



SCIENCE GUY GROWS UP

Bill Nye, the Science Guy, told *Wired* magazine that he's coming out with a new show called "The Eyes of Nye." The former children's TV show host will now take on some more serious issues like addiction, sex, cloning and climate change.

METRO

WHEN YOUR FIANCÉ GOES TO POT

An Indian bride was married off to a pot by her relatives after her groom failed to show up for the ceremony, reports the *Deccan Herald* newspaper. Savita took her vows with a clay pot when her fiancé Chaman Singh, a police officer, got stranded on the border because of heavy snowfall. Savita, from Jaunsar Babar, India, agreed to go through with the ceremony. A photograph of the groom was reportedly placed behind the pot, reports Ananova.com.

METRO

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Rules of the hunt

Dating in NYC is an exercise in primitive psychology

DATING IN NEW YORK CITY is not about a meeting of two people who are attracted to each other. It's more of a compulsion that people seem to enjoy about as much as a bulimic enjoys scoffing the contents of the fridge at 4 a.m.

"Going on a date is like being interviewed for the job of potential husband," a male friend complained to me recently, pointing out the mindset of most New Yorkers when it comes to dating.

New York seems to be full of men trying to evade marriage and women trying to marry them — or, worse, women who think men are trying to evade marriage and men who think women are trying to marry them.

Add to this the fact that in New York everyone says they are doing "just great!" even if their mum just died that morning and the cat fell off the terrace the night before and they just got fired from their job. No one wants to admit that they're not a success; it's no wonder dating is such a nightmare.

It is so bad, in fact, that many women can't get by

without instructions manuals like "The Rules" — the book that exhorts women not to agree to weekend dates if the man calls after Wednesday, to screen calls, to get off the phone first (and within 10 minutes) and never to pay for dinner.

Following strategy

Dating here is a game of strategy. "Every date is a blind date," a man told me recently. "Every time you meet someone new it's like moving to a new town. You can be a different person."

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ANONYMOUS MAN

Odd, then, that most of the men I meet are so similar. I sometimes wonder if they have all taken a course in what women want to hear (I have seen these courses advertised). If I meet another man who enjoys gourmet

cooking, for example, I am going to run screaming from the room. Or one who loves his mother. Or "really respects women." Or any of the other things someone has clearly told them that women like.

But in New York you learn not to go by what someone says but by how they behave. For example, I was recently chivalrously put into a cab on a rainy evening by a man who, in his eagerness to show his hunter-gatherer skills, had karate-chopped two other women to the ground in order to get it for me.

Great expectations

In New York, to impress the woman is of such vital importance that you invariably find yourself at dinner sitting across from a man delivering a fast-paced monologue on his attributes and interests. You practically expect the guy to backflip his way to the bathroom.

And at the end of the evening, the men all but hand you a resume, their last three bank statements and a reference from their last girlfriend — well, they



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would if there were still speaking to her. They usually aren't, however, because relationships between two people who have done everything in their power to hide who they are rarely end well.

Very occasionally I come across a man who has clearly been trained — or has perhaps read somewhere — that he is supposed to ask you questions. However, he usually is lagging behind in the actually-listening-to-the-answers department.

Then again, why should he since you will probably be lying anyway? This is perhaps why the focus on physical beauty (admittedly cur-

rency the world over, but taken to new levels here) is so huge in New York.

The wrong words

I have been told on actual dates "You make me look good!" as if this is a compliment. One man, who commented on my small waist, even asked what it measured. I wouldn't be surprised if someone got out the fat calipers one day. I once dated a man for eight months (I say "dated" because God forbid I should refer to him as a "boyfriend," even though we were sleeping together) who, when we broke up, actually didn't know how to pro-

nounce my last name (soo-ter).

So I have given up dating, and I am investigating kickboxing as a viable alternative. I went out the other night (purely researching for this article, you understand), and at the end of the evening was told: "I think you and I could see each other. We could go to a museum, sit on the sofa together, kiss for hours, make monster love and" (he paused as if to evoke the image in my mind) "... probably see each other for an undetermined period of time." Precious.

TESSA SOUTER

This article first appeared in *British Airways* magazine.