



Setting the romance tone

An unlikely duo has teamed up for a new book on love, writes **Elle Halliwell**

Let men chase you, never make the first move and ignore people who say "Life's too short to play games."

That's the advice relationship guru Zoë Foster and co-author Hamish Blake dish out in their straight-shooting dating guide, *Textbook Romance*.

It may seem an odd partnership, but Foster, a *Sunday Telegraph* columnist and beauty editor, and the 2DayFM funnyman Blake have been informing *Cosmopolitan* magazine readers on the ins and outs of modern dating since 2005.

The founder of beauty site *primped.com.au* has plenty of dating experience behind her, including a nine-year relationship with footballer Craig Wing and countless hours spent solving the man problems of friends, *Cosmo* readers and beauty therapists.

The book contains sound dating advice from Foster. Some not-so-sound (but hilarious) offerings from Blake, 27, are peppered

across the margins.

"As Confucius said: The free cheeseburger can never taste as juicy as the burger purchased through a hard day's labour," Blake writes, before adding: "(John Confucius, that is. I went to high school with him. Smart guy.)"

Blake is quick to play down his contribution to *Textbook Romance*.

"Zoë said, 'If I write a book on relationships, will you scribble in the margins?,' and I said, 'Can I do it in pen while I'm eating dim sims on a Sunday afternoon?' and she said, 'That's fine'," he says.

"She later picked up the manuscript I'd scribbled on, cleaned up the soy-sauce stains I'd spilled, and got it published."

Blake's long-time girlfriend, Anna Jennings-Edquist, felt relieved after reading his light-hearted insights.

"Once she'd read my bits of the book, she said, 'Thank God you're not actually giving too much ad-

vice to people, because I'm not sure you're in a position to do that,'" he says.

Textbook Romance has had a varied but generally positive response from its initial male readers. "It's a pro-man book; I don't believe in man-hating," Foster says.

Released this week, it advises readers on navigating the dating scene, starting a relationship and improving an existing one in a blunt but light-hearted way.

Foster has one golden rule for couples who have managed to make it to the long-term commitment stage, and she doesn't mince her words.

"Keep it romantic, not domestic," she says. "And don't ever go to the bathroom with the door open."

"You hear couples say, 'We broke up because we ended up just being friends.' And I'm like, 'You wonder why? You'd take a s*** while he was in the shower — what do you expect?'"

Textbook Romance, \$24.95, Penguin, out tomorrow



Complementary therapists: Co-authors Zoë Foster and Hamish Blake