

Love At First Site

Online dating to hook you up—or bring you down

WORDS JEREMIAH J. SHAW

E-Harmony

Nothing says “I am so very, very, very ready for commitment” like undertaking 438 multiple choice questions just to sign up for a dating service. E-Harmony’s much-vaunted Compatibility Matching System makes the bar exam look like a “What Kind of Prophylactic Are You?” online quiz. An hour of my life was sucked away in DSM-IV hell as I tried to sign up for this damn thing. Once finished, I couldn’t even browse through pictures of my potential matches (presumably women with way too much free time on their hands as well) without paying a monthly fee of \$59.95. Sorry, Dr. Warren, but dropping \$60 bucks a month dives right over “ready for commitment” and belly flops into the shallow end of “desperate.”

eharmony.com

Craigslist

Craigslist exemplifies online personal ads done correctly. There are no fees. No ridiculous tests. No 128-bit encryption. Just a bunch of people out looking for ... whatever it is that people look for. There’s the usual fare: men seeking women, women seeking men and same sex searches. But it’s the “Casual Encounters” that make for the truly interesting reading. Foot fetishist? Got ‘em by the hundreds. Furry? Plenty of “yiffing” going on here. Want someone to cover you in tepid Ramen noodles and duct tape your genitals to a llama? Odds are pretty good there’s someone out there that’s totally into “RamaLlama-ing.”

craigslist.org

Sugar Daddie

We’re not sure which is more horrifying: the fact that such a site exists, or that there are women actually willing to throw their hat into such a gem-encrusted ring. I simply couldn’t bring myself to sign up for this one to test it, but I did inform their search engine that I was a man looking for a sugar babe between the ages of 21 to 31. To which Sugardaddie.com happily responded with over 100 willing women looking to pole vault—so to speak—into a higher income bracket. After browsing through a couple of them, I had the uncontrollable urge to take a scalding hot shower and sanitize my keyboard.

sugardaddie.com

Yahoo

I actually tried to go on a date with someone I met on Yahoo.com once. True story. Alas, when she showed up for our date, she wasn’t quite the cute, normal girl that her pictures suggested and was more an anti-social, death metal-listening, malcontent with spacer earrings, dreadlocks and a life-sized tattoo of her spine—on her spine. Presumably her ex-boyfriend was a student chiropractor and used her as a living flash card. That little experience was enough to swear me off online dating as a whole. But if you’re really serious about giving the

Intarwebs of Love a shot, Yahoo isn’t a bad place to start. It’s one of the few that allow you to view pictures of potentials for free and send quick messages. yahoo.com

MySpace

Any relationship that begins on a marketing research tool for FOX/NewsCorp is more than just star-crossed; it’s destined for hopeless, abysmal failure. That is, unless your black and white “I’m so pensive!” portrait looks really good next to his “Oops, my shirt seems to have come off. Good thing I have a camera phone in my hand!” pic. myspace.com



Logitech QuickCam Pro 9000

Most dating sites include video options, so you’ll no doubt want a camera that’ll help you look your best. And the Logitech QuickCam Pro 9000 is—without a doubt—the webcam for the job. It features 960 x 720 resolution, connects via USB and comes with interesting filters like ‘50s Movie Reel and Blockhead. [The latter might not be the best choice for seeking suitors.] With it, you’ll always be ready for your close-up—assistance from Mr. De Mille be damned.

FREAKS NEED LOVE, TOO

bigchurch.com

And if the URL wasn’t creepy enough for you, just wait until you check out some of the profiles. Scads of born-again devoutly spending paragraph after atrociously spelled paragraph extolling their undying love for The Jeebus, all the while fitting in the occasional “must make over \$55,000 a year;” “must own your home” and “no fatties.” The site’s intelligent design [zang!] allows for free thumbnail browsing but charges \$6 a month for access to members’ pictures and e-mailing options. At least BigChurch has a same-sex search option, although we’re not so sure how their congregation feels about that.

alt.com

This ain’t your momma’s BDSM site folks. This is a place for people who know exactly what they want—down to the breed of chicken and the color of the clamps. The Alt.com dropdown search list has a lovely selection of choices like asphyxia, branding, coprophilia [do not Google that], blood, needle play [wtf?!] and even an option for “The Rack/Medieval Torture Devices.” God bless the Internet.

dailydiapers.com

Nothing gets me hotter than squatting a grumpy in my pants and having my significant other break out the babywipes for what I’ve dubbed “Scatological Fun Time!” Sorry, did I lose you there? Apparently you haven’t been hanging around Dailydiapers.com where a growing subsection of folks—mostly males—enjoy dressing up like infants and are in search of a nice girl who’ll act as Mommy. The more jaded women among you are noting that the only difference between this and a normal relationship would be the costume.

