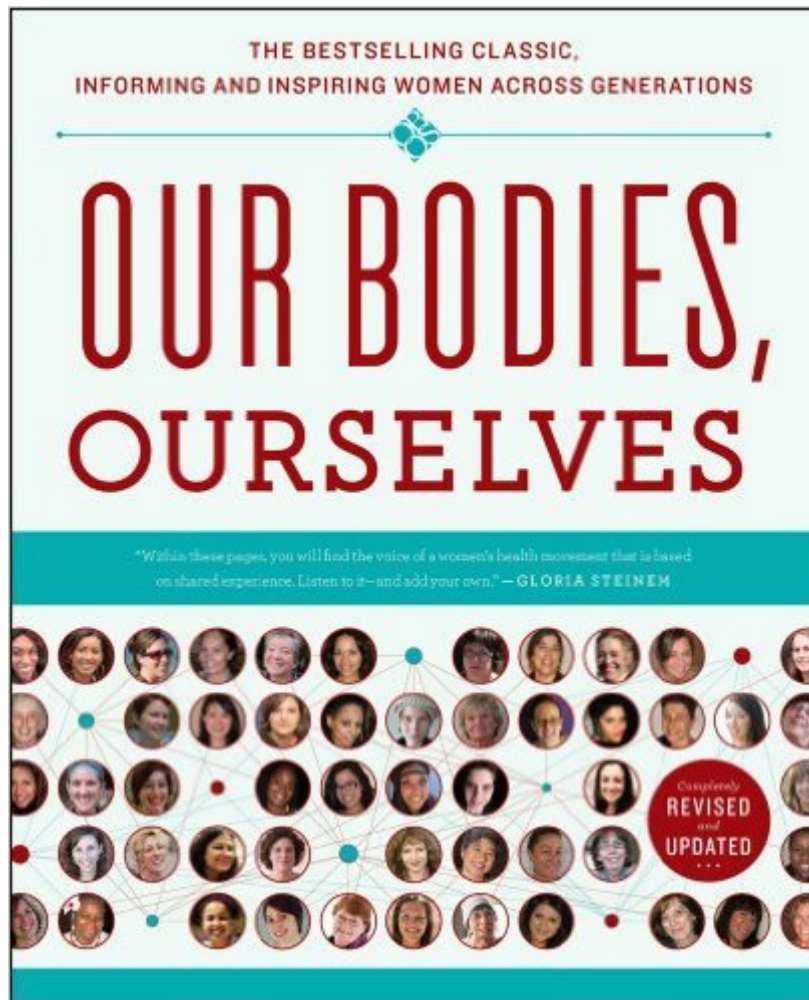


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# Our Bodies, Ourselves



## Synopsis

Hailed by The New York Times as a "feminist classic" and "America's bestselling book on women's health," the comprehensive guide to all aspects of women's health and sexuality, including menopause, birth control, childbirth, sexual health, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental health and general well-being. Six years after the 2005 overhaul of this classic guide to women's health, the 2011 edition focuses on what *Our Bodies, Ourselves* does best: provide information on women's reproductive health and sexuality; practical information on how to find and access health information; and resources, stories, and information to educate women about health care injustices and inspire them to work collectively to address them. This new edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* includes the latest vital information on:

- Changes in the health care system "especially how health care reform affects women and how to get the care you need.
- Safer sex "how to engage in pleasurable, satisfying sexual experiences while protecting your health and the health of your partner.
- Environmental health risks "including minimizing exposure to everyday pollutants that endanger reproductive health.
- Body image "resisting negative media stereotypes and embracing healthier approaches to looking and feeling good.
- Local and global activism "using social media and organizing tactics to build community and advocate for policies that improve women's lives.

-As well as crucial information about gender identity, sexual orientation, birth control, abortion, pregnancy and birth, perimenopause, and sexuality and sexual health as we age. Together with its companion website, [OurBodiesOurselves.org](http://OurBodiesOurselves.org), *Our Bodies, Ourselves* is a one-stop resource for women of all generations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am old enough to own the original version of this book, released in the 1970s. The book was both educational and comforting to me as a young woman looking desperately for information I could trust and understand. So, when one of my favorite nieces became a teenager, I bought the latest version for her. The information, of course, is solid, as we could expect, but the format is so dense, it's unreadable! Instead of the simply written, well laid out book that meant so much to my younger self, this book is more like a textbook to be left on the shelf with all the other texts we tell ourselves we "should read." At a time when women's reproductive rights are under siege, we really need a reliable source of information and support. I wish they offered cliff notes.

