

IN THE WORLD OF MASS MEDIA

Part 2

READING

1. Read the text about "Online Dating".

Patricia Costello, 33, e-mailed 120 men in her first four months of Internet dating. She talked to 20 of them on the telephone at least once and met 11 in person. Of these, she dated four several times and then realized she had not found the one.

One of the first lessons that subscribers to Internet dating sites learn is that life partners are difficult to find. But Ms. Costello isn't ready to give up. She is convinced that she has a better chance to find her life partner in cyberspace than in the real world.

Online dating is rapidly becoming a normal part of single life for adults of all ages in the United States. More than 45 million Americans visited online dating sites last month, according to comScore Media Metrix, a Web tracking service. Although the Internet has a reputation as a meeting place for people interested in casual relationships, a majority of subscribers now say that they are looking for a serious bond.

There are still many stories about liars. Many online daters are married and don't admit it. In fact, people are almost expected to lie a little or exaggerate their good qualities. Nonetheless, singles say that the Internet is still better than singles bars, dates set up by friends, or church groups for meeting other singles.

"My brother told me to take a dance class," said David Collins, 28, who met his fiancé, Sharon West, 27, on Match.com. «I tried it and met some nice people, but no one that I wanted to go out with.»

«The traditional ways for getting people together are not working as well as they did before,» said Linda Frankel, a sociology professor at the University of Southern Idaho. «There's a need for something new, and the Internet is filling that need.»

«Twenty or thirty years ago, most American couples met in high school or college,» Professor Frankel explained. «But people now marry at an older age, and there have not been any social institutions to replace the traditional ones local communities, families, and schools. The Internet maybe the answer.»

Daniel Weston, author of the article «Mate You Want Now,» agrees. «The Internet not only allows you to meet people, but it allows you to choose from thousands of them. If you work hard enough, you can find the exact kind of person you are looking for.»

Of course, Internet dating isn't perfect. Online daters often complain that it is difficult to judge physical chemistry through computer communication. «Certain things look really good on paper,» said Regina Coughlin, a computer consultant in Manhattan. «Then, in real life, it's a completely different story.»

After a few disappointing meetings, many online daters just quit. Those who find partners say they often think that they might find someone better – if they just looked through a few hundred more profiles.

2. Mark the TRUE statements.

1. Patricia Costello tried Internet dating for only four months.
2. For meeting a husband, Patricia thinks the Internet is the best choice.
3. Most people go to online dating sites to find a casual relationship.
4. Most people on dating sites overstate their good characteristics.
5. David Collins and Sharon West are engaged to be married.
6. In 1975, most married couples found one another in school.
7. "Find the Mate You Want Now" is a book by Daniel Weston.
8. It can be difficult to tell if you like someone without meeting in person.
9. Even those who find a mate online feel they can find a better one.
10. It is easy to find a partner at an online dating site.