

## Price not right, women pay more than men

By Diane Targovnik  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OLYMPIA — The price is not right.

That's the name of the new study showing a woman in Washington state gets charged an average of \$5.56 more for a haircut than a man, while she also pays on average \$1.63 more to get her white cotton shirt dry cleaned.

So what is going to be done? Sen. Pat Thibaudeau, D-Seattle, says next week she plans to propose legislation to punish businesses that charge women more than men for identical services.

Thibaudeau sponsored a similar bill last year that allowed the state Human Rights Commission to fine violators up to \$10,000. It didn't pass, but the Senate voted 26-22 to study the problem.

"Women get a double hit," she said Friday. "They make about three-quarters of what a man does and now they are paying more for services."

The senator isn't too optimistic about it passing, calling it more of an educational and informative action.

"Women will keep saying to themselves, to their dry cleaners, to their legislators, 'We don't have to tolerate this,'" Thibaudeau said. "I think that this sends a signal."

Sen. Harold Hochstatter, R-Moses Lake, thinks the bill is a bad idea.

"Brave men died for our liberties, not for the price of our haircuts," Hochstatter said.

"I guess it's one of those things where you ask, 'Why should government have to rule?' " he said, after pointing out he doesn't worry about the barber because he's bald. "If you don't like your barber or your dry cleaner, you don't sue them. You go into competition with them."

The study divided the state into six regions, calling hair dressers and dry cleaning salons in each area.

"If Joe Blow or Jane Blow comes in off the street, we wanted to know what they were going to be charged," said Jonathan Seib, staff council for the nonpartisan Senate Commerce and Labor Committee that headed the study.

Seib was in charge of calling and asking about haircuts and dry cleaning services for men. A woman from the council got the female quotes. Neither of them identified themselves as state employees doing a study.

"We are also consumers," Seib said.

The study did keep away from asking car dealers about prices. Staffers feared having to use deception to find out if gender bias existed in that arena, too.

A total of 180 salons were called, with 60 percent of them charging women more than men for a basic haircut. When asked, both Seib and the female caller said their hair was "above the collar."

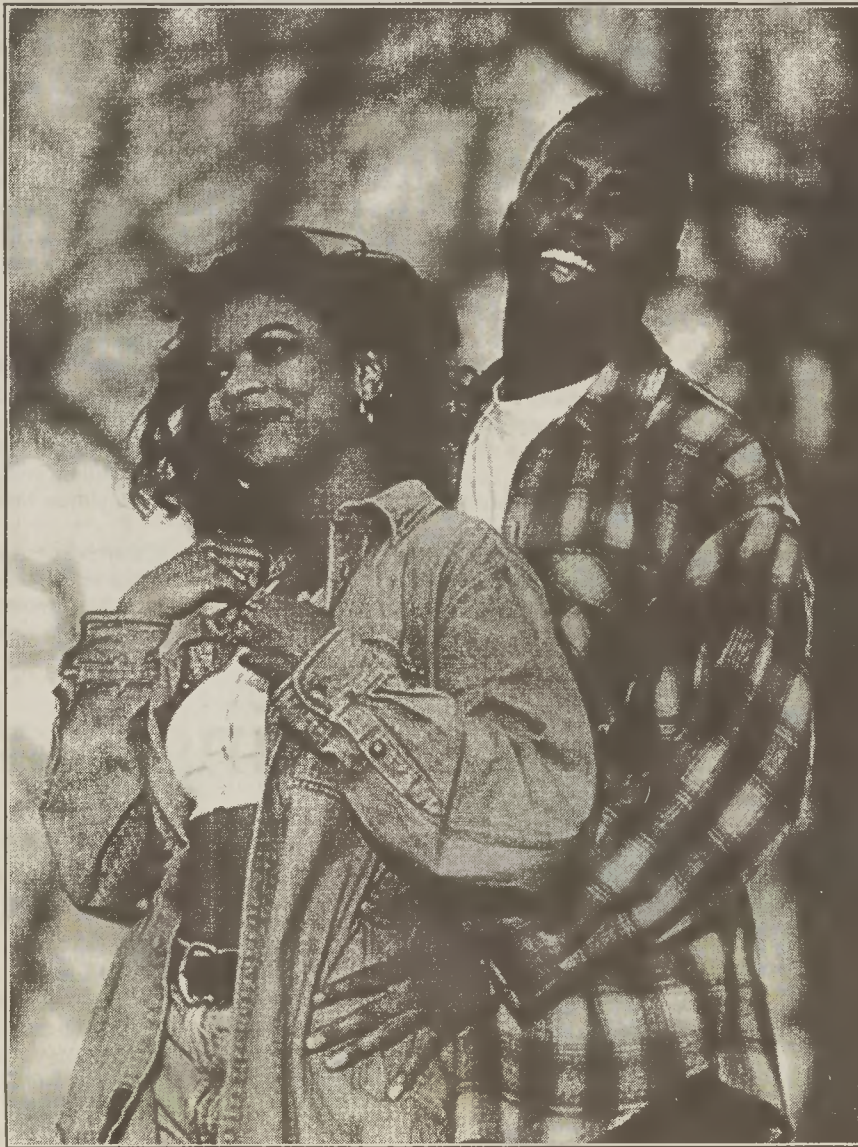
For dry cleaners, the study showed that of the 70 establishments called, 66 percent charged women more than men to have a basic white cotton shirt cleaned.

