

Flowers send mixed message

STAFF REPORT

To your average guy, flowers are really intimidating.

The willingness to walk into a store busting at the seams with fragrant blooms, lacy ribbons and other such frilly things probably means that you're, well, whipped.

Totally whipped.

But, you know, for Valentine's Day, that's not really a bad thing. In fact, it's a good thing. Chicks like flowers. So do most guys, for that matter.

And really, they're just flowers. A bundle of fresh blossoms doesn't mean you're going to be slipping a sparkly ring on anyone's finger anytime soon.

So calm down.

Now, you just need some help with that flowerphobia. Don't worry — it'll be OK.

One of the first rules to buying flowers for that special someone is to be spontaneous. But it's Valentine's Day, so that doesn't really apply here.

But there are other ways to be surprising. Instead of the classic red roses that seem to be the requisite for the holiday, try a new color.

All roses are symbolic of love, but their colors carry significant meanings. Opinions vary on what each color signifies, but Web sites such as 800florals.com offer a basic rundown.

Yellow roses, traditionally thought to be emblematic of friendship, can be a tribute to joy and gladness. Peach roses show gratitude, appreciation and admiration.

Or branch out even more — try a new flower. Experts at Aboutflowers.com suggest mixing a Valentine's bouquet with flowers that are usually associated with spring. Popular choices include lilies, irises, tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, tuberose or freesias.

Other flowers can carry important meaning, too. White lilies proclaim, "It's heavenly to be with you." (Be careful with tiger lilies — they stand for pride and wealth, and your recipient might not know how to react to that kind of message.)

Yellow tulips send a cheery message, meaning, "There's sunshine in your smile." The flower, in general, means "perfect lover" ... so maybe all you flower purchasers out there should go with that.

Whatever you do, though, don't

buy carnations. According to the 1-800-FLORALS, white carnations mean "pure love," and red carnations say, "My heart aches for you."

But no matter the color, they all scream "cheapskate."

If you're worried about price — flowers can be expensive, with a dozen roses generally going for about \$80 — there are better cheap alternatives.

Go for daisies. They're cute, bright and sweetly innocent.

Or maybe dandelions. At least that would be funny ... if your loved one has sense of humor.

But when all else fails, seek professional help. Any florist will be able to help you create an arrangement that will fit the recipient's personality, your message and, most importantly, your budget.

Chapel Hill offers several florists within walking distance of campus, including University Florist and Gift Shop at 124 E. Franklin St. and Chapel Hill Florist at 200 W. Franklin St.

Contact the Features Editor at features@unc.edu.

Religious differences don't stop love

BY JACKIE RANDELL

STAFF WRITER

A rule of thumb: Don't talk about religion or politics. Both are volatile issues, not suited for polite discourse.

Another adage: You can't argue with faith. Attempting to coerce someone into adopting your belief system is futile.

But when you're in a relationship, all issues are fair game, especially when it comes to religion and its impact on your future.

Interfaith relationships are a perpetual compromise. Parents are pushy, holidays are hard, and the more serious it gets, the more the problems might escalate.

Parents aside, other issues can arise. What religion will the children be? What holidays to celebrate? How much are you willing to compromise?

Resolutions to religious quandaries come in many forms. Conversion is an option, as is compromise and coercion.

And deciding which course of action is best for any given couple might necessitate counseling from a religious adviser, whether it is a rabbi or a priest.

Dr. Phil says the measure of a good relationship is its ability to meet the needs of both the people involved.

When it comes to the religious aspect of the relationship, the same is true. As long as both people feel spiritually fulfilled, the relationship is worth maintaining.

Take "Meet the Parents," for example. When Ben Stiller discloses that he is Jewish to his fiancée's Christian ex-boyfriend, he is met with tolerance and appreciation.

"Really? Well, so was J.C.," replies Owen Wilson.

Focusing on common points of religious sects might lead couples to realize that the idiosyncrasies that define the differences are

irrelevant.

Differing doctrines don't spell doom for lovers. That which you call your faith is merely a facade for a shared spirituality, the core of any sect.

To perpetuate the abundance of Shakespearean allusions being thrown around the Valentine's Day:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose/ By any other name would smell as sweet."

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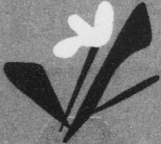


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