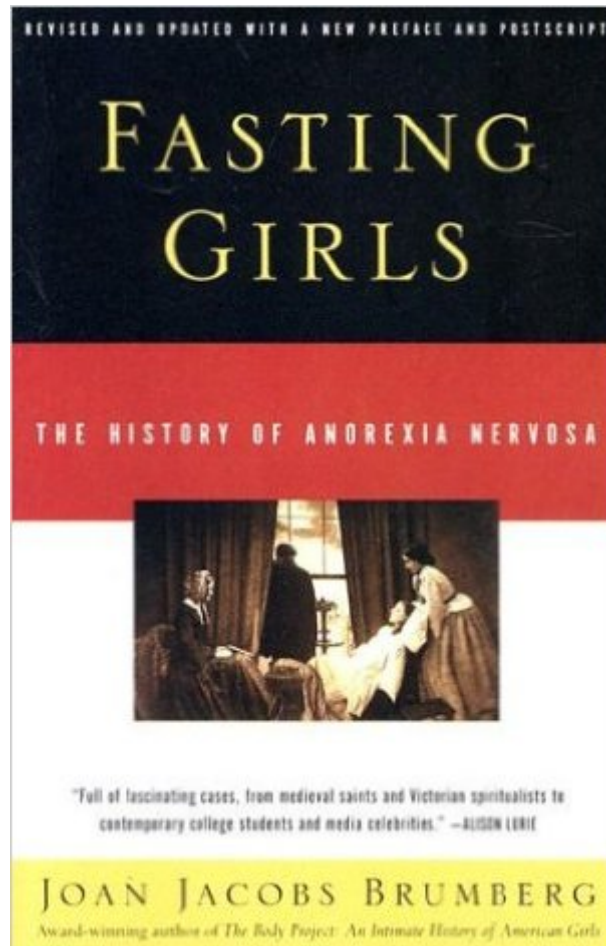


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Fasting Girls: The History Of Anorexia Nervosa



Synopsis

Winner of four major awards, this updated edition of Joan Jacobs Brumberg's *Fasting Girls*, presents a history of women's food-refusal dating back as far as the sixteenth century. Here is a tableau of female self-denial: medieval martyrs who used starvation to demonstrate religious devotion, "wonders of science" whose families capitalized on their ability to survive on flower petals and air, silent screen stars whose strict "slimming" regimens inspired a generation. Here, too, is a fascinating look at how the cultural ramifications of the Industrial Revolution produced a disorder that continues to render privileged young women helpless. Incisive, compassionate, illuminating, *Fasting Girls* offers real understanding to victims and their families, clinicians, and all women who are interested in the origins and future of this complex, modern and characteristically female disease.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've become an avid reader of medical history. When in medical school for my degree in neuroscience, my favorite class was one that dealt with the neurological basis of psychiatric disorders. The professor had MDs come in with a patient with a particular problem (Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, anorexia) and we would have the opportunity to listen to them tell their own story and their frustrations with their illness. When they brought in a girl who was probably 5'8" and weight 78 pounds, it was fascinating to see the guys in the class who were normally very vocal and aggressive, totally shut up! From behind she looked like someone from a Nazi concentration camp,

yet she continued to consider herself 'fat'. When she left, the MD had the nerve to turn around and tell the boys, that basically...anorexia was the fault of men. All of us were stunned. He put up an obviously much used power point slide showing the weights of women in both Playboy magazines and in the Miss USA pageant from the beginning to that year (1997). The line was steep and steady from the upper left-hand corner of the slide to the bottom right corner of the slide. This was the change in weight of the women who were participating in these 'endeavors' that the MD said were run by men (it was a male MD). Then he went further and said...most women's magazines are still mainly male bastions, as is the fashion industry both here and in Europe. The men in the class were absolutely horrified (and the women were thrilled that someone had the nerve to say this to them!) This outstanding book is a must read for anyone going into psychology, neuroscience, working with adolescents, education, public health, etc. I've read few books with such deep understanding as to the history and ramifications of social mores on young women and girls.

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