

# THE HUFFINGTON POST

Laura Goldman, 11/10/15

## Dr. Ruth's Advice: Put Down the iPhone and No One Night Stands



At 87 years old, sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer is still adding more chapters to her incredible life. For those who aren't aware, Karola Siegel, Dr. Ruth's birth name, was rescued from certain death at the hands of the Nazis by the Kindertransport. After learning her parents perished, possibly at Auschwitz concentration camp, the 4-foot-11-inch teenager joined the Haganah, the precursor to the Israeli Defense forces, as a scout and a sniper. She was seriously wounded during the Israeli Independence War. She married and later divorced, becoming a single mother before moving to America to pursue her dreams as Ruth Westheimer. In the 1980s, she became an American cultural icon for discussing sex openly and honestly on the radio at a time when sex was only discussed behind closed doors.

Dr. Ruth will be discussing this and more in her inimitable style when she visits the National

Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia on Nov. 16 to promote her new book, "The Doctor is In: Dr. Ruth on Love, Life, and Joie de Vivre." If the audience is lucky, she might dispense relationship advice such as what she counseled my readers. "Tell the readers of The Huffington Post I don't want them to engage in one night stands," she advised. "Forget texting on the iPhone. Having a good conversation is more interesting. I don't care if this makes me square or uncool."

Dr. Ruth confessed that she initially didn't like talking about sex. "I was trained as a nurse. One of my first jobs when I arrived in America was at Planned Parenthood. I came home from work after the first day and told my husband I don't like this job. All they do is talk about sex, condoms all day. After the second day, I loved it."

She later completed post-doctoral work with pioneering sex therapist Helen Singer Kaplan. We shared an x-rated chuckle because I dated Kaplan's son.

I finally got the chance to ask Dr. Ruth: How does she have the chutzpah to say the things she does in public? She used turtles, which she collects, as a metaphor for her life. "If the turtle stays in one place, it is safe since it carries its house on its back. But if that turtle moves, it takes a risk. It has to stick its neck out. That's like me. I did stick my neck talking about sex on radio or television when nobody else did."

Even Dr. Ruth has limits to her frankness. She refused to discuss her sex life after the death of her third husband in 1997. Her reply was a curt, "Next question." She claimed she did not discuss sex in the house when her husband was alive or now with her grandchildren. She explained, "I don't talk about sex with my grandchildren. That is the job of their parents," she said.

If you are thinking Dr. Ruth's life is dramatic enough to be a play or movie, you would be right. When we talked, she was very excited the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia will be presenting "Becoming Dr. Ruth" from November 19 to December 27 in their Independence Studio on 3. The play was written by Mark St. Germain, who previously wrote "Freud's Last Session," "Scott and Hem in the Garden of Allah" and "Best of Enemies". During her visit to Philadelphia, she plans to attend a performance of "Becoming Dr. Ruth" and see acclaimed local actress Jane Ridley (picture above) play her. The show previously had a successful off-Broadway run and has been produced nationwide.

