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Quantum Wellness

A Practical and Spiritual Guide to Health and Happiness

By **Kathy Freston**

Weinstein Books • 2008 • 282 pages • \$23.95

Reviewed by **Aurelia d'Andrea**

Kathy Freston's third book has practically obtained cult status, thanks to the author's appearance on "Oprah" and the talk-show host's subsequent vegan-for-three-weeks experiment. Turns out going vegan—as the author has—is one of the fundamentals outlined in the book for how to achieve *Quantum Wellness*. This book "isn't about deprivation," writes Freston, but, rather, about taking small, painless steps to improve our mind-body-spirit function. Even skeptics will admit that Freston's system can't hurt, and could help. At the book's basis are "eight pillars of wellness," which include such non-scary strategies as integrating exercise and positive thinking into our lives. Freston recommends a 21-day fast—no dairy, alcohol, gluten, caffeine, etc.—to get to a healthy baseline, and offers plenty of personal anecdotes and tasty recipes to support readers through any difficult transitions. Backed by authoritative citations and basic logic, Freston—a vibrant and healthy vegan spokesperson—presents a believable prescription for optimal wellness that will appeal to all demographics, making this *the* read to bequeath to friends and family resistant to the vegan messages offered in other books.

Skinny Bitch: Bun in the Oven

A Gutsy Guide to Becoming One Hot and Healthy Mother!

By **Rory Freedman and Kim Barnouin**

Running Press • 2008 • 336 pages • \$14.95

Reviewed by **Jennifer Pickens**

Bursting with smarts and their classic sense of humor, Rory Freedman and Kim Barnouin of *Skinny Bitch* fame offer fans old and new *Skinny Bitch: Bun in the Oven*. With this sassy new tome, the authors give pregnant women everywhere a whole new reason to eat healthy. Using language familiar to *Skinny Bitch* readers, Freedman and Barnouin reiterate the evils of factory farming and dairy, and include new information about cravings, breastfeeding, post-baby attitude, and constipation—yes, that's right. You gotta love a couple of chicks who bring us a chapter simply called "Pooping." How much weight should you gain during your pregnancy? Don't worry about being a "skinny bitch" now. The underlying message is that a healthy baby is the ultimate goal. Harried moms-to-be will appreciate the day-of-the-week sample menus, and won't believe the scary stuff they dig up on the Big Three baby food companies. "If you're engaged enough to put a bow in her hair or match his sneakers to his onesie, you can take the time to make sure you're not poisoning your child," they write. This book is an entertaining read even if you're not preppers, but it makes the perfect gift for a friend who is.





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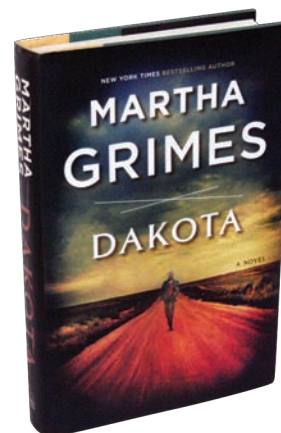
Dakota

By Martha Grimes

Viking • 2008 • 432 pages • \$25.95

Reviewed by Claudia Delman

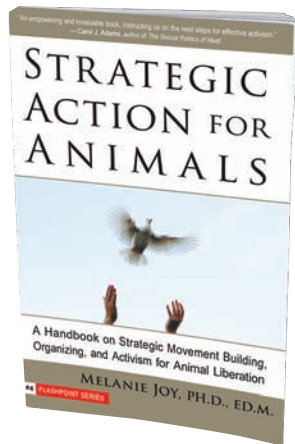
Thrilling and engaging, *Dakota* is a book you just can't put down. Author Martha Grimes has woven animal welfare/rights messages into her works for years, and in *Dakota* (a sequel to *Biting the Moon*) she uses Andi Oliver, an amnesiac and animal-lover, to further her discussion on how humans mistreat their fellow beings. In the previous novel, Andi spent time rescuing animals in the Sandia Mountains of New Mexico. In *Dakota*, Grimes focuses on confined-animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and slaughterhouses. Forewarning: she includes descriptions of animal abuse both chillingly accurate and disturbing. While *Dakota* uncovers the plight of animals in the CAFO system, her narrative also brings the reader into a universally compelling tale of a woman trying to discover her own identity. Grimes draws the reader in and spins her tale with an expert-storyteller's skill. This book is Grimes at her best, with strong messages and an inspirational protagonist.



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Strategic Action for Animals A Handbook on Strategic Movement Building, Organizing, and Activism for Animal Liberation

By **Melanie Joy, PhD**

Lantern Books • 2008 • 176 pages • \$20

Reviewed by **Tara Failey**

As history attests, it's often a powerful book that propels social change—think *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the abolition movement and *Silent Spring* to the ban on DDT. Similarly, author Melanie Joy's *Strategic Action for Animals* imagines and instructs how the animal-rights movement can rise to new levels of empowerment and success. The book provides guidelines for multifaceted strategic action, including movement building, organizing, and individual activism. Drawing on diverse social movements, Joy underscores that harnessing “people power” is key to overcoming both internal struggles within the movement and animal exploiters' myriad advantages. All activists stand to benefit from Joy's tips to prevent burnout, wasted resources, and dissidence within organizations. The overarching message is hope-inspiring: Joy writes, “If you can imagine it, and you can strategize, you will achieve [your goal].” **VN**

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