



# the Commentator

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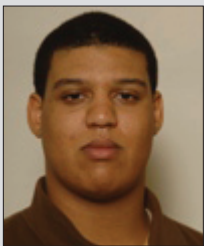
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## Martha Coakley Shares Stories, Lessons Learned from Career in Public Service



Gerardo Gomez Galvis

By RELIC SUN '13  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Honorable Martha Coakley, Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, delivered the 14th Annual Robert Abrams Public Service Lecture on Sept. 20, 2010, urging NYU law students to become involved in the great issues of our time.

Recalling her childhood in the 1960s, Coakley noted a quotation by Dr. Tom Dooley, who had dedicated his life in the 1950s to work in impoverished Southeast Asian countries: “Seek something beyond the split-level ranch house and the two-car garage. Become supremely aware of and be intimately involved in the great issues of your day.” In the backdrop of an era in which President John F. Kennedy urged Americans “to think not what your country can do for you,” Dooley’s spirit of being involved in something bigger than oneself resonated strongly with Coakley.

Coakley spent the first few years of her legal career in private practice. Desiring to pay it forward, she decided she wanted to do something that would allow her to be useful and have an impact.

Coakley commenced her 20-plus years of public service by becoming Assistant District Attorney in Massachusetts’ Middlesex District Attorney’s office. She has served as Special Attorney to the Department of Justice’s Boston Organized Crime Strike Force, Chief of the

Child Abuse Prosecution Unit at the District Attorney’s Office and District Attorney of Middlesex County, prior to becoming Attorney General in 2007.

In early 2010, Coakley made a failed bid as the Democratic candidate to fill the late Senator Ted Kennedy’s seat. She reflected that although “there are no silver or bronze medals in political races, there are sometimes silver linings,” because she got to return to a job that she loves.

As Attorney General, Coakley has not only worked on criminal cases, but has also dealt with white-collar crime, cyber crime and civil cases. Some notable accomplishments include pursuing predatory lenders and Medicaid fraud, filing suit against the Defense of Marriage Act to defend the rights of same-sex couples and playing a role in the containment of health-care costs in Massachusetts.

Coakley devoted a large part of her lecture to sharing valuable lessons she learned while working on child abuse cases. Coakley emphasized that prosecutors must balance the need to protect the safety of victims, while ensuring that the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Amendments of the Constitution were being respected in the process of prosecuting. Looking back, she says that child abuse cases were some of the “toughest cases in the world,” because “you were in trouble if you didn’t indict and you were in trouble if

you did but got it wrong.” In addition, prosecutors wield a great deal of power to bring cases forward, which is an ability Coakley learned should never be abused. She believes that, “to be a good lawyer is to be a fair lawyer.” Finally, in a sobering story, Coakley explained that she realized the need to recognize the “cycle of violence,” when she found out a man charged with child abuse was in fact a boy she had represented years ago who had himself been a child abuse victim. She concluded that no matter how many people are put in jail, “unless we find a bigger approach to how we are preventing these problems, we are not going to solve them.”

Returning to the theme of her lecture, Coakley urged students to commit to an issue of our time, whatever it may be. She stated that, as in the words of an archbishop’s prayer, “we cannot do everything, but we can do something, and we can do it very well.”

Coakley often quoted others in her speech, but her own declaration was one particularly worthy for law students to remember: “I think that lawyers have an enormous capacity to do good, precisely because we speak for people, no more, no less, and we can choose for whom we speak, and we can choose what we say.” Lawyers, Coakley believes, are in the position to make the world better.

## COMMENTATOR CANDID



Gerardo Gomez Galvis

Children swim in the Washington Square Park fountain as summer officially comes to a close.

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When it Comes to 3Ls, the MPRE and the Impending Bar Exam, What We’ve Got Here is a Failure to Communicate

By MICHAEL MIX ’11  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In Franz Kafka’s *The Trial*, protagonist Joseph K. is accused of a crime, but finds himself engulfed in an endless sea of bureaucracy, never being able to even find out what he has been accused of. As much as I hate myself for referencing something higher-brow than *Jersey Shore*, I found myself sympathizing with Joseph K. recently during a conversation with several friends regarding the MPRE, which eventually evolved into a rant about how clueless 3Ls are about their responsibilities in order to graduate and become a member of the bar. Our concern is that we feel as if we are just fumbling around in the dark, having to figure this all out for ourselves without any guidance from NYU.

