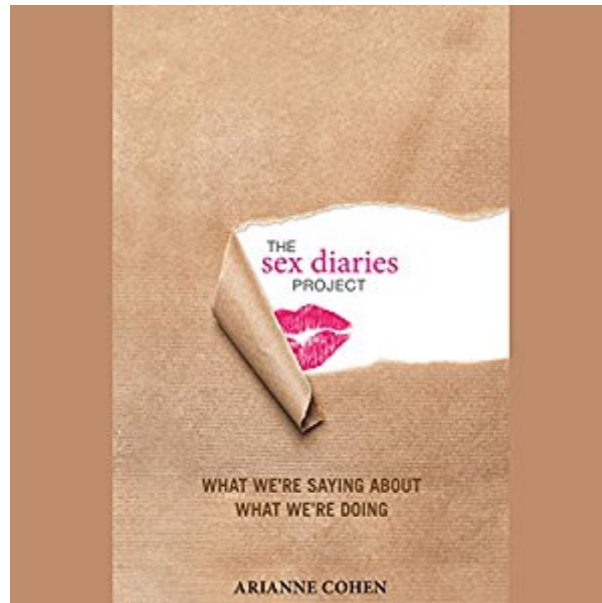


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# The Sex Diaries Project: What We're Saying About What We're Doing



## Synopsis

In the tradition of *The Vagina Monologues* and *PostSecret*, this provocative collection takes a peek behind bedroom doors - satisfying our insatiable desires to look into the private lives of ordinary people. Arianne Cohen spent four years collecting 1,500 Sex Diaries and in this book she takes us on a tantalizing tour of American bedrooms through the all-new, provocative, often moving, sometimes shocking, always entertaining real diaries of 40 Sex Diarists. From the Madly-in-Love 17-Year-Old Who Might be Pregnant to the Cheating Father of Three and the Grandma Who Is Perfectly Happy Alone, these tales of love, lust, longing and leaving will shock, titillate, and educate. Cohen serves as tour guide, drawing on her deep database of Sex Diaries for her incisive and illuminating commentary. Cohen was the first editor of the Sex Diaries column, a popular feature in *New York* magazine, editing it from 2007 to 2010. Her work regularly appears in *Marie Claire* and *The New York Times* and she is a contributing editor at *Woman's Day*. She is executive producing a TV reality series based on this book. Presents a groundbreaking portrait of relationships in America - including myriad options beyond single, dating, and married. Includes Sex Diaries of straight, gay, bi, single, married, young, and older Sex Diarists, published here for the first time. Gives listeners tips on how to evaluate their own relationships and sex lives. Sex is everywhere in our culture - yet how people best connect and disconnect is largely a mystery. The Sex Diaries Project turns the lights on to reveal the secrets that lie behind closed bedroom doors.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

After hearing about The Sex Diaries Project and seeing a few things online, I recently attended a talk at Powell's by the author of this book, Arianne Cohen. I expected a series of wry one-liners to lighten up an audience shy about publicly discussing this topic. Instead, in a very respectful and inquisitive way, she shared really fascinating insights into various sex (but really relationship) realities lived by different people around the world. Page 62 of the book, where she identifies 13 relationship goals that show up over and over in the diaries, seems to me like a really big deal. It's basically the definition of happiness in relationships, and sex as discussed in the book is less about sex and more about how we want to relate to each other. When you read this, you feel like you're hanging out with someone you would afterward describe by saying, "Wow, she is really cool. I love how evidence-based her ideas are and how sensitively she presents them." Or maybe I'm the only person who would say something like that! Anyway, read the book. It's quick and good.

I ordered this book after seeing a positive review in *The Week*. It isn't what you might expect or at least what I expected. I thought I was going to read a lot about people's different sex lives. Instead, the diaries and the author's insights offer explanations of why people lead such different sex lives and what makes for a successful couple. It's good bedtime reading and fun to share with a partner.

Reading *The Sex Diaries Project* offers the incredible opportunity to peek into the intimate lives of others. It is a rare treat to witness the private thoughts of such a wide range of folks, and find inspiration in the most unexpected diaries. I participated in this project as a diarist, and though I do not have any stake in the book's success, I will be widely recommending the experience that this book offers. As a sex educator I have long promoted the practice of keeping a sex diary. The act of writing down your everyday truth is one of the most powerful practices I know for revealing desire, understanding scripts and patterns, and discerning who you are as a sexual being. But rarely do we get the chance to read a collection of intimate moments, and the insights and inspirations this collection offers is dazzling!

I am very impressed. Ari Cohen's compilation is intimate, revealing, and private. That men and women are indistinguishable on paper, that there are predictable signs before a breakup, that people watch a LOT of porn, that our sex lives are really our relationship lives-- none of this is news to me; it is my field too. What struck me is Ari's clear, calm eye. Her ability to keenly glean the point. Her finger is on our pulse and her stories are culturally informative. We all want to know what is "normal," most of my clients ask me just that. I'll send them to this book to understand that there is

no "normal," there is a wide variety of real. Think Nancy Friday with more editorial focus. The stories are brilliantly sorted into interesting and usable information with the attending emotional and relational context. it is non-denominationally great. ANYONE can learn something from her collection. I'm considering starting my own diary now! I highly recommend reading it.

This book turned out better than I thought it would be. Though it's titled Sex Diaries, it's really about relationships. It seems when people give themselves permission to write about their sex lives, they are more open and direct about themselves and their partners. Some parts of Cohen's analysis of the dairies tend to drag on a little too long, but just feel free to skip what you don't want to read. If you've been in several relationships, I guarantee there will be diary entries you can relate to, and you won't feel alone about some of your taboo habits or fantasies.

I'm fascinated by sex and dating and relationships and all that good stuff. But there are so many books out there that read like a cliché "Sex and the City" episode (I loved the show but let's face it: I'm not a stay-at-home writer who can buy Blahniks aka 2002's version of Louboutins). I also can't stand those "How to get a MAN ASAP" books -- they never dole out legit advice. However, when I opened "The Sex Diaries Project" I couldn't put it down. It's a fascinating read!!! I can't stop talking about the book to my friends either. I felt like I was a fly on the wall of bedrooms ranging from lovesick teens to Betty White-esque elderly women. You really get a sense of everyday people's sex lives and it makes you feel less alone about your passions, needs and even fetishes. You're really reading these dirty diaries but the key is not hidden and the diary is not stuffed underneath the mattress!!! The author Cohen (who is pretty funny, BTW) also breaks down people in relationships in 3 different categories -- lovers, partners and aspirers. So Aspirers might marry for financial security (think Real Housewives of Whatever City) and Lovers might look for romance and passion. She made me realize that people marry for so many different reasons and that it's OK. I used to look down at women who I thought were "settling." WTF, is wrong with me?! Not everyone is looking for a soulmate or whatnot. Beyond relationships, Cohen also talks about how Facebook's relationship status are not applicable for real life. For example, I might be single but dating several people or a man might be widowed but also dating two women or whatever. Cohen really helps define the grey areas for the masses -- particularly for single people who make up a rather large population of the country. It's a great read, not boring at all and worth every penny. Trust.

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