

Perv: The Sexual Deviant in All of Us

By Jesse Bering

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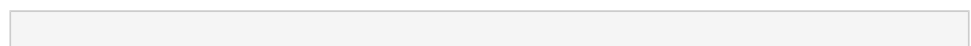
"As a sex writer, Jesse Bering is fearless?and peerless." ?Dan Savage

"You are a sexual deviant. A pervert, through and through." We may not want to admit it, but as the award-winning columnist and psychologist Jesse Bering reveals in *Perv*, there is a spectrum of perversion along which we all sit. Whether it's voyeurism, exhibitionism, or your run-of-the-mill foot fetish, we *all* possess a suite of sexual tastes as unique as our fingerprints?and as secret as the rest of the skeletons we've hidden in our closets.

Combining cutting-edge studies and critiques of landmark research and conclusions drawn by Sigmund Freud, Alfred Kinsey, and the *DSM-5*, Bering pulls the curtain back on paraphilias, arguing that sexual deviance is commonplace. He explores the countless fetishists of the world, including people who wear a respectable suit during the day and handcuff a willing sexual partner at night. But he also takes us into the lives of "erotic outliers," such as a woman who falls madly in love with the Eiffel Tower; a pair of *deeply* affectionate identical twins; those with a particular penchant for statues; and others who are enamored of crevices *not* found on the human body.

Moving from science to politics, psychology, history, and his own reflections on growing up gay in America, Bering confronts hypocrisy, prejudice, and harm as they relate to sexuality on a global scale. Humanizing so-called deviants while at the same time asking serious questions about the differences between thought and action, he presents us with a challenge: to understand that our best hope of solving some of the most troubling problems of our age hinges entirely on the *amoral* study of sex.

As kinky as it is compassionate, illuminating, and engrossing, *Perv* is an irresistible and deeply personal book. "I can't promise you an orgasm at the end of our adventure," Bering writes, "but I *can* promise you a better understanding of why you get the ones you do."



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Perv: The Sexual Deviant in All of Us By Jesse Bering Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In a book as informative as it is entertaining, Bering (*Why Is the Penis Shaped Like That?*) argues for the efficacy of science and logic over irrational morals when addressing sexual deviancy. Citing numerous studies and historical sources, Bering makes the claim that, deep down, we are all sexual deviants in one form or another—and that sexual deviancy is, in fact, not deviant at all. From the beginning of human history, people have engaged in antiheteronormative behaviors, from bestiality to pedophilia. Furthermore, Bering shows how most sexual deviancy isn't a choice, but rather is the result of a genetic predisposition over which the individual has no control. Laws and medical diagnoses controlling sexual activity should investigate whether the activities in question cause harm (though harm itself is subjective, and is therefore also a problematic way to assess behavior), rather than whether society is merely grossed out by them. This is clearly a personal topic for Bering, who is gay and, in fact, discusses his experiences of self-loathing and discrimination. Despite the occasional preachy paragraph, Bering's latest is a delightful, intelligent, and thought-provoking addition to the growing body of our sexual knowledge of self. Agent: Peter Tallack, the Science Factory. (Oct.)

Review

“As informative as it is entertaining . . . Bering's latest is a delightful, intelligent, and thought-provoking addition to the growing body of our sexual knowledge of self.” *?Publishers Weekly (starred review)*

“Bering's a supple, witty writer, and praiseworthy terms like wry and irreverent suggest themselves readily. The book is a humane flirtation with the often-strange intimacies that drive people's lives.” *?Michael Washburn, The Boston Globe*

“A master craftsman at refashioning reproductive biology into provocative composition, Bering nimbly probes ‘the darkest corners of our sexual nature’ with no illicit aftertaste.” *?Kirkus Reviews*

“Against a colorful backdrop of science, history, and psychology, Bering calls on human society to stop judging people's sexual preferences based on a personal belief about what's normal or natural, instead asking what is harmful. [He] throws a bucket of ice-cold water on topics that often become overheated by the fires of morality, religion, and politics.” *?The Scientist*

