

Vancouver Singles: The war of the Sexes

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Vancouver's reputation as a tough city for dating continues—accusations are flying that our men don't know how to take the initiative with women, that manly men don't exist, that their ambition is lacking and that they look like bums. Our women are branded as being aloof and dismissive of the opposite sex—except for the richest and best-looking alphas. This is a very simplistic summation, but there is some truth to both sides. For the record, our 'third-worst-dressed city in the world' ranking by MSN Travel and GQ came as a result of looking at both women and men.

When it comes to pairing off and mating with the opposite sex, we all need to smarten up and change our attitudes and behaviours.

Boys, you need to remember that no matter how much women have evolved and regardless of the advancements we've made in our careers, we're still traditional when it comes to dating. Women need and want you to take the lead and pursue. There's a reason I wrote "Man Up" a few issues back—if you see someone you're interested in, make the first move. Keep it simple: sometimes "Hi" is the best pickup line! A beautiful, smart and successful woman should not intimidate you—we love confident and chivalrous men.

Ladies, in Metro Vancouver and most major North American cities, there are slightly more women than men in the over 30 group and the gap varies based on age. Our city is also a multicultural mosaic, with 52 per cent claiming something other than English as their first language. Our population has significant East Indian and Asian representation and race plays a huge role in dating. Many women severely limit themselves with their lists, wanting only a good-looking black man or a tall, Caucasian, fit, successful guy with hair. Some women even refuse to date anyone from their own race. But there aren't a million Ryan Goslings walking around, ladies—if you are only open to dating one race, you restrict your dating pool. And don't even get me started on the income requirements I hear about from some women!

If a guy approaches you and you're either not available or not interested, don't be mean or rude—you're just perpetuating the image of stuck-up Vancouver girls. Thank the guy for coming over and let him know you're flattered, just not available: hopefully this will encourage him to continue approaching others.

Both sexes need to remember that Vancouver is not limited to our very small downtown

area, Yaletown and the West Side. While it may be ideal to date someone who lives nearby, there's a good chance the person you're looking for lives in another neighbourhood or region. There are attractive, available people of both sexes out there everywhere. The people in Burnaby continuously impress me with their relaxed, friendly manner and lack of pretence. Let's just stop with the Surrey jokes. Whistler happens to have more men than women—so what's stopping you from getting out and meeting them?

Vancouverites can be closed off, unfriendly and suspicious of those they haven't known for years. Start engaging with others when you're out and about and expand your social group. Vow to be friendly in general.

If both sides continue to think that the other sex sucks, nothing is going to get better. We need each other, so let's start to change the dating scene, one person at a time: it really will make a difference. There are lots of amazing men and women out there—we all just need to be friendly to each other and remain open-minded, and then it won't be long until the war of the sexes in Vancouver gets downgraded to a pillow fight... **W**

