

My "right man" has changed a lot since high school. And the range is narrowing: not just because the number of available men is decreasing, though I have used some foresight in planning where to live and work, but because I find *myself* gradually becoming less flexible. I am no longer willing to date just to be going out. I could not say that before I turned 24. I do love to date, but I find an increased longing to have the experiences be meaningful. I also find myself struggling to be patient; patient with the "relationship process" which takes time to enact. The biggest danger I see in breaking up with Tom is hesitancy to start that process all over again with someone new. It takes an incredible amount of energy to begin again.

There is something I need from you right now: to write me and love me and include me, without the pressure your worry too often instigates. Please be comforted that marriage and a family are still my goals. If I could only know that in say five years I'd be married, then I would have no regrets about my life to this point. My greatest plague is that my previous decisions may have stacked the cards against my getting married. But since there is no way of knowing that, I try not to worry. Even if worst comes to worst, I guess as long as I live worthily of the celestial kingdom, I will still have that final choice between being a second wife or a ministering angel!

Your loving daughter,
Mary

JOURNAL JOTTINGS

Dianne Higginson

The Victorian Ideal of Womanhood doesn't seem so disadvantageous to girls thrust into a hostile world "on their own." When you remain single, society takes away the advantages of being a girl and forces upon you the disadvantages of being a man — so you are neither and are lost in the void.

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It is difficult to talk about the advantages of being single since after a certain age it cannot properly be considered to be a blessing, though it well may be. All the advantages seem temporal and selfish, character-softening, and of diminishing value. Others, who tend to judge righteousness in terms of pitifulness ("It's not her fault, she *wants* to marry."), tolerate only facetious exultings in the unencumbered life, for to be seriously exultant is to be instantly suspected of unrighteousness. To be too happy brings judgment, yet being too obviously unhappy is criticized just as severely. Job's comforters never had it so good!

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It's a buyer's market, one may as well face it. G. gave me this, from *As you Like It* (though I don't):

Mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees,
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
Sell when you can! You are not for all markets.
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer,
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.

(Act III, Scene V, Lines 557-62)

Bewilderment is the main feeling. How does everyone else do it? And why can't I?

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The post-college single L.D.S. girl on the outer rim of nubility is aware of being in the right church but the wrong pew. Neither a priesthood bearer nor a childbearer, her presence becomes increasingly embarrassing, unless she has the good fortune of being in a predominately singles ward.

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Marriage: to be determined not to be determined by it is also to be determined by it.

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A year ago, away from home for Christmas, bronchial, and feeling keenly homeless, I re-read *Little Women*. My grief astounded me: I wept and wept and could not be consoled, not because Beth died (it seemed right that she should on this reading), not because Jo wouldn't marry Laurie, but because it was irrevocably clear to me that, of the four models for girlhood and womanhood presented by Louisa May Alcott, it was *Amy* who was the embodiment of all that was good, not Beth; Amy who triumphed, not Jo; Amy who deserved admiration and emulation, not Jo or Beth or the docile Meg. My grief was from shock and disappointment at having been so long and confidently wrong, from a horror of prolonged and disastrous self-deception. Perhaps other girls were perspicacious enough at nine or ten to realize that Amy was the one they wanted to be like. Perhaps they were half in love with Laurie and wanted to marry him and live happily ever after. I wasn't that insightful. I thought Amy a horrid, selfish little person quite deserving of the fate of marrying Laurie, whom I did not admire or find attractive; I accepted Jo's refusal of him as just in the largest sense, though heroic and sad too. Now I could see that while Jo reared Laurie, it was Amy who brought him to his best self, Amy who was the real "Little woman." The grief is real: I am not an Amy. I do not like or admire Lauries, and there simply are not enough German professors to go around.

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I am someone to whom movies like "Gigi" and "My Fair Lady" appeal psychologically — fulfill all fantasies . . . wanting to be the toad who is discovered by the Prince and magically changed into a princess. *Not* wanting to be found by another toad . . . and accepted with resignation.

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Out of the context and structure of family, the individual loses her meaning. There are so many other beings, how can God care about me? What about all those others on the subway? Within the family, with father or husband representing the Lord, *she matters*; she knows it, and the security is vital to a clear perspective. Family Home Evening groups in university wards are a worthwhile attempt to compensate for not being properly organized into a proper family.

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Faith is dating boys who, when they ask, "Is there someone else?" can only be answered, "There's got to be."