

male call



A guy friend of mine in Seattle went on a date last week. Sort of. Apparently the *datee* insisted before they went out that it wasn't a "date." They did meet at an appointed time, and spent almost three hours

pretty busy – she with travel, me with whining and kvetching about my absent love life – so when an opportunity came up to get together for the standard "coffee date," I suggested getting together.

You'd think I had propositioned her in the produce department of Safeway for an evening of vegetable debauchery.

She advised that she finds these new-fangled "coffee dates" demeaning and not at all appropriate for people of our age. In her view, you either take her out for the full-meal-deal or hit the road. I pointed out that literally all the experts suggest that you should have an introductory meeting, in a public place, with a no-harm-no-foul sort of time limit –



JAMES ROBERT
Phoenix

talking. He paid. They're supposed to see each other again. I guess it didn't matter to him what she wanted to call it.

Then there's the gal I talked to via e-mail over the course of several weeks not long ago. We'd both been



in short, a coffee/drinks date.

She said that guys just want to check you out to see if you're...um...date material. (Her actual words are disguised to protect youthful sensibilities.)

I said, "Um, yeah, that's exactly the idea."

I explained that what with all the photo trickery, disingenuousness and outright deception that goes on with online dating services, it's not

only guys who want to know if your "athletic, toned body" bears any resemblance to reality.

So I called JK, a local real estate whiz/single-dating mom to get her perspective.

"Yeah, I call it the 'hit-and-run,'" JK said. "A guy calls you up and wants to practically meet you on a street corner or something. Supposedly he's a very busy tycoon and he'll try to fit you in to his mad schedule so could you just kind of meet for 10 minutes at the Coffee Plantation?"

Women hate that, JK says. Makes them feel like they're being judged on the most superficial level.

"Yes, I said...but what's the difference between that and scoping out candidates for your affection at a party or a happy hour?"

I hate to admit it, but JK then pointed out something that never occurred to me and it changed my view.

She said: "In order to meet a guy, it takes us almost an hour of preparation – taking a shower, picking out the right outfit that sends just the

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right message, doing our hair, makeup, picking the right shoes, picking out an alternate outfit, different shoes...hmm... outfit too provocative? Whereas you guys slap on a pair of jeans, dock shoes and a sports team t-shirt and call it macaroni.

You're good to go."

Good point. I imagine it takes as long to get ready for a 10-minute drive-by as for a dinner at Desert Ridge.

I still like the idea of meeting someone before committing to an entire evening. Truth be told, if the woman is intriguing enough, I've generally got the entire day blocked out secretly anyway.

I'd like to know what you think though. Just don't take more than 10 minutes.

James Robert is an over 40-something Phoenix-based writer, author of On Being Eight Again and The Tao of Coyote. Divorced with no children, he has been exploring the dating scene and collecting tales of woe for many years. Need a guy's perspective? Jot a note to Male Call at jrobert.penn@aol.com.