

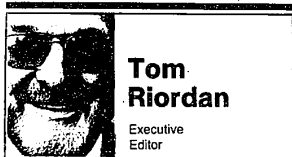
It's true — love can conquer all

This is a love story. It begins four years ago, just before Christmas. There was this mature, widowed Irish newspaperman, 55 years old to be exact. And there was a gracious woman, six years his junior. Her once jet black hair was attractively flecked with gray. Both of their spouses had died earlier that year — within 24 hours of one another.

NOW HERE COMES the bizarre part. So pay careful attention.

Her mother's sister had been the wife of the newspaperman's favorite uncle. That same uncle had also been her favorite. But through the years, the paths of the newspaperman and this lovely widow had never crossed.

They shared a mutual cousin, who decided late in that tragic year of 1976 that the two should be introduced. The plan was that the cousin, the widow, her eldest son and the Irishman would attend a Sunday afternoon symphony orchestra performance of Handel's "Messiah." This would be followed with coffee and conversation.



Tom Riordan
Executive Editor

The newsman felt a warm glow engulf him as he chatted for the first time with this vibrant woman. "How about lunch on Wednesday?" he asked. She said fine. At the time, she was running an automotive service business her husband had owned. He was managing editor of an outstate daily paper. The meal lasted almost three hours. There was so much to talk about.

A WARM FRIENDSHIP soon grew into a deep-

ening love. In March 1977 they married — after convincing six adult children (four hers, two his) that this was not an irresponsible lark.

By then, he had dubbed her Magnificent Marilyn. The pair decided they'd start a whole new life together. She turned the business over to her son. He resigned his job. With her previous experience as an executive secretary and his in the news business, they formed TARCO, a two-person company. The product: newspaper management seminars. Things rolled along nicely for nearly a year. One day there was a call from Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Could TARCO present four seminars for O&E personnel? You bet.

A FEW WEEKS LATER came another query from O&E. Would the Irish newspaperman like to assume the role of O&E executive editor? He accepted.

Three years ago this month, the *newlyweds* moved to O&E land. The job turned out to be a whirlwind project. It's no easy task keeping one step ahead of 12 young, talented community editors. While all this was going on, MM decided she was

tired of being "just a housewife." After all, you can capture the grandchildren (there were four then) only so many days a month and play golf with the girls only so many times a week.

She decided to go in business for herself. So Magnificent Marilyn was soon operating her own Insty-Prints shop in Garden City.

IN THE PAST 18 months, under MM's dedicated management, the business has grown to a point which is becoming too much for her.

The Irishman pondered. Maybe he should join forces with her. They could work side by side in her operation, just as they had with TARCO.

After 34 years in various newsrooms, maybe a new setting would be in order.

A final decision to move along was made last week. The Irishman found it difficult to bow out of the O&E, especially to leave his troupe of energetic editors and all those hard-working writers, photographers and copy editors.

Despite the apparent absurdity of this notion, we are fed such information obtained not by monitors, but by tasteless journalists who pander to the joundless public lust for gossip about prominent people.

In this land of plenty, we often feast foolishly. Junk food is part of our diet. But our weakness for selectible tidbits of what is nutritionally worthless is not limited to what we chew. It also includes what we choose to read and hear.

Gossip, like junk food, is not fatal but it is certainly injurious. The American public deserves a better menu.

Gossip, like junk food, is bad for America

Now that the American people have elected their highest officials, the media are rushing to provide us with delicious morsels about their private lives. We are advised about President-elect Reagan's first marriage, Nancy Reagan's taste in fashion, the personal foibles of the Reagan children, and similar meaningful items pertaining to the vice president and other figures in the new administration.

The media are not alone to blame, because they respond to the American passion for gossip.

A GOSSIP is someone who indulges in idle, often malicious talk, especially about others.

The original meaning of gossip, according to the dictionary, is one who stands sponsor at a baptism. From this, its meaning evolved towards someone who spreads confidential information that might be



moral perspectives
Rabbi Irwin Groner

gained through any close relationship, or be intrusive into the privacy of others.

The differences between gossip and information should be noted.

First, gossip generally deals with the personal side of life. Second, it is not usually verifiable. Once uttered, it is widely accepted, regardless of its truth or falsity. Webster refers to it as "idle talk, groundless rumor."

Information about our political leaders is not an end in itself. It should enlighten us with regard to public policy, controversial issues and critical decisions.

Such information is subject to the canons of verification and truthfulness. It is also limited to those aspects of the thought and conduct of our leaders relevant to their public responsibility and office.

WE NEED TO DRAW the line between relevant and irrelevant information.

If gossip served a useful purpose, then we should create legislation to monitor every move of our

public figures. Television cameras could be installed in their offices, living rooms and bedrooms, and then we could all watch. Why rely on People magazine when we could gaze upon live, daily telecasts?

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