

'Marry Smart' Author Susan Patton Wants Young Women to "Plan Ahead For Their Happiness"



Interview by [Whitney Johnson](#). Written by Liz Kim.

Maybe it's the native New Yorker in her, but newly-minted author Susan Patton is not afraid to tell it like it is. Although she is first and foremost a human resources consultant and an executive coach, she is perhaps best known for a letter she wrote to *The Daily Princetonian*, the newspaper of her alma mater, in March 2013.

Her note advised Princeton's young female students to find their husbands while at school rather than dating men post-college who probably won't be of the same standard. She also suggested that female students dedicate less energy solely to advancing their careers and more towards finding a good mate and preparing for children. Naturally, the responses were visceral and immediate. The sheer amount of comments not only shut down Princeton's website, but word quickly spread and soon, Patton was on every talk show imaginable defending her words.

Here, she talks to CupidsPulse.com about her controversial letter and new book *Marry Smart: Advice for Finding THE ONE*, which was released yesterday.

What motivated you to become vocal about the current state of young women and write your letter and then your book *Marry Smart*?

It's become so politically incorrect to suggest to our young women that embracing traditional roles is wonderful. I can't really explain it because I don't understand it myself. But certainly the women's movement has become so extreme and so vitriolic in their message of women being identical to men, that they don't need men, that they can do it alone – but none of that is true. Instead of empowering women, it's become is sort of a bullying organization that is pushing women to want what *they* want for these women, not necessarily what women want for themselves.

What's empowering for any woman is to be with a man in a committed relationship who adores her, who values her and treasures her and worships her. *That's* empowering. Sleeping with a different man every night who you wouldn't even want to have a cup of coffee with isn't empowering.

I think *Marry Smart* is absolutely vital for any young woman who is thinking about how to best plan for her own personal happiness. I think it's a book that will help young women who are interested in being a wife and mother.

Related Link: [Are You Too Young For Marriage?](#)

Do you think your advice applies to women across the board or only for women who attend universities like Princeton?

The reason why I initially wrote this letter to the women in Princeton is because it's my alma mater, and I feel close to the university. I wanted to warn the undergraduates to not let this happen to them, to not be so all consumed with their careers that you get yourself to a point where you're in your mid to late 30s and realize that you have missed your opportunity to be married and have children. And sadly for many of them, they do.

My letter applies to smart women everywhere. You have to plan for your happiness with at least the same commitment and dedication as you're planning for your professional success.

In fact, I think you have to invest more effort and energy in planning for your personal happiness because you can make up lost time at work, but you can't make up lost time if you've missed your opportunity to have children.

What would you say to women who don't want marriage and kids in their 20s and instead want to focus on their careers?

I think that's wonderful if that's what they truly want. I'm certainly not saying that you shouldn't pursue a career; I've always had a career – many careers, in fact. I'm not suggesting that women focus only on their personal happiness. What I am saying is that, if you're a young woman and you know you want children in a traditional marriage, you have to plan for it.

If you don't want to get married or don't want children, then this advice isn't for you. I'm not critical of a woman who chooses career and only career.

Do you think the attitudes of male undergraduates toward marriage have changed as much as those of female undergrads?

I think, in college, it's hard for anybody to really think about marriage because of the workload and classes, but I think that young men do have marriage in the back of their minds. Then again, my concern isn't really for the guys because if they don't find the women of their dreams in their 20s, it's not like they missed any opportunity. But a woman who is in her late 30s or early 40s has a very different story. If that woman hasn't found a man yet and hasn't had babies yet, she pretty much knows that that ship has sailed.

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Readers might misinterpret your advice on looking for love in college while there are the greatest number of single men. Do you think it's ever too late to find somebody?

Different groups will misinterpret my words for their own purposes. But how could you argue with the idea that young women should plan for their personal happiness? Who argues with that? Of course, we should encourage young women to plan for their happiness! I think I've been misinterpreted in the sense that I'm not suggesting you don't pursue a career.

No, I don't think it's ever too late to find a partner, but I do know that there is definitively a hard stop on her ability to have children if that's what she wants.

If you'd like to purchase Marry Smart, visit Amazon. You can keep up with Patton on Twitter @ThePrincetonMom.