

# How to find true love

Will Pavia

- 1 Back when Jane Austen concocted bustling romances at her brother's dining table, eligible gentlemen entering a ball were all known by their annual income and their last name. For young men and women running the gauntlet of New York's dating scene today the latter would be unthinkable. Modern love means never having to say your surname, at least until the third or fourth date, when it will be taken as a sign that things are getting serious.
- 2 First-name-only dating has taken hold in an age where introductions are performed not by a hyperventilating matriarch but by a smartphone app, which refers to would-be dates chummily as Jen, or John, or Victor. It has been adopted, vigorously, by young men and women seeking to meet new people in an era when a perfect stranger can become known, quickly, via an internet search.
- 3 "We are fomenting a world of anonymity," said Victor, 41, a single Manhattan lawyer who didn't want to give his last name. He noted that some apps link to a Facebook page, which can unveil a person's friends, tastes and political inclinations long before you have met them at a bar. Matt Russel, 32, who lives in New York and works in communications, said he had gone to some lengths to scrub the internet of personal details. "I don't have a Facebook page," he said. "But I started a faux Facebook page with Matt R and then a jumble of letters just so I could sign up to the dating app Tinder." That way, if prospective dates tried to do research, "they wouldn't know who I was". Googling your intended date ahead of time has become a social sin more honoured in the breach than in the observance. "I do it," said Mr Russel. "You have got a phone in your hand. It's so easy."
- 4 When Mr Darcy enters a ball, in the third chapter of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, his last name and social standing precede him. It is not until midway through the novel that readers learn that his first name is Fitzwilliam. Now it is the tendering of a family name that is a significant moment. Angelical Guarino, 20, a student at Boston University, lists the last name of her dates as "Tinder". Changing the listing to a date's real name is "a modern relationship milestone," she told *The Wall Street Journal*.
- 5 **8** An Australian expatriate in Manhattan complains of married men asking her on dates through a dating app, sure that she would not discover their surname. It also leads people down some curious alleys.



Hayden Moll, a student at Missouri State University, was attempting to signal interest on Tinder in a woman named Claudia. He accidentally swiped the wrong way, losing his chance of meeting her via the app. Noting that this Claudia was at the same university, at which there were 42 students named Claudia, he proceeded to email them all. "If Tinder provided last names this would be so much easier but it doesn't, so I have to describe the profile to you," he wrote.

- 6 The real Claudia, one Claudia Alley, duly shared this email on her Twitter page under the caption: "This guy literally emailed every Claudia at Missouri State to find me on Tinder." The tweet was reposted 30,000 times and gained 166,000 likes. But, perhaps, no love.

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