

Teens and Twenties Special on Valentine's Competition

Affairs of the Heart

by Betty & Veronica

LOVE a four letter word — must have been quoted by an irrational parent, who probably has no idea about the agonies the youths of today are putting through, all in the name of this supposedly true, true love.

To this generation, having a girlfriend or a boyfriend is more of a status symbol rather than an act of love. It is mostly just a relationship of conveniences. Both girl and boy look daring, cool and rebellious in the eyes of their friends. The saying "First Love, Last Love" is a farce for today's generation as most of them fall in and out of love at the drop of a hat.

or her entire life ahead of them and that there will be many such affairs in the future. They should at this point of parenthood look back at their teenage years and deal with their child, with patience and intelligence.

Most kids sneak around behind their parents' backs mainly because they don't feel free to discuss their love life with their parents. Parents tend to be rather touchy on such subjects. They immediately jump to conclusions, condemn the relationship and declare it unacceptable. In most cases they expressively forbid the kids from associating with the opposite sex.

thority on their lives.

Parents are so concerned about their reputation, about what society will say about them and defame their family names that they totally ignore the agonies of pain their kids go through. If Bangladeshi society was more lenient, more like western societies, parents would not be so hard on their kids concerning such affairs of the heart. After all, they do put their kids in co-ed schools, where they constantly mingle with the opposite sex. They would not have done so if they truly and thoroughly disapproved the idea of their kids associating with the opposite sex.

Thus, in the long run, it is the narrow-minded society that is the villain in this case. It condemns any sort of relationship, even a "just friends" relationship between males and females before and after marriage. In the eyes of society, only a husband and wife are allowed to share an intimate relationship. But it's definitely time society confronted reality.

"Face It! The Times They Are A Changing!"

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Of course there are some exceptions to this usually applicable rule. Some people truly do fall in love. It's all a part of nature. It's only natural for someone at some stage of their life, to be attracted to a member of the opposite sex. But parents usually jump to conclusions, thinking this entirely natural attraction to be dishonorable.

Parents have to realize that for the most part it is only infatuation, which ultimately does not lead to anything. They should not take it seriously and should dismiss it as a part of growing up. Even though their kids might believe themselves to be in love, the parent should realize that their child has his or her entire life ahead of them and that there will be many such affairs in the future. They should at this point of parenthood look back at their teenage years and deal with their child, with patience and intelligence.

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ing with each other. This has no effect on the lovebirds, as they feel rebellious and determined to do the forbidden, questioning their parents au-

mate relationship. But it's definitely time society confronted reality.

Love Conquers All

Survey of the Valentine's Competition

A total number of 91 youths, with age limit from 18 to 21, studying at various institutions, were asked the A following questionnaire:

1. Do you think your parents should know about your affair?
2. If your parents find out about your affair, should they interfere?
3. Should your parents be more liberal or more understanding regarding your affairs?

Answers of the questionnaire is tabulated below:

Question 1:	Yes: 33 No: 58	approx: 36%	approx: 64%
Question 2:	Yes: 12 No: 74	Yes: 13%	No: 87%
Question 3:	Yes: 55 No: 36	Yes: 60%	No: 40%

We thank each and every people for participating in the survey and the competition as well and we welcome any comments regarding these statistics.

Notice

After reading all the articles we decided Betty and Veronica to be the winners! Congratulations!! Please come and collect your prizes from The Daily Star office on 28.3.96 around 3:00 pm. Thank you all for participating.



Be Young at Heart Love Destroyed Troy Created the Taj

by Cadet Ali

WHenever I sit to write anything regarding the problems related to us teenagers, the first thing that pops into my mind is: how many times I had to lie to Mom and Dad about talking to my girl-friend on the phone or taking her out. But it certainly does not feel good deep inside when I have to lie or when I think about it.

But what else is there to be done? Because the situation is like this, that either I have to lie or I have to give up my affair.

wasn't there he would have nothing to think rather than his studies most of the time. Also to mention here is that, restricted things are always most attractive. So if our parents had changed their opinions about us going steady, a lot of things would have been easier for a student. The question is: have the parents really succeeded much by creating all the stress? The answer is no!

In our society going steady with someone is a serious offence specially during the teenage years. It is also seen that whenever somebody is out with his girl-friend they become the subject of peculiar stares, as if they resemble the animals at the Zoo. If the couple is seen by any of their relatives then there is even bigger a problem. The guy would not forget to give the news to the parents of the couple.

Love is a divine gift of Allah. It is the most immaculate relation between a boy and girl or a man and a woman. Love is such a power that destroyed Troy and created the Taj.

