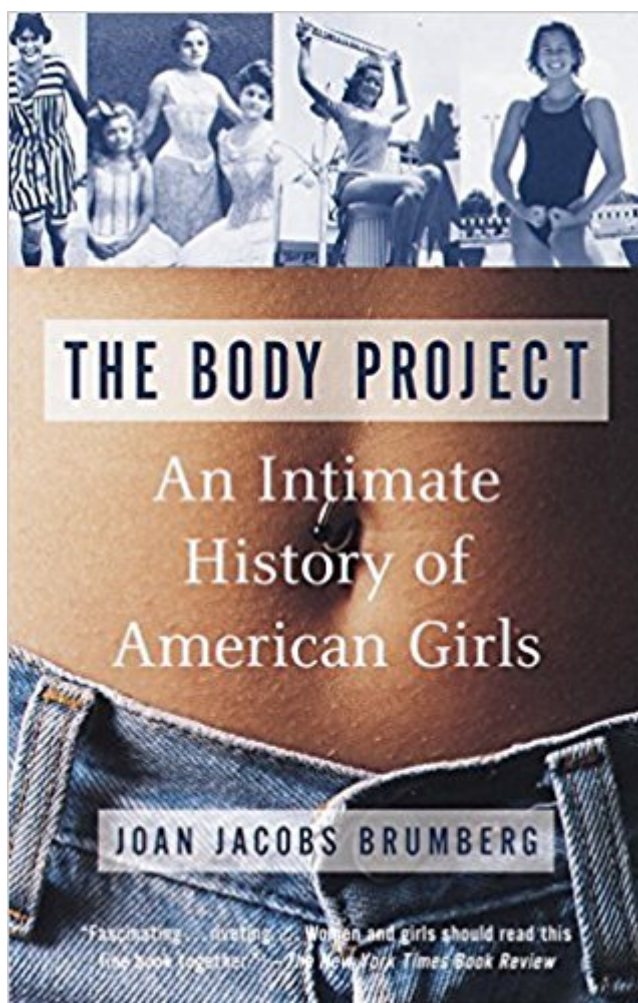


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# The Body Project: An Intimate History Of American Girls



## Synopsis

A hundred years ago, women were lacing themselves into corsets and teaching their daughters to do the same. The ideal of the day, however, was inner beauty: a focus on good deeds and a pure heart. Today American women have more social choices and personal freedom than ever before. But fifty-three percent of our girls are dissatisfied with their bodies by the age of thirteen, and many begin a pattern of weight obsession and dieting as early as eight or nine. Why? In *The Body Project*, historian Joan Jacobs Brumberg answers this question, drawing on diary excerpts and media images from 1830 to the present. Tracing girls' attitudes toward topics ranging from breast size and menstruation to hair, clothing, and cosmetics, she exposes the shift from the Victorian concern with character to our modern focus on outward appearance—in particular, the desire to be model-thin and sexy. Compassionate, insightful, and gracefully written, *The Body Project* explores the gains and losses adolescent girls have inherited since they shed the corset and the ideal of virginity for a new world of sexual freedom and consumerism—a world in which the body is their primary project.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Adolescent girls today face the issues girls have always faced: "Who am I?" and "Who do I want to be?" Unfortunately their answers, now more than ever before, revolve around the body rather than the mind, heart, or soul. "The body is at the heart of the crisis that [Carol] Gilligan, [Mary] Pipher, and others describe.... The fact that American girls now make the body their central project is not an accident or a curiosity," writes Brumberg, "it is a symptom of historical changes that are only now beginning to be understood." The historical photos, thorough research, and political

even-handedness make this a book of worth and sincerity. The Body Project is also comforting for women, adolescents, parents, lesbians, and male lovers of women--helping us sort out the roots of female insecurities, obsessions, and angst. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

YA?From the most private method of sanitary protection to the most intimate place to pierce one's body, this history of feminine hygiene and fashion records young women's obsession with looks and how society has channeled and manipulated them to reflect the values of the times. From diaries, journal articles, advertising, and doctor's records, the author has amassed information about mainly middle-class American girls of the 19th and 20th century that shows how they have been raised first by overprotective, repressive adults to play a submissive role in society and, more recently, to be consumers in an ever-widening marketplace. From skin cream to dieting to figure-altering garments and body piercing, physical enhancements in the last 200 years are reported. Beginning with an account of Abigail Adams's concern about the early maturation of her 11-year-old granddaughter in 1806 and progressing to descriptions of today's independent young women grappling with numerous options of dress and sexual conduct, a thought-provoking social history is revealed. The author begins and ends her treatise with a passionate argument for advocacy for today's girls who are preyed upon by the media and allowed dangerous sexual options without emotional maturity and are lacking the protective umbrella of moral guidelines and supervision provided by earlier generations. Young women will enjoy the numerous photos and will have a giggle about the corsets and belts of earlier times. A fine choice for mother-daughter book groups. ?Jackie Gropman, Kings Park Library, Burke, VACopyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Fails to address the real and immediate threats to girls and young women and instead focuses on the nonsense of body image that would indeed be a luxury to most who in real danger, that is in danger of violence, rape, incest, exclusion, isolation and in the tradition of obedience to authority, pregnancy which is the ultimate alienation to one's growing body. The best thing a girl can have - the experience of physical joy of her own body via sports, dance, athleticism and the knowledge and assurance that her body belongs to her, and her alone. The very things that many girls are denied from the onset of life. In other words, I hated this book for its failure to recognize the core issues - instead, it's another silly analysis of our failure to hold sacred the intimacy of knowing and experiencing OneSelf as whole In and of Ourselves.

Great little book. I teach women's history at a small community college. This is one of my textbooks. My students love it. They relate to many of the issues that women in the past and present had to deal with regarding their ideas about the female body. It's a quick easy read that examines the most personal details of womanhood. Topics include changing concepts of body image, physical beauty standards, menstruation, sexuality, and many other topics. Great book for moms and teenage daughters to share. Filled with anecdotal stories that help bring the history to life.

Great quality of book. Very historical with small personal stories here and there. I would've liked more personal stories, though- the history part got a bit boring at times.

Interesting read for a research project i'm doing. Arrived in great condition.

Easy read, very interesting and entertaining. I would recommend to anyone, it was fun talking to my daughter about what I read.

This book compares girls from the Victorian period through today on issues of menstruation, dating/sex, and puberty. Adolescence is a hard time now, and was a hard time then. This book includes tons of information about how things were and were viewed in the past (for example, pimples were viewed as a sign of impurity or pre-marital sexual relations). This book is a quick, easy, and fun read. I've recommended it to my Psychology of Women students.

Very interesting history of how girls used to be raised compared to more recent times. However it seemed written from a more slightly liberal/feminist view that I expected.

This book also was delivered in a short amount of time. Faster than I had expected. Good condition, just like new.

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