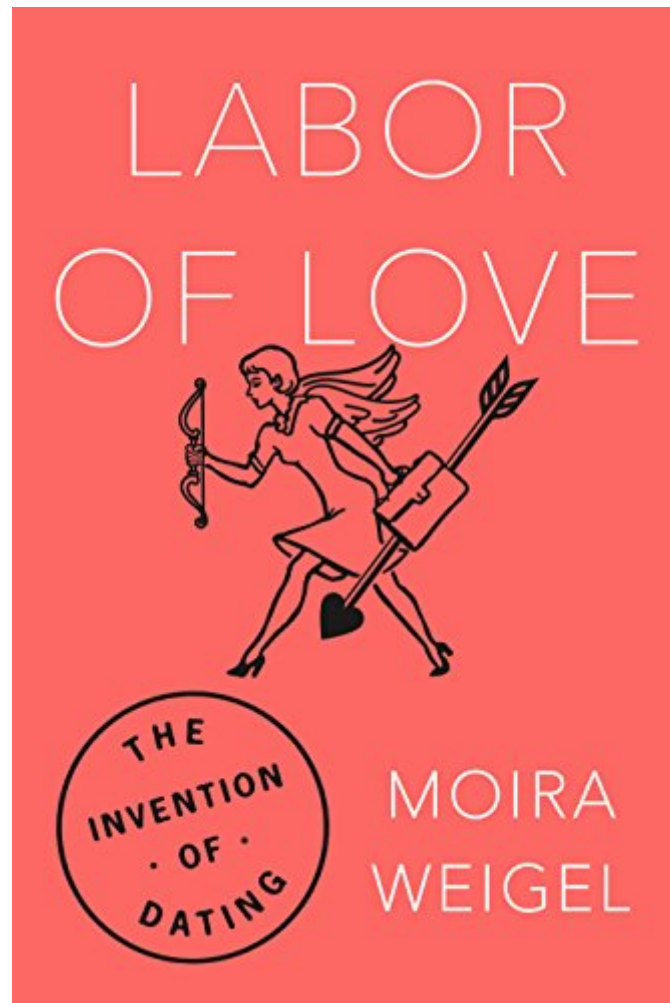


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Labor Of Love: The Invention Of Dating



Synopsis

“Does anyone date anymore?” Today, the authorities tell us that courtship is in crisis. But when Moira Weigel dives into the history of sex and romance in modern America, she discovers that authorities have always said this. Ever since young men and women started to go out together, older generations have scolded them: That’s not the way to find true love. The first women who made dates with strangers were often arrested for prostitution; long before hookup culture, there were petting parties; before parents worried about cell phone apps, they fretted about joyrides and parking. Dating is always dying. But this does not mean that love is dead. It simply changes with the economy. Dating is, and always has been, tied to work. Lines like “I’ll pick you up at six” made sense at a time when people had jobs that started and ended at fixed hours. But in an age of contract work and flextime, many of us have become sexual freelancers, more likely to text a partner “you still up?” Weaving together over one hundred years of history with scenes from the contemporary landscape, *Labor of Love* offers a fresh feminist perspective on how we came to date the ways we do. This isn’t a guide to getting the guy. There are no ridiculous rules to follow. Instead, Weigel helps us understand how looking for love shapes who we are—and hopefully leads us closer to the happy ending that dating promises.

Book Information

File Size: 922 KB

Print Length: 306 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0374182531

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (May 17, 2016)

Publication Date: May 17, 2016

Sold by: Macmillan

Language: English

ASIN: B0176YG0L0

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #59,572 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #6 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Customs &

Traditions #13 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Sociology > Marriage & Family #22 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Historical Study > Social History > Gay & Gender Studies

Customer Reviews

This is an excellent book that covers more topics than one would expect. However, a few topics weren't included:- Alcohol. How has changing alcohol and drug consumption affected dating? How much of women's desire for sex actually a desire for alcohol, and vice versa? Was 1920s college women's enthusiasm for dating actually a desire for drinking? Did the "going steady" among teenagers of the 1950s correlate with a reduction of alcohol consumption? The author suggests that the "free love" of the 1960s may have been young women getting drugged and raped. Was the rise of the singles bars in the 1970s due to women's new freedom to enjoy sex or their new freedom to enjoy alcohol (and cocaine, cannabis, etc.)? Is the current "hook-up culture" on college campuses related to the rise of women's binge drinking and alcohol poisoning?- The author documents that in the 1920s poor, rural young women got jobs in cities hoping to "marry up." Why is this not done now, considering the growing class divide? Why isn't my OkCupid mailbox full of messages from lower-class women, or from illegals hoping for green cards? It seems like people now date within their classes, e.g., doctors date doctors, when 50 or 100 years ago people dated across class lines, e.g., doctors dated nurses.- How has the rise of media affected dating? A century ago our great-grandparents saw few beautiful people in their villages or neighborhoods; now we see hundreds every day on television, in magazines, etc. Our expectations of what a partner should look like has increased, while we dress sloppily and more people are overweight.- The book ends with "The Rules" and "Pick Up Artists," i.e., popular advice to disrespect persons of the opposite sex.

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