



# OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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## Men, women still the same

Many people would have you believe that differences between men and women are gradually disintegrating. Don't you believe it.

While advantages in math skills (boys) and English (girls) are diminishing in children, and women now have much greater access to jobs traditionally reserved for men, there remains one area of difference that hasn't changed since the stone age.

Men and women have very different ways of trying to hang onto their mate.

A study — in the February, 1997 issue of the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology by psychologist David Buss and colleagues at the University of Texas — paints a rather unflattering picture of the types of strategies we use to keep a partner interested.

The authors studied 'partner retention strategies' in 214 couples. The researchers investigated what people did when they wanted to keep their partner's interest, and how the partner responded to those strategies.

Women tended to primp and preen, with pouting held in reserve as a last resort. Men tended to give displays of power. They would buy expensive gifts or brag about career successes.

Is power in men an aphrodisiac for women? Is beauty in women an aphrodisiac for men? You betcha. Believe it or not, it works.

Buss' data showed that women who were married to economically successful men spent a good deal more time trying to look attractive. In contrast, when a woman's interest started to wane, men unfailingly started taking them out to fancy restaurants, buying expensive clothing or jewelry and boasting about their success and prospects at work.

The data clearly showed that men do have better success at keeping their mate when they attain new heights at work. Interestingly, a corollary is that men who were too satisfied with their station in life — who did not progress to new heights at work — had more trouble keeping their mate.

Why do men and women use such different strategies? And why these particular strategies?



### Psychology in the '90s

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

Buss takes an evolutionary perspective. Power and great bodies became aphrodisiacs because they served a real purpose during the stone age days. Males who had a lot of resources and power were better able to provide for and protect a woman and her offspring. A well built, youthful woman was better able to bare healthy children, (and therefore also brought status to the male).

Surely we've progressed a bit since the stone age days. Well, not much, according to Buss' data. We've added a few variations on the same theme. He found that women may flaunt their wedding rings to keep competitors away, pout to regain control when their mate flirts with another woman and track his whereabouts if he's away too much.

He, on the other hand, may buy the expensive gift or brag about his career prospects to regain her

interest if her eye starts to stray. If that doesn't work, he may adopt a 'mate concealment' strategy (also popular among insects), keeping his partner from parties where men are present, monopolizing her time in the presence of other men and isolating her from family and friends. The concealment strategy rarely works for very long because the partner begins to resent it and him.

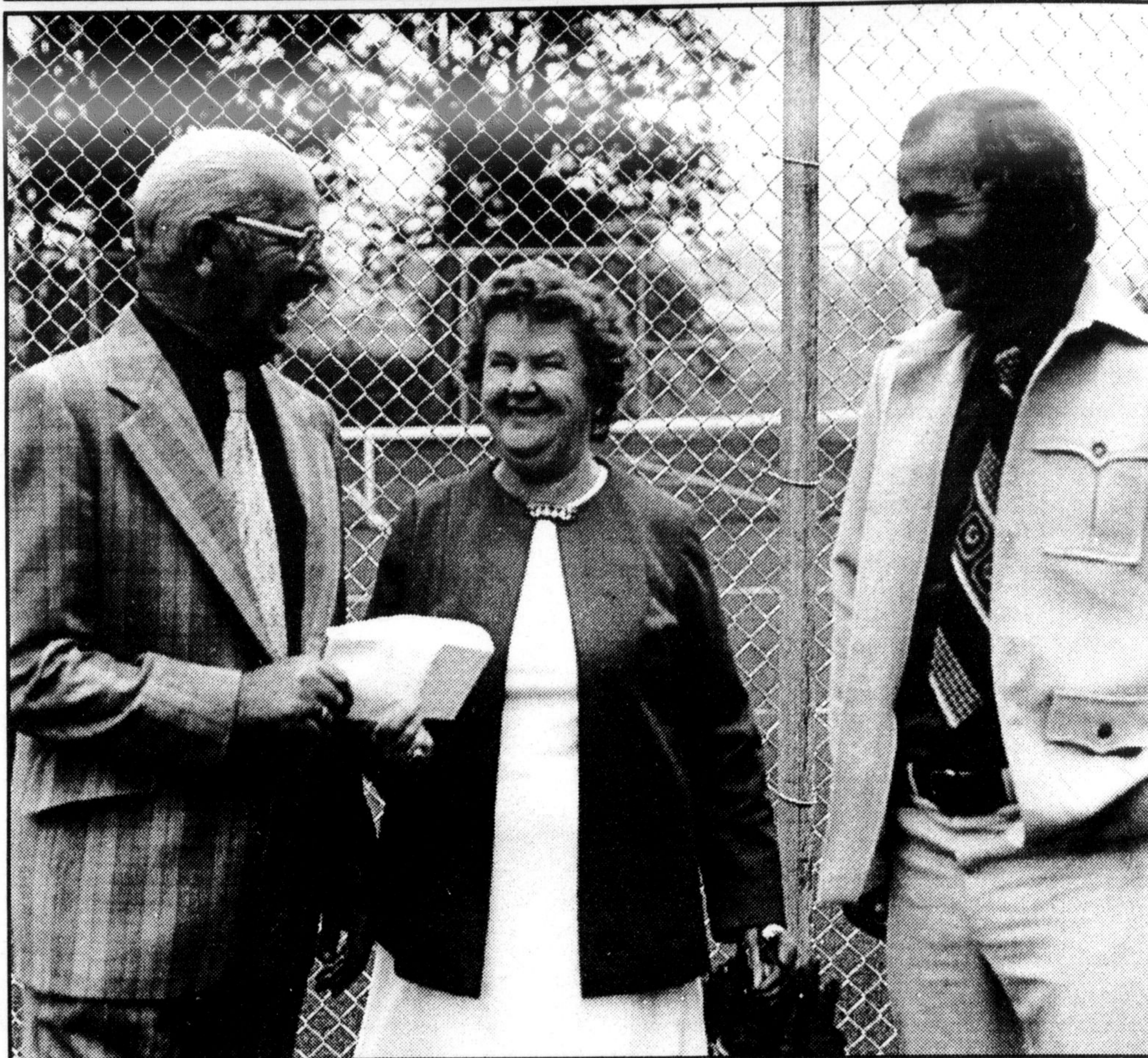
With women entering the workplace in record numbers, you might expect that career success and financial gifts from men would lose a bit of their power.

