

# Men and Women battle with gender imbalance

By Larry E. Davis  
(KRT)

As we celebrate Black History Month and, with it, Valentine's Day, it is a fitting time to ponder this sobering fact: B0together.

Moreover, when social and economic factors are thrown into the mix, finding a suitable partner becomes even more difficult for black women, who are graduating from college at twice the rate of black men and subsequently accruing incomes and professional positions consistent with their higher rates of educational attainment.

As a woman reporter told me in the '90s, "Black women have become the men that their mothers wanted them to marry."

The compounded result of all this? A double whammy for eligible black women -- too few black men with too few resources. These facts may explain why there is so much emphasis devoted to the fostering of opposite-sex relationships at formal gatherings of blacks, even at professional black business and civil right conferences.

Of course, some will immediately think, "Why don't black women date and marry non-blacks?"

Well, this sounds like a good idea in principle, but it must be kept in mind that there is actually a shortage of white males, too, albeit not nearly to the extreme of the shortage among blacks.

Moreover, relations between blacks and whites remain contentious; just think of the repeated instances of police brutality reported in the news media and of poor intergroup race relations generally.

And it is true also that despite some lessening of racial antagonisms toward interracial marriage, societal prohibitions against such unions still remain strong both within white and black communities.

Of course, it is likely that romantic unions between blacks and other non-whites such as Hispanics and Asians will increase, but these groups don't have a surfeit of marriageable men, either -- certainly not one that would supplant the



Finding true love this Valentine's Day might be a challenge with statistics like this: There are about eight black men for every 10 black women.

gender imbalance currently being experienced by black America. Hence black women are foremost left to find marriage partners among the few eligible black men who often have too little to offer.

What to do, then, about this profound social problem? We now recognize that the presence of responsible married men within the black community is key to exercising social control over youth: These men can prevent crime and raise boys to be responsible fathers who will then, in turn, provide financial as well as social support for their children.

One possible approach to solving this national dilemma comes from an unexpected source: President Bush's recently announced \$1.5 billion

drive for the promotion of marriage. Reportage on the Bush proposal mentioned federal officials favoring, among other things, premarital education programs focused on high school students, young adults and unmarried new parents that offer instruction in marriage skills and mentoring programs using married couples as role models.

This would be a sterling chance for President Bush, during Black History Month, to prove to one and all that, by marrying his newly announced marriage initiative to his oft-voiced commitment to education, he sincerely means it when he says that in America no child should be left behind.



This security gate has been installed in front of Wilson Hall to block cars from driving through on to Vargrave Street.

## GATES, from cover

for traffic to go through on to Vargrave Street, and now you have to get on MLK just to get to Vargrave Street. It is a waste of time." While trying to figure out other ways to keep the cars out of the fire lane Chief Bell said, "The only way to fix this was to gate up this lot." So that is exactly what was done. The gate is up there to control the fire lane."

Zenobia Argentin, sophomore mathematics major said, "When there is an

emergency, how are the emergency vehicle supposed to get through?" Bell responded by saying, "If there is an emergency situation an officer could open the gates and emergency vehicles enter at ease."

The only vehicles allowed to park in the gates right now are Rams Commons and Wilson Hall staff and that is only on the right-hand side. The gates are actually very valuable even though they are an inconvenience -- safety is the main reason for them. Bell said, "We are just looking out for the safety of the students."



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