



INTRODUCTION



In a bookstore recently I was amazed at how many books there were on the subject of how to “get a man” or “pick up women.” The guidebooks ranged in titles, from simple catchphrases to clever, dirty ones. I was both intrigued and horrified that there seemed to be such a big consumer need for lessons on pursuing love and sex. While I stood for a mere five minutes in the “self-help: relationship” aisle, at least ten women and six or seven men appeared, sifting through these books like they were the long, lost Dead Sea scrolls. Amazing!

Well I’ve been through it all more times than the average bear, and I’m not kidding. I’ve dated from the west coast to the east coast. I’ve traveled through the United States, Europe and the Middle East, just to meet, fall in love with, and get dumped by nearly every guy out there. (That might be a *slight* exaggeration ... but only slight.) So with that kind of experience I must be able to offer something new with regard to meeting, dating, sleeping together and ultimately navigating the break-up between a man and a woman.

Through it all (so far, anyway) I’ve decided these countless experiences might actually help me in my pursuit of self-actualization. And so I would like to share my findings with you. However, I urge you to take it all with a grain of salt. I am, after all, a really weird, perpetually single stand-up comic.

“Thirty seconds after you’re born you have a past and sixty seconds after that, you begin to lie to yourself about it.”

– David Cronenberg

I’ll never forget the first time a guy called me psycho. I’d been playing four square with a group of fellow fourth-graders and suddenly had the urge to throw the big red ball into a nearby garden so I’d have my hands free to grope J.J. Nesbitt. I wrapped my tiny, ten-year-old arms around his waist, puckered up and kissed him on the cheek. He screamed a ridiculously high-pitched squeal, ran behind the teacher and declared me a crazy person. Actually, the exact term he used for me was “psycho-mamma,” which was odd, considering he wasn’t a 40-year-old disco dancer, circa 1976.



For the life of me I couldn’t understand why this would be his reaction. I was no supermodel, but for a fourth-grader I wasn’t bad. How could he resist my long dark hair and awkward pre-teen teeth? More importantly, how could he be so *cruel*?

Turns out that last one was a question I’d be asking for the next 20 years. How ... *could* ... he ... be ... so ... *cruel*? Of course the names of the boys changed throughout the years, as did the nature of our relationships, but the sentiment remained the same. Guys had no heart, it seemed, and we women had too much of it.



Being older now (and a little bit wiser), I'm more able to empathize with that other gender. I know now that most of the thoughts and feelings I assigned to boys in school never existed. So, for example, if a guy looked at me in the hallway with his eyes half-squinted, he probably wasn't angry with me; he was stoned. What he was really and truly feeling I couldn't know, and so I made it up. Now, thanks to social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook, I get to hear from guys I've dated along the way and find out the truth. For better or for worse, I get to see myself through their eyes and memories. And let me tell ya, sometimes it ain't pretty.

I remember one guy – let's call him Patrick. He emailed me 13 years after high school to tell me he was surprised I ended up in the entertainment world, as I'd been so shy. He said he had always thought I was cute, but didn't ask me out because I never expressed opinions about *anything* and seemed to be interested in nothing but designer clothes and gossiping. I was furious when I read this, as anyone who knew me even remotely at that time knew I had opinions about *everything* and was far from shy.

But what he got really wrong were my interests. The only thing I ever remember caring about in high school (besides getting into an Ivy League university) was *Patrick*. How could he have missed that? How could I have failed so miserably in communicating to him that he was the one for me, and

that my whole existence revolved around him feeling the same way? Though other girls my age were (allegedly) sleeping with some of our teachers, I had my eyes set on an age-appropriate senior. And while I had thought I was wowing him with my long stares and hair-flips, he was seeing me as vapid and *gasp* uninteresting!

How could we have seen things so differently? Of course, now I've come to realize that most men and women approach love and sex and talking and just about *everything* from a completely different perspective. The question now is: *why* does each gender think the other is certifiably insane?

