

MY *day* **SAMANTHA VON SPERLING**

IMAGE CONSULTANT

She's "Queer Eye," "What Not to Wear," "Dr. Phil" and every HGTV makeover show all wrapped into one. Image consultant Samantha Von Sperling brings her fine pedigree to the successful but socially clueless.

How did you become an image consultant?
 I've been doing it my whole life. It started when I was five.

How's that?
 Admittedly, I had a very privileged childhood. I'm the daughter of a rather famous designer, Coco Raynes. She's an industrial graphic designer. Instead of an after-school program, I grew up in her design studio. I grew up listening to my mother explain why one shade of lime green was superior to another. I spent my whole childhood and adolescence having lunch with presidents and heads of industries. My early education was about what to say, what not to say, what to wear and how to behave. That was more important than if I could read or not. I used to come home with failed spelling tests and my mother would say, "Don't worry about it, darling. One day you'll have a secretary."

What is the first thing you notice about your new clients?
 I look at somebody and I know, intuitively, in 10 seconds, what the problem is. Poor manners and bad grooming are usually the most glaring offenses. My

clients across the board tend to be extremely educated people.

How is a rule of etiquette created?
 A rule of etiquette is created with an underlying mission of showing respect, hospitality and diplomacy.

What are the most overlooked rules of etiquette?
 Opening doors for women and poor table manners.

Chewing with your mouth open, not holding your knife and fork correctly.

What are the rules for text messaging?
 Text messaging is inappropriate to use when you're trying to avoid speaking to someone. It's also inappropriate when it requires more than a yes or no answer. When it's faster to discuss something on the phone, just call them.

What on earth is happening to Britney Spears right now?
 She's hurting on the inside. Her life is a mess right now. I think she's afraid for her children. Her life is in turmoil, she's afraid for her career. I think she's acting out because she never has come with the skill set or background or education to have the composure to deal with



ON TEXTING

Text messaging is inappropriate to use when you're trying to avoid speaking to someone. It's also inappropriate when it requires more than a yes or no answer. When it's faster to discuss something on the phone, just call them.

GET A CLUE

For more info, go to www.socialimage.net.

some of the things she has to deal with, which, to be fair, most of us don't have to deal with.

Do you think the picture of her naked on the cover of Harper's Bazaar improved her image at all?
 That cover was a cheap, tawdry imitation of the original of Demi Moore. Instead of looking like the glowing, pure-of-heart earth mother, she looks like a cheap showgirl. Gaudy necklace, lots of black makeup. However, to be fair, we need to evolve our thinking a little bit about family dynamics. Showgirls can be mommies, too.

HEIDI PATALANO