

Rachel Machacek Discusses 'The Science of Single'



By Krissy Dolor

Ever compared navigating the dating scene to science problem?

After all, there *must* be a secret formula to get boy + girl = love. Well, after dating without solving her equation for years, Rachel Machacek took matters into her own hand and gave herself one year to try different methods of dating, hoping to find the right guy. Lucky for us, she put her findings into a book: *The Science of Single: One Woman's Grand Experiment in Modern Dating, Creating Chemistry and Finding Love*. In her debut novel, Machacek shares the triumphs and failures of her various methodological steps, including online sites, matchmakers, singles events, self-help books and the good old-fashioned blind date. While the ultimate goal was to find chemistry with that special someone, this journalist found something much more important – herself.

We spoke with Machecek via email about her book. Here's what she had to say:

You said that one of your goals in writing this book was to improve yourself as a dater. Do you think you have?

Oh yeah. While working on the book, I went out with a lot of guys (60!), so by simply practicing the art of dating for an entire year, I became better at finding dates, the process of dating (I stopped hijacking conversations with inane babbling because I felt uncomfortable with brief silences in conversation) and learned to pick myself up and brush off the dust when something didn't work out, versus analyzing the situation and beating myself up over it. Essentially, dating evolved into this thing that I did. It became the rule instead of the exception.

What has your feedback been from the guys that have read your book? Also, have you gotten feedback from any of the men you've dated and written about?

I think I might have more male fans than female. It's surprising to me because I thought for sure only women would truly relate to my stories. I get a lot of emails from men who

are connecting with my book. Many of them are just getting back out there after a divorce and they say it's great to hear a woman's perspective. Others tell me their experience with dating – all the insecurities and crackpots they run into – is exactly like mine. Of course, some have called into question my integrity and felt threatened by the way I described the dates and men I went out with. Alas, you can't win them all.

I have heard from a few of the men I wrote about in the book and they've been flattered and excited. Of course, these were the guys I was positive about. For the men who had a less-than-favorable story, well, it's been quiet on that front. Crickets, in fact. I'm OK with that.

Where do you find yourself in your dating life now? And do you think you've figured out "the science of being single"?

Not a ton has changed for me. I'm single. I date. I still deal with some of the same issues. What *has* changed – and this is the clincher – is my perspective. I'm a LOT easier on myself. I allow myself to have fun with dating (I stopped thinking about the endgame – too much pressure!) and it's not this gray pall over my existence like it used to be. Much of this comes from finally feeling OK with where I am in my life. I stopped should-ing on myself. (i.e. I should be married, have kids by now.) This has been critical to being happily single – it's the science of single. I do what I want to do and I do what's important to me, so I'm more confident in general. And as we all know, confidence is half the battle in dating – and in life.

What's next for you?

I have a new idea for a book on a different topic (it's still evolving so I won't say more – bad juju), so eventually I will want to talk about that, too. However, dating will remain a heavy focus for me because I still have so much to say, and I just started a couple regular columns including Dating

Disaster Day where readers can send in their worst date ever, as well as guest posts from dating bloggers. It's fun!

What's the one piece of dating advice you've learned through writing your book?

I only get to talk about one?! Oh man. OK. This one is important: Don't be afraid to put yourself out there. I used to feel so utterly vulnerable about being single – it's fun in your 20's, but by your 30's, people start wondering about *why you're still single*. It's like a disease. Syngalitis. The horror! I felt shy about it. And shy about dating. And that makes it pretty hard to date. Once I started saying yes to singles' events, blind dates, online dating – all of it – and stopped thinking that doing these things made me look desperate, dating became a lot more fun.

I have to add one more piece of advice: We tend to be very superficial when forming our checklist for the ideal mate. So make sure yours includes important criteria that can actually make a relationship work, like "he/she supports and respects me." Don't limit yourself to great hair and nice shoes. Those things do not a relationship make.

Cupid thanks Rachel Machacek for her time! You can find *The Science of Single: One Woman's Grand Experiment in Modern Dating, Creating Chemistry and Finding Love* on Amazon. For more on Machacek, visit her website at www.rachelmachacek.com. Cheers to solving your dating equation!