



A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis

By David M. Friedman

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman

Whether enemy or ally, demon or god, the source of satisfaction or the root of all earthly troubles, the penis has forced humanity to wrestle with its enduring mysteries. Here, in an enlightening and entertaining cultural study, is a book that gives context to the central role of the penis in Western civilization. A man can hold his manhood in his hand, but who is really gripping whom? Is the penis the best in man -- or the beast? How is man supposed to use it? And when does that use become abuse? Of all the bodily organs, only the penis forces man to confront such contradictions: something insistent yet reluctant, a tool that creates but also destroys, a part of the body that often seems apart from the body. This is the conundrum that makes the penis both hero and villain in a drama that shapes every man -- and mankind along with it. In "A Mind of Its Own," David M. Friedman shows that the penis is more than a body part. It is an idea, a conceptual but flesh-and-blood measuring stick of man's place in the world. That men have a penis is a scientific fact; how they think about it, feel about it, and use it is not. It is possible to identify the key moments in Western history when a new idea of the penis addressed the larger mystery of man's relationship with it and changed forever the way that organ was conceived of and put to use. "A Mind of Its Own" brilliantly distills this complex and largely unexamined story. Deified by the pagan cultures of the ancient world and demonized by the early Roman church, the organ was later secularized by pioneering anatomists such as Leonardo da Vinci. After being measured "scientifically" in an effort to subjugate some races while elevating others, the organ was psychoanalyzed by Sigmund Freud. As a result, the penis assumed a paradigmatic role in psychology -- whether the patient was equipped with the organ or envied those who were. Now, after being politicized by feminism and exploited in countless ways by pop culture, the penis has been medicalized. As no one has before him, Friedman shows how the arrival of erection industry products such as Viagra is more than a health or business story. It is the latest -- and perhaps final -- chapter in one of the longest sagas in human history: the story of man's relationship with his penis. "A Mind of Its Own" charts the vicissitudes of that relationship through its often amusing, occasionally alarming, and never boring course. With intellectual rigor and a healthy dose of wry humor, David M. Friedman serves up one of the most thought-provoking, significant, and readable cultural works in years.

 [Download A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Pen ...pdf](#)

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis

By David M. Friedman

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman

Whether enemy or ally, demon or god, the source of satisfaction or the root of all earthly troubles, the penis has forced humanity to wrestle with its enduring mysteries. Here, in an enlightening and entertaining cultural study, is a book that gives context to the central role of the penis in Western civilization. A man can hold his manhood in his hand, but who is really gripping whom? Is the penis the best in man -- or the beast? How is man supposed to use it? And when does that use become abuse? Of all the bodily organs, only the penis forces man to confront such contradictions: something insistent yet reluctant, a tool that creates but also destroys, a part of the body that often seems apart from the body. This is the conundrum that makes the penis both hero and villain in a drama that shapes every man -- and mankind along with it. In "A Mind of Its Own," David M. Friedman shows that the penis is more than a body part. It is an idea, a conceptual but flesh-and-blood measuring stick of man's place in the world. That men have a penis is a scientific fact; how they think about it, feel about it, and use it is not. It is possible to identify the key moments in Western history when a new idea of the penis addressed the larger mystery of man's relationship with it and changed forever the way that organ was conceived of and put to use. "A Mind of Its Own" brilliantly distills this complex and largely unexamined story. Deified by the pagan cultures of the ancient world and demonized by the early Roman church, the organ was later secularized by pioneering anatomists such as Leonardo da Vinci. After being measured "scientifically" in an effort to subjugate some races while elevating others, the organ was psychoanalyzed by Sigmund Freud. As a result, the penis assumed a paradigmatic role in psychology -- whether the patient was equipped with the organ or envied those who were. Now, after being politicized by feminism and exploited in countless ways by pop culture, the penis has been medicalized. As no one has before him, Friedman shows how the arrival of erection industry products such as Viagra is more than a health or business story. It is the latest -- and perhaps final -- chapter in one of the longest sagas in human history: the story of man's relationship with his penis. "A Mind of Its Own" charts the vicissitudes of that relationship through its often amusing, occasionally alarming, and never boring course. With intellectual rigor and a healthy dose of wry humor, David M. Friedman serves up one of the most thought-provoking, significant, and readable cultural works in years.

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #972247 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Free Press
- Published on: 2001-11-06
- Released on: 2001-10-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 1.12" h x 5.76" w x 9.50" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 368 pages

 [Download A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Pen ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis* By David M. Friedman

Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

David M. Friedman's *A Mind of Its Own* is a cultural examination of the penis, from ancient Sumer to the present. Friedman convincingly suggests that humankind's various and contradictory attitudes toward the penis have been instrumental in mapping the course of both Western civilization and world history.

Friedman begins with pagan attitudes: ancient Greeks considered the penis a measure of a man's proximity to "divine power," while the Romans, whose generals were known to promote soldiers based on penis size, saw it as an indicator of earthly strength. Thanks to the spread of Christianity, the "sacred staff became the demon rod"--a fearful manifestation of the devil. Theology gave way, grudgingly, to science. In the Renaissance, anatomical discoveries allowed for the possibility that this "agent of death" was, in fact, only a "blameless instrument of reproduction." Subsequent chapters discuss the penis's role as a racial yardstick; its "defining role in human personality" as asserted by Freud; its politicization; and finally, through the likes of Viagra, its objectification as a "thing ... impervious to religious teachings, psychological insights, racial stereotypes and feminist criticism."

