

Is Love Truly Blind? Stacy D. Phillips Weighs in on the Hit TV Show Around Its Season 4 Finale

Article By:

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The hosts of the Netflix reality show “Love Is Blind” are married stars Nick and Vanessa Lachey, and they pose the question “Is love truly blind?” to about 15 girls and 15 guys each season.

Q: Stacy, what do you think of the show’s premise?

Stacy: I think that love is semi-blind. Let me tell you a story about my mom and dad when they went on a first date together. Dad tells the story that he couldn't sleep that night because he was smitten with her. He got up early because he could not sleep. He went walking in Central Park whistling because he had met my mom. My mom tells a story that she thought he was such a lovely person and would be a great person to fall in love with. And later, she did. It took her two or three dates. Whether or not love was blind there, they had to have some attraction. But it was his heart and his soul that she fell in love with.

Similarly, on this TV show, they have shown that one can get to know somebody and grow to like or even love them only by conversing through a wall. At one time in my life, I got to know and like somebody only over the phone initially, and I later ended up dating him. But conversely, I also believe that when you meet someone in real life, you either have chemistry and physical attraction or you don't. It is at that juncture where things go off the rails on this show, making for some really good television viewing.

Q: Does the show's premise shed any new light on the potential for relationships to spark and later endure?

Stacy: I think the show's premise is that you should truly spend quality time getting to know somebody's heart and soul through conversation. It should never be as quick and simple as slam bam, thank you, ma'am. The first few times you meet somebody and start getting to know them, you begin to understand what their character is like, and then if you're lucky enough, you have the chemistry. “Love Is Blind” is the opposite of the popular show “Married At First Sight;” both are extreme scenarios, but I will always support getting to know a partner as deeply as possible before taking the serious steps of engagement and marriage.

Q: As a divorce lawyer and a family law attorney, what advice would you give potential singles

before walking down the aisle to the Love Is Blind altar?

Stacy: If you really feel like you are going to get married, please be really, really, really sure. It is not like “I can get divorced the next day.” If you think you can get an annulment, think again. Getting an annulment in California is very difficult. So, my advice is to take the process and the marriage very seriously. But if it's worth the risk to you, go for it.

Q: If a couple from the show, or any other TV dating show for that matter, gets married and then later divorces, what is the timeframe for potential annulment of their marriage?

Stacy: Well, annulment in California is not easy to achieve, so please do not think if you go on a show like this that you can get the marriage annulled. It is not a matter of a timeframe. It has to be for a certain reason, which will differ in your state. In some states, it may be a lot easier to obtain an annulment than in California; but in California, it is very hard. To obtain an annulment in California is only if the issue goes to the heart of the marriage, which boils down to two specific parts of the marriage relationship: the willingness to have children and the willingness to have sex. That is basically all there is. If somebody defrauds you or is a scammer or steals your money, or lies to you, sadly, those are not grounds for divorce. But if a spouse refuses to consummate the marriage or refuses to have children, and it was agreed you would have children, then those are viable grounds.

Q: What part do you feel physical attractiveness and chemistry play in a successful marriage?

Stacy: You really have to find a deeper connection with somebody, and those connections can be formed in different ways. Physical attraction is great, too. But I do not believe that somebody can walk into the room, and you can immediately feel that you're in love with them or that you will marry that person. It just isn't realistic, but I do understand it happens occasionally. I believe instantaneous attraction can be very powerful; however, if your relationship is built solely on sex appeal and sex, I do not believe it will last.

Q: These “Love Is Blind” contestants are contracted with the TV show first and foremost. Does their TV wedding even count? Is a “Love Is Blind” marriage legally binding? (The show creator apparently says it is.) Could these marriages be challenged in court?

Stacy: I would expect that the “Love Is Blind” TV show (its producers and their teams) has researched all those issues. Interestingly, I was called by a reality TV show asking this same question. I responded that it is a legally binding marriage if all the right steps are taken. Those steps would include filling out the proper paperwork and having it signed by the proper person, the officiant. That paperwork must then get mailed in. The couple getting married must also fulfill all their requirements to get married, such as taking blood tests or perhaps they have lived together for a certain period of time. (The length of time spent living together probably wouldn't qualify in this show's case because it's too short of a period.) But if they do all things the right way, then it's a legally binding marriage.