Only for love the world is a colourful and joyful place for living. But in our society loving somebody is a capital offence. And when it comes to teenagers it's all the more a restricted fruit. Many believe that falling in love while still a student is the sure way to doom. What they do not seem to understand is that this opinion is not absolutely correct and even if there is anything wrong in falling in love, it is mostly because of the complications created by parents themselves.

Using money is one point that the teenagers should restrict themselves. It's true that some teenagers do spoil money uselessly over their lovers which is not always required. But then again there is another point to ponder as well, where would we get money for the dates, presents and other things.

The mere problems related to love in the teenage years often create major psychological problem in the later part of the life. The teenager who is growing up with problems such as these are sure to face serious after effects. This kind of problems continuously haunts the minds of the teenagers which ultimately hardens up, directly or indirectly, towards their parents. This kind of problems show up just because of some stress created on the teenagers which is not even worth it.

The major complication that arise between teenagers and parents related to love is the school grades. It is true that sometimes teenagers falling in love start getting low grades in the school, and naturally love is to be blamed. Yet I would like to give an example, that almost all the teenagers of the western country have at least one friend with whom he goes out steady, but there, such degradation of grades or bad results are almost unthinkable. Then, why this difference?

The difference is because there is too much stress in our country on the teenagers in love. A teenager cannot express his feelings and discuss about his problems with his parents. He continuously has to hide himself from his elders which creates a mental stress. He continuously (intentionally or unintentionally) has to think about explanations to his family about the next date, about where he was last evening or about that phone call.

If these complications

At least we can see, that all these discussion related to teenagers, their parents and their love affairs ends up only in creating more stress on them about their going steady and does nothing except create problems both for teenagers and parents.

So, if the parents are more liberal and considerate to the teenagers, things would become easier on both sides.

The writer is a Cadet of Jhenidah Cadet College, Jhenidah.

The Great Luncheon! Cheers to Freedom and Family!

by Mujibul Haque

WHILE Trishna has chosen to seek the permission of her father if she could spend the day at a friend's house (a lie in order to hide about the lunch she intends to have at a restaurant with her 'intimate' friend and Jahed all ready to coax his mother for the money that is to be spent for the 'Great Luncheon', obviously the two did not need a father nor a mother to consult before becoming friends at first and then 'intimate' ones.

I, as a parent, would like to know why the boy has to take money from his mother for the luncheon and the girl seek permission from her father. Usually mind it, I say 'usually' usually a girl tells her mother about her relationship with a boy, while all the 'intimate' things are made known by a boy to his father. And a boy now-a-days does not have to ask for any extra money in order to 'feed' his girl friend. The money comes either out of his savings or his own earnings. Should we the parents ever try to encourage such a kind of luncheon or not is a question that need answering by the younger generation as well as the older ones.

As for ANY religious norms of life and living that is concerned none encourage free mixing of young boys and girls intimately, not to speak of touching unmarried girls by menfolk. Although in the west and even in our country this is going on unnoticed or in full view of the elderly population we don't see any reason to complain about how each person tends to lead his or her life in a society. Ultimately the sufferer happens to be the girl as the Almighty has chosen it to be like that. Free mixing, free sex or extra marital relationship is never encouraged in any religion. We may create a 'row' over the issue in many ways, setting examples and results but the true fact remains as it is meant to be. Equal Rights sought by the women-folks falls into dust when they are asked to be the 'bread earners' and allow the menfolk to take care of the household chores only. Then there is the question of child bearing. Whoever has ever heard of a male carrying a child or becoming 'pregnant' after a love affair?!!

As for the teens and the twenties it is best to keep their relationship with boys and girls to themselves alone and refrain from making it 'public'. This may not be shameful but at least the sanctity of that relationship remains to be HONOURED as well as sacred. If the teens and the twenties wish to have lunch or dinner together then why not have the same at home with their parent? Why does it have to be a restaurant and that too at the parents' cost? The couple (?) may also have lunch or dinner along with their parents at any restaurant, if all agree.

In our present day society boys and girls are allowed to mix freely in schools and colleges and also socially. There's nothing WRONG in that. But at the same time we have been trying to teach them or make them understand that their feelings towards one another must be like 'brothers and sisters' and no more than that. If physical attraction arise then who shall be blamed for or accused of any foul play?

If Trishna and Jahed and

many more teenagers feel they are not free enough to discuss their 'own affairs' with their parents then surely the fault lies with the younger generation. The parents also have failed to educate them about the religious teachings and social behaviour. Again, when Trishna and girls of her age have to tell lies and 'whisper' over the phone at the expense of parent's telephone bills and would prefer to 'chat' every evening with Jahed who happens to be an intimate friend surely it smells (stinks)!!!!

