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BUSINESS RESEARCH CONSULTANTS, INC.

**STD Dating Site Scam**  
**Backburner Relationships:**  
**Evolutionary Adaptation or**  
**Love Scam?**



**CE/CLE Training**  
Jean Mignolet is proud to offer state approved trainings regarding tips for "Locating Hidden Assets" and "Google is not an Investigation" for legal professionals and attorneys. Please contact for available dates.

For more than three decades Jean Mignolet has served in law enforcement and private investigation, managing all aspects of general investigative business. She specializes in in-depth background investigations, and is the top choice of attorneys, corporations, small business owners and individuals who require all types of investigative services.

Dear Debbie,

It's February and love is in the air. All around, people are love sick, love drunk, and crazy in love. If you are looking for love, are you falling in love or falling into a love scam?

How secure are we really in our online dating site profiles? How secure are we really in our own relationships? How secure are we really in our honesty with ourselves?

Love comes along to teach us the lessons we'd otherwise ignore. Keep aware and pay attention before you fall for a love scam.

*Jean Mignolet*

*A reminder that prior issues of the newsletter are view-able from the website.*

**Backburner Relationships:**

For further information  
visit: [www.Mignolet.com](http://www.Mignolet.com)

Contact us at:  
[investigators@mignolet.com](mailto:investigators@mignolet.com)  
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## STD Dating Site Scam

Online dating has become a normal part of life. The stigma of dating someone you met online has largely lifted in light of the fact that most of us spend quite a lot of time living online.

Alongside this, fear of the consequences of revealing highly personal information about ourselves on the internet has also largely subsided. Take a look at OkCupid.com and you'll find literally hundreds of thousands of adults from all walks of life openly revealing the kinky sexual fantasies they wish to implement in their next relationship. Clearly we've come to feel safe online.

But should we?

While some dating sites are responsible with their users' profiles, many are not. In fact, PositiveSingles.com - a dating sight to adults with STDS - is currently facing a \$16.5 million fine for sharing information from users' profiles to populate other dating sites they are affiliated

## Evolutionary Adaptation or Love Scam?

Chances are we've all nurtured our own handfuls of backburner relationships throughout our lives.

**These are basically lines of communication kept open with people who we're not currently in romantic or sexual relationships with but someday possibly could be.**

The active component here is that lines of communication are kept open. If you don't reach out, it's not really a backburner. It's just someone you're interested in. If someone is on your backburner, that means you're reaching out to turn up the heat every once in a while to keep the pan warm. This could be through a phone call every once in a while, an "I'm thinking of you" text, or even getting coffee.



So why do we keep people on the backburner? Many social scientists believe that this our evolutionary adaptation to keep our options open. That's why when someone who you're nurturing a backburner relationship with suddenly starts dating someone or...dare I say...gets married, your get a little gut wrench because your options have diminished. The act of reaching out and keeping the communication going is an investment in your options. If you lose this option, you lose your investment in a possible future for yourself.

If we look at backburner relationships in terms of social science, Caryl Rusbult's investment model of relationships developed in the 1980s comes to mind. **This model says when people invest more resources into a relationship they grow more committed to it. In turn, they tend to stop looking for other options and concentrate their energy and resources nurturing their central relationship.** If this is true, we should see that people in committed, long-term relationships in which they've invested a breadth of resources - physical, emotional, and otherwise - would have fewer people on the backburner. This isn't the case.

A recent study by assistant professor of communications Jayson Dibble at Hope College found that there is no significant difference between how many backburners are maintained by people who are in committed relationships and

with. In fact, claimants found that their profiles on PositiveSingles.com also showed up on other subsidiary sites of the parent company SuccessfulMatch.com. These sights include ChristianSafeHaven, PositivelyKinky, Herpesinmouth, AIDSDate, and MeetPlackPOZ.

In April, a judge dismissed similar charges brought against the parent site SuccessfulMatch.com by two women whose profiles ended up on a whole host of other niche sites. **The case was dismissed because the claimants hadn't read the fine print of their terms of service that actually indicated profile information on this site is shared between niche affiliated dating sights.** This is to pre-populate these sights to make them look more attractive to potential users.

However, this recent lawsuit is different. **SuccessfulMatch was found guilty of "fraud, malice and oppression," because even though the user agreed to have his profile information shared amongst subsidiary sights through agreeing to terms of use, his profile ended up on sites that did not reflect his identity.** True, he was STD positive, but he was not HIV positive, black, Christian, or gay as was reflected by the sites where his profile ended up.

Should you just scrap online dating altogether? Not necessarily.

people who are not.

This is from a self-report survey of 374 undergraduate students. The survey assessed how many backburner relationships they maintained, the nature of their communications with their backburners, and what technology they used to communicate. This survey also assessed the levels of investment in committed relationships for the students surveyed who were in committed relationships.

**In addition to finding that there was no significant difference in the number or nature of backburners people kept regardless of their current relationship investments,** Dibble's study also found something interesting about methods of communication with backburners that sheds some light on his results.

**45% of people maintained these potential future relationships via text, and 37% used Facebook.** These are new communication options that are low-maintenance and acceptable for even people in committed relationships to use. In relationships people tend to do what they can to maximize benefits while minimizing costs. **Sending a brief text every once in a while or writing on someone's Facebook wall are minimal-cost ways of retaining the benefits of keeping someone around on the backburner.**

Social media also allows a new method for people to survey their romantic and sexual options with minimal contact on a large scale. Oftentimes you can tell from someone's relationship status whether or not it would be worth the cost of reaching out to have them on the backburner.

So is this a love scam?

Sometimes people know they are on the backburner, other times they're oblivious. Backburners have been around since the time of "the little black book" in which to keep the names of people who "Could be with you...just not now." Everyone has them. However, it's not the best feeling to be on someone's backburner, especially if your feelings for them are stronger than theirs are for you. Another example would be if you're in a position where you're looking to cash in on your backburner and your backburner is not. This comes down to a blend of good old evolutionary cost-benefit analysis and our

There are many reputable sites you can use to meet matches over the internet. **Just before you go ahead and set up a profile, ask friends who have used these sites about their experiences, do your research, and read the fine print.**

feelings as people who have wants, needs, and desires.

**A scam is when someone takes more from you than you would readily give, and uses means of trickery to get it from you. If the possibility of a future relationship is more than you would give for a text here and there or a comment on your Facebook status, you might just be falling for a love scam. But let's be honest: if the backburner is a love scam, then we're all con artists here.**

*Happy Valentine's Day!*