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Josh Gondelman, Joe Berkowitz : You Blew It!: An Awkward Look at the Many Ways in Which You've Already Ruined Your Life before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised You Blew It!: An Awkward Look at the Many Ways in Which You've Already Ruined Your Life:

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human? - Do you exist in the modern era? - Have you ever farted, used a mobile phone, or gone on a date? Good news, this book is for you! It will make you laugh. It will make you think (but not too hard). It will make you cry, because you almost certainly have found yourself in many of the cringeworthy scenarios outlined in the book. If you're interested in becoming a slightly-less awful adult, or accidentally doing a spit-take while reading in a boba cafe, give "You Blew It" a try! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. So glad I did! By FlyingFishThumbs up, a good read. Awkwardness is something we ALL face daily (at some point, don't lie to yourself.. you do). But, it's nice to see that many of the situations- we aren't alone in. So, if you could use a good belly laugh, take some time and read this book. As a side note: Glad I know how to handle a rejected fist bump... 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read. These guys have looked at many aspects ... By Howard W. Berkowitz Great read. These guys have looked at many aspects of everyone's life and have highlighted just how ridiculous we all can be. I found myself speeding through the book turning pages laughing myself into exhaustion. If you are looking to laugh at life in general, as well as people you know and yourself - this is a must read.

A hilarious examination of faux pas for readers of Allie Brosh's *Hyperbole and a Half* and Jenny Lawson's *Let's Pretend This Never Happened* Humankind is doomed. Especially you. It's already too late. From overstaying your welcome at a party, to leaving passive-aggressive post-its on your roommate's belongings, to letting your date know the extent of the internet reconnaissance you did on them—you're destined to embarrass yourself again and again. In *You Blew It!*, Josh Gondelman, comedian and co-creator of the "Modern Seinfeld" twitter account, teams up with Joe Berkowitz, an equally wry and ruthless social-observer, to dissect a range of painfully hilarious faux pas. Breaking down the code violations of modern culture—particularly our fervent, ridiculous addiction to technology—Gondelman and Berkowitz will keep you laughing as they explore how social blunders are simply part of the mystery that is you.

About the Author Josh Gondelman is a comedian and writer who incubated in Boston before moving to New York. He is an Emmy-nominated writer for *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, which is a television show. He has also written for *Women's Health*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Cut*, which are magazines. He has toured internationally performing standup, which is just heavily-rehearsed talking, really. Joe Berkowitz is a writer living in Brooklyn. His work has been featured in *The Awl*, *Salon*, *The Village Voice*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Vulture*, *RollingStone.com*, *GQ.com*, and *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, among others. He is currently a staff writer at *Fast Company*. He apologizes in advance and often. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. ***This excerpt is from an advance uncorrected proof*** Copyright © 2015 Josh Gondelman Joe Berkowitz CHAPTER 1 Friends Like These Every year after your twenty-second birthday, it becomes more difficult to make new friends. Nobody told you this as a child because you would've cried about it until given ice cream or a pony. As children, two people can form an intense bond over simply not being the kid who threw up on the monkey bars that time. Once we're old enough to file our own taxes, though, we've become conditioned to assume everyone we meet has enough friends already. As hard as it is to make new friends in adulthood, though, it's easier than ever to lose them. Friendship dynamics evolve over time. In high school, half your friends hated each other and only stuck together because, well, what else were they gonna do—hang out at a cooler high school, where the principal spends most of his time with a small group of students at a nearby fifties-themed diner? Adults don't have to do that. Our busy lives both explain and excuse losing touch. All it takes now is one perceived slight, and we never text that buddy from our urban kickball league ever again. Of course, this disposability isn't true of old friends. Anyone whose wedding you were in won't kick you to the curb because you declined to "like" one of their Facebook status updates. (Although he or she probably will move to Scarsdale and breed, thus de-friending you by natural causes.) It's the new people in your life you actually worry about. A blossoming adult friendship is a delicate soufflé under constant threat of collapsing under its own weight and turning into egg chum. But unlike the soufflé we destroyed back in home ec class, friends don't give you credit just for showing up. Making Plans and Breaking Plans Even if much of friendship can now be literally phoned in, most of us still like to actually meet up from time to time and gaze at our phones together in person. Every year, though, it seems there are fewer hours in each day and more reasons not to leave the house. Spending time in the same room as your friends used to be an essential part of forging a community, and still is, but now you can get that feeling of togetherness from protesting a sitcom cancellation while doing five other things and not wearing pants. If people meet up less than they once did, it's also because making plans has started to feel like a cold-war showdown of who will cancel first. It's pretty much expected that before any two people meet up they will first cancel back and forth five or six times, like two awful ships in the night piloted by people who have never driven ships before. One part of the problem is scheduling. If you pick a date too soon, your friend probably can't make it; pick one too far out, and you come across like your own executive assistant trying to pencil someone in for a "desk-side." Choosing a time frame is crucial, though, because everybody knows that "Let's meet up sometime" is code for "See you never." Getting together and doing stuff always sounds like something Future You would do. Future You is down for whatever. On the day of, though, Current You is more "down comforter," and doesn't want to go anywhere—which is often the optimal outcome. But bailing on friends too often puts you on that slippery slope toward becoming the Boy Who Cried RSVP.

