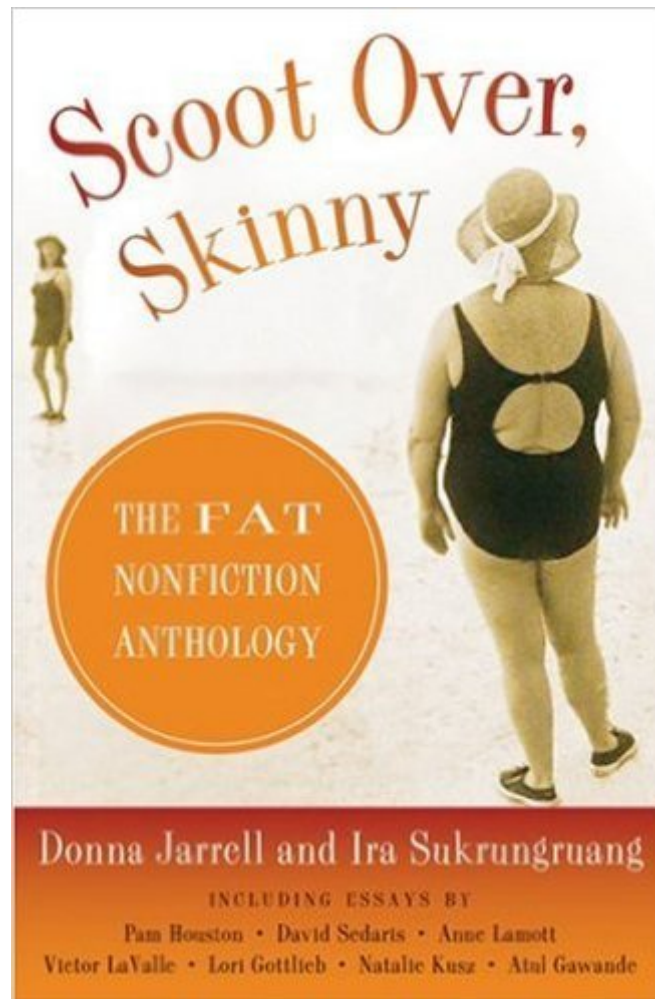


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Scoot Over, Skinny: The Fat Nonfiction Anthology



Synopsis

As Americans are the fattest people on earth, the fat, the formerly fat, those who feel fat, and those who fear fat encompass just about all of us. In this surprising collection of pieces, almost half of which are original to this anthology, some of our most lively, provocative writers explore the many folds of fat that make up reality. From David Sedaris's hilarious assessment of his father's fat prejudices in "A Shiner Like A Diamond" to Anne Lamott's self-prescribed cathartic weight loss remedies in "Hunger", Pam Houston's rich literary panorama in "Out of Habit I Start Apologizing," and psychiatrist Irving Yalom's deeply moving confrontation of his own biases in "Fat Lady," each piece in its unique way deals with fat as a matter of fact. Sometimes funny, sometimes angry, often illuminating and always engaging, these writers make a new and compelling case for why we should make room for a bigger behind.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A few essays in this book merit reading. Natalie Kusz's "On Being Invisible" speaks honestly about the pain of growing up fat and the way many of our relationships render us unseen. David Sedaris's "A Shiner Like a Diamond" had me laughing out loud about his sister's antics in the face of her father's fat phobia. However, several essays offended me. In "Fat Like Him," Lori Gottlieb (recovered anorexic) writes unapologetically about her hateful thoughts and behavior toward the fat man she met through email. She had a sexual relationship with him, but wouldn't be seen with him in public or introduce him to her friends. Sarah Fenske writes, in "Big Game Hunter," about "hogging:" a sport where men pick up fat women for sex because they are seen to be pathetic, desperate, easy. The

editors of the book say, "We are speaking out, speaking up, speaking back: Scoot over, skinny, the Fat have a few things of their own to say about obesity..." THAT'S the kind of book I wanted to read, but the inclusion of fat hating essays (by thin people) undermines the power this collection might have had. Instead I highly recommend *Shadow on a Tightrope: Writings by Women on Fat Oppression* by Lisa Shoenfielder, et al, or *Fat!So?* by Marilyn Wann.

I picked up this book for some "light" reading but was pleasantly surprised by the range of provocative and thoughtful contributions. Some made me sad, some made me laugh and all of them had me reflecting upon my life as an overweight woman. I recommend this book to anyone, not just those of us whose weight makes it especially relevant but also those luckier ones who tend to regard us somehow inferior, or even invisible. One comment on one of the official reviews...my edition does NOT contain a piece by Bill Bryson.

Lots of great shorts with insight on the "weight" issue faced by us Americans today. I was, as expected, disgusted by the story about "hogging." I just take that as another example of shallowness of most men. Even the ones who truly enjoyed a woman with more meat on her bones would never admit it. Fat women are just not for show. But a word to the fellows: If you do find a woman who is comfortable in her own skin, hang on to her no matter the size, she is a treasure. My favorite stories were *Fat Guys Kick Ass* and *Fat Like Him*, and also David Sedaris's story of his sister Amy in her fat suit and makeup bruises. What characters they all are! Thank goodness not everyone aspires to being "normal!" How boring would that be?

The essays have no common thread such as self-acceptance, which one would hope for. It's analogous to an anthology on the experience of being a woman with several rabidly misogynous essays. The most egregious example is "Fat Lady," where the psychiatrist author Irvin Yalom smugly reveals how he came to tolerate, even sympathize with a fat patient, who under his tutelage (and via liquid diet) lost 80-some pounds. His negative feelings towards fat women were most amusingly (in his view) vindicated by "Betty's" eventual revelation that, she, too, hates fat people. Well, as a previous reviewer noted, a thread of this book is "don't we all?" Uh, no. I have news for you, Irvin. Betty has gained all the weight back and more. Your therapy didn't work so well after all. But at least you're free to hate again.

Not good....especially once I read the story "Fat Like Him" written by Lori Gottlieb....pity when she

was found out to have lied throughout her article nobody caught her until after publication. For those that might be interested to find out just how far the fabrication goes see <http://jezebel.com/5467630/email-interview-with-lori-gottliebs-ex-tim>

A few interesting articles but some are very poorly written. Overall a quick, enlightening read.

Essays pack an anthology largely original in content, which explore fat, reality, and confrontations with biases surrounding fat people. Scoot Over, Skinny: The Fat Nonfiction Anthology is packed with angst, observation, admonition, humor, and serious reflection by such notable writers as Anne Lamott and David Sedaris. Any reader interested in body image will find Scoot Over Skinny a most provocative collection of insights.

Just to be clear, the World Health Organization reports a list of nations in order of fatness of populations... and America is not on the top of the list... there are many way ahead of us in this domain.

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