Men's strategies haven't changed, but their effectiveness has diminished.

**"Power and great bodies became aphrodisiacs because they served a real purpose during the stone age days."**

**DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER**

## Looking Back ...



Everyone was happy as developer John DeVries handed over a cheque for \$20,000 toward the costs of the Campbellville tennis courts to Milton Mayor Anne MacArthur in July, 1976. Mr. DeVries' son Peter (right) also attended the opening.

## Beware of timeshare deals

Exciting prospects of spring vacations swinging along the golf links or in the sun-drenched gardens of an upscale resort might tempt anyone escaping from harsh winds and rains to sign a timesharing agreement.

But the promise of years of fun-filled timeshare vacations has left some consumers soaked. Experts at the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations say people should exercise caution before signing up for timeshare vacations.

"The boom in the travel industry has meant continued popularity for timesharing and between 50 and 60 companies in Ontario alone deal with timeshare properties," says Marilyn Gurevsky of the ministry's Business Division.

Ms Gurevsky cautions consumers that timeshare property ownership is quite different from buying a timeshare vacation. Timeshare property ownership means buying or leasing a week or more of vacation accommodation every year at the same time in the same unit.

Companies selling timeshare vacations do not have to own the resort; they just need access to the vacation properties that are available.

"People are being offered vacation packages which have nothing to do with timeshare ownership. Basically, what the consumer is buying is membership in a club. If the company that sells that vacation membership goes under, the consumer has nothing," Ms Gurevsky says.

Vacationers may be lured into the timeshare

View point



with CAROL-LYNN LEPARD

option by sales representatives who commonly offer a gift or free trip to listen to a well-crafted sales presentation. While the offer may sound like a good deal at the time, hours later consumers find themselves bombarded by a high-pressure sales pitch. The agents are well-rehearsed and know their best chance of making a sale is to convince people to buy quickly.

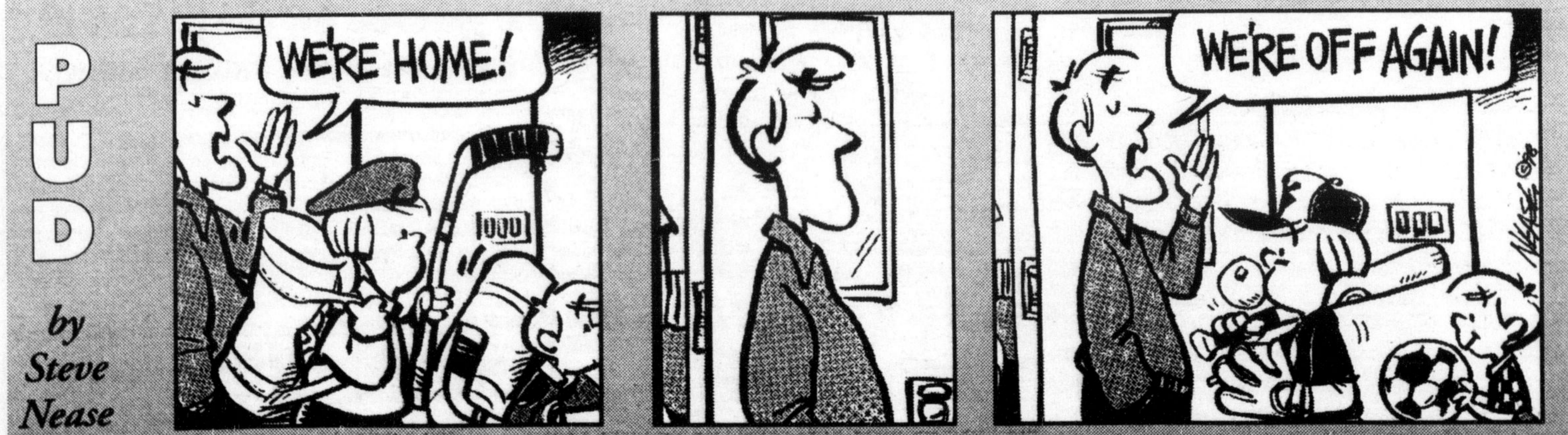
"The biggest problem arises when prospective buyers attend the sales presentation and are persuaded to sign right away," says Ms Gurevsky. "When you are considering a major purchase you should have the opportunity to think about it carefully. If the timeshare marketer won't let you take the agreement away to review in private, you should consider dealing with someone else."

In many cases, vacation buyers have reported signing legally binding documents and providing credit card numbers on the spot. They say they've been billed between \$1,200 and \$1,800 before they've had a chance to read and examine the contracts they signed.

Vacation-minded consumers who are tempted to buy a timeshare property, which may cost many thousands of dollars, should make sure they know exactly what they are getting into. Ask a lot of questions and read the contract carefully.

Some people have lost money to fraud artists who presented glossy brochures describing beautiful resorts in a vacation area other than the one they were to visit.

When they showed up to stay at their timeshare unit, they discovered there was no such address.



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