



---

**DAVID H. MATHEWS**

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **LEMONS AND LEMONADE: MY MID-LIFE DABBLE IN ONLINE ROMANCE**

by David H. Mathews

David H. Mathews' personal memoir, *Lemons and Lemonade: My Mid-life Dabble in Online Romance*, is a quirky, irreverent, introspective look into a the world of cyber romance.

His unique perspective is that of a middle-aged twice divorced guy, just trying to get by.

Mathews pulls no punches and doesn't duck from those thrown at him, some of which are self-inflicted. Mathews is 'everyman,' the person we walk past on the street, stand behind in the grocery line, and wish we could be, while at the same time, sorry that we are.

Written in a plain, sometimes blunt, style with a pleasing cadence and upbeat tone, *Lemons and Lemonade: My Mid-life Dabble in Online Romance* reveals Mathews' relationships, his missteps, his failures, and his ultimate success.

Mathews shares his honest-to-God experiences with honest-to-God women in the down-home voice of an Indiana farm boy who spent his youth playing basketball, fondling cheerleaders, baling hay, and shoveling manure.

Mathews lives in River Hills, Wisconsin with Clare, his wife of ten years, and Dave, their neurotic, shoe-chewing Wheaton Terrier. Having forsaken past skullduggery, he now enjoys his extended family of seven children and nine grandchildren. When not writing, Mathews spends his time tinkering with old cars, old trucks, and an antique wooden sailboat.

*Lemons and Lemonade: My Mid-life Dabble in Online Romance* is Mathews' first full-length book. Nearly 30 of his essays, articles, and features have appeared in national magazines.

---

**WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM**

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## SYNOPSIS

### **LEMONS AND LEMONADE: MY MID-LIFE DABBLE IN ONLINE ROMANCE**

by David H. Mathews

“What you are about to read is frequently salty, occasionally convoluted, and in all ways, very personal. These true and sometimes ribald tales did actually occur during my online dating dabble between wife number two and wife number three...”

In 2004, I am a paunchy, middle-aged, twice-divorced car salesman who calls a sixth floor studio apartment home, ready for a new approach to marital bliss. I become intrigued by TV ads touting surefire results from an online matching site—Synchronicity. Subscription paid, profile completed, and photos selected, I pressed ‘Enter’ and began the journey to find my life mate. My path, although always interesting, was never smooth.

“Hey David, we’ve found someone we want you to meet...” Time and again, Synchronicity’s Personality Matching Process finds me a “highly compatible” match, sourced through its patented scientific process. But when I meet these sure-fire matches, I find that they’re not so sure-fired after all.

Among those who fail to make the first-date cut are Cat Lady who has an inordinate obsession with five angora cats, a single woman who really isn’t, but “hopes to be soon...you understand, don’t you?” and a lady who wants me, her perfect match, to be aligned with the stars...her pre-date vetting involves astrological consultation.

I move from email and telephone intercourse to actual face-to-face interaction with Bless You Lady, a gal trying to reconcile who she is, with who she and the Good Lord want her to be. One with whom I am busted by a local cop for nearly-indecent behavior in a city park.

Nervous Nellie, is a lady who over-promises and under delivers, and pays for her deception in a catastrophic misstep at a McDonald’s restaurant. “There’s catsup on my sequins.”

(continued on page 2)

---

**WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM**

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## SYNOPSIS (CONT.)

I relearn the adage, “you can’t tell a book by its cover,” during my encounter with Helen Unhinged. Helen, a mild-mannered school teacher who initially appears to be the poster child for inner peace and harmony, isn’t. That her metamorphosis includes X-rated talk and unbridled sex isn’t so much a problem to me as the stalking behavior to which she resorts when our relationship begins to fracture.

The Cop is my first foray into interracial dating. What I hope for...what we both hope for...is simply not meant to be. No blood, no foul.

Mimi presents a different challenge. She’s a bossy control freak with a heart-shaped ass, a weakness for merlot, and a jealous streak that is troubling. But, the problem is not so much with her as it is with her rebellious son and the conflict caused when his rebellion lights my short fuse.

