

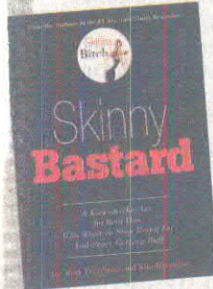
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'Skinny' Authors Have New Goal: Making Men Buff

By MOTOKO RICH

Can the sassy, foul-mouthed, hectoring tone that prompted millions of women to buy "Skinny Bitch" work for men?

In an effort to capture the other gender with their best-selling diet book franchise, Rory Freedman and Kim Barnouin, the authors of "Skinny Bitch," a vegan manifesto clothed as a weight-loss primer, have re-



rofitted the original book for men under the title "Skinny Bastard." The book, published by Running Press, goes on sale on Monday.

The authors and publisher believe that the tough-love message of the original book will translate to men who want to lose weight and "get ripped." Running Press, a division of Perseus Books, has planned an initial print run of 100,000 copies.

"Skinny Bitch," with maxims like "sugar is the Devil" and "soda is liquid Satan," has spent a total of 92 weeks on The New York Times Advice, How-To and Miscellaneous Paperback Best-Seller list, and has sold 1.1 million copies, according to Nielsen BookScan, which tracks about 70 percent of sales. The authors have also written a recipe book, "Skinny Bitch in the Kitch," which sold a healthy 217,000 copies, and a book for pregnant mothers, "Skinny Bitch: Bun in the Oven," which has sold only 26,000 copies.

"Skinny Bastard," said David Steinberg, chief executive of Perseus, is "a testosterone repackaging of basically the same book, prepared in a way that will get the message out to men."

Ms. Freedman said she and Ms. Barnouin had always planned to write a book

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STEPHANIE DIANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kim Barnouin, left, and Rory Freedman, authors of "Skinny Bitch" and now "Skinny Bastard."

Authors' New Goal: Making Men Buff

From First Arts Page

for men. "All along, the plan was to target both men and women," Ms. Freedman said. "It was just: Let's get 'Skinny Bitch' out there and establish it because women are more prone to buying diet books and books in general."

"Skinny Bastard" follows roughly the same outline as "Skinny Bitch," with the language retooled to appeal to male psychology. Whereas the introduction to "Skinny Bitch" reads, "If you can't take one more day of self-loathing, you're ready to get skinny," the men's version does not assume low self-esteem: "Chances are, you haven't done so badly, despite the few extra lbs you're carting around. ... But don't kid yourself, pal: A hot-bodied man is a head-turner."

The authors added a section on professional athletes who follow a vegan or vegetarian diet (although not necessarily the one presented in "Skinny Bitch"), including Ricky Williams, a running back for the Miami Dolphins, and Jerry Stackhouse, a shooting guard for the Dallas Mavericks. (A spokeswoman for the Mavericks said Mr. Stackhouse was now back to eating meat.) A new chapter, "No Girls Allowed" details the benefits of eating a vegan diet in preventing heart disease, diabetes and pros-

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tate cancer.

In general the most popular men's diet books tend to focus on fitness more than food, said Edward Ash-Milby, a buyer in the diet book category at Barnes & Noble. He said 8 out of 10 people shopping in the diet section were women. Both the publisher and the authors assume that mostly women will buy "Skinny Bastard."

"I think the guys will enjoy it once they have it," Ms. Barnouin said. "But I think it's going to be the wives and girlfriends and sisters buying these books."

Some booksellers suggested that men might be affronted by the book's tone. "You're not going to insult somebody into weight loss," said Geoffrey Jennings of Rainy Day Books, an independent store in Fairway, Kan. "It's funny for girls to do that back and forth and guys too can throw things back and forth insult-wise. But this isn't going to be one of those pass it around the bar, 'Here's a book for all you guys with beer bellies.'" Mr. Jennings said he had ordered only six copies of "Skinny Bastard."

From a nutritional point of

view [Lisa Young](#), an adjunct professor of nutrition at New York University, said the tone of "Skinny Bastard" — in which, for example, the authors refer deprecatingly to "man boobs" — didn't appeal to her. "But it may appeal to the nondieter or the people who don't want to read a boring diet book that just says eat less," Ms. Young said.

She said men tended to be motivated more by health than vanity when trying to lose weight, so adding a chapter about heart disease and prostate cancer "is a very smart way to speak to men."

Perhaps what "Skinny Bastard" needs is a celebrity to be photographed with a copy. After all, "Skinny Bitch" only took off a year and a half after it was published, when Victoria Beckham, the pop star known as Posh Spice and wife of the soccer star David Beckham, was seen picking up a copy at Kitson, a boutique in Los Angeles.

According to Fraser Ross, the owner, Ms. Beckham didn't buy the book, though the store sold thousands of copies. He said he hadn't yet seen "Skinny Bastard."

The book, Mr. Ross said, "needs the perfect skinny bastard to endorse it like Victoria did." (Ms. Beckham did not actually endorse "Skinny Bitch.") "And I don't know who that would be."