

# In This Game, Women Always Lose Out

**W**e all play The Game, whether we like it or not. The Game defines the roles we play in a relationship, and what we do (or do not do). More simply, The Game is the carrying out of society's expectations about dating/marriage/sex.

Many women respond to The Game by duly following the unwritten rules, like "Physical intimacy should progress slowly." In other words, you should leave him with a chaste good-night kiss and a protrusion after the first date. Nothing more intimate until at least the fourth date, and even then some clothing should remain on. And SEX? Hell, if you have sex before you date three months (or wear a ring on your finger), you're not only damned, but a "loose woman."

Other women veer to the opposite extreme by bucking the system entirely — having sex to make a statement. "Look at me, I'm independent. I can have sex with whomever I wish, whenever I wish." Some call it "do-me feminism," but I call it a power trip (and fun). Certainly, this option implies an independence that the first lacks. On the other hand, doing something merely to thwart the system is as weak as rigidly following the rules.

Set to thinking about these contrasting reactions, I watched a production of *Man of La Mancha*, which explains them. Does Don Quixote imagine Dulcinea as a passionate, intelligent woman? No, he transforms the whore Aldonza into a virtuous lady who embroiders all day; a virgin who'd faint at the mention of sex. (The song "The Impossible Dream" comes to mind.)

It's yet another example of the old virgin-whore dichotomy. Everywhere — in literature, on TV, in movies — women are seen as Very Good, or Very, Very Bad. The Very Good follow rules to a frustrating extent, while the Very, Very Bad ignore them entirely. Older generations termed the former The Marrying Kind and didn't speak of the latter above a whisper.

It's unfortunate, but no matter what the latest fem-



Tommy Metcalf, Cornish College of the Arts

inist propaganda announces, a double standard still exists. If a woman has sex with a man before The Game allows, he'll think of her differently than if she waits. Not by breaking up or anything major, but by little things, like questions that arise in his mind: "How many lovers has she had? Do I have to take her out again for her to sleep with me?"

It's hard to remain on a pedestal, but it seems unfair that you're either up there (virgin) or in the depths of depravity (whore).

It'd be nice to comprise an attractive mix of goodness and badness with a little mystery sprinkled in.

Sometimes I'm so idealistic I make myself sick.

■ Jeanne Fugate, *The Daily Tar Heel*, U. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

## BlahBlahBlah

### Dan, Dan the Haiku Man

In the process of trying to find interesting student poets for the Pop story on page 15, we discovered a Chicago performer who is, at once, charming, clever and deeply, deeply disturbing.

He's Dan, Dan the Haiku Man, and several times a week he performs at various coffeehouses and bars with his "haiku belt" — a bandoleer of notebooks containing more than 200 original haiku — draped over an Ozzy Osbourne T-shirt. Some of Dan's haiku categories: "Love and Relationships," "Angry Young Man Haiku" and "How F—ked Up Was I?"

A sampler:

The sun shines on me  
When I watch Doogie Howser  
In the afternoons.

"It does, too," Dan says. "The 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. TV time slot is a huge catalyst for me creatively. *Happy Days*, *Golden Girls*...."

And Dan's sole political protest haiku:

How you would like a  
Scuff mark in the middle of  
Your head goddammit?

"They're all strictly 17 syllables," Dan says. "I'm a purist."



## Freshman Fifteen

Grant Corley, *Collegiate Times*, Virginia Tech