To the unindoctrinated, the MPRE stands for Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination, which to the best of my knowledge is required to be admitted to the bar. I say “to the best of my knowledge” because I actually have no idea. I have heard from others that we have to take the MPRE, and I know I just spent over \$60 for the right to go to Columbia on a Saturday morning to prove that I am all ethical and whatnot. But as far as I know, we 3Ls have not received anything from the school

with any information regarding signing up for the MPRE. Even in my Professional Responsibility class, the professor briefly mentioned the MPRE on the first day, but only in saying that we weren’t going to learn how

are adept at researching and figuring out things for ourselves. Even so, I think the administration should be providing a little more guidance in this area. It would not be very difficult to send an email to all the 3Ls list-

in Honors, which resembles the traditional 4.0 grading system. The kicker is that Harvard never officially announced the change; instead it stealthily changed the student handbook. While I hope that the NYU would never make this kind mistake, I worry in general about the apparent disconnect between administration and students that seems to be increasingly prevalent at law schools, whether it is new grading policies at Harvard or guiding the students through the MPRE and bar abyss at NYU.

Look, I understand that we don’t want our law school to be a paternalistic institution (and we presumably should read our student handbook to find out about any grading changes). But it certainly does not hurt to make things a little bit easier. With the economy in the tank, NYU should be making an effort to give us every advantage we can get. If the administration communicates about our responsibilities to pass the bar, it gives us faith that NYU would never stoop to the level of our north-eastern neighbor and stealthily change the grading policy without officially announcing it. Because that behavior is as reprehensible as *Jersey Shore*’s Sammi Sweetheart displacing her Ronnie anger towards J-Woww and Snookie (whew, that’s the kind of cultural reference I’m used to).

Comment

The Guy Behind  
The Guy Behind the Guy

to pass the test. Honestly, if I didn’t have friends, I probably would have no idea that the MPRE exists.

Many of my friends feel the same way. During the aforementioned conversation, someone asked whether we could take the MPRE at the same time we took the bar. No one had any clue what the answer was. In fact, no one was even sure when or how we are supposed to sign up for the bar or what review classes to take. We also realized that we have no idea if there are any other things we need to do in order to graduate law school and become a lawyer. Basically, we are as clueless as Joseph K., lost in a law fog.

I understand that we are all enterprising law students who

ing everything we need to do in order to successfully graduate and become a member of the bar. While it’s certainly possible that the administration has indeed sent something, I talked to several of my peers and none of us can remember any communication from the administration on this important subject.

On a similar note, I was dismayed a few weeks ago to read the article in the *Harvard Law Record* (Harvard’s version of *The Commentator*, albeit with a worse name and a better website) which uncovered Harvard’s secret new grading policy. Two years ago, Harvard moved to a pass/high pass/low pass grading system, but this year it decided, among other changes, to use a new formula for calculating Lat-

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Why Is it so Hard for a New Yorker to Vote?

By JORDAN WELLS ’13  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I was prevented from voting in the primaries last month, even though I have lived in New York for seven years. While I may (or *may not*) have been allowed to cast a provisional ballot, the process would have been so onerous that it effectively stopped me from voting.

Before beginning school this fall, I was registered to vote in upstate New York. Having attended the Attorney General candidate’s forum at the law school, I was looking forward to voting in the primary on Sept. 14. Unfortunately for those of us who moved from elsewhere in New York during the weeks leading up to the election, voting is not very simple—if it is an option at all.

It turns out that you must live in New York City for at least 30 days to vote here; I moved here from Albany on the first day of orientation, Aug. 25, less than 30 days before the primaries. Moreover, since I was no longer a resident of Albany, the Albany County Board of Elections told me that I was ineligible to vote by absentee ballot there. With elections scheduled

near the start of school, these policies seem to disenfranchise young voters who are likely to be changing residences around this time. “This can’t be,” I thought, so I called the State Board of Elections.

The State Board of Elections advised me that there would be judges on hand in locations around the state, and that I could explain my situation to the appropriate judge in the hope of obtaining a court order allowing me to vote provisionally. As of less than a week before the polls opened, however, the list of judges wasn’t available. “Can this be?” I then thought, having exhausted the phone calls I could make.

According to the New York State Constitution and State Election Law, it *can* be. Although the law provides a special procedure for people like me to vote in presidential elections, by its plain language it denies us the opportunity to vote in all other elections—including those for statewide office. Thus, even if I had access to a judge, it appears unlikely that he or she would have allowed me to vote.

