



# What Do Women Want?: Essays by Erica Jong

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Erica Jong's two rules of writing are "never cut funny" and "keep the pages turning." And Jong delivers in these twenty-six essays, coupling frank and risqu? stories about her own life with provocative pieces on her passion for politics, literature, Italy, and-yes-sex. Originally published in 1998, this updated edition features four new essays. *What Do Women Want?* offers a startlingly original look at where women are-and where they need to be in the twenty-first century: Are women better off today than they were twenty-five years ago? Has burning pre-nup agreements become the new peak of romance? Why do our greatest women writers too often get dissed and overlooked? Why do powerful women scare men? And who is the perfect man? How does the mother-daughter relationship influence cycles of feminism and backlash? Will Hillary become president? What is sexy?

## What Do Women Want?: Essays by Erica Jong Details

Date : Published May 10th 2007 by Tarcherperigee (first published 1998)

ISBN : 9781585425549

Author : Erica Jong

Format : Paperback 309 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Feminism, Writing, Essays



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## Chinook says

First, "What do Women Want?" by Erica Jong. Jenni borrowed this from me ages ago and said it wasn't much good. She'd be right. I thought it was going to be quite feminist, but rather wasn't. The title page maybe should have had me guessing that-four pics, bread, roses, sex, power. Now, I suspect I'm in a minority of people who even get the bread and roses references, cause none of the people I pointed it out to had heard of it. You can learn more on Wikipedia. Then, the sex is illustrated by a condom. Something that men use. Hmmmm. And power by a high-heeled shoe. Uh huh.

So, I wasn't loving it. The best bit for me was the end where she writes about trips to Italy, cause I love Italy and want to retire there to a villa and drink too much red wine. There were some chapters about literature and porn and she wrote a lot about Lolita, which I really should get around to reading.

"Every life decision I have made - from changing jobs to changing partners to changing homes - has been taken with trepidation. I have not ceased being fearful, but I have ceased to let fear control me. I have accepted fear as a part of life, specifically the fear of change, of the unknown."

This is my life! I changed all three back in April and it was certainly very scary. It has totally paid off, though. I have a tendency to think that if something scares me, it is probably the thing I should go and do. Generally this line of thinking has paid off, with that one big, messy notable exception. But then, life is messy. If it isn't, you probably aren't living it.

"We love people, ultimately, for their humanity; not because of their perfection but in spite of their imperfections."

Something to remember when dealing with the ex. His imperfections were once why I loved him, not the annoyances I find them today. Breathe. Forgive. Understand.

"I forget how she died. I'm sure I deliberately blank out her story because I loathe stories about young women who die at tender ages. I would rather see monuments to women who survived their first loves and went on to have several more."

I like this idea very, very much.

"What I require of a book is that it kidnap me into its world. Its world must make the so-called real world seem flimsy. Its world must trigger the nostalgia to return. When I close the book, I should feel bereft.

How rare this is, and how grateful I am to find it. The utter trust that exists between reader and author is like the trust between lovers. If I feel betrayed by the author, I will never surrender again. I must believe in the author's honesty in order to be swept away."

I love it!

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## Hella says

Quanto amo questa donna! Quanto ho amato questo libro!

Mi sono concessa un paio di giorni di assoluto far niente, anche "grazie" a un raffreddore che mi ha tenuta in casa per un paio di giorni.

Questa raccolta di saggi della signora Jong mi ha tenuto compagnia per quei giorni, e non avrei potuto scegliere miglior lettura che mi tirasse su. Un viaggio nella letteratura tra Nabokov, Gore Vidal e Henry Miller, l'Italia tanto amata da lei, la sua casa nel Connecticut, donne magnifiche come Lady Diana e Anais Nin. Insomma il mondo di Erica Jong raccontato a noi dal suo personale punto di vista, una vita interessante e affascinante, una mente brillante e una grande ironia. La conoscevo già con Paura di volare, il suo celeberrimo romanzo, ma in questo "Cosa vogliono le donne" ho sentito la donna Erica, non la sua controparte romanzesca.

Libro fantastico, sarà uno di quelli che sfoglierò e riprenderò in mano almeno una volta all'anno, per ritrovare quella forza e quell'energia della vita.

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## Alex says

She's the sassiest of my favorite sassy girl writers. I'm reading the old edition from the library (subtitled power, sex, bread and roses), but it's fairly timeless. She talks about love and motherhood, politics, porn, feminism, and literature.

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## Jennifer says

I enjoyed this book. I need to read more Erica Jong.

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## Tess says

Just not for me. It was recommended to me; the title and cover already made me hesitant. I found the essays to be fairly boring and not holding any refreshing or new ideas. Oh well.

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## Roy says

Erica Jong 'at home' with her thoughts, perspectives, running commentary, character studies. A witty, commonsensical collection worth the time. Jong has substance, she just hides it well and entertainingly.

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## Gina says

I like Erica Jong, and I liked these essays. But I think the title was misleading. They were not all about women, so I think "Essays by Erica Jong" would have been a much more appropriate title.

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### **Badger says**

A lot of people seem to be hung up on the title. What this book is is a collection of essays by Erica Jong with a catchy title. The essays therein don't necessarily answer the question on the cover. For those looking for an answer to that question, you will probably be disappointed.

The essays are loosely grouped into 3 categories: Power, Sex, and Bread & Roses. You'll probably like some and others not so much like I did. If you like Ms Jong's writing, you should give it a spin.

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### **Furiosa Ning says**

Just ignore the cheesy title. I like how many modern important female figures and female literature she touched in this book from a fairly relatable angle to the general readers. Camilla Paglia talked a lot of the same female figures in her sexual persona, vamps and tramps and sexual culture. Camilla "s perspective is innovative and mind blowing while Jong "s is more like listening to a girl next to door.

The verse and writing style is not colourful but the ideas are grounded in. After read hers You will say yes I totally agree with you and I think the same way! Jong "s writing run parallel in resonance. It is a book for general readers and some academia who are not snobbish and are willing to sit down and listen to another woman to talk.

I think as a woman, you will find reconfirmation of your thoughts in this book and also find strength and encouragement while facing the world as a female.

Erica Jong is not afraid to talk about the truth and not afraid of sharing our most universal fear and worrisome.

Although I don't like her opening about emphasizing herself being a writer, maybe she can be a bit humble ??

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### **Juanita says**

I found this book very interesting, with a lot of ideas for further contemplation. It also gives an interesting look into the psyche of writers of both sexes.

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