Friedman's study of what he calls the "symbolic muscle" is filled with fascinating side trips (castration cults, ancient graffiti, the anti-masturbation "semen-retention movement," aphrodisiacs through the ages, and, to modern eyes, risible medical practices with the likes of monkey glands), as well as a rich cast of characters (Leonardo da Vinci, John Kellogg of cornflake fame, Kate Millet, Clarence Thomas, and Walt Whitman). The book is informal, but well researched (and documented), entertaining but not cute, wide-ranging but not sketchy, and simultaneously irreverent and respectful. --H. O'Billovitch

From Publishers Weekly

"Over time, the penis has been deified, demonized, secularized, racialized, psychoanalyzed, politicized and, finally, medicalized," declares freelance journalist Friedman in a serious yet entertaining book that weaves together an enormous amount of material. In the Greek and Roman worlds, statues of figures with erections were commonplace, he observes, though by the Christian era, the penis had become a source of evil and weakness. Doctors and scientists from da Vinci onward "deflat[ed] the religious rhetoric" and scrutinized the male organ sometimes with untoward results, as when American "semen science" led to the creation of antimasturbation products such as Graham crackers. Western man's fear of the African phallus undergirded colonialism and slavery, and resonates to this day, Friedman argues, as was evident in the case of Clarence Thomas. If some of Freud's case histories might be questioned, Friedman notes how the psychoanalytic interpretation enduringly places the penis and associated anxieties at the fulcrum of society. The rise of feminism put the penis in its place, as The Hite Report pointed out the limits of conventional intercourse in moving women to orgasm, and as Andrea Dworkin exposed penile pathology though the author concludes that male sexuality arises more out of evolutionary strategy than misogyny. His final and liveliest chapter concerns the medicalization of the penis, culminating in Viagra. Even though Friedman quotes a (female) sex therapist on the limits of such drugs, he concludes optimistically that "the erection industry" has performed a paradigm shift, allowing man to impose his will below his belt. The book has a few gaps -- there's little about the gay penis -- but it should reign as the seminal treatment of this topic (and inspire many more puns).

From Library Journal

An impressively research-prone journalist who has written for Esquire, Rolling Stone, and the Village Voice, Friedman has prepared a catalog of happenings and horrors perpetrated on the penis or in the name of the penis as an organ and as an idea. His opening chapter about religious teachings begins with a ghastly story about the torture of a witch who "knew the Devil's penis." Next come Tissot and the medical antimasturbation mania, plus biological discoveries about the organ. This is followed by an even more terrible and detailed discussion of racist stereotypes and violence relating to supposedly macrophallic Africans. Chapter 4 belongs to Dr. Freud, Chapter 5 to feminist criticism, and Chapter 6 to Viagra and the erection industry since ancient Egypt. Referenced in considerable (if not perfect) detail, the work could be improved only by textual subheads and (perhaps) illustrations. A fascinating and sobering complement to more lighthearted books, including Maggie Paley's *The Book of the Penis* (Grove, 2001), Joseph Cohen's *The Penis Book* (Konemann, 2001), and Kit Schwartz's *The Male Member* (St. Martin's, 1985). Recommended for collections in history, popular culture, and sexology. Martha Cornog, Philadelphia Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Martha Williams:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important act, like looking for your favorite guide and reading a reserve. Beside you can solve your short lived problem; you can add your knowledge by the book entitled *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis*. Try to stumble through book *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis* as your pal. It means that it can to get your friend when you really feel alone and beside that of course make you smarter than ever before. Yeah, it is very fortuned to suit your needs. The book makes you a lot more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let me make new experience as well as knowledge with this book.

Catherine Hudson:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray a person, why because this *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis* reserve written by well-known writer we are excited for well how to make book that may be understand by anyone who also read the book. Written within good manner for you, leaking every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your hunger then you still hesitation *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis* as good book not merely by the cover but also by content. This is one reserve that can break don't determine book by its protect, so do you still needing a different sixth sense to pick this particular!? Oh come on your studying sixth sense already alerted you so why you have to listening to an additional sixth sense.

Daniel White:

This *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis* is great e-book for you because the content and that is full of information for you who also always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. This kind of book reveal it details accurately using great manage word or we can state no rambling sentences within it. So if you are read the idea hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but difficult core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having *A Mind of*

Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis in your hand like finding the world in your arm, facts in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no book that offer you world inside ten or fifteen minute right but this e-book already do that. So , this is good reading book. Hi Mr. and Mrs. occupied do you still doubt this?

Lena Robertson:

It is possible to spend your free time to read this book this publication. This A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis is simple bringing you can read it in the recreation area, in the beach, train along with soon. If you did not get much space to bring the particular printed book, you can buy the actual e-book. It is make you better to read it. You can save the particular book in your smart phone. Thus there are a lot of benefits that you will get when you buy this book.

Download and Read Online A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman #9VXG4K6R0YH

Read A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman for online ebook

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman books to read online.

Online A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman ebook PDF download

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman Doc

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman Mobipocket

A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman EPub

9VXG4K6R0YH: A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis By David M. Friedman