Q: What are your thoughts on some of the relationships being forged this season?

Stacy: Ooh, the relationship I am rooting for – and the one I feel has the most potential to last – is Brett and Tiffany. They seem to be real and very connected authentically. And they both seem like they are very good people. I am not sure if any of the other relationships this season will stand the test of time. They all seem a little bit forced, except for Brett and Tiffany. I think their love is good, genuine, and pure, and they have great communication skills, which are always key. For this show to

have even one successful relationship out of a dozen or more each season, to that, I say, “God Bless!”

Q: Given that some of these couples may later become famous, do you think they are signing prenups, and if so, how might that be structured?

Stacy: I am unsure why they would sign a prenup. If they both come to the marriage with basically the same things, then they shouldn't need a prenup. It goes back to my premise that if you have been previously divorced, if you have children and want to protect them, or if you come from family wealth, then have a prenup. But if you have two people who are basically young, first-time out, or basically equal in wealth and have similar prospects for future wealth, then why would you have a prenup? In other words, if you believe love is blind, go for it!

Q: Is the show just cotton candy television, or does it have some lessons to really offer singles on the dating scene?

Stacy: Well, reality TV is a little like cotton candy, but I actually like the premise behind this show. I love the psychological intrigue of watching people get to know each other for days without seeing each other. It is fascinating to see and learn who manipulates whom and to gauge if budding relationships feel real or not. I genuinely like the show's premise.

Q: How is “Love Is Blind” different from other shows like “The Bachelor/The Bachelorette” franchise?

Stacy: I actually think “Love Is Blind” is inherently more authentic because, in “The Bachelor” and “The Bachelorette,” they have spectacular dates that are highly controlled, and it seems really easy to think that you are falling in love. It's a fantasy. When you're doing all these romantic things, and you have this man buying you all these clothes or a man or woman whisking you off in an airplane, it can be “oh, so much fun,” but you're not talking about anything for real. I remember one episode of the latest season of “The Bachelor” where one of the siblings in the hometowns asked: “What's my sister's favorite color? What's my sister's birthday?” and Zach could not answer those basic questions. I would bet that on “Love Is Blind,” they would have talked about those things and much more in the pods for hours on end. At least, I hope they were talking about those things and more.

Q: The show puts couples together in just a matter of weeks. What advice would you give to a famous client who comes to you saying they're planning to marry someone just after a few weeks of dating?

Stacy: I have known many people – friends, clients, and prospective clients, who have gotten married really quickly. I remember one client whose divorce I handled called me to say: “I'm getting married on Saturday.” I literally had to advise this person that their divorce had not gone through yet, and then I had to work magic with the judge to get it signed in time. I mean, where does this type of person come from? I have had good friends who got married very quickly. I would give friends the same advice I would to foes or reality show contestants. If you think you are in love with this person, and if you are willing to take the chance on marriage, then think hard about it. Dig deep into your heart and soul, and if you really believe that it is the right thing for you, then do it. Objectively, of course, it is better to spend time really getting to know your potential spouse.

Q: Stacy, are you open to any of these contestants knocking on your door for family law counsel?

Stacy: I am open to any client that will listen to me and follow my advice. I will work with any client with whom I can have reasonable and reasoned communication and who will allow me to partner with her/him on what could be a very difficult journey. I try very hard not to prejudge.

Q: Any last thoughts on “Love Is Blind” Season 4?

Stacy: I'm curious to see how it ends. I'm curious to see what happens after Season 4 concludes and some time has passed. It's the first time I have watched this show, so I am eager to see if my predictions as to who will last pan out. I hope they do, and I hope the couple I'm rooting for remains happy and has a lovely family and joy-filled life together. I am curious to see if I'm wrong about the other couples. I do believe it is a great “social experiment,” and I often say: “Nothing ventured, nothing gained.” Or better yet, “If you don't ask, you don't get!”

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