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It's all in the marketing

Strategies for snagging a husband after 35

Joanne Laucius

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Forget Cupid's arrows. If you're a woman over 35 looking to get married, you need a 15-step action program.

Denver, Colorado-based marketing whiz Rachel Greenwald has scored a publishing hit with the ungainly-titled *Find a Husband After 35 Using What I Learned at Harvard Business School*.

"A strategic plan is not a set of 'tricks' or 'games,' but rather an organized, smart approach to achieve a goal," says Greenwald in her book, which is now No. 7 on the New York Times' advice bestseller list.

In Britain, where the book will debut in January under the revised name of *Find a Husband After 30* (the Brits consider 30 to be the "best-before" date), *The Guardian* has dubbed her "the hottest thing to hit America's dating scene since *Sex and the City*."

Greenwald reportedly got a huge advance for the book -- and there are a dozen foreign language translations on the way. According to the Hollywood trade journal *Variety*, Paramount Pictures plans to make a movie out of it. Kind of a cross between *The Rules* and *How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days*.

It's a rough world out there in dating land: in the U.S., there are 28 million single women for 18 million single men, says Greenwald, who believes marketing yourself is a lot like marketing bottled water or fashion jewelry, both of which she has hawked in the past.

"All around me I saw single friends who wanted to get married and dated occasionally, but after college their lives became more insular," she told *Fortune* magazine. "To me that sounded like a marketing challenge."

Greenwald started out with individual clients and moved on to seminars. Finding a husband is like landing your dream job, she says. You have to be determined and energetic.

The truly dedicated who follow her formula will supposedly get that engagement ring in a year to 18 months.

But it's not for the faint of heart. If you're willing to do anything --provided it's not illegal or immoral -- to snag a husband, *The Program* is for you.

First of all, she recommends dropping between 10 and 20 per cent of your annual income into a "husband search" bank account and consider it "investment spending." And you might want to start off by buying a push-up bra.

"I believe most men seek women who exude feminine qualities," says Greenwald. "I've learned from my marketing career that if you want to succeed, you have to sell what customers want to buy."

Next up, find a Program mentor to give you advice and monitor your progress. Cast your net wider. Never mind limiting your candidates to tall doctors who do modelling work for Calvin Klein on the side. Too short, too fat, too old? "What type of man are you looking for? Answer: Someone wonderful."

Network. Join an online dating service (it's efficient, fast and inexpensive) and try "guerrilla marketing" -- go to a different dry cleaner or coffee shop. You never know who you'll meet. If you're signing up for a night class, make it building log furniture, not designing greeting cards.

Carry a conversation starter, such as a book. Telemarket yourself. "You are going to call up everyone you know (and Greenwald means everyone, including your grandmother's neighbour) and directly ask them to fix you up with someone."

"The Program is like a combination job search and strict diet: There are commitments, sacrifices and rules involved."

And when you find a likely candidate, don't have sex right away, advises Greenwald. If you wait, it encourages him to think of you as a potential wife or "big-ticket item" and not a one-night stand or "impulse buy."

Sure the system sounds contrived, she says. But think of it as "strategic."

"I assume you want results more than you want to believe in fairy tales," she says. "The romance comes not in the search process, but when you've found a wonderful man."

The proof is in her own success. Greenwald, now a mother of three, married her husband Brad 11 years ago at 28 after she met him at a party she threw for herself.

"I was precocious: I knew I didn't want to be single after 35, so I planned ahead. I was on my 'pre-Program' called Prevention 101."

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