Young people are perennially exposed to the hand wringing of older generations and a media that portrays low youth turnout as resulting from apathy or lack of engagement. I make no direct comment on those criticisms here, but it may be

that residency requirements in New York disproportionately deter young would-be voters. For any individual voter, the likelihood of casting the decisive winning vote for one’s candidate is very low—even in a primary. Given the improbability that one’s vote will determine the winner of the election, the individual incentive to vote is correspondingly low. Therefore, when the voting process is onerous, the burden may outweigh the individual incentive to vote. In order to maximize turnout, we must strive to minimize the effort required of voters.

With that in mind, is it sensible to expect a voter to go through the steps of calling (and calling again) the State Board of Elections to ascertain where and when to appear and before whom; going to court and waiting one’s turn to plead for an order; and—if the order is granted—only then going to the corresponding polling location to cast a provisional ballot?

Based on my anecdotal experience, I think it is not sensible, and so urge the creation of a simple process whereby New Yorkers in transition within the state may retain their opportunities to vote.



## Newly Opened Bare Burger Provides More than the Bare Necessities

*LaGuardia Place Eatery Includes Ostrich, Elk, Bison, Lamb, Turkey and the Traditional Beef*

By STAVAN DESAI '11  
ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR  
AND ELYSE FEUER '11  
STAFF EDITOR

*The Commentator* food critics have a not-so-secret passion: burgers. There's very little more satisfying than a great burger. We've tried burgers from all over New York City in a quest to find (and review) the very best ones. When we saw Bare Burger being built less than five minutes from campus, we knew we'd have to try it (and write about it). Bare Burger touts its organic ingredients, flavorful combinations and varied protein selections, which include Beef, Lamb (+\$1), Elk (+\$1), Bison (+\$1), Ostrich (+\$2), Chicken, Turkey and other vegetarian selections.

A group of six of us eagerly walked into the restaurant from the pouring rain. The interior of Bare Burger feels very woodsy and tropical, with bamboo on the walls, neon green menus and accents and different colored clay wall sconces in the shapes of bears. In one person's view, it reminded him of a "tree harvesting plant in Hawaii." There were a lot of other nice interior touches that made the atmosphere interesting. While table service is provided, take out and counter service can be had behind a faux wooden wall that resembles a storefront. The "chandeliers" over the tables were made from a variety of different items, including spoons and glass bottles. The tables themselves are diner style,

and while all the pieces are a bit eclectic, it all worked together create a nice vibe.

When we sat down, the server came over promptly and offered us water and a chance to look at

healthy meat, it had excellent flavor and texture. You could tell that the burger wasn't beef, but the Ostrich wasn't unusual or strange and made for a very satisfying burger. The Beef Bare Burger Supreme (\$10.95)

The turkey bacon was not nearly as good as the regular bacon in others' burgers.

To round out the menu, we also tried a few other items. The Panko Covered Chicken Strips (\$8.95) were pretty good, but a bit standard. They were nice and crunchy on the outside but not overcooked. The fries (\$4.95) were also decent, but still standard. They were nice and hot, crunchy on the outside and tender inside. The Gourmet Battered Onions Rings (\$6.95) were a consensus favorite at the table. The crust was crunchy and flavorful. The inside was moist and tender. The onions rings were not greasy, and despite having a moist inside, did not fall apart on us, which we appreciated. The restaurant also specializes in a variety of different sauces to go with their

spicy ranch, the chipotle mayo and the barbeque sauce. The restaurant also offers a Fries and Onion Rings Combo (\$6.95) for those wanting to try both without handing over twice the cash.

After all that food, no one had room left for dessert. However, one of us had actually been to Bare Burger on a previous occasion and remarked that the chocolate milkshake (\$5.95) was solid. It was nothing revolutionary, but a very nice end to the meal.

Bare Burger is a welcome addition to the NYU area. It provides both indoor and outdoor seating, as well as high quality burgers for moderately expensive prices. It has some competition with Five Guys Burgers and Fries right down the street, but we felt that the flavor and variety offered by Bare Burger was

a much better option and is worth the price when you need your burger fix.

Bare Burger is located at 535 LaGuardia Place between Third and Bleecker Streets. Bare Burger also delivers, and is open from 11am-10pm Sunday-Thursday, and 11am-12am Thursday-Saturday. 212-477-8125. Credit cards accepted.