That's why there's a protocol for cancellation. On the day you're supposed to meet with a friend, it's fairly standard to check in and confirm that neither of you has died nor had a conflicting appendectomy come up. Some people even offer an out during this check-in, a chance to reschedule if need be. Any mention of a rain check, though, is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Unless you're seriously pumped about after-work drinks, it seems almost rude to not reschedule when your friend offers. He or she probably just wanted to put this off until later but didn't want to be the jerk who pulled the trigger. It's like a vampire playing coy about needing to be invited in until you just give up and throw your neck-blood right onto his fangs. After canceling and rescheduling enough times, it's clear that this is all a charade and neither of you really wants to see the other. Actually meeting up at this point would be like listening to the decades-delayed Guns N' Roses album Chinese Democracy—confusing and unnecessary. Neither of you will come right out and pronounce the plan over. Instead, you slowly starve it out, withdrawing from Gchats, avoiding all mention of this idea, until it withers and dies. When two weeks have gone by without mentioning your coffee date, you've both officially won at cancel-chess. Congratulations, you are free.

I Don't Know Why You Say Good-bye, I Say Hello If you're anything like us, you're not out of the woods—even if you do make time to see a friend. But assuming you're seeing this acquaintance on purpose, you may want to actually, you know, talk to her. Don't worry, though. There are plenty of ways to botch both the entry and dismount of conversation.

The Handshake What was once a simple clenching of fingers for the purpose of making sure the other person wasn't going to stab you with a sword is now a minefield of unregulated finger gymnastics. First off, how much pressure do you apply during a handshake? You don't want to go too hard with it. You would seem psychotic. Squeezing an acquaintance's hand with a metric ton per square inch of pressure is like dunking over your seven-year-old nephew. You've just proved that you are a big strong person who has no restraint. But you also don't want to leave your hand completely limp, like your limbs are made of uncooked steak. It's unnerving. Unless you are a surgeon or someone else who does delicate, creepy work with their fingers, grip firmly. Don't be gross. Even once you've gauged the appropriate pressure with which to clamp, there's still the issue of handshake style. Do you pump once? Twice? Thrice? (Answer: One pump is standard, two is for politicians, and three is reserved for characters played by Chris Farley in early 1990s SNL sketches.) Plus, over the last few years, the handshake-shift-grip-pull-in-for-a-hug-and-backslap has become increasingly popular. That move says: "I want to hug you, but I'm worried things are moving too fast. Oops. It happened." Usually it's men doing this. Women often feel less shame about showing physical affection to their friends, whether it's hugging, cheek kisses, or making out while drunk and talking about it twice a year. On average, women are much less emotionally repressed.

The Fist Bump A fist pound is a simple, no-frills greeting. Unfortunately, it has permeated the public consciousness to a point where everyone knows it, but nobody knows exactly when to do it. A fist bump sends one of several diverse messages. It could mean anything from . . . "Thanks for coming to my fraternity mixer," to . . . "I am a germaphobe," but also . . . "I just saw a movie about cool inner-city teens in the eighties," or . . . "We're both wearing rings that when touched together give us superpowers!" Worst of all, there's no way out of a fist bump if the other person rejects you. After a snubbed handshake, you can run the rebuffed fingers through your hair. In this case, you're left holding a limp fist in front of you with no outlet. If this happens to you, simply punch yourself in the face and declare, "I'm dumb!" It is no more awkward than what was already happening.

The Hug Unless you're European, a full-on hug is the most intimate form of friend-greeting, except when you do it wrong. Hugging is like lovemaking but with your clothes on, and you can do it with people you're not attracted to even when you're sober and not trying to get revenge on someone. (Who's living in the past NOW, Rebecca?) What we mean to say is, it is a close-up smooshing of bodies against one another that could go wrong at any moment, especially if one person is more into it than the other. When one person goes for a hug and the other person offers only a handshake, it is a rejection as powerful as the "I love you" . . . "I know" scene from *The Empire Strikes Back*. Even if a hug does end up happening, it'll be a rigid, hips three feet apart, room for the Holy Ghost hug. The kind you thought you left behind when you stopped going to middle school dances.