Surely there must be so many other things to do in this world than to 'waste time, energy and money' every evening!! and, I must repeat: and if it is more 'than friendship' then they better start earning and the girl without wasting time and pointing an accusing finger at the parents, get into wedlock and live happily ever after.

If the society IS TRULY TOO STRINGENT then surely there must be an obvious reason. Teenagers of today must wait to find out the reality and grow up to be our age before they too become a part of this so-called stringent society.

As far as I am concerned I would rather feel much obliged to do whatever I wanted to do at this age; after all inside of me I feel young and energetic and lively. What a wonderful world this is indeed! But hush! I have to remove my glowing eyes from the window through which I was looking at a my young daughter has entered the room with her dear mother.....!!!! Cheers to FREEDOM and FAMILY!!!!

The writer is an artist and an English teacher.

Determined to do the forbidden

by M Rashid

FEBRUARY 14th, Valentine's Day --- people going about with dreamy smiles on their faces, their heads in the clouds and roses in their hands. Of course they are today's teenagers, who from every early ages know the ABC of the dating game. They are the ones who are the romantics at heart, they believe that love makes the world go round. And yes, they are 'extremely' developed in this day and age.

Of course we must not forget our country's older generation, looking on disapprovingly in the background. They feel that teenagers are adopting western cultures, that they are growing up too fast. 'Free mixing' is definitely not a plus among the wiser class.

As a teenager myself, I am having a hard time being objective and keeping my priorities straight so as not to be prejudiced. But I have some strong concepts and opinions in this rather controversial issue and would like to express them with no intended offence to anyone.

Let me start by giving a clear view of 'teenage love.' When you are around the early ages of, say, twelve or thirteen... maybe you a boy in school catches your eye and strikes you like a thunderbolt, and for some bizarre reason you feel yourself attracted to him.

one fine morning, out of the blue you find yourself "asking him out" --- which, when accepted, involves having conversations, the length of the Great Wall of China over the telephone, smiling at each other till your lips fall off, and suffering merciless teasing from your friends. All harmless fun, you would like to think --- "think" being the operative word. In this modern world, sometimes it extends a bit too far, and their can be serious consequences. Believe me, with the risk of sounding mysterious, I have to state that you would be quite shocked at some of the going-ons.

But, without quite knowing it, teenagers are not the only ones crossing the limit, adults are too. Some parents, instead of being just conservative, are just plain ridiculous. They will not even allow their children to talk over the phone to someone from the opposite sex, while getting together is out of the question. When children feel that their parents do not trust them, they feel the need to rebel and do things to anger them. In some cases the adults are being rather hypocritical since they tend to forbid their own carefree youth. It may be due to the generation gap that these days people simply do not understand one other.

I feel, in both instances, that everyone, old and young is carrying this whole farce to extremes. And since this subject is not physics, it does not

have an exact accurate solution. However, this intricate pattern might be made somewhat simpler.

If the adults, instead of frowning, accepted the fact that our society is changing, things might be a little easier. As they are more experienced, they have a right to voice their thoughts. They know what is best and the most important things is, they care sufficiently to point out when things get out of hand. But they do it in a way which makes their children, instead of confiding in them, shy away with fear. There is something known as 'young at heart' --- they should make an effort to be more liberal.

But that does not mean that teenagers get away scott-free. If their parents are to rely on them, then they must be mature enough to justify between what is right or wrong, good from bad and carry out their actions accordingly. They must learn to accept responsibilities and be aware of the fact that ours is a conventional community.

If people made enough attempts to come to a compromise, I am quite certain that life would continue with less misunderstandings and they would not feel so constrained and pressured. Life certainly would not be a golden fairytale where everyone 'lived happily ever after' but it would be more facile to breathe. And, in my belief, 'Live and let live' should be the motto of 1996.



The King and The Princess

KING: Let's check out my girl's secret casket I want to know the name of the Prince she is in love with. If he is rich she is married off, if not his head is off.

LOVE

by Monika Khan

WHEN you are bold, Love is told.
When you are rude, Love is crude.
When you are kind, Love is blind.
When you are funky, Love is clumsy.
When you cried, Love was pried.
When your heart tears, Love unbars.
When you stopped it, Loves was dropped.
When you are angry, Love is expressed, frankly.
When you are jealous, Love is not credulous.
When you are old, Love is cold.
When you are in school, Love is cool.
When you are cute, Love is the Beauty.
When you are in mood, Love is good.
When you are in trouble, Love is not double.
When you are a child, Your love does hide.
When you look at my eyes for a long time, Shyness enters my heart for sometime.
When you leave me and go away, Love is thrown away.
When you are naughty, My love is haughty.
Monika Khan is student of Omni School, Class IX

Live and Let Live

Nowara Munir

THE youth knew well enough that the dying society had little use for them, for they could not reach their destination by putting the horses behind the cart.

