

# wwwhat's love got to do with it? By Erin Hagedorn

**N**ever has it been easier to date, mate and relate online. Most web savvy students have no problem striking up cyber conversations and embarking on virtual relationships. Here's some personal looks at online plug-in action.

Bowdoin College student Aimee says, "Nobody dates in college anymore. You just sorta hang out. So having email and chat room friends is cool because it's casual."

Michael, studying in Pittsburgh, says, "there is certainly something to be said for drunken hook-ups, cross-campus walks of shame and all that. But some people are looking for an exchange of words as well as bodily fluids."

Princeton student Samantha offers this: "I think that women in particular are very taken by the written word. Just think

of how many romance novels we sit around and read—we fall for that stuff. It's also a way for frat guys to have actual meaningful communication."

A woman at Boston University relates this cyber success: "For a year, I'd noticed this cretin of a guy who was always grunting at parties. Around the same time, I met

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an online friend who sent me all of these philosophical Ayn Rand quotes and was a real deep thinker. It turned out it was the same person."

Students who are willing to accept the risks and responsibilities of dating in general have access to a number of web sites for hooking up. Whether these sites are dominated by the geeks, the freaks, the brave or the fun-loving depends on where you look.

## Breaking the Ice

The first commandment you should adhere to when choosing a site is "Never pay." One example of a cornball ripoff is the

**College Date Line** (<http://members.tripod.com/~Institute/college.html>). The cheese factor here is exorbitantly high. It actually starts off with "College students are known to appreciate and enjoy the differences and similarities of those around them." Whatever. These guys require you to use 1-900 number for \$2.99 a minute before signing on. Skip it.

Fortunately, the cash-for-love scenario is the exception rather than the rule. Check out a site called **College Matchmaker** ([www.college.matchmaker.com](http://www.college.matchmaker.com)), a free link on the College Connection Web site.

Unfortunately, even though it's free, this site is extremely time consuming. After filling in 30 quick hit answers (your gender, sexual preference, appearance, location, religion—and pet preference!), you still have to wade through 23 essay questions. You end up with a really comprehensive profile of potential dates, but it takes so damn long to fill out the form that only the truly dedicated (desperate?) stick with it.

Less time-consuming is Swoon.com. With free personal ads, advice columns, horoscopes and chat rooms, this place is all about hooking up. "I like having your first connection with somebody center around personality, rather than appearance," says Aaron, a Chicago-based Swoon success story. About his Internet gal-pal, he says: "So far, so great. We've been corresponding and we exchanged pictures. We're meeting for the first time in person later on this week."

The best part of Collegedates.com is that you can meet people from your own school—you can pinpoint a geographic area and hone down your search to people that you're likely to be able to go see, if it works out. And you can search by personality profile, so you can easily weed out the people you've already met in "real life" and didn't like.

**College Chat** ([www.collegechatroom.com](http://www.collegechatroom.com)), one of the easiest sites to use—it only takes a minute to register. We signed in under two aliases to see what kind of a response we'd get. "Super Star Phoebe" has been getting a lot of play. "Friendless Flute Player" hasn't been so popular.

So log on for love—it may be out there, after all. •



## Neat Net Tricks By Jack Teems

### Email Test

If you wonder if your email is working, address it to [www.TestHTML@wopr.com](mailto:www.TestHTML@wopr.com). This will not only prove that you're getting out, it will also confirm whether your setup is adequate to receive email in HTML format.

### Who Wants to Be Prez?

You can see if you have what it takes to be president at [www.phoenixnewtimes.com/extra/president/](http://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/extra/president/). The latest Shockwave is required. Poll the electorate or call an advisor for help; or cheat by retrying a wrong answer on your way to 50 million votes and election.

### Is it Animal, Vegetable or HTML?

Impress your grandmother! The old parlor game known as 20 Questions is back, residing at <http://207.236.3.210/avm.html>. It uses a form of artificial intelligence to build on information gained from site visitors. •

For more Neat Net Tricks, visit [www.NeatNetTricks.com](http://www.NeatNetTricks.com).