canada the favour of U.S. President Barack Obama.

The Uyghurs are a Muslim minority group in northwestern China. Beijing has used the war on terrorism as leverage in its continuing crackdown on the Uyghurs, some of whom have fought fiercely for independence from China.

The three men, all in their 30s, were detained in Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2001 and 2002. One, Anwar Hassan, applied for sponsored resettlement last fall, and the two others applied last week. All three are being sponsored by the Don Valley Refugee Resettlement Organization, a group of eight Toronto churches.

Mr. Hassan's Washington-based lawyer, George Clarke, said his client's application will be a litmus test of whether Canada might open its doors to all 17 Uyghur detainees with



A detainee opens a cooler at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, late last month. U.S. President Barack Obama has ordered the prison closed.

BRENNAN LINSLEY/REUTERS

no place to go with the closing of the U.S. detention centre, one of Mr. Obama's first moves after his inauguration last month.

"Canada, from a perspective of human rights, is a sort of leader," he said. "They certainly are also a close contact to the United States, they have a strong economy, they have a good Uyghur population, so it's kind of all the pieces put together in one place."

Seema Saifee, a New York-based lawyer for the other two men, said taking in the Uygh-

urs, who are ideal candidates for refugee status, would allow Canada to lend a helping hand to the Obama administration. "Immediately after they were brought to Guantanamo, the U.S. military told our clients they were mistakenly picked up, were innocent, and would soon be released. The government has conceded that they are non-combatant civilians, and has declared them free to leave Guantanamo. The sole reason they remain in Guantanamo is because they have nowhere to go."

Canada has come close to taking in the Guantanamo Uyghurs in the past, but Ottawa pulled back at the last minute - in large part, an investigation by The Globe and Mail found, because of fears of what would happen to Huseyin Celil, a Canadian citizen in a Chinese prison who is also a member of China's Uyghur minority.

An opportunity will be missed "if Canada doesn't act this time," said Mehmet Tohti, a member of the Uyghur Canadian Association, part of the group sponsoring the men.

The only Canadian in the Guantanamo Bay prison is Omar Khadr, who is accused of killing a U.S. medic in Afghanistan. Ottawa has been under pressure to bring him back to Canada.

PROTEST

Shoe-dodging Chinese leader follows in Bush's footsteps

BY ADRIAN CROFT
AND DAISY KU CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

A protester threw a shoe at Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and called him a dictator as he delivered a speech on the global economy yesterday.

The shoe missed Mr. Wen and landed on the stage about a metre away from him during an address at Cambridge University on the last day of his official visit to Britain.

The protest followed the hurling of shoes by an Iraqi journalist at former U.S. president George W. Bush on his farewell visit to Iraq in December.

The protester, who was held by university security guards, blew a whistle and then shouted: "How can the university prostitute itself with this dictator? How can you listen to the lies he is telling? Stand up and protest."

Mr. Wen hesitated for a few moments before continuing his speech.

After the protest, Mr. Wen said: "We come in peace. This is not going to obstruct China-U.K. friendships. History shows harmony will not be obstructed by any force, so would you let me continue."

» Reuters News Service