Exit Through the Gift Shop "Parting," as Shakespeare wrote, "is such sweet sorrow." But usually it's just the regular kind of sorrow, completely devoid of any sugar or artificial sweetener. Every departure presents the same pitfalls as a greeting, plus a few more opportunities to show you barely know how to be a person. Given what we've already mentioned about planning social events, the best way to say good-bye to a friend is to make direct eye contact, count to three in unison, and then shout: "LET'S TOTALLY DO THIS AGAIN SOON. I KNOW YOU'RE VERY BUSY, BUT I'LL TEXT YOU WHEN I HAVE A BETTER IDEA WHAT MY WEEK LOOKS LIKE." Then run in opposite directions, regardless of where you parked or what subway you need to take. This technique subverts the discomfort of both planning a future engagement and the multiple good-byes that occur when both people leave in the same direction. It always plays out the same way: The laughter at each false ending grows more strained. The shrugs grow more cartoonish. This is why we recommend using the second half of any meet-up to draw a map of each person's exit strategy like you're planning a prison break. Color-code each individual route, if you have to. Anything's better than a series of exponentially more queasy iterations of "I guess this is good-bye for real" until one of you is finally inside of an apartment.

Say It to My Facebook When friends from separate circles meet in real life, you hope it's as cordial as a UN meeting. Not necessarily on social media, though. Friends of yours who will never meet in person might butt heads in the comments of your Facebook status and, rather than whipping these opposing factions into order, you hope

they fight each other to the death like Coliseum gladiators. That's just one way interactions with friends online are much different than in person. All that remains is the constant threat of embarrassment. Each strain of social media offers the same opportunity to validate your opinions and your lifestyle in general. It's officially confirmed that the double-gluten brownie you baked looks delicious. Everyone agrees that Sunday is indeed Funday. We crave affirmations like hamsters pressing buttons to get more pellets. (Pellets of heroin. In this scenario, you're a hamster involved in a heroin experiment.) On the other hand, if you like every single status your friend writes, then, in true nihilist fashion, you like nothing. Some friends go the other way, though, never affirming anything you post online. Which is fine! Maybe he or she is busy, you know, actually doing shit. But now anytime you think about Jody, you're thinking about "Jody, who hates everything I say and wishes I was dead." If your friends are ever mad at you, social media has made it easier than ever to find out, or delude yourself into that conclusion. It used to be a common fear that everyone is having a good time without you. Thanks to Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, though, you can now see everybody hanging out without you in real time, all the time. On the bright side, not being invited to a heavily photographed event means you won't have to ask anybody to untag you from all the pictures where it looks like you have a wonky eye. (All the pictures. All of them. What is wrong with your eye?)

Friends of Friends: The Strangers We Spend Time With

There's nothing better than spending time with old friends. You develop an intimacy and a shorthand that enriches over time, a lack of pretense. Words that don't have any specific importance to the culture at large conjure cherished memories because of a mutually remembered goofy thing that happened one time. That said, being forced to tag along with friends of friends and witness other people's inside jokes is a Clockwork Orange-esque immersion into horror. That exact same type of shorthand that brings you so much joy amongs friends—only between other friends—looks to you like the demented scrawling of a madman. What really makes friends of friends worse than outright strangers is that you're expected to get along with them. At a party full of randos, you can be honest. You can argue. You can ignore the folks you don't care for. But when you're connected by a mutual acquaintance, you're supposed to behave nicely, like you're on a playdate set up by your parents. Getting along with your friends' friends isn't quite as important as maintaining a cordial relationship with the significant others of the people in your social group. Picking a fight with your college friend's childhood bestie isn't going to, let's say, cause your friend to sleep on the couch. But you can still derail an otherwise pleasant birthday party or housewarming. And going your whole life without having at least a minor dustup with a F.O.A.F. (Friend of a Friend) is impossible, because most of your friends' friends are assholes. In fact, most of your friends are probably assholes, too, it's just that you've learned to love them. Statistically, you're probably an asshole. We don't have the numbers on hand, but trust us. It's true. That's why it's so stressful when separate groups of your friends meet. Any gathering where most of the attendees don't know each other is like a dog park for humans. And dogs at a dog park don't get along. They posture. They yap. They pee on things. These dangers apply to people as well, although humans are generally more adept at taking commands like: "Can we do this later?" and "Let's not talk about Israel, okay?" It's a situation that can't be remedied. Every generally good person is someone else's asshole, as illustrated above. That's why every F.O.A.F. meeting has trailer-park meth-lab explosion potential. To you, your friends are just your friends. You love them all. But what if you accidentally invite Borderline Racist Friend to dinner with Gets Offended By Every Single Thing Friend? You're in for a long night of "I don't think that's what Gary meant by 'those people.' Please stop shouting Maya Angelou poetry in this restaurant." Just as disastrous can be pairing Unambitious Hometown Friend with Pretentious Globe-trotter Friend. "Actually, it's pronounced phuh. It's a Vietnamese noodle soup." Relax, buddy. Nobody doubts that you backpacked in Asia after junior year. You don't have to overrenunciate every single teriyaki dish and martial art for the rest of your life to prove it.

