



Scandal sheets

Is nothing in this world sacred anymore?

"The separation set the tabloids afire with rumors of trouble in the marriage of the serious-minded prince, who likes classical music and far-away places and Diana, who loves pop music and admitted that intellectually she was 'as thick as a brick.'" (from the Associated Press)

C'mon. We know how little it takes to "set the tabloids afire with rumors." Any politician can attest to that. It must be extremely difficult for the royalty of England to avoid periodic knocks like this, as more obvious targets for prying paparazzi (as they are so quaintly referred to).

Tabloids have long been the scourge of mass media society. What they print is not only ludicrous and melodramatic ("Heroic Mom Gives Herself Caesarian With Can Opener"), but the truth is also slightly inflated ("Bigfoot Stole My Wife"). Juicy articles are often accompanied by equally lurid photographs in which the stars look greasy (Liz Taylor for example, has puddles of mascara under her eyes) and the pores on their noses are crater-like. If this is the price one pays for being a star, then no thank you, I'd prefer being humble and destitute. And modest.

The sources who provide the information are supposedly "close friends" and I wonder just how legitimate these so-called friends are. Good friends with loose lips must be in hot demand. As a quoted source,

they lend themselves handily to an aura of incredibility.

What exactly constitutes an inquiring mind? It's a question I have often asked myself. As a child I suffered from television deprivation after my father threw a flashlight through the boob tube while we children were obediently watching the seventh rerun of a M.A.S.H. episode. To this day he disputes hotly that the show in question was *Bonanza*, but I know better. After all, I was sitting right in front of the TV when the screen and tube exploded in a shower of sparks. It was a very traumatic experience for a seven year old.

When my withdrawal symptoms subsided, I turned my attention to other sources of entertainment.

Rather unfortunately, my neighbor would periodically bestow me with two-foot stacks of scandal mags of all shapes and sizes. Big names like *The National Enquirer* and *The Star* were interspersed with the lowliest of lies, *The Weekly World News*. I read them all in a frenzy, sitting amidst a ton of newspaper. Years passed and I came to marvel at the reaction of my fellow Americans who were so caught up in the romantic notion of "shy Di" (a revolting nickname, if I ever heard one, and inaccurate to boot) and Prince Charles dating.

Big deal, I thought. Looking back on the incident, I realize that the engagement of these two "love-birds" was a turning point in my life.

Nothing would be the same after the enormous publicity generated by this momentous event.

And now these same rags have the audacity to suggest that this marriage made in heaven is on the rocks. The tabloids practically married them off. Now divorce seems inevitable, if one is to believe the latest scandalous behavior on the part of England's finest.

Generating rumors seems to be the pastime of this no longer fresh-faced princess. I'm sure she derives a great deal of pleasure by thumbing her nose at The Establishment (and who wouldn't), but the fact that these actions are being interpreted as "splitsville" must make even her slightly uneasy.

This is old hat. Can't tabloid journalists find somebody more interesting to pick on? Predicting doom and gloom for the royal couple will spur paper sales, but this smear campaign amounts to little more than harassment. I personally don't care if they get divorced. If they want to do so, then the matter is their business. Do people get their jollies eavesdropping on the not-so-private lives of the rich and famous? Does the Pope wear a red beanie? Is Reagan senile? What is the world coming to? Argh!!!

Old McDonald is a sophomore majoring in English and is a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. Her column appears every Thursday.

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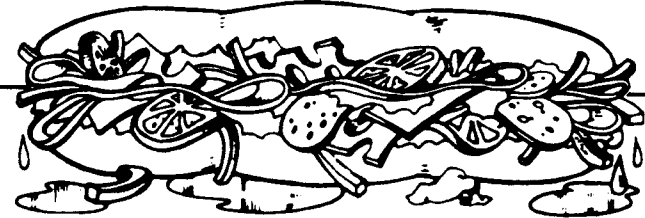


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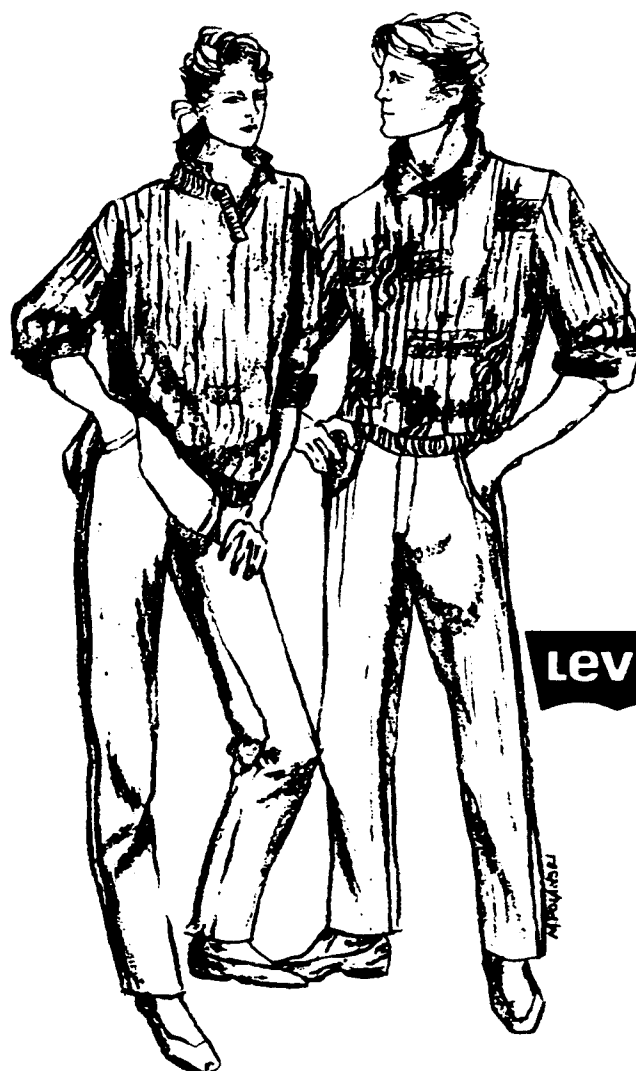
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