If asked about the size of the shirt, the female caller would say eight. Seib was never asked.

A similar bill was passed in 1995 in California, where the penalty for violating the law is an award to the consumer of \$1,000, or up to three times the amount of actual damages and attorney's fees.

"This affects men, too," Thibaudeau said. "I have had more than one man tell me he is tired of paying more for his wife's dry cleaning."

# Opposites attract



## Battle of the sexes just a skirmish

By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Men and women are opposites, says psychotherapist Ronn Elmore.

But that isn't a bad thing. "The miracle and the beauty of love is that we are opposites," he said. "Both can make good things happen or make sick things happen."

Elmore, author of the 1996 best-seller "How to Love a Black Man," has spent years studying black relationships. His private practice was filled with women who wanted to understand men.

The key to having healthy relationships is not trying to change your partner.

"The genders have styles that are so different," Elmore says. "We think love ought to mean the same thing to both. We think we ought to love each other the same way. That is not going to work. It just ain't so."

Elmore is working on a companion piece, "How to Love a Black Woman."

"Same concept," he said. "This

time I am writing for black men or any man that loves black women."

The concept is simple. The book divides relationship behav-

ior into five categories: pleasers, controllers, rescuers, avoiders and bashers. Each group has its own way of dealing with relationships that further exacerbate the gender divide. Elmore offered 73 "tips" or behavior modifiers that help alleviate problems and draw the sexes closer.

The solution is simple, but hard to achieve.

nor are they all bad.

"At the core of men is a sense that performance and accomplishment are most important," Elmore said. "Those are the things that he values. Historically for black men, that sense has been lacking."

Men and women need to realize this, he said. "Traditionally, we have not had the resources to protect our women," Elmore said. "We didn't have the resources or the power to make her feel safe."

The important thing is to acknowledge the differences and work through them.

"It is OK to be opposites," he said. "God made us that way."

"We just need to realize that we are opposites," he said. "We need to realize we have styles that are so different and misconceptions about one another."

Men value their sense of accomplishment, he says. Women, on the other hand, value security most.

"What women want is someone they can count on," he said. "Women want commitment. Women sometimes feel that if the love is good, it won't last. They wonder about men's abiding commitment. Men don't always realize that fear. Women must communicate that need to men and men must be open enough to understand it."

Women, he suggests in the book, need a "reality check." They must come to terms with who black men are and of course, aren't. Black men aren't all good,

nor are they all bad. "At the core of men is a sense that performance and accomplishment are most important," Elmore said. "Those are the things that he values. Historically for black men, that sense has been lacking."

Men and women need to realize this, he said. "Traditionally, we have not had the resources to protect our women," Elmore said. "We didn't have the resources or the power to make her feel safe."

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## How to love a black woman

Excerpts from "How to Love a Black Woman."

"The new book is just like the other one," author Ronn Elmore says. "You have your five love substitutes and ways to counter those for healthy relationships."

Tips for countering these behaviors include:

- Avoid analyzing women. "Women tell us what they want, but we tell them why they don't want it or won't get it."

- Don't run away from their tears. "Men often feel that emotions are pointing a finger," Elmore said. Most often it is not. It is simply an expression of emotion.

- Stick around. For women, security is commitment.

- Say, "I don't know," when you don't. Talk to her to understand her feelings. It is OK not to know everything.

- Resist the urge to be a "sugar daddy."

- Reassure her of your devotion. "It can be holding her, or saying 'I'm glad that you are my woman.'"

- Keep your fascination with passing women to yourself.

Most important is to let her know when "you are going underground."

