

## The Real Dr. Ruth

Pierre Lehu is a polite, low-key fellow -- not someone you'd expect to be giving advice about, say, the erotic use of onion rings.

But he does. The 48-year-old Bay Ridge resident is all-around "minister of communications" for the mother of pop sexology, Dr. Ruth Westheimer -- on whose latest book, *Dr. Ruth Talks About Grandparents* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), Lehu is listed as co-author. "It was her idea," he says. "I didn't twist her arm."

Their relationship began in 1981, when Lehu's p.r. firm took on Westheimer as a client. "She had a 15-minute, Sunday night radio show," Lehu recalls. "I said, 'Send her to me -- I can get p.r. for a sex therapist!'" (He'd already represented a surgeon who "redesigned women's genitalia.")

As Westheimer's career took off, Lehu's duties expanded to include working on her newspaper column -- finding "the best (letters) for her to answer," he explains. "Then I'd pull everything together as a column -- give titles to the letters, like that."

Lehu performed similar work on two of her books, *Dr. Ruth's Encyclopedia of Sex* and *Sex for Dummies*, but didn't get co-author credit until the current project, which he describes as "sort of a how-to manual for children, on how best to (relate to) grandparents."

Lehu, whose wife, attorney Joanne Seminara, ran unsuccessfully for City Council last year (they have two children), also continues to work on the column -- dealing with relationship issues and what he calls "plumbing questions."

"There are four basic problems," he says, sounding rather blasé. "Men with premature ejaculation; women who can't have orgasms; couples where the husband wants more than the wife; and where the wife wants more than the husband."

But occasionally he gets something more exotic, like the onion rings bit (during foreplay, the man's partner tosses the rings onto his, er, target). "That was a real story that Ruth got on the radio. She repeated it on *Letterman*, and it cracked everybody up. I think they even brought in

some onion rings from this little coffee shop at 30 Rock... Onion rings became the ‘theme’ of the show.”

– *Philip Berroll*

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