



Source: AP, 'More court tantrums by Saddam', *The Australian online*, 14/02/06.

Tags: [husband/wife](#), [evidence](#), [sex](#), [workplace](#)  
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'Dating' was in the Google History on Deidre's husband's laptop—wedged between 'Sluts on Suzukis' and 'Titty-Titty Bang-Bang'.

Dating! Deidre felt sick. She didn't care about the porn, but dating? Why was her apparently loyal, monogamous husband of seven years checking out dating services on the net?

Deidre clicked on the seemingly innocuous little word—her chest tightening, her heart racing—morbidly fascinated, and just a bit anxious about what she might find.

As the long list of dating services unfolded on the screen before her, she heard the penny drop—well, pennies—a truckload of discordant, deafening pennies tumbling down over her head and scattering around her feet.

There was the bank statement she'd recently stumbled across -\$10,000 drawn from a joint savings account over a few months, with nothing to show for it. Not much anyway, not \$10,000 worth.

'Root canal therapy,' her husband had replied—wincing for effect—when she'd asked him what he'd spent the money on. 'A couple of suits,' he'd continued. 'Tailored black suits,' he'd repeated, with emphasis, as though tailored and black justified an extortionate amount. 'Suits? Who needs more than one black suit?' she'd asked. 'Couldn't decide which one to buy,' he'd replied, 'so I bought two...' Okay...

But there were other signs she suddenly realised, looking at the screen—of something up, something not quite right—in the past few months.

'What are these women's sunglasses doing under the passenger seat of your car,' she'd asked her husband a short while ago, dangling the sunglasses in front of him, then asking with a laugh: 'Are you having an affair?'

She recalled the bored look on his face, like a yawn. And the fact he didn't answer her question—the one about an affair. He appeared more interested in what she was doing under the passenger seat. 'Looking for my wallet,' she'd replied. 'But don't deflect...'

'Well,' he'd finally said, his expression an: 'it's-no-big-deal', James must have dropped them when I gave him a lift.'

'James has an interesting taste in sunglasses,' Deidre said, trying them on and catching her reflection in a mirror. They suited her, which was unusual, because sunglasses rarely did. 'If James is so careless to lose his sunglasses, I think I'll have to keep them,' she'd decided, happy to leave it at that.

Deidre scanned the list of dating sites on the screen, and thought about the sexual practice her husband had recently introduced into their bedroom.

Lying on his back, he'd positioned her in a squat over him, and asked her to sink down on his cock, avoiding any

other skin contact. It was great, she'd enjoyed it, but now her suspicions were aroused. 'Who had taught him that?' she thought, reaching for the phone. 'Had he picked that up from some little floozy he'd contacted through a dating site, or was it from Sluts on Suzukis?'

Suddenly Deidre felt close to tears. She dialled her husband's work number. 'I can't talk,' he answered before she'd barely said 'hello'. 'I'm in the middle of a meeting.'

But Deidre refused to be deterred. 'I've just got to ask you something,' she said. 'I'm on your laptop because mine's crashed, and I notice you've been accessing dating sites...' She trailed off.

There was silence. Then Deidre's husband hissed: 'How dare you use my computer, how dare you snoop around my History!'

'I had to get my e-mails,' Deidre said, her voice quaking. 'I wasn't snooping—I went to Google, and your History came up...' The dawning of a big conglomerate of her husband's betrayals was rising in her throat.

Her husband finally answered: 'I had the laptop at work; a few of the guys wanted to look at the sites—to see if there was anyone on it they knew.'

That was it. That was his explanation. Deidre felt stupid; but she also felt uneasy.

'I've got to go,' her husband said, irritated—but just before hanging up he said: 'Deidre?' 'Yes,' she replied, hopeful. 'Please don't use my computer, fix your own.'

Deidre was angry, and miserable. She clicked on the first dating service on the list in front of her, and selected her 'State', her 'City', and 'Men, aged 30-50'.

She began to trawl through the photos that appeared, which were accompanied by captions, a brief blurb and 'More information'. It was strange how she was compelled to find the evidence she didn't want to face.

As Deidre scrolled down the photos, she realised this was how people met a mate in the 21st century. She remembered her friend Marianne saying she'd been at a dinner party where two of the couples had met over the net through a dating site. Another couple had re-united in their 30s, after going out in their teens, when the woman Googled the man's name, hoping to find a reference to him.

Deidre looked at the photos of 30-50-year-old men until 'Funny guy' caught her eye. She stopped scrolling. 'Funny guy' had a rugged, kind face. She paused, then clicked on 'More information'.

'Funny guy' liked nude bushwalking, telling the truth, and caring for the people he said he loved.

Deidre stared at him; he looked pretty funny—and she was in need of a good laugh. She hit 'Reply'.

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Diana Prichard.*