

# Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners

By Therese Oneill

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**NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER**

**Have you ever wished you could live in an earlier, more romantic era?**

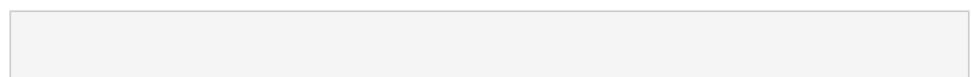
Ladies, welcome to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where there's arsenic in your face cream, a pot of cold pee sits under your bed, and all of your underwear is crotchless. (Why? Shush, dear. A lady doesn't question.)

UNMENTIONABLE is your hilarious, illustrated, scandalously honest (yet never crass) guide to the secrets of Victorian womanhood, giving you detailed advice on:

- ~ What to wear
- ~ Where to relieve yourself
- ~ How to conceal your loathsome addiction to menstruating
- ~ What to expect on your wedding night
- ~ How to be the perfect Victorian wife
- ~ Why masturbating will kill you
- ~ And more

Irresistibly charming, laugh-out-loud funny, and featuring nearly 200 images from Victorian publications, UNMENTIONABLE will inspire a whole new level of respect for Elizabeth Bennett, Scarlet O'Hara, Jane Eyre, and all of our great, great grandmothers.

(And it just might leave you feeling ecstatically grateful to live in an age of pants, super absorbency tampons, epidurals, anti-depressants, and not-dying-of-the-syphilis-your-husband-brought-home.)



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Hysterically funny and unsettlingly fascinating. **This book is full of awesome.**"?Jenny Lawson, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Let's Pretend This Never Happened* and *Furiously Happy*

**"If *Unmentionable* does not secure the Pulitzer Prize for Most Fascinating Book Ever, the whole gig is rigged.** Hilarious, horrifying, shocking and revelatory, this book is for every girl who pictured herself running through a field of wildflowers in a silk dress and Little House on the Prairie boots, only to discover she has nits in her hair, her clothes have never been washed and she sleeps with her poop under her bed in a bowl. **A miracle of a book and one of my favorite reads ever, *Unmentionable* will be my go-to gift this year.** All hail Therese Oneill for uncovering all of that dirty, dirty laundry."?Laurie Notaro, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *It Looked Different on the Model* and *Housebroken*

**"Oneill uncovers the filthy, untidy, licentious conditions of nineteenth-century women's lives that novelists of the period often glossed over...brilliantly conveyed with fascinating illustrations."**?*Elle*

**"Oneill has created a book so excellently informative about the Victorian period, it should be shelved right next to Dickens for reference.** Your stomach will hurt so much from laughing, you'll be thankful you're not wearing a corset."?Princess Weekes, *Bustle*

**"It's hard to imagine a woman - or a teenage girl - who won't love this book."**?Caitlin Flanagan, *Washington Post*

**"A fascinating look into the shocking pseudoscience of the 1800s, in which Oneill sheds new light on the origins of today's misogyny,** double standards, and just plain mystery surrounding women that, maddeningly enough, persist."?Booklist

*"Unmentionable* transports us back to the world of middle-class 19th-century women, with special emphasis on the messy details that costume dramas airbrush out. . . . With a 4-year-old's scatological glee, **Oneill details the logistics of old-time peeing, pooping, gestating, menstruating and mating . . . lovely tidbits from the dustbin of history.**"?New York Times

"Rich with information that will amuse and sometimes horrify... the playful application of language makes the horrendous plight of Victorian women palatable to modern audiences. **Oneill succeeds in making otherwise dry information (the proper order of eating utensils, the development of modern sanitation) sparkle.**"?The Guardian

**"Flat-out hysterical (and occasionally alarming)...**Read it and be very, very glad you're a woman of modern times."?Good Housekeeping

**"If you've ever felt like you should have been born in another time, *Unmentionable* will disabuse you of that sensibility, and it will do so charmingly . . .** The book transmits a wealth of historical research in a cheerfully tongue-in-cheek tone and an impressive collection of archival photos."?Vice/Broadly

**"A treasure trove of bizarre and fascinating information."**?Bustle (Best Nonfiction Books of 2016)

"Oneill writes from the perspective of an all-knowing, slightly cheeky Victorian woman giving guidance to the contemporary woman. The result is a **thoroughly researched** but **hilarious** look into daily life of the Victorian woman."*The Millions*

"A down-and-dirty perusal of the realities of hygiene and womanhood in the Victorian era. The truth behind slimming corsets, virtuous nuptials, and strict morals is **sometimes shocking, occasionally alarming, but always funny with Oneill's wry commentary.**"*Library Journal, Editors Fall Pick*

"A quick, hilarious romp through the gritty unmentionable details that literature fails to discuss--those of the most intimate nature. . . . Oneill's delight in her subject is endearing. She delivers even the most disturbing facts, like how drinking wells and sewage were placed close to each other, in entertaining ways. Yet Oneill's stories are not without depth. Throughout *Unmentionable*, she notes how far feminism and related movements have come from the constrictions of Victorian ideologies."*Shelf Awareness*

"Oneill is our sarcastic 'tour guide to the *real* nineteenth century' in this cheeky romp of a book. She's here to tell you, ladies, that what you think you know is all wrong. . . . **If you're seeking a witty life coach, look no further.**"*Kirkus (This Season's Best Gift Books, 2016)*

"Between wisecracks and clever one-liners, Oneill reveals the misogynistic underbelly of the Victorian era and how harmful and antiquated theories about female biology, sexuality, and emotions persist to this day. **I can't recommend this book highly enough.**"*BookRiot*

"It's clear in every page of *Unmentionable* that Oneill has done her research on what the Victorian lady was expected to tackle, from dinner-party etiquette to arsenic as skin care. . . . the vagaries of courtship, running a household, and taking a bath fall under a modern and distinctly snarky lens."*NPR.org*

#### About the Author

Therese Oneill lives in Oregon and writes humor and rare history articles for many different popular outlets, including *Mental Floss*, *The Week*, *The Atlantic*, and *Jezebel*. She lives with her husband and children near Portland. She can be found online at [www.writerthereseoneill.com](http://www.writerthereseoneill.com) where she runs a popular history and narrative blog.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Bob Pratt:

The knowledge that you get from *Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners* will be the more deep you looking the information that hide inside words the more you get considering reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to understand but *Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners* giving you thrill feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by simply anyone who read it because the author of this e-book is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having this *Unmentionable: The Victorian Lady's Guide to Sex, Marriage, and Manners* instantly.

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