

5 Questions With: Peggy Drexler

We catch up with Peggy Drexler, author of the soon-to-be-released *Our Fathers, Ourselves*.

A Weill Medical College of Cornell University assistant professor of psychology in psychiatry, **Peggy Drexler** literally wrote the book on alternative families; her first book, *Raising Boys Without Men*, was a Books for a Better Life Award finalist. Now the wife of J.Crew's CEO and chairman of the board, Mickey Drexler, and mother of two is turning her insightful eye towards a different family dynamic in *Our Fathers, Ourselves: Daughters, Fathers and The Changing American Family*, available May 10 at bookstores citywide.

1. Why write this book?

PEGGY DREXLER: I grew up as a fatherless daughter—I lost my father at three-and-a-half—and I always, as a result, have been interested in fathers and families and how other women have dealt with issues related to father. I looked at this new generation of women who were basically 20 to 40 with outliers on either side, women who have made things work out well for themselves either through a job or family—successful women—wondering given their expectations are that the world is open to them, how do they feel about their dads?

2. Why release this book now?

PD: Because there is a change in the climate. Women expect to go to schools that were previously male; medical schools are equal in terms of men and women. I wanted to see what part the dad played in that given that he's a male, and given that people have always thought that men have been obstacles to women's advancement. Here now are women who want to be like their dad. What I found is no matter how successful these women are, no matter what kind of dad they had, they still wanted to maintain and nurture a connection and if they didn't have one, a lot of effort went into trying to salvage it or reconnect.

3. Where do you like to write?

PD: It's very interesting, I have an office and then I have a space at home where I write and I find sometimes that I feel more comfortable at home because I can stay in my bathrobe and my pajamas. I'm not one of these people who goes to Starbucks with a computer and pounds out things.

4. Name a few Manhattan fathers and daughters you find especially fascinating?

PD: Sumner Redstone and his daughter, Shari, [particularly regarding] how he cut her out of the whole thing. Chelsea and Bill. Paul McCartney and Stella McCartney. Alexandra Lebenthal and her dad. Dr. Mehmet Oz, he talks about his daughters all the time. Also Sofia Coppola, Kathryn Bigelow, Celine Cousteau, Patti Smith, Uma Thurman, Gwyneth Paltrow, Paul Newman's daughter Susan Newman, Anna Wintour, Sally Singer, Phoebe Philo, Sheryl Sandberg, Elizabeth Peyton, Kate and Laura Mulleavy and Tina Fey.

5. What NYC restaurants do you visit to celebrate finishing a book?

PD: I love Downtown, but sometimes as an Upper East Sider it's harder to get there, so we're kind of "in the neighborhood" people. We go to **St. Ambroeus**, we go to Sette Mezzo, we'll go to the **Four Seasons**—that's a real celebration.



DAUGHTERS, FATHERS,
AND THE CHANGING
AMERICAN FAMILY

Our Fathers, Ourselves

DR. PEGGY DREXLER

"A fascinating journey into the world of fathers and daughters—a place at once familiar and fraught with mystery. *Our Fathers, Ourselves* will give you a whole new understanding of the man you call 'Dad.'" —ARIANNA HUFFINGTON

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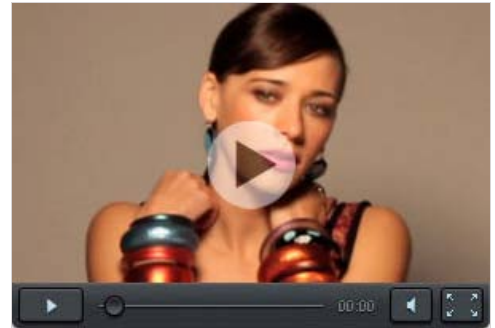
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