

Opinion

News

Arts & Life

Community

INSIDER

Marketplace

Advertise

About Us

CLASSIFIED | ANNE NEUBER

‘Highs in the Low Fifties’

October 17, 2013

BY MELISSA GERR

Not your typical how-to book about middle-age dating

“I’ve always been the kind of person who sees the humor in something, and what these *events* — we won’t call them relationships — seemed to have in common, they had a strong ludicrous element,” said Marion Winik of her latest book, “Highs in the Low Fifties, how I stumbled through the joys of single living” (skirt! press), which is about dating as a middle-aged woman.



Marion Winik's new book talks to middle-aged women interested in romance. (Melissa Gerr)

Winik’s book begins when she arrives in Baltimore in 2008 after her second marriage ends. Now she’s a resident of the Evergreen neighborhood in Roland Park, a community she loves. She lives with her daughter, Jane, and Beau the dachshund (both featured prominently in the book) and teaches writing at the University of Baltimore.

Winik had a more difficult time publishing this book than others. She was surprised when one publisher, after reading the first few chapters, said she would have nothing to do with it.

“I felt like I was writing a porno book or something,” said Winik. “There is this reaction that, I think, has to do with middle-aged women not generally viewed as people who are interested in sex and romance; people seem to find the subject slightly distasteful. There’s almost no sex in it, sorry to say, but the idea for a middle-aged woman to be dating seemed to be very outrageous to people.”

Winik’s book is a memoir, but reading it feels more like sitting down with her over coffee and listening to a good friend’s hilarious and sometimes wince-inducing anecdotes about dating.

“Even though my writing is very therapeutic for me, I’m writing for other people — that’s foremost in my mind,” said Winik. “I have to entertain or offer them some reason why they would possibly care.”

And you likely will care and even laugh out loud. “Highs in the Low Fifties” recounts her two marriages (the first was to a gay man who died of AIDS, and the second was a “debate-club-on-steroids” marriage that ended in divorce) and the litany of men Winik meets via online dating and through friends. There are even those who just happen to be working on her house.

It’s ultimately a book filled with love and laughs and many instances where you might find yourself thinking, “You did what?”

But Winik’s book isn’t a how-to book of dating secrets, and it doesn’t offer the tidy endings that you might find in fiction. Instead, it’s real and heartfelt and brave — much like Winik.

“We crave to know how other people are on the inside because part of what makes us all lonely is the sense that we don’t know if other people are like us and if they feel the same things, and fiction tells you that,” said Winik. “But memoir tells you that in a way that’s extremely intimate. What memoir has is an actual real communication between real people. Even though these readers might not meet me, we are having a true interaction. When you read a [fiction] novel you’re interacting with the fictional person, not the author.”

There are two opportunities to experience that real (and likely hilarious) communication with Winik. She reads at the 510 Series at Minas Gallery in Hampden on Oct. 19 at 5 p.m. and at the Rosenbloom Owings Mills JCC on Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. Her books will be available for purchase and signing at each event. Learn more at marionwinik.com.



Melissa Gerr is JT senior staff reporter and digital media editor — mgerr@jewishtimes.com

Related Posts via Categories

[Out Of The Shadows](#)

[Love Her Sew](#)

[Best Music Festival](#)

[The War That Changed American Jewry](#)

[Understanding And Intuition](#)

[Obstacle Illusion](#)

[Flowers For Powers](#)

[Be Happy](#)

[The Best Medicine](#)

[Not Only for Art's Sake](#)

UMUC Online Degree

www.umuc.edu

UMUC makes paying easier. Financial aid available for those who qualify



DIGITAL MAGAZINE

APP

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-LETTER

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

YOUTUBE

NEWS

OPINION

ARTS & LIFE

COMMUNITY

INSIDER

About Us

OUR STAFF

NEWSSTANDS

DIRECTIONS

CONTACT US

OUR PARTNERS

Advertise

RATES SHEETS

SALES STAFF

Marketplace

GUIDE TO JEWISH LIFE

JEWISH CAREERS

CONTESTS

CLASSIFIEDS

Other Publications

WashingtonJewishWeek

STYLE