*Want more inspired ideas about where to dine in New York City? Check out our food blog at [IdCrossTheStreetForThat.Wordpress.com](http://IdCrossTheStreetForThat.Wordpress.com).*

## Comment

### I'd Cross The Street For That

the drinks menu, which includes soda, beer, wine and milkshakes. Bare Burger provides a nice beer selection. Their beer list had the bad habit of listing a brewery without actually listing which specific beer it carried, but after a quick trip to the storefront, we found a decent-sized selection. The entire table was also appreciative when our server told us that if we buy three pitchers, the fourth is free. That may not be the normal deal, but it was offered and we took advantage of it.

The menu itself is divided into burgers, sliders, snacks and essentials, salads, milkshakes, sandwiches and breakfast. The food was largely met with praise. Given our large group, we were able to try a variety of different things.

The consensus favorite at the table was the Ostrich Bacon Cheeseburger (\$11.95). Although Ostrich is a very lean, (dare I say)

was good, but paled in comparison to the Ostrich. I thought the meat had a nice texture, but could have been a bit more flavorful, even with a little more salt and pepper before cooking. The Elk Burger with Turkey Bacon (\$10.95) received some mixed reviews. The meat was very soft and moist, which some liked, but as a result didn't have much texture. The burger was also a bit undercooked, which probably added to its moistness. The leanness of the meat could also be tasted, unlike with the Ostrich.



fries, chicken strips or anything else. We particularly enjoyed the

## NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

My New York State Bar Association law student membership gives me an edge. I have had many opportunities to network with NYSBA seasoned attorney members and have established priceless relationships with NYSBA staff attorneys. I gain additional, valuable insight on life after law school through my General Practice, International and Young Lawyers Section memberships."

**Jennifer Clark | NYSBA law student member since 2008**  
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# Objectionable TV Lawyers Make a Mockery of the Practice of Law

By JOSEPH JEROME '11  
MANAGING EDITOR

Behind cops and sexy doctors, lawyers are the go-to archetype for zany TV drama, and our chosen profession is back in force this year with three new network procedurals: *The Defenders* on CBS, *Outlaw* on NBC and *The Whole Truth* on ABC. Never mind a new *Law & Order*! In Los Angeles! Of course, everyone knows what they're getting with another L&O — so what about the other new shows? Well, the overall quality and dismal demo ratings of two of the three suggest they may no longer be on the air by the time you read this, so I apologize in advance for wasting your time talking about how silly Jimmy Smits is in a show most of you will never see. I wouldn't point to any of the three as a potential template for a law school admissions essay.

Suffering through these three shows made me realize how TV lawyers shape the general perception of our profession. I'll admit to occasionally indulging in a *Law & Order* marathon — who doesn't want to grow up to be Sam Waterston? But when I learned some of my German friends used *Boston Legal* as a way to brush up on American law, I could only shake

my head. The truth about the law is that crusaders aside, we aren't members of an inherently dramatic profession.

But on *The Defenders*, we antagonize judges for fun and gain trial strategy from baseball games! On *Outlaw*, we quit the Supreme Court to travel around the country to gamble and right injustices. And

potential to have all three of these terrible rookie shows in a three-way legal deathmatch on Wednesdays at 10 p.m. Instead, *Outlaw* is bad all by its lonesome and the other two are up against *Law & Order: Los Angeles* (or LOLA as NBC would have it) when it starts up after this article goes to press. Basically, I'm saying I had to do a lot of channel-flipping and Hulu-viewing in order to counsel you all to stay away from these shows.

Let's start with *The Whole Truth*, which had some real potential. Starring the always-delightful Maura Tierney, *The*

*Whole Truth* has the clever gimmick of showing both sides of a trial ... in 40 minutes ... repeating scenes from different perspectives ... starting with the crime. The result is a show where everything and nothing happens at the same time, leaving the viewer both confused and dissatisfied. Assuming you can get past that — and

the fact that Maura the ADA will be facing off against Rob Morrow's stereotypical wacky-but-brilliant defense attorney each episode — you still have to stomach Maura telling a grieving couple: "I love the law. It is the only thing I am good at. Just ask anybody who's unfortunate enough to be involved in my personal life." Golly, it's a good thing she's got the sexual tension with Morrow.

