

WHY WAIT FOR INTIMACY?

ACCOUNT NO.1: Lady Diana, Princess of Wales

When Charles, Prince of Wales, next in line to be King of England, began seriously looking for a bride, much speculation began. The English press had a field day guessing about a number of possible brides and weighing each candidate. Those on the inside of Buckingham Palace were much more serious--this was a national decision, as well. The bride of Charles would become the Princess of Wales and next in line to be the Queen of England.

One of the first stipulations laid down was that the bride must be a virgin. They could take no chances of a "love child" somewhere, or a disgruntled former lover who would like to share the juicy tales of his previous romance with the future Queen. It was decided that she absolutely must be a virgin.

Prince Charles selected a shy, attractive, young woman named Lady Diana Spencer. You can believe she was interviewed and thoroughly researched by the Palace staff. Had they found any evidence to suggest that Diana had been physically intimate with any others, her name might not still be Diana Spencer, but it would certainly not be Diana, Princess of Wales.

ACCOUNT NO. 2: Doogie Howser, M.D.

Doogie Howser, M.D., was a hit television show of the early 90's. It portrayed a 17-year-old genius who had already graduated from medical school and was a practicing physician.

The writers of the show felt it was time for Doogie to lose his virginity. (Up until this time in his life, he had been only interested in schooling and getting his medical practice established.) So, an episode was written in which Doogie became romantically involved with a young woman, and the romance lead to sexual intimacy. Unfortunately, the romance didn't last and Doogie was left sad and wondering.

A strange thing happened then, but not on the television show. The writers assumed the ratings would go up for that particular episode and level off at least even or higher than they were prior to the romantic episode. They were right about scoring big numbers for that one show, but after that the ratings began to drop. They dropped so much that the show was cancelled the following season.

When one of the writers for the show was interviewed he expressed these feelings, (Paraphrasing) "I think that having Doogie intimately involved changed the show in a way that we couldn't fix. What we set out to do was make the character more mature,

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but what ultimately happened was the episode took something from the character that his viewers valued and respected in him. People saw him as a unique, special role model, and after that he lost his innocent appeal and we couldn't write it back in."

ACCOUNT NO. 3: Miss America, Sharlene Wells

The Miss America pageant of 1985 was unlike any other. It followed a very stormy year for the Miss America who had been crowned just one short year ago, a beautiful young woman named Vanessa Williams.

Ms. Williams' reign as Miss America began as any other; she was busy with photo shoots, guest appearances on "Johnny Carson" and other important talk shows. She had a promising career until someone from her past who wanted to cash in on her fame, shared some photos with the tabloids. The photos were nude pictures taken of Vanessa in obscene poses, and printed in tabloids all across the world.

The people who sponsor the Miss America Pageant were not amused. The winner of the pageant promises to uphold certain moral and ethical standards, and all contestants must sign a promise that they haven't done anything in the past that can embarrass or bring shame to the pageant if she should win. The officials of the pageant asked for her resignation immediately after she confirmed the photos shown in the tabloids were indeed of her.

Imagine the caution then, that pageant officials were taking during the 1985 competition. They did not want to ever have this type of thing happen again. Contestants were screened very carefully. In the final moments of the competition, the judges asked each finalist a question that seemed to be searching for signs of anyone who might have a questionable past.

Among the candidates was a beautiful young woman from Salt Lake City, Utah-- Sharlene Wells. She was an attractive, poised, and talented young woman who stated in her interviews that she was waiting for the right man to marry before becoming physically intimate. She made it clear that this choice was part of her value system and she felt very strongly about it.

Sharlene Wells won the 1985 Miss America Pageant. Some of the contestants, perhaps a little jealous, felt that while Sharlene was indeed beautiful and talented, she had an edge over many of the others because she could make a claim of innocence that others could not.