



Guide to Getting It On!

Paul Joannides , Daerick Gröss (Illustrator)

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This guide replaces taboos with techniques and provides safe, practical advice for improving your sexual relationships. It all comes down to communication and this is one book that has no problem with telling it how it is.

Guide to Getting It On! Details

Date : Published August 1st 2006 by Goofy Foot Press (first published 1996)

ISBN : 9781885535696

Author : Paul Joannides , Daerick Gröss (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 854 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Sexuality, Reference, Self Help, Psychology, Relationships, Health, Science, How To, Gender and Sexuality

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From Reader Review Guide to Getting It On! for online ebook

Riley says

So I went into reading this book a bit more critical than most, which may have affected the way in which I reviewed it.

I think this is a a great and thorough guide to both sexual health and sexual pleasure. Definitely more comprehensive than a lot of the stuff out there. I was a little turned off by the fact that no sex professional was involved in the writing of the book but found a view things problematic. For example, I found that it seemed to frown upon casual sex or no strings attached sex. It seemed to emphasize sex with emotions ("Sex can be as emotionally powerful as you want to make it. But good luck if you are trying to have sex without it becoming emotional"). This was then followed by a chapter on romance. I found it to be a bit to preachy, whether it meant to or not. Even though I did appreciate the chapter on "Hooking Up Sex" later in the book I feel like the beginning set a tone I was rather uncomfortable with.

I really liked that it featured a chapter on things that people often forget others don't automatically know how to do, like kissing and hiding hickeys. Super useful!

Unfortunately it can be incredibly heteronormative but it makes up for it with chapters like "Sex in the Military" & sex for differently abled people.

Despite its large size I would definitely recommend it!

Jenny says

This book is not just a how-to manual on "getting it on." It's a witty, informative, COMFORTABLE book on all the why's, how's, do-not's, and responsibilities of being an sexual bean. I credit this book and this book only with the massive accomplishment of getting me to stop being afraid of sex. It even includes chapters you don't want to read, but you prolly should know anyway. Dangers of it all. And above all, it prefaces the whole thing with a warning that if you are not ready to have a baby and make those life choices, you prolly shouldn't be having sex in the first place. Smart warning.

Alicia says

I'm not ashamed, I read this book, and it's great. My friend Meredith gave it to me as a present on my 21st birthday.

Andrea Calò says

Imperdibile, dovrebbero renderlo lettura obbligatoria nelle scuole. Non dico altro.

Nick says

Such a fun light read about one of the greatest thing to spent our time, sex! Quite an extensive one, at more than 1150 pages. Almost every subject can be found in this book, from vanilla to the very kinky. A lot of modern subjects (internet pornography for example) have a place in this vast tome, and rightly so. You can read it in its entirety, but it's possible to go to the specific subjects that interest you. Or skip the parts which are not relevant to your personal sex life. Personally I loved the (for me) not so relevant chapters as well, as it gives a look into the world of sex, and all of the diverse ranges of experiences within it.

Would I let my (hypothetical) children read this book? Definitely. It talks about sex in a very openminded manner. Very informative, though with lightness and humour. There are few taboos in this book, and I'm sure this read can help teens with developing a healthy view on sex and sexuality. It can be a start to a conversation about the important subject.

We should talk more about sex on this planet. not only between children and parents, or biology teachers and students, but as a normal and interesting subject between adults as well. Quintessential to life, we would not exist without sex, often it's still a theme in people's lives accompanied with strong feelings of shame and guilt. I hope we can overcome this as society, and I think this book can be a fun element to use in this quest.

Megan says

Sweet, cute, funny, humorous. Definitely recommended for anyone interested in having sex, even if you've been doing it for years. This book is amazing. It covers about everything you can imagine, and when it doesn't cover something thoroughly, it tells you, and gives you recommendations for other books to read on the subject.

Evan says

A sex guide as big as a telephone book; a page turner, yet somehow oddly disappointing in many respects.

My greatest frustrations with this book--achievement though this tome may be (and it *is* quite a feat)--are that it repeats a number of facts and motifs over and over, and seems to do so because there is no apparent logical order to the overall presentation. It gets to be quite fatiguing after a few hundred pages.

The book is meant to be digested in small compartmentalized bits. The voice is bemused and humorous, but quite often I found author Joannides' urges to make jokes about the topics under discussion strained and possibly undermined the facts he was writing about. The book tries to find a balance between facts, conjecture, philosophy and humor to keep itself from becoming academically boring (though many sources are aptly cited), but sometimes I think the conjectures and the quips go too far. The definition of trophy wife in the book's "Goofy Glossary", for instance, is mainly editorialized satire that seems to cynically dismiss a man's second marriage outright without making any concession to genuine feelings and motives, and is sexist to boot. Most intelligent readers should be able to discern between Joannides' flip opinions and actual facts, but sometimes the line is blurred to the point of annoyance.

