

Couple's 'no-fault' love passes the test of time

What is true love? It might be different for other people, but after almost 29 years of marriage, University Professor Raymond Mikesell and his wife Irene have a pretty good idea.

It means being considerate, being respectful and showing your partner common courtesy, they say. And don't think that romance doesn't have a lot to do with it, too.

But that's long-term love. Most students just want to find an answer to the question, "Is it love or infatuation?"

It's a tough question to answer. For the Mikesells, there was no chance of it being just infatuation as they knew each other too long and too well for that — 12 years in fact, before they set a date to meet at the altar, Raymond said.

It seemed an unlikely place to meet your future wife — the World Bank organizational conferences at Bretton Woods, N.H. She was working for the State Department; he for the Treasury Department. They were colleagues in business at the time.

And they continue to be, though it wasn't "love" at first. After New Hampshire, they would meet again in Paris and in Geneva, all on business. But through the years, the business relationship blossomed into something more.

"He used to hold my hand

when things got rough," Irene said.

They decided to get married. By this time Raymond was teaching school in Virginia, but the wedding attracted all sorts of current and soon-to-be federal dignitaries.

All of the members of the president's Council of Economic Advisors came, Raymond said. "I still use the present George Shultz (currently Secretary of State) gave us," Irene added. Shultz gave the newlyweds a little box she uses for storing bills.

Of course most of those people, she said, "weren't so luminary then."

But just like real life, after the wedding there's the day-to-day living to contend with, and 29 years is a long time to keep the romance alive.

That's where the respect and courtesy come in. Try to appreciate the daily events, the couple advises.

In fact, Irene said that is probably the most romantic thing that can happen. She doesn't get that type of romanticism all the time, but enough, she says.

It's tough sometimes. Like the day she spent trying to clean up his study and he didn't notice. "He was too busy cluttering it up," she said.

But when she does get com-



Raymond Mikesell

pliments, that's payment, she said.

He's quick to tell people what a gourmet cook she is. "Nothing compares to it," he said, and it brings him home for lunch every day.

But life is more than just eating. Continuing the relationship they had back in New Hampshire, Irene still edits Raymond's publications — 18 books in all at this point.

And there seems to be little of the editor-writer tension. "If he doesn't like my comment, he just has to live with it," she said.

Raymond quickly added to that, however. "She always improves my writing. I wouldn't send any of it in without her."

And when it comes to the inevitable disagreements, their rule is "agree to disagree." Raymond calls it a "no-fault" agreement.

"Anything that happens isn't anyone's fault," he said.

And what about Valentine's Day? It should last all year, they said.

But in reality, Raymond does have one personal gift to his wife of 29 years. "Every year I've written a verse for her, which she keeps. She never shows (them) to anyone else."

Story by Stasia Scarborough
Photos by Karen Stallwood



Irene Mikesell

Valentines for politicians? Lobbyists say 'Have heart'

Politicians don't often get love letters, but a Eugene group has Oregon's congressional delegation on its valentine list.

The Council for Human Rights in Latin America will hold a Valentine's Day letter-writing party today to lobby Congress against sending further military aid to Central America.

Organizers of the event are inviting people to come and write valentines and letters to Oregon senators and congressmen, President Ronald Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz and others, asking them to end the military aid.

The valentine party will be held at the council office, 1236 Kincaid St., from noon to 3 p.m. and will coincide with the council's weekly "Hard Times Lunch." Stationery and stamps will be provided.

In March, Congress will vote on Reagan's request for \$14 million to support "contra" rebels fighting the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The administration is requesting a total of \$1.1 billion in economic and military aid for Central America.

Jack Kapuscinski of the council opposes the aid because he says the contras are attempt-

ing to overthrow the legitimate government of Nicaragua and are killing many civilians in the process.

"Basically we're fighting an undeclared war, and we shouldn't be doing that sort of thing," he says. "Women and children are being killed."

Oregon Sens. Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood will play key roles in the funding issue because of the important Senate committees they chair. Hatfield chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee and Packwood heads the Senate Revenue Committee.

Packwood had supported contra funding in the past but voted against it in October. Kapuscinski believes Packwood changed his stance because of pressure from his constituents.

Kapuscinski says he does not oppose all aid to Central America but says most is used for military purposes.

"According to the Hatfield report yesterday, 85 percent of the aid is going straight to the military instead of building hospitals and education facilities and things like that," he says. "Most of it is going to the military to oppress the population."



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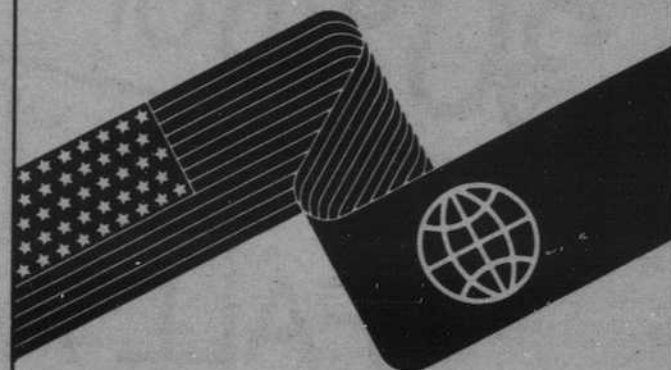
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