

These Are 'Not Your Mother's Rules': Ellen Fein Helps Us Find Love in the Digital Dating Age



By Jessica

Conigliaro and Michelle Danzig

In their twenties, Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider were experiencing the dating world in a completely different way. To help single women like themselves, they wrote *The Rules: Time-Tested Secrets for Capturing the Heart of Mr. Right*, which highlighted the many guidelines that a woman

should follow in order to attract and marry the man of her dreams. After the book became a *New York Times* bestseller, four more books followed, covering the rules for getting married and online dating.

As the authors progressed through life—and, more importantly, became mothers—they began noticing that new technologies were affecting the dating scene for today's generation. In their new book *Not Your Mother's Rules: The New Secrets for Dating*, they explain the effects of modern communication and social media on relationships and how to adapt *The Rules* accordingly. In an exclusive interview, author Ellen Fein shares her personal experiences that influenced the book and offers some great advice on how to date in a digital world.

You've written several books that helped women navigate their love lives through the 90's, online dating and even through marriage. What inspired you to write a book for today's generation?

A woman told us that she had lost her phone in Bloomingdale's and couldn't find it for an entire day. By the time she got it back, text messages had piled up from a guy she was seeing. That hadn't happened before because she always immediately replied back. They had been "text chatting" and casually dating but nothing more serious. Because of her lack of response, he actually seemed *more* interested in her. It was all so puzzling. This story is one of many in our 15 years of dating consultancy experience that inspired us to revive the rules.

We also had mothers handing down the original rules to their daughters, and their daughters didn't understand half of them. We realized we needed to write another book because everything about communication was so different.

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We have noticed that the book is getting a bit of controversy in the press. What do you make of it?

We've sold over two million books. We have consultations and hear from girls who need our advice. We're not trying to write a bestseller; we're trying to write a helpful book. Clients never mind the negative press. They just want the answers to their dating questions. It's not fake or outdated to play hard to get; it's just what works.

A lot has changed in 20 years. What rules did you toss out for today's generation? What is the most antiquated rule you had in *The Rules* that no longer applies today?

We wrote it differently. Originally, we said not to tell your therapist. However, we found that many therapists recommended the book to their patients. We also tossed the rule about not calling a guy. Honestly, no one calls anymore; everyone texts now. We didn't feel the need to include it. Lastly, this book is less marriage-minded and a little bit more about getting a boyfriend. Don't lose your friends because you're obsessed with a guy. Don't accept booty calls and meaningless hook-ups.

What are three obstacles that women face today that they didn't in the past? How can they overcome them?

1. Doing the same thing they always do and never changing their approach to dating. Honestly, I say do whatever you want until you're ready to follow *The Rules*. They may seem old-fashioned, but they really work.

2. Mass texting. Men today can send compliments and date requests to multiple women at a time. How do you know if you're special? Back in the day, men had to try a little harder; they had to know your home number, your roommate, where you live or where you go out. Let him make an effort to see you.

3. Sexting. Don't do anything online with him that he can copy

and paste, including video chatting and dirty texts. It might blow up in your face when you split.

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In the book, you touch on the difficulties mothers face when trying to give their daughters advice. Why is it important for young women to communicate with their mothers about dating? What advice do you have for people struggling with this interaction?

Mothers should spend time with their daughters but never push anything on them. Make sure they know they can come to you about anything. Don't overreact when they come to you with problems or questions. Listen to what they have to say, and then quietly freak out in the next room if necessary. You don't want them to be afraid to talk to you.

What is the most important thing you learned from writing the newest installment of *The Rules*?

I would never break any of my rules. When a guy likes you, he wants you. He's willing to meet you halfway; he likes paying for you; and he wants to take you out. It's just that easy.

For more information about Ellen Fein or to purchase a copy of 'Not Your Mother's Rules,' visit [Amazon](#). You can find out more about 'The Rules' series by visiting [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).