'A Million First Dates' Author Dan Slater Offers New Insight about Online Dating
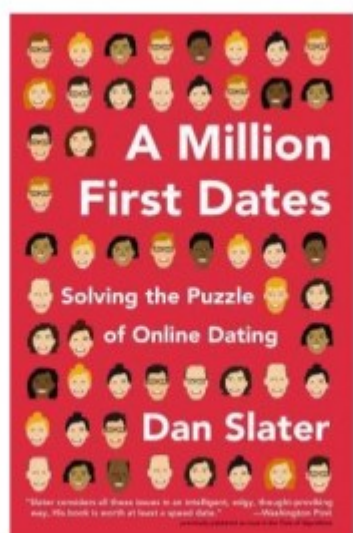

Interview by [Lori Bizzoco](). Written by Brittany Stubbs

When it comes to meeting The One, we're no longer stuck sitting alone at the bar or praying that our next blind date will work out. Today, millions of singles are turning to dating websites to help them find their better half. Although a new success story happens every day with the help of these online matchmakers, the unlimited profiles and possibilities these sites provide pose some issues as well.

In his second novel *A Million First Dates: Solving the Puzzle of Online Dating*, journalist Dan Slater invites us behind the scenes of the fascinating online dating business. He shows how

this industry is changing our culture in more profound ways than we can imagine. By altering our perception of what's possible, these sites are reconditioning our feelings about monogamy and challenging the traditional paradigm of adult life. Slater examines the questions that the digital revolution is forcing us to ask: Why should we settle for someone who falls short of our expectations if there are thousands of other options a click away? Can commitment thrive in a world of unlimited options? Can chemistry really be quantified by math geeks? In our interview below, we talk to Slater about the answers to these questions and more.

What inspired you to write on the subject of online dating?

A few things sparked my interest in this subject. The fact that my parents met by one of the first computer dating websites in the 1960s definitely gave me a reason to go back and research the beginning of this trend; after all, I wouldn't be here today if my parents hadn't met this way. I'm also one of the first generations that latched on to online dating — my friends were doing it, and people were always talking about it — so it was a subject that sort of surrounded me and seemed relevant.

Related Link: [10 Tips to Being Successful with Online Dating](#)

What advice do you have for people exploring online dating?

As far as finding the right site, look for results. If you're going on several dates and you're not finding anything, maybe the community isn't right for you. I encourage people to use a few different dating sites.

When it comes to looking for a partner, I had the most success with online dating when I sort of threw away my checklist of things I was looking for and focused on maybe a single thing I wanted to find in a person. Maybe you just want to find someone who will go bird watching with you. If so, forget about what people look like, where they went to school, etc.

and just focus on finding someone who shares this interest. Online dating is a commitment, and it's sometimes scary, but if you're going to jump in with both feet, take advantage of trying to find that one thing you're really looking for.

In the book, you state that "Internet dating has helped people of all ages realize that there's no need to settle for a mediocre relationship." But it appears that we have higher expectations now on what is good. Can you expand on this idea?

In the past, I think people would settle because there weren't as many opportunities to meet new people; a new person didn't just pop up every day. With online dating, people are popping up with the click of a mouse. I don't see this as a bad thing or mean to imply that more people are running away from good relationships, but I do think people in relationships that are on the fence will be more liberated by all the opportunities that online dating provides. People are now less likely to stick around in a so-so relationship just because they're afraid to be alone or afraid they won't meet anyone else. I think the majority of people still want relationships and will commit when they find something really great, but again, I think it lowers commitment for those on the fence.

Related Link: [How to Deal with Online Dating Rejection](#)

Do you think technology or a dating website can truly determine if two people are going to have chemistry?

I think online dating can predict to an impressive degree whether two people are going to hit it off on that first date, whether they're going to sit down and have that spark where they can talk about common interests as an hour flies by. Online dating is getting better and better at determining if two people are going to get along. But I think that is a huge leap away from long-term compatibility, such as marriage, living together, and sticking with one another for a long time. I don't think that's something that can be quantified by

these websites yet. I don't want to rule it out, but I don't think technology is there yet.

What are some positive aspects of approaching love this way?

For one, it does allow you several options. I think another positive is that they provide you with more dating experiences, and these experiences are going to benefit whatever relationship you finally end up in. They grant you real life opportunities versus received wisdom from your parents or friends and allow you to discover the kind of relationships and people that work or don't work for you, which helps you ultimately understand what you're actually looking for and need in the end.

To learn more about online dating, purchase Dan Slater's new book on Amazon!