“[A] lively exploration of sexual perversion . . . Bering has a very entertaining writing style, but don't let that distract you from the serious stuff he's talking about: this isn't just a list of so-called perversions but, instead, an exploration of the way the human mind and body work and the way we are all just a little bit unusual.” *?Booklist*

“As a sex writer, Jesse Bering is fearless--and peerless.” *?Dan Savage*

“Like a slightly kinky friend, *Perv* is sometimes weird, often revelatory, and always enthralling. You'd expect a book about sexual perversions to be at least interesting, but in Jesse Bering's hands it's also smart, humorous, and eminently humane.” *?Florence Williams, author of Breasts: A Natural and Unnatural History*

“*Perv* is a deeply fascinating and surprisingly insightful peek into the weird world of human sexuality. With his shocking examples and unique evolutionary approach, Jesse Bering provides perhaps the best testament out there to Mark Twain's immortal quip that man is the only animal that blushes--or needs to.” *?Laurie*

Santos, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Comparative Cognition Laboratory, Yale University

“Come to gawk, stay to learn. Jesse Bering has written a fascinating, funny, and scientifically literate book about all the aspects of sex you didn't want to think about. *Perv* will change the way you see yourself and everyone around you.” ?Art Markman, Ph.D., author of *Smart Thinking* and *Habits of Leadership*

“If truth be told--and Jesse Bering urges us to be honest--we're all perverts. And if you're not, then most around you are. Bering pulls no punches in this engrossing romp through the history, cultural relativism, politics, and science of sexuality. He brings shadowy taboos out to the front stage for a juicy, humorous, and nonjudgmental outing. *Perv* is a page-turner that is hard to put down.” ?Bruce Hood, Chair of Developmental Psychology in Society, University of Bristol, and author of *The Self Illusion*

“Jesse Bering's *Perv* is a copiously researched, scientifically solid, fascinating and fun ride through a museum of sexual oddities that makes a strong argument for why we need to ease up on our sneers at the 'erotic outliers' and admit the reality: To perv is human.” ?Amy Alkon , author of *I See Rude People*

“In this unusual and wonderful book, Jesse Bering makes a persuasive case that we are all perverts. Bering is funny, brave, and deeply compassionate toward those whose desires cause suffering to themselves and others. This brilliant book will appeal to anyone who wants to learn more about the most unruly and intimate aspects of our lives.” ?Paul Bloom, Brooks and Suzanne Ragen Professor of Psychology, Yale University, and author of *Just Babies: The Origins of Good and Evil*

“I have yet to come away from reading one of [Bering's] essays and not feel considerably better informed than I was just minutes before.” ?*Forbes on Why Is the Penis Shaped like That?*

“Excellent in its entirety, woven of Bering's rare tapestry of scientific rigor and a powerful, articulate social point of view.” ?*Brain Pickings on Why Is the Penis Shaped like That?*

About the Author

Jesse Bering is the author of *The Belief Instinct* and *Why Is the Penis Shaped Like That?* His writing and research have appeared in *Slate*, *Scientific American*, *New York* magazine, *Cosmopolitan*, *The Guardian*, and *The New Republic*, among other publications, and have been featured by NPR, Playboy Radio, and more. Bering is the former director of the Institute of Cognition and Culture at Queen's University, Belfast, and began his career as a professor at the University of Arkansas. He lives in Ithaca, New York.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lillian Albrecht:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important behave, like looking for your favorite guide and reading a reserve. Beside you can solve your long lasting problem; you can add your knowledge by the reserve entitled *Perv: The Sexual Deviant in All of Us*. Try to make the book *Perv: The Sexual Deviant in All of Us* as your pal. It means that it can to get your friend when you truly feel alone and beside that course make you smarter than ever. Yeah, it is very fortunated for you. The book makes you considerably more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let's make new experience in addition to knowledge with this book.

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