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# The Impossibility of Sex: Stories of the Intimate Relationship between Therapist and Patient

By Susie Orbach



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The conventional view of a patient in therapy has been that of someone who forms a powerful, erotic bond with the therapist. On the other hand, the view of the therapist has been that of a neutral listener, emotionally unaffected by the patient. But what really does go on within the sacrosanct space of the therapist's office?

Distinguished psychotherapist Susie Orbach provides the answers as she presents six stories of patients, all of whom suffer from such common afflictions as depression, loneliness, compulsive eating, consuming sexual desires, and fear of attachment. In each story, Orbach reveals not just the client's problems, but -- with startling honesty -- the effect the client has on her as therapist.

*The Impossibility of Sex* breaks new ground by taking us into the center of the therapy relationship, one usually shrouded by therapist-client confidentiality. From the unlikely role the therapist plays in the troubled relationship of two lesbians to the unsettling dreams the therapist experiences while treating a man consumed by sexual desire, Orbach illuminates the complex human interactions at the heart of the therapeutic process and the "joint discoveries" that contribute to its effectiveness.



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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Those who have ever surrendered themselves on an analyst's couch, or considered doing so, will want to read this vibrant book about therapy from the therapist's perspective. A seasoned analyst who was recently revealed to have counseled the late Princess Diana, Orbach (author of the '70s classic *Fat Is a Feminist Issue*) reveals what happens during therapy from the therapist's point of view with honesty, dashes of wit and a refreshing lack of sensationalism. Those who suspect that therapists sleep through their sessions will be gratified to find out how involving some find their patients. Orbach's examples (based on composites of patients she's seen over the years) fascinate but never read like case studies: Belle is a compulsive liar who moves from crisis to crisis; Joanna's distress threatens Orbach's sense of self by touching her deepest emotions; Carol and Maria are an interracial lesbian couple whose marriage counseling provokes Orbach to consider the role of trust and sex in relationships; Adam, an erstwhile Lothario, almost lures Orbach into his sexual web before she is able to help him relinquish his own libidinousness in favor of deep passion. Orbach elucidates the analytic process with verve, grace and erudition, invoking Freud and a host of other psychoanalysts while unveiling her own feelings about life, love, sex, passion and, of course, the therapeutic process. (Mar.)

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From Library Journal

Therapist Orbach (*Fat Is a Feminist Issue*) explains that the point of this misleadingly titled book is to convey "the feel of the relationship developed between the therapist and patient." Using six therapy case histories based on her real-life clients, she investigates their problems (some of them sexual)--which, from a voyeuristic perspective, is fun--and her own reactions, which are somewhat narcissistic and distracting. In the midst of the case histories, she also discusses psychoanalysis. Two different typefaces are used to distinguish the case histories from the digressions on psychoanalysis, and a third would have been helpful to offset Orbach's reactions. The concluding discussion of the female psyche is interesting but seems tacked on. Although somewhat confusing in execution, this bizarre little book is recommended for academic and public libraries, as the publisher notes that Orbach was Princess Diana's therapist.

*-Margaret Cardwell, Georgia Perimeter Coll., Clarkston*

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From [Booklist](#)

Orbach, a psychotherapist, explores the complex relationship between patient and analyst from the analyst's viewpoint. She uses case studies from her 20-year practice to illustrate the intimate nature of psychoanalysis and how intimacy itself is at the heart of so many human anxieties. Orbach examines the seductiveness of the relationship with patients, learning so much about them and their neediness. The patients include men and women, with varying degrees of psychological problems, such as a man with sudden sexual performance problems after an adult life spent seducing women and a woman who constantly creates crises in a bid for attention. Orbach outlines the case studies and notes her reaction to the patients, the need to invite enough intimacy to encourage a patient to open up but to maintain a professional distance. She concedes the sexual tensions that are sometimes provoked in the relationship, requiring the therapist to stand back and do some self-analysis. Orbach intersperses the case studies with asides that examine methods of therapy and professional practices. *Vanessa Bush*

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What do you consider book? It is just for students as they are still students or this for all people in the world, the particular best subject for that? Merely you can be answered for that question above. Every person has different personality and hobby for every other. Don't to be pushed someone or something that they don't want do that. You must know how great and important the book *The Impossibility of Sex: Stories of the Intimate Relationship between Therapist and Patient*. All type of book is it possible to see on many methods. You can look for the internet resources or other social media.

#### **Gayle Collins:**

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#### **Linda Gaitan:**

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#### **Fred Polak:**

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