

Shutterbug mail: Play by rules

Buying photographic equipment via mail order can be risky business, advises the Better Business Bureau, but your chances of satisfaction with the order are greatly improved if you play by "mail order rules."

The major disadvantage of buying by mail is, of course, that you can't see and handle the merchandise before buying it. Camera parts sometimes are not interchangeable with the equipment you already own, or a different model lens, light, or meter may be substituted when the firm couldn't fill the specific ordered item.

It is wise for you to fill out a duplicate order form when you order. The information saved on your duplicate form then can serve as a good reference if a problem later arises. The form should include the company name, address and phone number; the date of the advertisement you are ordering from; the medium carrying the ad; your order date; type of payment; type of equipment; method of shipment.

It is also suggested that you follow a buyer's checklist, detailed below, before you send the order to the company. And,

if you have any doubt about the firm, phone your local Better Business Bureau for a reliability report.

- Has the advertised price changed? If the ad is an old one, this is a possibility.
- Do you know the firm's return and/or refund policy? It may be stated in the advertisement.
- Will the equipment be ready for use or will you need additional items in order to use it?
- Are all equipment components manufactured by the same firm?
- If you are buying a lens, is the lens interchangeable for several mounts or useable only with a single mount? Is an adapter needed?
- Is the equipment sold with a warranty?

If you have a complaint after you receive the order, contact the company by phone. The records you have kept will back you up. If you return the merchandise, ask if the company will refund postage. And, if the complaint isn't resolved, request a complaint form from the BBB in the city where the company is headquartered.

Ending a marriage is difficult

"Moving from marriage into divorce has been compared with traveling blindly through a foreign country. Also, few people can afford the fare and few are eager to travel the route."

So says Dr. Leo Hawkins, extension human development specialist, North Carolina State University. "Research has shown us that most people have to deal with five different types of experiences." These include:

--Emotional divorce. This includes growing apart and experiencing loneliness and distrust. Grief and mourning take over and lead the person through to acceptance.

--Legal divorce. "Those who expect an emotional outlet and support are usually

disappointed, finding this part is usually all cold and legal business," says the extension specialist.

--Economic divorce. There is seldom enough money. Some people head toward economic chaos; others take the road of careful responsibility and freedom.

--Larger family divorce. Divorcing persons have to decide how much separation will come between oneself and the family members of the former spouse," Dr. Hawkins points out. This is especially true during social and religious functions and as former in-laws try to keep close contact with grandchildren.

--Social and community divorce. Many divorce people report that they feel like misfits in a couples-oriented society.

Grandfather is often remote

Most grandfathers and grandchildren do not provide much physical and social support for each other.

The average relationship is best characterized as "remote," says Dr. Vira Kivett, University of North Carolina at Greensboro. "The emotional value of the role, however, may be considerably more important and should not be underestimated," says the researcher, who is with the North Carolina Agricultural Research Service.

Most of the 99 grandfathers surveyed recently saw little of their grandchildren, getting together with them usually at holidays, on birthdays and for occasional visits. The men in the study were asked about the one grandchild with whom they had the most contact.

Grandfathers were asked if they felt grandchildren should help their grandparents in time of financial need and poor health. "They usually felt that grandchildren have some responsibility toward them," the researcher says. But less than 20 percent received any help from their grandchildren. Help received was usually

with transportation, yard work or offered during an illness.

Approximately 27 percent of the grandfathers said they helped their grandchildren in some way. Help was usually with transportation or during an illness. Living nearby was directly related to the amount of help given and received.

Despite relatively infrequent contact between the two generations, "88 percent indicated they felt very close to the grandchild with whom they had the most contact," Dr. Kivett says. The feeling of closeness did not seem to depend upon visits or the grandfather's expectation of help in the future. Grandfathers did feel closer to younger grandchildren.

The men surveyed live in the Southeast in rural and urban areas and represent mainly textile workers and farmers. Ninety-three percent were white. Sixty-five percent had at least one grandchild living within 30 minutes of their homes. Grandfathers had the most contact with the children of their child who visited them most often.

Hughes was prolific writer

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Langston Hughes was one of the most versatile and prolific of all black writers. He was one of the first to earn his living as a professional author. His astonishing range of productivity includes, approximately, ten volumes of poetry, two novels, eight collections of short stories: more than twenty plays, operas, and musicals; at least seven books on black history; translations and anthologies of Spanish poetry; collections of folklore and humor, African and Afro-American poetry and short stories; two autobiographies, and innumerable ar-

ticles and essays on a variety of subjects. Although Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri, Harlem became his home spiritually as well as geographically: there he became totally and lovingly immersed in the rich variety of black life. He was, more than any other writer, the articulator of the frustration, exuberance, pain, joy, anger, comedy and tragedy of life in Harlem and the black experience in America. When Walt Whitman said in 1855 that "The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it," he might well have been describing Langston Hughes' role in Black America.

SAVING BABIES...



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