-----Sinking Friendships: Acquaintances to Avoid

We have lots of otherwise great friends whose worst qualities are amplified in unfamiliar settings. Combining any of those ingredients, which can be wonderful on their own, will lead to a foul-tasting hobo chili of camaraderie. So be careful who you bring into contact with one another or your two favorite people could become mortal enemies. Like these people:

- Cries After Two Drinks Friend
- Loves Strip Clubs Friend
- Suddenly Got Really Religious Friend
- Can't Get Over Their Ex Friend
- Won't Leave Their Own Neighborhood Friend
- Plays in a Shitty Band Friend
- Can't Do Anything Without Their Significant Other Friend
- Never Carries Cash Friend
- Comes From Money Friend
- Used To Be Poor and Is Now a Rich Dick Friend

----- If You Can't Say Something Nice, You'll Probably Still Say It

Most people are horrendous when it comes to accepting compliments. Even the slightest praise about, say, their performance in a play, and they vehemently deny it as though you had asked if they ever had a sexy dream about you. As annoying as this behavior is, and as awkward as it can get when a friend fishes for compliments and you don't take the bait, sometimes it's the person doling out the praise who can turn a celebratory moment into a fiasco. Some compliments are barely better than saying nothing at all, but others are worse than if you had said nothing while giving a double thumbs-down and shaking your head slowly. Hate, Actually

The word "actually" conveys surprise where none should be and can therefore be taken as an insult. Saying your friend is actually good at basketball means you're amazed that he is able to overcome the insurmountable obstacles set by his height and Judaism.

Paparazzi-ing

Even if the celebrity you think your friend looks like is objectively attractive, making the comparison out loud is bound to backfire. There's every chance you'll accidentally bring up the celebrity your friend hates or, more interesting, the

celebrity who hates your friend. The Non-pliment Here is a short list of things that are fascinating: serial killers, stunt bartending, David Lynch movies, and the healing of scars. If you call your friend's appearance or creative output "interesting," you're actually pretty good at being kind of a dick. Compliments without any value judgment are just observations. Saying "Oh, you got a haircut!" instead of "Nice haircut!" makes you sound like a toddler excited about learning new words. Unimprovement Telling someone he "cleans up nicely" means the rest of the calendar year he dresses like a chimney sweep. If you're too emphatic about how great your friend looks now, he gets embarrassed about how he looked before—like when your barber gives you a look when you come in that says, "How have you even been walking around like this?" The Investigator "How are you still single?" isn't flattering praise—it's an invitation to categorize your most private flaws for the sake of small talk. The False Idol Almost anything you tell your friend she is "brave" for doing is something you would not be caught dead doing yourself. You don't really wish you were "confident enough to wear that dress." You just know you would confidently throw that dress in the trash if given the chance. Known Unknowns Knowledge is power. Take something as simple as a person's name. If you don't remember the name of an acquaintance, it's totally fine. In the average week, we interact with approximately one hundred Arcade Fires' worth of people and they're not all gonna stick. What's unacceptable is guessing someone's name. You're definitely not going to get it right. Even worse is forgetting the name of a friend's significant other. Now there are two people mad at you. Not remembering at all, though, is much preferable to calling that friend's current significant other the name of his or her ex. Doing so might break up their relationship and give you the reputation of a reverse matchmaker. Chickenshits everywhere will seek you out to break up their relationships for them. Remembering people's names is super important—and if you remember the names of their dogs, too, you deserve a human treat. On the other hand, sometimes pretending not to know stuff makes conversations go smoother. Interrupt your friend's soul-bearing moment to mention that Vanessa already gave you the gist, and now you're spending ten minutes discussing how Vanessa is the worst. (Of course, Vanessa and your friend will also have this discussion later about you. Everybody in your circle of friends is equi-worst.) When you're not pretending to know information or pretending to not know it, you might be giving something away you're not supposed to. It could be a secret—or more likely something you didn't realize was a secret until it's too late. This is why you are never to speak of parties you've been invited to until you are actually there at the party, completely covered in nacho crumbs and margarita salt. Way more people are not invited to any given party than are invited, and anyone you mention one to definitely wasn't yet aware this party exists. It stings a lot less to find out a party happened and you weren't invited, though, than to know a party's about to happen and everyone's going but you. Not that we have any idea what that's like. If you ever don't see us at a party, it's because we had a cooler party to go to. Beyoncé was probably performing there. But we were totally invited. Trust us.