So they considered it prudent to keep away from it and to build a new society in its place in which they could realize their aspirations. On the other hand, according to the old the youth are mislead, impatient and unscrupulous who have no respect for the old, no faith in the tradition and no patience to learn.

The old and the young seem to be living in two different worlds and they move in two different directions-one blaming the other for the void and for the noise round the neck. I believe, that it is the teenagers who should change their attitudes.

Why should one whisper while talking on the phone or lie to his parents unless he has something to be scared of, unless he is guilty? Falling in love is not exactly a crime, so why are most teenagers so frightened? It is because, they themselves are not sure whether they like the person or not. It is too early to develop such feelings in the teenage years because there is no certainty of the future. To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven. Let us keep all our relationships on a friendship basis for, "Friendship is like an earthenware once broken it can be mended; love is like a mirror, once broken it is the ends."

Life is full of fun and enjoyment. There are many things to do and many ways to have fun. I am not against the idea of having friends of the opposite sex. It's just that when this friendship turns into an intimate relationship, which in other words we call love, it causes problems. It hampers our studies and cause unhappiness. The teenage years are the most fun years in our lives and during this time our feelings are very unstable. We tend to think we like a certain person very much and after a few moments that feeling turns into hatred. These feelings fluctuate so often that we, ourselves have problems understanding them.

Nowadays, most relationships don't last more than two years and then 'poof' Gone. They go on dates, have fun, tell each other how much they love one another and then one day they realize that the person is becoming boring and is not good enough for him and

suddenly all the love disappears. Love is truly wonderful, isn't it?

I don't understand why most teenagers have problems discussing their own affairs with their parents. I mean like, I'm a teenager and I feel very free to discuss my problems with my parents.

There is no friendship, no love, like that of the parent for the child.

My parents are like my best friends, I feel at ease talking with them. Give them a chance and then you'll see how understanding and considerate they turn out to be.

Nowadays, teenagers take going on dates and kissing very casually. If you ever happen to overhear a conversation between teenagers, you'll most probably hear them talking about their girl-friends/boyfriends, or what they did on their previous date, or maybe planning on what to do on their next date, or maybe planning on how to break up. Wow! If only love and intimate relationships were so

Of Parents and Society

by Frustrated

UNDoubtedly and un- doubtedly we are a part of an ultra-conservative society. (Many of you might remember the article by Ms Gulnaz Alam contradicting Ms Trishna's 'Just Friends'.)

To find the roots of this society, we need mainly, to refer to the fundamentalist societies, of the subcontinental countries poverty and the distortion of our religion by the fanatics. Fundamentalism and certain elements of this society led to repression of women and the weak, and ultimately the repression on the new generation.

The most fiery issue seems to be that of, what is known as 'free mixing'. 'Free mixing' has always been a controversial topic, especially in our present day urban society. On one side, most of the parents are still weary of the changes that are taking place among generations following them. While others prefer to ignore totally. There are some snoop parents who pry on the telephonic conversations only to find conclusions to their imagination of unimaginable things. On the other side, 'free mixing' is evident among the pre-

sent day teens, and a vast majority of them support it.

All that about 'Javed' and Trishna's date (I still don't get it why they have to publicize their 'secret' date, especially when they don't want their parents to find out about it), are just the foregone conclusions. Javed and Trishna are lying to their parents-probably regretting it-but, do they have a choice? They are utterly confused should they, or should they not?

This leads to immense mental unrest, and eventually total dishonesty, that may not be limited simply to a date. Javed might be asking for money for Eid shopping, but somewhere X might be raising the money by stealing, or adopting to other illicit ways.

I have many friends who imagine the telephonic conversations as a 'date' or going out! They seem to have found out a certain alternative, and it is a good start, though things must and should change, and this is not very REALISTIC!

Then again, what's the problem with the parents? 'Free mixing' is a part of most of the societies of the west, but does that lead to any 'problem'? If they do have any good, reasonable reasons, which they must, they might as well express it through these columns. The big question is: if they have any other reasons to cite, except so-called tradition.

In the religion Islam, 'free mixing' is not by any circumstances banned, and the fundamentalists make such distortion, only to establish themselves in the society. It is about time that all of us come to our senses and we resolve this issue. This is an important social factor that we are yet to deal in a realistic manner that will please both sides of the society.

The adults seem to have a false sense of the need to offer excessive protection (that is partially unnecessary by all means), while all of us are ready to fool and cheat them. We must look for a change, and gradually the society will come to see OUR side of the story. And, this change must be based on mutual trust, for which, devotion from both sides is a must.

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