One of my encounters is not the result of online palaver. Double D, a well-endowed and well-heeled bottle blonde, is a car customer of mine who is intrigued by my revelation of online dating dalliance, asks for my assistance creating her own profile, and entices me to jump off the cyber bandwagon temporarily. At least, I have something to hold onto.

And then it get complicated. I connect with Clare, a lady with whom I develop an instant, unexplainable bond, although I have yet to meet her face to face. At the same time, my former philandering partner, Terry, and I reacquaint and plan to reconnect...to see if there remains a ‘thing’ between us. In my attempt to sort things out, my visit with Terry simply adds confusion to the situation. However, after actually meeting Clare, my path becomes clear.

I enhance my story of our short courtship with actual snippets of our matching dialog and emails we exchange from the morning of August 5, 2006 to the evening of September 12, 2006, the day before our wedding. In my epilogue, I tie together all loose ends and offer my assessment of the online process, the matches that sputtered, the romance that didn’t, and my ten-year (and counting) marriage to Clare.

---

**WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM**

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### **LEMONS AND LEMONADE: MY MID-LIFE DABBLE IN ONLINE ROMANCE**

by David H. Mathews

- 1 Disclaimer.** A segment from 'Helen Unhinged' (see paragraph 12) An explanation of what my book is: a personal, painfully truthful account of my online dating experiences occurring between wife number two and wife number three. This chapter also describes what my book is not: a step-by-step tutorial on how to snag love (or reasonable facsimile) via an online matching site, or a lamentation over what went wrong with my cyber-matches.
- 2 Prologue.** A glimpse of the first few moments of my new (third) marriage, my brief analysis of the online matching process, and a bit of housekeeping regarding how my book is organized.
- 3 Me.** A snapshot of who I am: a very basic, very ordinary male human being. I briefly detail my youthful intemperance, my first marriage to my Indiana farm country high school sweetheart, the disastrous result of bad decisions, my tumultuous second marriage, my resolution to remain forever, forlornly single, and my eventual decision to give online matching a try.
- 4 The Process.** A description of the online profile process and how I struggled to answer the questions that shaped my bio, how and why I chose the accompanying photos, my early assessment of my profile, and how, with a push of the enter button, I joined the cyber love fest.
- 5 First Responders.** My assessment of the initial contacts made through the site, what was wrong, what little was right, and how I was totally intrigued by the process. The reader is also introduced to Double D, a lady with obvious assets who was interested in how the process worked, but tempting enough for me to briefly consider cancelling my online subscription.
- 6 More Pace and Process.** An in-depth description of the steps involved in the communication process.
- 7 Contact.** After considering and rejecting the profiles of many 'surefire' matches, I escalate to telephone discourse with several ladies. Brief snippets of those phone conversations are included.
- 8 Bless You Lady.** My first physical connection sourced through the online process. It was not a match made in heaven. A phrase I used in my profile comes back to haunt me.
- 9 Time Out.** A quick retreat from my first mis-adventure, an analysis of my career as a car salesman, and my infatuation with a gorgeous, hot-blooded, Italian...motorcycle.

(continued on page 2)

---

**WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM**

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## CHAPTER OUTLINE (CONT.)

