Clarion Review

Self-Help

Relationships 911: Surviving Love's Emergencies
William C. Small
First World Publishing
978-0-9715515-7-2
Four Stars (out of Five)

It's a sobering but widely known statistic that Dr. William Small cites in the introduction to *Relationships 911*: fifty-three percent of marriages in America end in divorce. That likely explains the huge business in books, DVDs, CDs, radio shows, television shows, and websites that address relationships.

Relationships 911 is yet another book to join this already crowded market, but it has a unique flavor, due primarily to Small's down-to-earth and often very direct style. The author is neither shy nor coy in addressing even the most sensitive topics, including the role money plays in marriages, marital infidelity, inter-racial relationships, and abusive relationships. In this respect, one cannot help but admire his candor.

Dr. Small presents what is essentially a case for maintaining a long-lasting, trusting relationship. He defines "the five levels of relationships," offers up "the essential elements of love," discusses the differences between men and women, suggests the qualities of a "faithful man" and a "virtuous woman," speaks to "love's financial risks and rewards," and details the fifteen "essential elements of manhood."

The author acknowledges that some of what he writes will "create controversy," such as his chapter entitled Avoid Attracting Abusive Men. He suggests that "both the abuser and the abused have a distinct behavior pattern that makes it easy to identify them as such." He outlines in specific detail "How an Abuser Selects a Woman to Abuse," likening the man to a predatory animal. He also says, "When a man has sex with a woman who is not his wife, he is engaged in a form of abuse."

There are two biases in *Relationships 911*. One is the fact that some of Small's observations may seem sexist; he openly criticizes feminists on occasion and also espouses controversial ideas, such as "ladies, it is not what a man can do for you. The key is you and what

you can do for a man!" While he presents a rationale for this view, it will no doubt alienate some female, and perhaps even some male readers.

The second bias is Small's reliance on the Bible to explain the complexities of modern relationships. He states, for example, "The reason the average man doesn't understand women is because Adam was asleep when GOD made Eve." In fact, Small quotes extensively from the Bible to support many of his statements about relationships between men and women. While some readers may welcome the religious undertone, others may be uncomfortable with this aspect of the book.

Despite these biases, however, *Relationships 911* is instructive, engaging, at times humorous, and even eye-opening. Readers may not always agree with what Dr. William Small has to say, but they may very well take his advice to heart.

Barry Silverstein