*The Defenders* is actually the best of the bunch. Starring Jim Belushi and Jerry O'Connell as smarmy Vegas defense attorneys, *The Defenders* has the whole drunken-playas-who-really-have-heart vibe going for it. Considering both of these guys have been stinking up television for a decade, I was astounded at how not completely awful *The Defenders* was. Certainly, it wasn't good per se, but that's mostly because the show seems to want to take itself seriously.

Belushi and O'Connell are believable as hacks, posing in front of their obnoxious interstate billboard. When they're giving sentimental speeches about caring for people and justice, however, I just think *According to Jim* and everything not *Sliders* and start giggling at the sanctimoniousness of it all.

But *The Defenders* has nothing on *Outlaw* in its portrayal of false righteousness. Jimmy Smits plays the titular *Outlaw*: conservative Su-

preme Court Justice Cyrus Garza. Oh wait, former justice. After his liberal father's death nags at him (and an *evil* Republican senator threatens to impeach Garza if he doesn't vote "our way"), Garza declares, "I am resigning from this Court, because I'm ready to change it!" Being the swing vote just didn't cut it for Garza, so he takes his clerks and tours the country to right wrongs and somehow pay off his gambling debts. Considering a spot on the high court is most lawyers' dream, the initial premise is absurd, but the rest of the show simply doesn't work. *Outlaw* is the legal version of *House*, only the drug habit is replaced with gambling and the crazy medical diagnosing with asinine legal strategy. Hugh Laurie is somehow able to carry that premise forward, but Jimmy Smits is simply too earnest to pull off a brilliant "conservative playboy." *Outlaw* is so bad that it pushes toward the so-bad-it's-funny realm, but then I realized just what I was giving up my Friday evening for and cried a little.

The bottom line is that this year's crop of legal dramas won't be airing all day on cable in a decade, and if there's any TV justice, they'll all be gone before anyone in the greater public thinks more can be accomplished by a drunken Vegas defense attorney than a Supreme Court justice.

## Taxicab Confessions Include Life Lessons on Love in the City

By JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ '11  
STAFF WRITER

Eleven years ago, Daniel B. missed a bus and found love.

Today, he looks distinguished in a black blazer, blue jeans and a baseball cap while he drives me from SoHo to Chelsea Market and recounts the story of how he met his wife.

Daniel was on his way to meet an ex-girlfriend for dinner, but his bus left early. Another woman was stranded until the next scheduled departure an hour later. "We began talking as friends," Daniel said. "Before we left, I asked her to go to dinner on Monday. She said she would think about it and call me that day to give me her decision." With one hand on the wheel, he turns his head toward me and adds, smiling, "I couldn't wait until Monday!" They went out to dinner the following week, and after that very first date, Daniel was certain that he wanted to marry her. Today he and his wife have been married for over a decade and have two daughters.

"I am in love with my wife and kids," he said. To the young women of New York he said exuberantly, "You should believe in love. It's the greatest thing on earth."

Daniel B., now 63, is one of several New York taxi drivers who have been kind enough to share with me their thoughts on a topic familiar to us all: love. Let me explain.

Taxis are New Yorkers' *de facto* confessionals. Each day (and night), drivers lend their discretion to drunk dials, back-seat whisperings and the occasional shouting match. I've often wondered what commentary the drivers were bottling up in the front cabin. So this month I spoke with 10

drivers during rides from NoLiTa to Chelsea to the Upper East Side and back to see what insights they had to offer about the city's dating scene.

The taxi drivers' ages ranged from 22 to 63 years. They came from Morocco, Pakistan, the Ivory Coast, Israel, India and the Dominican Republic. Five had arranged marriages, all of which have lasted over 20 years. Two have never married, two have divorced, and one other — Daniel B. — has been happily married for 11 years. At first, I expected to gather some simple dating tips and a juicy story or two. I was surprised to find that, though a couple drivers were reticent, most were happy — even relieved — to discuss details of their own experiences with and reflections on romance. By turns wise and cynical, despondent and charismatic, pedantic and vulnerable and ultimately, hopeful, these men shared with me their personal stories of love. They also provided affectionate words of guidance for the single women of the city.

As the eldest interviewee, Daniel B.'s happy ending came after a divorce and some years spent alone. But many cab drivers, like many of us out there, are still living in the gaps between loves, waiting for their fortuitous meetings. As they related to me their past experiences and future hopes, twin feelings consistently emerged: the desire to feel understood and the grave fear of being deceived.