Is it necessary to have an entire two pages devoted to showing a first-timer how to insert a tampon, and then have a section that jokes about Viagra and dismisses its users rather than talking more about the facts of what Viagra does? Is it necessary on page 566 to give the exact same advice about using condoms as was already detailed earlier in the book? Why does the book insist throughout that the best thing to do when contemplating or having sex is to talk to your partner about what each of you wants, but then have an entire chapter way back on page 429 about "Talking to Your Partner About Sex"? Shouldn't this chapter be on page 1? In the chapter on anal play on page 290, why does Joannides mention gerbiling as one kind of kink without then elaborating on it or condemning it, since, as he notes elsewhere, there *are* sexual rights and wrongs? In one section he rather courageously and gingerly raises the question of interfamilial desire, but then seems at sea in explaining it. Why include letters from average people asking about sex topics that in many cases have already been addressed in the book?

Overall, I found this pop guide to be like taking a balloon ride over the landscape of sex with an eccentric balloonist tour guide, getting caught in crosswinds and drifting again over previously flown-over territory. I did learn some things, including a few practices I was not aware of, and would recommend it to people who think they know it all (and who usually botch their lovemaking as a result).

There are some gems throughout. It was interesting to learn about an exercise in which women are observed taking the man's on-top thrusting role and being barely able to handle it for 3 minutes, resulting in many exclamations of "How do men do it?"

There is also this, from page 247, which I like:

"A mediocre lover always knows what a partner wants without having to ask. An accomplished lover is a wise grasshopper who implores a partner to give him copious amounts of advice."

Most people will find this book fun and helpful, but I think it could have remained fun and informative in a version that cut out the approximately 40 percent of the material that seemed repetitive to me.

Mousuke says

What I liked:

-The honest, approachable, humorous, and unflinching writing. This book is never intimidating or threatening. It passes no judgments on peoples' preferences. (A good example of this is the letter a reader wrote about including breastfeeding into sexual activity. My initial reaction was, "Eww, why would you ever want to do that?" But as I read the author's response, I was awed and impressed by his lack of judgment. He offered information on the mechanics of the activity, on why some couples find it enjoyable, and resources for learning more. By the time I finished the letter, my reaction had transformed from "Eww" to "I'm glad there are people out there who enjoy this.") The book did not reinforce tabboos or cast judgments on what couples (or threesomes, or foursomes...) do sexually.

-The sex-positive attitude. Sex is natural and sex is great! I loved the enthusiasm.

-The inclusion of all orientations as natural and valid. I was psyched to learn that this book wasn't aimed just at heterosexual couples. That said, I do think the book used a heterosexual couple as the "standard" pairing in most chapters, and I would have liked to see more gender neutral wording.

-The testimonials from survey respondents. Specifically, I appreciated the variety of responses that reaffirmed the meaning of "different strokes for different folks." However, there were a few times when these responses seemed cherry picked in order to meet a specific conclusion. More on that later.

-The silly drawings and diagrams. I did not particularly find these useful, but they did break up the text a bit and add even more levity.

-I particularly liked the chapter "Talking to your kids about sex." I liked the head-on approach to discussing anatomy, masturbation, and sexual feelings, and I loved the emphasis on creating an open line of communication. I would advise any parent to read this chapter.

What I did not like:

-The chapter about abortion was abysmally short and gave very little information about what the different procedures are, how much they cost, and where to obtain them. It did not give advice on how to support a partner or friend who chooses to have an abortion. This chapter did not even include testimonials from survey contributors like most other chapters did. It annoyed me that this subject was glossed over so tritely.

-There was no mention of pansexuality in this book, not even in the glossary at the end. For a book that did a pretty good job validating people of all orientations, sexes, and genders, it ignored pansexual individuals and only mentioned bisexuality. (To those who are confused, "bisexual" generally refers to individuals who are attracted to males and females, whereas "pansexual" rejects the gender binary and refers to individuals who are attracted to all sexes and genders.) I was extremely disappointed by this.

-At times, the survey testimonials seemed to be cherry picked for a specific response. I especially noticed this in the chapter about penis size. The featured responses became an echo chamber of "size doesn't matter at all!", perhaps to appease guys who express concern in this arena. Personally, I think size matters...sometimes a lot. I would have liked to see at least one testimonial that preferred sex with a larger penis. The one-minded chorus seemed phony to me.

Overall:

I recommend this book and think it would be a valuable resource to older teens/young adults. I also think parents could use this book as an educational tool for their kids if talking about sex makes them squeamish.