"Men tend to back away when something is bothering them," Elmore says. "Women tend to value dialogue and talk on subjects that affect them."

It is OK to go underground, Elmore says, but let your partner know when it is happening.

"Let her know you are working through something," he says. "Let her know you're going underground, but that you will be back."

## Around Charlotte

### News of Note

• Community Health Services continues through Friday. The week-long event includes lectures, tuberculosis screening and immunizations. For more information, call 375-0172.

The North Carolina Extension Service is seeking volunteer urban forestry educators. Each volunteer will receive 30 hours of training in urban tree care in exchange for 30 volunteer hours. For more information, call 336-2561.

• The Old Greensborough Preservation Society is accepting promotional kits and demo tapes from bands for its '97 Friday at Five Series. Send tapes and information to The Old Greensborough Preservation Society, 447 Arlington St. Greensboro, NC 27406.

The North Carolina Association of Black Storytellers will host 1997 Storytelling Harvest Saturday at 4 p.m. at the Main Library Auditorium, 310 N. Tryon St. The program will feature local story tellers, Elisha Minter, Annette Grier, Cheryl "Sparkle" Mosley, Connie Ellington, Nooma Rhue and Mona Ferguson. Wekesa O. Madzimoyo, president of the North Carolina affiliate will present a tribute to Martin Luther King.

• The Charlotte Black Political Caucus will meet Sunday at 7:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church West, 1801 Oaklawn Ave. Mecklenburg County Commissioner Darrel Williams will present an economic development plan for the black community.

• The Fiber Artist Guild of Charlotte will meet Sunday at 2 p.m. at the Hezekiah Alexander Museum, 3500 Shamrock Drive. Lucinda Thornburg of the Schiele Museum's Backcountry Farm will present information on 18th century needlework and embroidery.

The Mecklenburg Vegetarian Association will hold its monthly potluck Sunday at Seventh Day Adventist Church, 928 Sharon Amity Road at 6 p.m.

• The Alumni Association of Fayetteville State University will meet Jan. 25 at 9 a.m. at the Golden Corral Restaurant on Sharon Amity. A second meeting will be held on Feb. 8 at the International House of Pancakes on Ashley Road. For more information, call 545-5172.

# Heating rocks and irons for buggy rides

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BISMARCK, N.D. — Before MTV, the Home Shopping Network and senior centers with hot coffee, people stranded at home in winter storms heated rocks and irons for buggy rides and went to bed early.

They remember it well. With much of North Dakota at a standstill because of a blizzard, "The Good Old Days," has become a popular topic.

"This is nothing compared to 1949," said Fred Fettig of Bismarck.

"Or the winter of 1958-59," said Arnold Pfeifer, another Bismarck resident.

Mel Berg of Bismarck was the Renville county extension agent in 1949. His office in Mohall was an emergency management center on and off during the winter. From there, North

Dakota Army National Guard soldiers delivered food and medicine to remote farmsteads.

Guard members operated bulldozers to break open roads and haystacks for ranchers to feed livestock. They drove "weasels," or vehicles with moving steel tracks instead of wheels. Small airplanes were used for mercy flights to ferry people to hospitals in during emergencies.

"The town of Tolley was down to one day's supply of coal when the train was finally dug out," Berg recalled. "The route to Minot was plugged for three weeks."

Near Strasburg that same winter, Ray Fischer said his routine was eat, sleep, do chores and, in his spare time, smoke a cigarette and look out the window of the farm house.

"We were just a half-mile off

Highway 83. So my Dad would come out to the highway, I'd walk to meet him and he'd take me to town to get groceries," Fischer said. "I'd have to walk back from the highway with the groceries. That winter, my wife didn't get to church for eight weeks."

That winter, Rose Cooper and her family moved from Killdeer to a ranch in the badlands nine miles west of Grassy Butte.

"Those years, '48, '49, '50 or '51 were the worst years ever. The snow was belly deep on my horse, and I had a pretty tall horse," she said.

"We didn't have that much time on our hands," Fettig said. "Some days, I was so tucked out (as a child on the farm), I went to bed at 5:30 p.m."

Fettig used the daylight hours as almost any child might: "We

had a windmill and the platform was about 40 feet off the ground, but we had a snow bank that went at least 30 feet up the side.

"I climbed up to the platform and jumped off. I was going to slide all the way down that snowbank," he said.

The thrill of the ride never materialized after a 10-foot leap.

"I got stuck," he said. "I jumped and my feet broke through the snow."