- 10** Nervous Nellie. Match number two in my growing string of failures. My realization that online deception can be a part of the matching process, and that catsup and conscience don't mix.
- 11** Cat Woman. A reflection on my brief phone conversation with a lady with an inordinate affection for felines.
- 12** Helen Unhinged. Undoubtedly, the scariest of my online connections. Let's just say that Helen is multi-dimensional...a school teacher with a proclivity for passion and a propensity for sudden mood change. Think, Fatal Attraction.
- 13** Time Out 2.0. A short hiatus from romance, my purchase of a sports car, my adventures riding on the Milwaukee County Transit Authority bus system, and a return to the siren's song of online matching.
- 14** The Cop. Some computer-sourced matches fail because those matched are untruthful or unrealistic. Some die, just because. No chemistry. No blood, no foul.
- 15** Time Out 3.0. Adjusting to the possibility of life alone, and making the best out of apartment life. Experiences with bread-making, Christmas shopping, and a return to some semblance of physical fitness.
- 16** Mimi. Liaison number five. Mimi is a winner...she's good looking, likes cars, and prefers cabernet. She also is a fiercely jealous Italian with an OCD obsession with order and control. Unfortunately, she has no control of a foul-mouthed teenage son with no manners, and a complete lack of respect for authority. My quick temper and lack of patience fuel a disastrous conclusion.
- 17** Double D, Redux. After striking out with Mimi, I'm ready to completely jettison the online process. Double D re-enters my life, albeit briefly, and validates the fact that sometimes, we have itches that simply need scratching.
- 18** Time Out 4.0. A reflection of past matching failures and renewal of a relationship, illicit in a past life, for years buried but not forgotten. Plans to reconnect are complicated by a new online match, this one different and thought-provoking.
- 19** Clare. The match that ends the game, but not before a pre-Clare reunion with Terry to see if that old romance deserves another chance. This chapter is unique in that it includes actual email exchanges between Clare and me, detailing the extraordinary quick escalation of our relationship, from email to wedding rings in very short order.
- 20** Epilogue. My story comes together; all loose ends tightly tied. I reflect on the process, our wedded relationship, our blended family, and Dave the Dog, our shoe-chewing, neurotic Wheaten Terrier.

---

[WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM](http://WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM)

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## BIOGRAPHY



Indiana born and bred, David Mathews was taught to obey his parents, respect his elders, be polite to women, and be kind to animals. He delivered newspapers while in grade school, and baled hay, shoveled manure, and chased cheerleaders when his family moved from the crumbling inner-city of Indianapolis, to a farming community 20 miles from just about anywhere. Like many boys in the 60s, his life revolved around cars and girls.

David now lives in River Hills, Wisconsin with his wife of ten years, and Dave, his neurotic, shoe-chewing Wheaton Terrier. (Yes, his name is really Dave.) Having forsaken past sculduggery, David now enjoys his nine grandchildren, and tinkering with his hot rod Porsche and old Dodge pick-up truck.

Lemons and Lemonade is David's first full-length book. Thirty of his essays, articles, and stories have appeared in national magazines.

---

[WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM](http://WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM)

---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

**Q** What inspired you to write this book

**A** Over the course of our ten-year marriage, my wife and I are occasionally asked how we met. When we tell them that we met online and married 39 days later, the response is always the same—surprise and disbelief. We are middle-aged. We came from much different backgrounds. We had no common friends; moved in different social circles. Yet, what we did share, what brought us together and keep us together, are basic core values—the importance of family, the value of sharing, etc. I wrote the book to tell the story of our extraordinary (and some-what abbreviated) courtship. Secondly, I wanted to share my experiences with the process itself.

In 2006, online matching was still pretty new, focused primarily on a younger crowd. Social media was foreign to me. So why would I, a 58-year old, twice-divorced working stiff, forsake traditional dating venues for the brave new world of cyber romance? Yikes. I'm still baffled. In any case, I wanted to provide a snapshot of the process, or at least as how I experienced it, my angst involved in creating a profile, and the remarkable matches that came my way. By remarkable, I mean funny, weird, scary, provocative, and ultimately satisfying.

**Q** Do you have a specific writing style?

**A** I tell stories and paint pictures with my words. I sometimes incorporate a lyric cadence that mimics poetry in my phrasing.

**Q** How did you come up with the title?

**A** My online dating encounters were at times sour. That my memoir concludes with my marriage makes the experience ultimately sweet. I also wanted to ensure that readers knew immediately the book is written from a middle-age man's perspective.

**Q** What books have influenced your life most?

**A** A. Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* was very inspirational. I've gifted Peale's book to friends and family. I copied snippets of his wisdom on 3x5 note cards and carry a few of them with me. (Have several on the shelf in front of me now) Fredrik Backman's *A Man Called Ove* was quirky, but thought-provoking. Beckman subtly morphed his main character, Ove, from a grouchy curmudgeon, to a man of kindness, influenced by the values of his wife. And lastly, Paul Kalanithi's *When Breath Becomes Air*. This book was a strong testimony to life's real value when death is near.

