

What's It Like Being Married To Successful Men?

By Leri Grier
Post Staff Writer
 Dr. Gwyn Davis and Mrs. Darlene Frieson keep our ball of women married to famous and successful men rolling this week. What they have to say should be of much interest to all.

Dr. Gwyn Davis, 35, is a 1966 graduate of Oakwood High School, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and a 1970 graduate of North Carolina A&T State University where she received a B.S. degree in Biology. She is also a graduate of Deaconess-Jennings Hospital School of Medical Technology, Detroit, Michigan, where she received a M.T. (ASCP) degree in 1971 and Tufts School of Dental Medicine, Boston, Mass., where she received a D.M.D. degree in 1979. She completed her internship (dental Residence) at Charlotte Memorial Hospital during 1979-80. Gwyn is the wife of Mr. Kenneth Koontz, formerly employed with WBTB for 13 years and owner of Ken Koontz & Associates Public Relations Firm.

They met at the Excelsior Club on a Friday night in 1980 and have been married for two years. They are the parents of three—Imana, 12; Karen, 9; and Kenny, 2. Gwyn decided to go there the night before her daughter arrived in Charlotte. She went to see "The Group" perform and was introduced to Ken by her play uncle, Mr. Jimmy McKee. "He had potential, and I've always told him that. When I met him I was on internship and rarely watched the news, so I didn't know he anchored weekend news. He was really sweet with a heart of gold and will do just about anything for you. I thought his mental process was intelligent," examined Gwyn.

Gwyn, a dentist who works part-time at the Dental Clinic at Central Piedmont Community College, doesn't believe that putting him and his career first means she loses out. "There are some sacrifices, but they are limited. No matter what you want to accomplish you must sacrifice for that goal. Between Ken's hours and mine someone had to take care of the kids, and I felt it was my responsibility. His job at the station meant he could be gone from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m."

Being jealous of her famous and successful husband is a no no. "I can't. He's known by a lot of people, and he has to be around a lot of people. There's no room for it." She hasn't lost her identity or self esteem and tells why. "I've kept my last name. If we attend a function, no one knows we're married. I'm Dr. Davis and he's Ken Koontz. It's quite interesting to see people's expressions when they discover I'm his wife. I lost my last name once, and it cost me more to get it back. I'll never lose it again."

Gwyn believes the wife really should know about her husband's business. "Many wives work with their husbands which is a good idea when they first get started. Ken has his career, and I have mine which makes it interesting when we get together and talk. I know a little about Public Relations, and he knows a little about laymen's terms of dentistry." She insists that the husband and wife should be good listeners for each other.

She considers her career as rewarding as Ken considers his. "I spent a lot of time (eight years) studying to become a dentist. During the time I was in Dental School, I was divorced and had a five-year-old daughter. My dental career is on the back burner at the moment, but I do intend to get back into it." Gwyn admits that there is no power struggle in their marriage, but Ken's career did interfere with family plans and activities "when he was with WBTB. He had to be places on the weekends, but he enjoyed it. Ken loves to be with people, and I don't think he could thrive without them. We missed him because of that. Since he's on his own he can take some time out to be with his family, but he's still at the office at 10 p.m. or 11 p.m."

Ken's success has added



Mrs. Darlene Frieson
Successful businesswoman

Fifth in series

a positive aspect to his family. "Everyone is really excited about his career with P.R. The atmosphere in our house is different. We're on a high." The rewards of having a successful husband are "I've gotten to meet several people whom I probably wouldn't have met. These are people who make the city run, active people and everyday people. He touches a lot of people on different levels. Blacks don't have many role models, so if Ken can be a role model that's good. Little black kids can identify with him and ask for his autograph. It gives them something to look forward to." The only disappointment is "his not being at home."

Although Ken and Gwyn have been married for only two years, they've known each other for four years. "Most of our struggling times happened before we met. The first year we were together, we were two independent people living under one roof. We set goals, divide them up and work on the short term goals first. We now see the light for our long term goals."

If Gwyn could marry Ken all over again, she probably would. Her words of advice to other wives of famous and successful men are "Be patient. Whatever you're striving for is not going to be easy. Give each other plenty of support and don't lose sight of your humor."

Mrs. Darlene Frieson, 31, is a 1960 graduate of Myers Park High School and 1961 graduate of Traphagen School of Fashion, New York where she studied clothing instruction. Darlene is the wife of Mr. Ronaldo Frieson, 23-year-old manager of Sunway Travelers Limited. The company has 28 outside sales people and eight inside sales people.

They met at a pre-graduation party in 1980 and have married since October 21, 1983. "That was the first time I'd ever seen him, but I had always heard people talking about



Dr. Gwyn Davis
Successful dentist

one else can help me with." She considers her career as rewarding as Ronaldo considers his. "I help make the family name and business a success." There is sometimes a power struggle in their marriage. "I stayed at home for the first time for only two weeks, went shopping, talked on the telephone and that still didn't help. I wanted to be at work, but he wants me to be a housewife." Her husband's success doesn't interfere with family plans and activities, because "We take vacations any time they come through the office."

Ronaldo's success has added a positive aspect to his family. "It's something we built together. We didn't go to school to learn about it, but Ronaldo went to Eastern's Travel Agency in Miami for three-day training. I learned about the business from him. By us being young in the busi-

ness it makes us feel like we have a future." The reward of having a successful husband is "We have the opportunity to work together." The disappointments are "People expect me to be a certain way just because I married him. I'm judged too much."

Life today for Ronaldo and Darlene compared to those struggling times when they dated are much better. "He's matured more and makes me feel like I'm number one."

If Darlene could marry Ronaldo all over again, you can bet she would. "I love him, and I like the way we've become two, successful, young people." Darlene's spiritual advice to other wives of famous and successful men was given to her by Rev. Alice Johnson, her mother. "A family that prays together stays together and succeeds."



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