

Exclusive Interview: Celebrity Attorney Ann- Margaret Carrozza Discusses the Pitfalls of Prenuptial Agreements



By Steven Zangrillo

With the national divorce rate spiking like a batch of Twisted Tea, it's no wonder that we've seen a renewed interest in pre-nuptial agreements. More than ever, these agreements have become an integral part of the arrangements a couple will make before tying the knot. Between high profile splits like the Kardashian catastrophe to the everyday scenarios of your neighbors down the block, the specter of divorce knows no singular demographic. As your relationship nears towards the ever-ominous edge that teeters between "dating" and "marriage," you'll probably be in need of a little

perspective.

“Everyone should consider pre-nuptial agreements, especially high net worth individuals,” says New York City based Celebrity Attorney Ann-Margaret Carrozza. “Sometimes they can lose about half of their net worth unless they are properly protected,” Carrozza adds.

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It’s not hard to imagine how difficult these negotiations can become. After all, marriage can be a huge financial risk. In Carrozza’s experience, she says that the party with fewer assets seem to be a little more contentious. “They are big proponents of adding benchmarks to the agreements. That is, these people will make sure they are given a percentage based on the years they dedicate to the marriage,” she says. In essence, they’re arranging prorated marriage agreements. If you put in five years, you get a cut.

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As far as mediating this process with perspective in mind, Carrozza says “It goes beyond being a lawyer; I try to expand the discussion. In fact, I tell many of these couples that this will be the least romantic thing they will ever do!”

In truth, prenuptial agreements sound about as comfortable as dental work and with a recent rash of hotly covered high-profile divorces in Hollywood, it appears attitudes towards commitment are shifting. Seal and Heidi Klum, Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries, Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore, Katy Perry and Russell Brand, and Jennifer Lopez’ heavily documented split from Marc Anthony are all situations that beg a bevy of questions. Is Hollywood getting it wrong? Are we?

Carrozza thinks that it’s a little bit of both. She believes

that, at the very least, pre-nuptial agreements are indicative of how we approach the institution of marriage. Divorces are going to happen, the best we can do is prepare properly.

“I think that not only with celebrity, but any divorce proceeding, each party wants to protect themselves,” she concludes.

That may be all it really is but it's alarming how we've gone from protecting one another to protecting our assets.