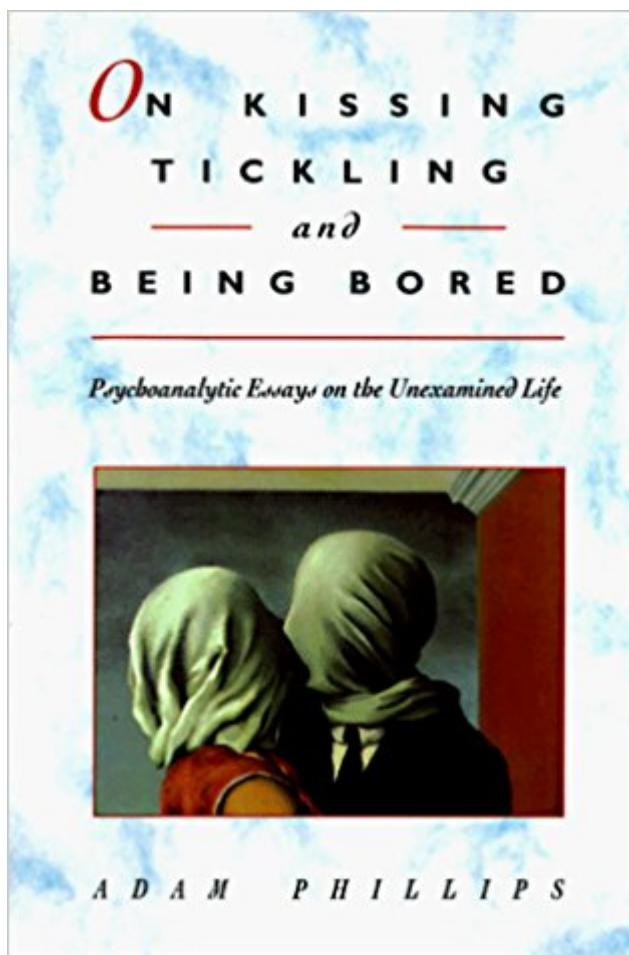


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# On Kissing, Tickling, And Being Bored: Psychoanalytic Essays On The Unexamined Life



## **Synopsis**

In a style that is writerly and audacious, Adam Phillips takes up a variety of seemingly ordinary subjects underinvestigated by psychoanalysis--kissing, worrying, risk, solitude, composure, even farting as it relates to worrying. He argues that psychoanalysis began as a virtuoso improvisation within the science of medicine, but that virtuosity has given way to the dream of science that only the examined life is worth living. Phillips goes on to show how the drive to omniscience has been unfortunate both for psychoanalysis and for life. He reveals how much one's psychic health depends on establishing a realm of life that successfully resists examination.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Adam Phillips...writes about magnificently light subjects (kissing, tickling and, best of all, worrying) with a great deal of insight...He writes with farsighted equanimity about everything from solitude to spiders. In this regard, he's a bit like an Oliver Sacks of psychoanalysis, both affable and unalarmed. (Gail Caldwell Boston Sunday Globe)A childlike freshness of vision informs these essays, which are at once compact, sophisticated, sharply knowing, yet almost provocatively casual, relaxed, amusing...[Phillips] is strikingly original and suggestive as a wry observer of psychoanalysis...[A] telling, engaging, brilliantly amusing and unsettling book. (Robert Coles Raritan)In three superb books, *On Kissing, Tickling, and Being Bored*; *On Flirtation*; and *Terrors and Experts*...[Phillips] has endorsed pleasure as a laudable goal (imagine!) and enshrined narrative as a form of soul making. In the process, he's punched lovely skylights into the gloomy Freudian edifice

and in general done much to rehabilitate the psychoanalytic enterprise by honoring the idiosyncrasy of human experience and by wielding method lightly, playfully, humanely. (Will Blythe Esquire) Like Chekhov, Phillips writes as well as he doctors, and his fascination with the subtleties of human behavior makes him a good storyteller...He has a welcome openness to the essential strangeness of every person; this alone is reason enough to read him. (Jane Mendelsohn *Guardian*) These are extremely insightful psychoanalytic essays on things like worry and solitude, which are of much more concern to me than issues like wanting to sleep with your closest relatives (Anne Enright *Irish Times*)

Adam Phillips is Principal Child Psychotherapist in the Wolverton Gardens Child and Family Consultation Centre, London.

This is a collection of essays by Adam Phillips that cover a variety of topics from a Freudian psychological viewpoint. The essays are generally well-written, erudite, humorous, and interesting, though occasionally he engages in bouts of nit-picking with other Freudian analysts. They are organized around a general theme of making the unexamined life conscious, often by asking questions such as "what is the unconscious problem than your belief solves for you?" The book assumes a deep knowledge of Freud's writings, some clinical experience, and familiarity with later Freudian theorists such as D. W. Winnicott and Masud Kahn. However the essays are still entertaining and interesting for those readers without all of that background knowledge.

This little book demands a careful read. The author does not 'dumb down' his considerable knowledge, despite the rather catchy title. It gave me some invaluable insights.

Great condition, service and price. Adam Phillips is great. Very insightful on common day things.

I picked this out due to an excerpt in my copy of the Faber Book of Science- also a high recommend, p.s. Wanted if for the chapter on worrying which was excerpted- a magnificent chapter that touches on hunting, etymology, and Charles Dickens. Also had high hopes for the chapter on boredom, which were met. That is a very stimulating (as in thought stimulating) chapter. The tickling chapter was the only letdown so far. The 3 pages there are a good start, but he just gave up on it. I anticipated a thorough insight into adult tickling erotica, such as who develops this fetish and why, but there is only a brief few notes on tickling in children. I suppose he never even thought of the

topic as one that pertains to adults...And be sure to start at the Preface. He psycho-analyses psycho-analysis, puts psychology right on the couch and gets into its head, its inner secret thoughts. High comedy and high-brow and highly worth it. Great noteworthy read overall. My margins are full of scribblings.

There isn't book Adam Phillips has written I'd pass up, I'm a former psych major/ now a yogi/ applicable in everyday life always, genius.

The essays were more academic than I'd anticipated and I think they presuppose a working knowledge of Freud and psychoanalytic theory. I skipped around to the ones that interested me, meaning I didn't feel like reading all of them. I've got an advanced degree in psychology; I understand from where this book comes and I thought it was just fine. Smart, worth looking at, but not as "nothing else like this" as the reviews seem to indicate. Worth mentioning: Phillips is a child psychologist and his anecdotes, from his own practice, are about children. Four stars for intelligence.

Insightful

Please issue this on Kindle.

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