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The Story Of Sex: From Apes To Robots



Synopsis

The French Best-seller 'The book France won't stop talking about...undoubtedly a lovely Christmas gift for anyone with a keen interest in when and how the first vibrator was invented' - Telegraph 'OOH la la...We've come a long way from wrapping Lady Chatterley's Lover in brown paper' - London Evening Standard 'Warm, humane, inclusive, open-minded' - The Times 'A witty account that embraces everything from the earliest humans to the age of cybersex' - Guardian 'Funny, erudite, and devilishly sexy, The Story of Sex is a treat for the whole family (except, perhaps, younger children and muffled prudes)' - The Culture Trip A history of sex, sexuality and human intimacy through the ages, from our primate pasts to our robotic futures Sex is everywhere, yet how many of us truly understand it? Our attitudes to sex and sexuality are forever in flux. Driven by pleasure, power, revenge, a desire for children or simply because it isn't allowed, humans have had sex on the brain since pre-civilisation. But what do we really know? In The Story of Sex, we discover the truth, including: what eroticism really is, when the first couple was established, what phallic festivals were all about, when chastity belts were used and how some ancient civilisations were far ahead of their time when it came to gender equality. We learn how, through the centuries, religion, superstition and morality laws have shaped our view of what is and isn't palatable - with many cultures having come a long way from prohibiting masturbation (by way of a microscope) or considering homosexuality a 'perversion', while others continue to condemn promiscuous behaviour, particularly of women - and how technology and disease have redefined the limits of pleasure and reproduction. The first graphic novel of its kind, The Story of Sex brilliantly and humorously uncovers the most fascinating details of our sexual ancestry, and foretells a future of virtual gratification. Philippe Brenot is a psychiatrist and the Director of Sexology at Paris Descartes University. Laetitia Coryn is a graphic artist and illustrator.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book France won't stop talking about...undoubtedly a lovely Christmas gift for anyone with a keen interest in when and how the first vibrator was invented * Telegraph * OOH la la...We've come a long way from wrapping Lady Chatterley's Lover in brown paper * London Evening Standard * A witty account that embraces everything from the earliest humans to the age of cybersex * Guardian * Funny, erudite, and devilishly sexy, The Story of Sex is a treat for the whole family (except, perhaps, younger children and muffled prudes) * The Culture Trip * Warm, humane, inclusive, open-minded * The Times *

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The book has the right pedigree to intrigue me and give me that final nudge to part with my book dollars. Philippe Brenot, French psychiatrist, anthropologist, and Director of Sexology at Paris Descartes University penned the words (translated into English by Will McMorran); Laetitia Coryn, an artist with at least one graphic book to her name, did the illustrations. Yes, this story of sex is a book done in comic strips by professionals who excel at what they do. And, the book, only available in print, is actually rather cheap as far as hardcover books go, particularly a fully illustrated one. Though touted as a graphic novel, strictly speaking, the book is not a novel. Although it has mythical stories from antiquity, Dr. Brenot keeps as closely to facts as he possibly can. But he can only do so much since there are inevitable limits to what we can know before people began making records of events. We can only speculate about what sex was like in the prehistoric period, for instance. Or, like the book, turn to Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman mythologies. Story of Sex is many things. Pornography is not one of them, although someone prudish who looks at the cover might think so. History, art, science, mythology, humor, religion — you'll find all those in the book. It's erotic, yes. How can it not be? But it's also chock-full of information; or, when that's not possible, theorizing based on knowledge. Having a graduate degree in psychology, I thought I knew a lot

about sex. It's a topic dealt with in several courses I took. I also worked in mental health programs where many problems you see relate to sex (repression, incest, obsessions, sex offenses). But this book's sweeping, eclectic perspective taught me much more or, at least, gave me a better understanding of the origins of sex; and how practices, beliefs, and attitudes about sex developed across the ages, starting with man's simian ancestors, all the way to the author's chilling but funny visions for the future. Many unexpected bits of information pepper the book. For instance, you might think apes don't have our intelligence and morals so they mate with any other available and ready apes, including their sisters and daughters. That, at their level, only hormones matter (Hormones determine when a female animal is in heat and ready for penetration). In fact, apes don't commit incest, a big problem in the US, often taking the form of child sexual abuse. Some information in the book made me understand some things better, such as the repressive effects of religion on sexual mores and practices. It seems we can blame Saint Augustine for many of our hang-ups. Depending on where you are on the subject of sex, you'll find this book more or less enlightening. Either way, I think it's rather entertaining. Presenting the topic in a comic book form is a truly inspired move. As far as I can tell googling the topic, this is the only comprehensive book on the history of sex; and it most certainly is the only one that presents that story as a graphic novel. It's that rare combination of both serious and fun, all wrapped up in tongue-in-cheek dialogue and graphic art. And since it's all about that eternally fascinating subject, it does occasionally titillate.

I absolutely love this book! I'm treating this in my (child-free) house as a coffee table book, although I read it in about two sittings. I'm somewhat of a history nerd, and this book gave me info I never knew in a light-hearted way without being too sordid. Highly recommend.

Hilarious illustrations and a playful approach to 'explaining sex'. Nothing revolutionary. I will say The Cartoon Guide to Sex has a more...educational approach but this work does poke fun at social mores that muddle up just what sex is.

A witty, insightful look at how the morality, philosophy, and technology of human sexuality has evolved over time. But don't be fooled by the cartoon format - this book is NOT for kids (unless you've had "the talk" with them).

Not quite as interesting/ exciting as I'd expected from reviews but better than just OK. Historically focused on France, as expected.

You find yourself spinning through it and then give up.

Very interesting and entertaining.

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