I believe, rather than making *The New Our bodies Ourselves* "easier to understand" than previous editions, or "updated," they have taken an almost defeated stance on women's issues, especially healthcare! I am in my mid 20's and have to say I learned about my body and myself from reading the earlier editions when I was a teenager. I came from a strict household that didn't really discuss sexual orientation or feminist issues, and *Our Bodies, Ourselves* was key in developing who I am today... It taught me to have no shame for my sexual feelings, how to demand the best healthcare possible, even how to eat properly. I was really looking forward to what the Boston Healthcare Collective had to say to a new generation... and saw that they have, in an attempt to stay "up-to-date," taken a much more passive stance on almost all the issues they used to so passionately educate their readers on. I personally became a supporter of the the movement to end the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth, and the right for women to use midwives. So I was especially disappointed to find the disclaimer at the beginning of the chapter on childbirth in this version saying that in the U.S, women are not always allowed to have natural childbirth, but "it is important to know what is possible." Which to me says, there's a good chance you won't have a choice, but, it's possible, maybe we will someday... rather than, Here's how you fight the injustice! And that seems to be the tone of the entire book, rather than taking a "radical" stance (ie, speaking up) they seem to promote dealing with many issues facing woman today with quiet resolve. I got the impression of, "This is unfair, but we're strong women and can deal with it," instead of "This is unfair, but we're strong women and can overcome it!" But as far as basic information and facts, I do believe this is probably still the most down to earth, informative guide to women's health and fertility that's widely available. But personally I also turned to *OBOS* for inspiration, not just facts, and I still find the truly feminist past editions to be more inspiring.

This book is by far the best ever. It is the first edition of OBOS which I feel really addresses the equally pressing healthcare needs of myself and younger generations of women. I had used prior versions of this book, but still had felt that the authors of those versions assumed that the readers had been with them through the 1970's...etc. The tone of this book is very inclusive and non-presuming. Consequently the medical information presented does not get lost in the personal vignettes. Our own generational experiences are just as important. Also, the authors take an enlightened approach to sexuality instead of segmenting off "LGBT/queer" issues into a couple of areas. This book is further commendable because it made more of an effort to tell the stories (and thus provide culturally sensitive health care) for different women. Kudos to the people who suggested a redesign and updating of the book layout.

UPDATE 2013: I've reduced the stars from 5 to 3 because there is a brand new edition now, which is very strong on the sexuality sections and less strong on the menopause and hormone therapy section (the menopause section tries so hard to give space to varying schools of thought that it ends up leaving one perhaps more confused about what to do than ever). However, OBOS is a must-have for any young woman who cares about the functioning of her body and the politics of health. If you're looking for menopause help, look elsewhere-- I'd suggest the much more practical "Perimenopause & Menopause Workbook," or the even shorter and more practical recent book by Dr. Ricki Pollycove. Original review, 2005: Wow, this book is great! It's so much better than the previous editions. The previous editions were extremely informative, but they sometimes stuck more to a feminist "party line" than I am comfortable with. This edition really covers both sides (or all sides) of every argument. For example, it covers the pros and cons of postmenopausal hormone therapy, rather than just taking an "estrogen is evil" approach. I was blown away by how good the breast cancer section is, and the birth control chapter is well done too. In addition to the medical information, this book gives you something to think about, by describing the political context that leads to many of our health issues and decisions. One more note: They finally updated the photos, thank goodness! I've already gotten copies of the book for myself and my mother, and now that the style lives up to the substance, I can feel free to get copies for my nieces as well. Recommended.

When this book first came out I started giving it as a gift to high school senior girls to take to college with them. First it was my daughters friends and my friends daughters, now it is my grand daughters and my friends grand daughters. This is by far the best reference book on womens bodies that there is available. I am always saddened that there is not one for men. The new edition is up to date but

has not lost the emotions of the other editions.

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The Mind-Gut Connection: How the Hidden Conversation Within Our Bodies Impacts Our Mood, Our Choices, and Our Overall Health Our Bodies, Ourselves Our Bodies, Ourselves: Menopause by Boston Women's Health Book Collective (Oct 3 2006) Who Has What?: All About Girls' Bodies and Boys' Bodies (Let's Talk about You and Me) What the F: What Swearing Reveals About Our Language, Our Brains, and Ourselves The Clash of Generations: Saving Ourselves, Our Kids, and Our Economy (MIT Press) Inheritance: How Our Genes Change Our Lives--and Our Lives Change Our Genes Growing Up Again: Parenting Ourselves, Parenting Our Children Our Babies, Ourselves: How Biology and Culture Shape the Way We Parent Mother Earth Spirituality: Native American Paths to Healing Ourselves and Our World (Religion and Spirituality) The Conscious Parent: Transforming Ourselves, Empowering Our Children Superman on the Couch: What Superheroes Really Tell Us about Ourselves and Our Society Living as United Methodist Christians: Our Story, Our Beliefs, Our Lives Pornified: How Pornography Is Transforming Our Lives, Our Relationships, and Our Families GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business Saving the Bible from Ourselves: Learning to Read and Live the Bible Well The Soul of Shame: Retelling the Stories We Believe About Ourselves Strangers to Ourselves Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears

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