**Q** Do you have any advice for other writers?

**A** Yes—write. Put away excuses and carve out time for your thoughts and words.

**Q** Have you every hated something you wrote?

**A** If I write something that bad, it ends up either deleted or shredded.



---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR (CONTINUED)

**Q** What authors have influenced your writing?

**A** Ernest Hemingway for his crisp, concise descriptive narrative. Erik Larson and David McCullough for their extraordinary attention to detail. Lee Child for the way he brings his reader into a suspenseful action scene with a bit of 'wise-guy' sarcasm.

**Q** What genre do you consider your book(s)?

**A** Creative non-fiction, incorporating cynical, sometimes self-deprecating, humor.

**Q** Do you ever experience writer's block?

**A** Unfortunately, yes. But I find that forcing myself to write, to get something down on paper, breaks that barrier.

**Q** What is your favorite theme/genre to write about?

**A** As a boy growing up in the 60s, I was crazy about cars. Consequently, much of my writing involves cars. I write articles for car magazines that focus on the owner rather than the technical aspects of the car itself. A car is just aluminum, plastic, iron. The real story involves the own-er—why the car is important to him or her.

**Q** Where did your love of writing come from?

**A** I've always been intrigued by the way words fit together to paint a picture, create a mood, tell a story. Reading, and obviously writing, are highly personal, emotional experiences.

**Q** What was the hardest part of writing this book?

**A** I struggled to infuse kindness with truthfulness and fairness when relating certain events. It was also difficult for me to 'fess up' to misdeeds and unfaithfulness.

**Q** What did you enjoy most about writing this book?

**A** Without a doubt, I enjoyed revisiting the short (39 days) courtship with my wife. Each time I read the words we shared (I include actual email exchanges during that time) and think about the intense feelings that grew so quickly, I smile.

**Q** Do you write every single day?

**A** I do try to write daily. Sometimes, life intrudes into my writing, but generally I get something on paper.

**Q** What are you working on at this minute?

**A** I have several automotive magazine articles that I'm under the gun to finish. I am about to begin my first novel—the story of a changing relationship.

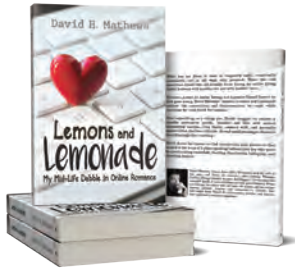
---

# DAVID H. MATHEWS

Fiction · Creative Nonfiction · Automotive Journalism

---

## BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION TOPICS



**BOOK TITLE:** Lemons and Lemonade: My Midlife Dabble in Online Romance

**AUTHOR:** David H. Mathews

**AUTHOR WEBSITE:** [www.dhmathews.com](http://www.dhmathews.com)

**PUBLISHER:** Black Rose Writing (2016)

- 1** How did the title of this book, its front cover, and short synopsis on the back cover first ‘strike’ you? Did the artwork and design intrigue you? What was your immediate reaction? Expectation?
  - 2** What was your first impression of the author? Did you view him as an ordinary, down-to earth guy, or someone different?
  - 3** Did your opinion of him change as you read his story? If so, how?
  - 4** Have you had actual experience with online matching? If so, how does the author’s experience align with your own?
  - 5** Do you believe the author’s description of the online matching process was accurate? Adequate? Believable?
  - 6** Considering each of the characters in the book, who was most likable? Who was the least likable? Why? Did you identify with any of the characters?
  - 7** Was the pace of the book appropriate? Was it lively? Too slow?
  - 8** Was the content what you expected? What about the tone of the book?
  - 9** The author changes the style of his book when he meets Clare, including much actual dialogue between he and Clare. Did that change add or detract from the storyline?
  - 10** How does online matching differ for Baby Boomers, Gen Xr’s, and Millennials?
- 

**WWW.DHMATHEWS.COM**