

insider

edited by Lisa E. Harrison

CULTURE CLUB

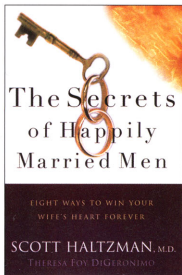
Marital bliss

One local doctor is doing his part to decrease the divorce rate.

"The word is getting out," says Dr. Scott Haltzman, "that men are not totally inept when it comes to relationships." If you believe him, that may be thanks to the Brown psychiatrist's new book, *The Secrets of Happily Married Men*, published by Jossey-Bass.

Released this month, the how-to manual is divided into two parts: the first tells men and women why typical approaches to relationships often don't work; and the second explores eight ways to achieve a happy marriage (including "Make Marriage Your Job," "Learn to Listen" and, of course, "Understand the Truth About Sex").

Haltzman, who's been married for sixteen years, admits that his wife was at first skeptical about the project but changed her view when she read it. "Ultimately," he says, "I don't put down women." Rather, the key take home message is that men need to make their wives understand they are number one in their lives. And women (the book isn't intended just for guys)? Well, they, too, might learn a thing or two about the men they've married, the doctor says. —L.E.H.



INNOVATION

Driven to distraction

A former RISD graduate student turns out a bold and efficient new design for that messiest of places — the inside of a police cruiser.

We've all had those mornings. You've got your cell phone cradled between your ear and your shoulder, a breakfast sandwich in one hand, and the other hand is dancing from one radio button to the next in search of a traffic update. Oh, and you're trying to drive a car at the same time.

Now imagine you're a cop. Throw in sirens, radar guns, computers, paper reports, dispatchers, scads of distracting blinking lights and buttons. This is the chaos Jr Neville Songwe saw when he peered into a police car parked outside a Providence courthouse one day. That one look inspired the RISD industrial designer to devise a better, more efficient and safer cruiser.

Working closely with Providence police — and armed with reams of research that stated an officer turns his head side to side an astounding twenty-four times in a few minutes — Songwe reinvented the cruiser interior. In his prototype (a stripped down Crown Vic), touch-screen computers are set into the dashboard, the steering wheel has six sets of buttons, which allow the officer to flip on the

siren or call the dispatcher without removing his hands, and efficient filing systems are within arms' reach. Songwe even designed a voice-activated system so that the officer would only have to say a word to turn something on.

Songwe, who has since received his master's from RISD and now runs a small design firm in Providence called Joneso Design, expects the new cruisers to be on the road in about two years. That means that Providence cops will be a lot more efficient. Which means we'll be obeying the speed limit on city streets. Not that we don't now, of course. —L.E.H.