M— says

Because everyone should have a sex guide book that quotes *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

This is an excellent, general guide to sex and is designed as an all-in-one introduction. It covers such topics as: basic biology, oral sex, hand sex, anal sex, masturbation, sex toys, sexual safety, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual orientation, and pregnancy. Roughly equal weight and attention has been given to both the female and male perspectives on all topics. All topics are discussed clearly, calmly, and in an engaging manner.

The publisher of this book also maintains a website (www.goofyfootpress.com) with sample chapters and chapter excerpts, the author's weekly advice column, recommendations for further reading, and purchasing information for this and other similar publications.

This review is of the third edition (published in 2000).

Jess says

After I started reading this book, I had a difficult time putting it down! It has some really great information that I've yet to find in other books about sexuality. However, most of the information was about heterosexual relationships. The author spent some time discussing other sexual orientations and was certainly gay-friendly, but again it is geared towards heterosexual sexuality.

The book also had some really great chapters that looked at sex and sexuality from a historical perspective and was written in a way that anyone could understand it.

Although the book was great overall, the author often had some really corny jokes that were either really bad or pretty funny depending on what the reader's sense of humor is like.

I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn more about sex.

Jeanne says

Orientally posted on The Perv Pack's Smut Shack.

I've actually had a copy of The Guide to Getting It On for close to seven years now. It has served as a great resource, reference and just a straight up entertaining read. Unlike a lot of other books about sex this book has a frank, but humorous tone to it. I mean with chapters titles like Nipples, Nipples, Nipples and The Zen of Finger Fucking, you know this book isn't your standard, stale guide to human sexuality.

Right off the bat with the Alpha Chapter Joannides sets the tone by introducing us to the idea of the Goofy Foot Philosophy "that it doesn't matter what you've got in your pants if there's nothing in your brain to connect it to." This tone carries through the entire book. Giving a practical guide to just about every aspect of sex you can think of, from anal sex to family planning and even how to explain sex to kids.

It also features excerpts from Joannides' weekly column The Naked Truth. One of my favorite one is a letter from a frustrated guy name Randy who had wined and dined a young women, but didn't get laid. The response to his plea for help began with "You might be confusing romance with prostitution." I laughed so hard I almost dropped the book.

The book also covers sexual anatomy, delving head long into What's Inside a Girl? Common myths about women's sexuality are dispelled and detailed diagrams and explanations of female genitals is laid out alongside beautiful illustrations by the talented Dærick Gröss. Fans of the penis do not despair. The dick gets a spotlight too.

One of my favorite part is the awesomely titled *The Zen of Finger Fucking*, where an entire chapter is dedicated to digital stimulation. Numerous sources, including interviews from actual women are used to give an informed explanation of “finger fucking” as well as giving tips on how best to bring a woman unbelievable pleasure by using your fingers.

A similar detailed approach is taken with handjobs, oral sex and of course intercourse, or Horizontal Jogging as it is called in the book. There are even chapters on how to masturbate, pick a sex toy, homosexuality, bisexuality and even kink. It even addresses Sex When You’re Horny and Disabled.

The Guide to Getting It On is a great resource for anyone curious about sex. Whether you’re a virgin or an old hat at sex it has something interesting, insightful and down right funny to entertain you.

Perv Pack says

I’ve actually had a copy of *The Guide to Getting It On* for close to seven years now. It has served as a great resource, reference and just a straight up entertaining read. Unlike a lot of other books about sex this book has a frank, but humorous tone to it. I mean with chapters titles like *Nipples, Nipples, Nipples* and *The Zen of Finger Fucking*, you know this book isn’t your standard, stale guide to human sexuality.

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Reviewer: Jeanne

Josh says

Snickers all you want - this is the best book on sex we sell in our bookstore.

Here's my blurbish review of the book from Brews and Books a while back.

The Guide to Getting it On is the only “instructional” title on this list, because it is really the best one I’ve seen. Equally fitting on the shelf of a couple or as the text in a sex education class, the nearly-1,000 page book talks about sex frankly and with a sense of humor. Published in over a dozen languages, 6 editions, and a winner of multiple awards, Joannides’ book deserves all the praise it has received. Although the tone is hip, light and informal, the Guide to Getting it On is meticulously researched and covers every sexual topic under the sun, from the benign to the kinky. The book deserves a place on the shelf of anyone who has had sex, is currently sexually active, or thinks they will be in their lifetime.

Eileen says

Essential, I think.

Manny says

A sort of cross between *The Kama Sutra* and *Modern Chess Openings*, this book is a portable, one-volume guide that explains clearly and helpfully how to have any kind of sex you can think of with any partner you can think of: male, female, neuter, yourself, or combinations of the above. If you like doing it and it's not listed here, you're either a remarkably imaginative person or in urgent need of psychiatric help. I'll leave it to you to decide which.