For the drivers, the fear of betrayal in love generated anxiety, and in some cases dread. A young man of 22, who wished to go only by the name Stranger, has never had a girlfriend, but he has strong feelings on the subject. "I don't want to fall in love. People who fall in love are

victims," he declared. With bitterness that belied his age, he insisted that in his generation dating has been corrupted by insincerity and opportunism among both men and women. For him, to take a girl out is "a waste of money," as he believes that dating no longer leads to lasting connections. "The old days are gone," he said. "These days, everybody is fake. Nobody is real. You can't trust nobody."

Some drivers who have been around longer are equally disillusioned. Elgouassi O., aged 35, remains heartbroken today over his first love, with whom he parted 14 years ago for what he believes to be financial reasons. His face tightened as he told me, "I thought she loved me, but in the end she liked money." He has resolved that he will never trust another woman. "She killed love in my heart. It's like when you buy a package of fish. If one fish smells bad, all the fish will stink."

A sense that the dating world is a hall of mirrors drove some to throw up their hands. At 54, Dahan S. has given up on love altogether. He admitted that, at the end of his rope with dating, he feels justified in trading romance for the immediate gratification of pre-paid services. "Going to the Chinese massage is a lot easier than dating a girl," he said. "With a masseuse, you know what you're going to get."

Some men believed that they were at a gender-based disadvantage. "A woman is stronger than a man. God gives her a good brain," explained Hussain S., aged 50. "But a guy, even some bitch, he can't judge."

Others contended that the genders were on a more level playing field. "Both the guys and the girls [in

New York] are just playing around, not serious. I've been driving for 26 years, and that's what I've found out," claimed Tej R., aged 50.

A few admitted that men, like women, are not always up-front. "A lot of guys don't tell the truth," said Mamadou D., aged 37 and recently divorced. Dahan S. commented categorically about the male disposition toward transparency. "Who cares about the truth?" he asked. "Lying is natural. When the first monkey begins to lie, he becomes a man."

Both those in successful marriages and those who still toil on the market expressed paternal solicitude for the young women who make up, as one driver estimated, 70-80 percent of their clientele. They pointed out warning signs that may indicate that a man is hiding something. "If his phone is ringing, and he looks at it and doesn't want to answer it," Elgouassi O. said. "When he talks too much," offered Mamadou D. In his characteristic categorical style, Dahan S. issued words of caution that might be of interest to the young women of NYULaw: "Don't marry a lawyer. They tell the worst lies of all."

For some, judging a man's sincerity was just a part of intuition. "If a girl doesn't know a bad guy when she sees him, nobody can help her," said Hussain M., aged 54.

But every driver maintained that should intuition fail, time will reveal all. For this reason, Hussain M. counseled girls, "Hold the kiss. Hold it as long as you can. Judge if he really is in love with you." More philosophically, Daniel B. advised young women, "Examine the water before you swim in it. You should be able to see the bottom. Do not swim in dark water." Further, he gently admonished women with a

penchant for scheming. "You should never play games in life, or life will play games with you. You will become an instrument, not taking life seriously."

The most striking part of these interviews was that, common as disillusionment was, hope was an equally consistent theme. Even the men who had been hurt the most indicated that they craved a lasting romantic connection. Mamadou D. was thin-faced and solemn. Though shaken by his recent divorce, he confessed that he still believes in soul mates. And for all his talk of stinky fish, before I left Elgouassi O.'s cab, he conceded that despite his decade-and-a-half long heartache, he hopes to fall in love again one day.

The men were thoughtful in describing the kind of woman they yearned to be with. Mamadou D. explained, "Honest is the most important. Then smart. Pretty is not necessarily important." Hussain M. agreed: "The perfect woman, she's honest. Pretty is the second." ("But pretty is good too..." he mused).

In the end I come back to Stranger, the youngest cabbie. Bitter though he seemed, when I asked him if he had a favorite love song his eyes brightened and his mouth flipped into a smile. At first he balked, but then confessed to listening over and over to P. Diddy's "I Need a Girl (Part Two)." The lyrics to that song provided a window into what he hopes to find for himself, and perhaps what his fellow cabbies, and maybe men everywhere, ultimately desire: "What I need is a pretty woman next to me/To share the dreams that I believe/Maybe we could start a family/Someone who truly understands, how to treat a man/This is what I need."