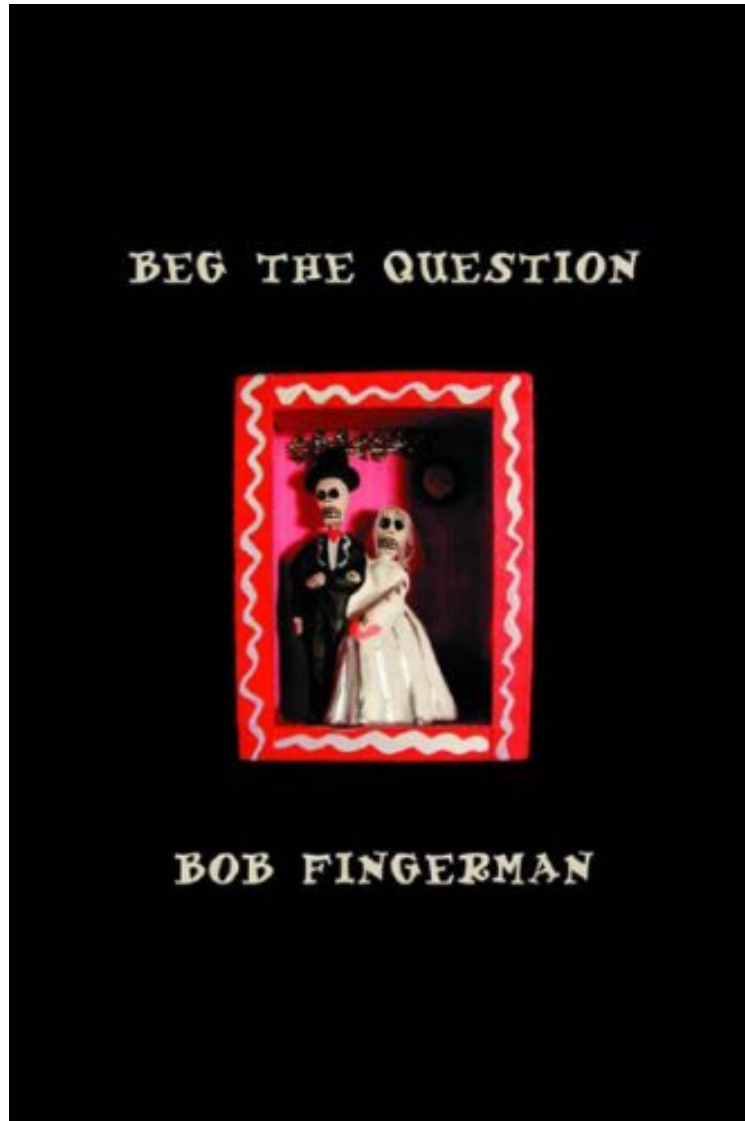


(Download free pdf) Beg the Question (Minimum Wage)

## Beg the Question (Minimum Wage)

*Bob Fingerman*

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**Bob Fingerman : Beg the Question (Minimum Wage)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beg the Question (Minimum Wage):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It was a gift. I didn't read the book ...By FrizzleIt was a gift. I didn't read the book.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. FantasticBy NovacaineThe art and story are just fantastic. It makes me want to move back to N.Y. I would recommend this to anyone who loves great art wrapped and great story telling.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. This book is crazy good!By Kevin HuxfordMan...sometimes there are books that are so near-and-dear to you that they are extremely difficult to try to

review and put into words. *Minimum Wage* was a book I first read years ago when it was initially released in single issues. The book was simply a semi-autobiographical yarn about an artist struggling through his days while living with his girlfriend. I was living with someone in Los Angeles when I first read it. The book hooked me immediately (but not just because of the domestic similarities). Fast forward many years ahead, where Fantagraphics has now collected it all under the new title of *Beg The Question*. It's a collection of every single scattered *Minimum Wage* issue to have come out, plus some original material. The book weighs in at a hefty 230 pages of graphic novel work, plus a few pages of prose (including an introduction by Penn Jillette (of Penn Teller fame)). In addition to all of that, Bob Fingerman has gone back to touch up every page (and nearly every panel). He had gotten feedback about how the star of the book, Rob Hoffman, had an inconsistent look regarding his age. So he went back to touch it up for this collection and it shows. I remembered Rob Hoffman fluctuating in looks pretty often and not looking to be in his 20s many times. It's nice to see a collection of the work that really seems, at this point, to have defined Fingerman's career wind up getting this sort of treatment. As mentioned, this book is semi-autobiographical. Both Bob and "Rob" worked doing strips for porn and satire magazines. This is evident through the story itself and the artwork. Bob's evokes memories of some of the best style of art you've seen in *Cracked* (where he worked) and *MAD* magazines. There is a gritty-yet-cartoony feel to his artwork that I've always enjoyed. Thinking about it made me remember how Fingerman doesn't draw a lot of "pretty" people...he draws real people. Don't get me wrong: Rob's lady in the book, Sylvia, looks extremely hot (for a cartoon chick) many times. But I'm trying to emphasize that he draws real people, warts and all. He writes them that way, as well. Every character has their flaws and weaknesses. The star of the book, like many of us, seems to see more of the bad in him than the good. In fact, I think that much of the best qualities in him are communicated just by the suffering that he has the strength to get through and the quality people that obviously appreciate having him in their lives. Since he's basically writing himself here, that seems pretty brave. There are many things about this book that make it difficult to review. The 230 pages worth of material doesn't really help. But I think what makes it the most difficult is that it really has a bit of that *Seinfeld* "it's a show about nothing" syndrome. While it is true that the story really walks us through the relationship of Rob and Sylvia (through dating, living together, engagement, and eventual marriage), you can't say that the book is about that. There is so much else going on that has little to do with that journey. There's Rob's struggle to succeed with his art career, his relationship with his friends, and then the idiosyncrasies of all his friends displayed separate from their relationship to Rob. The only thing that every chapter has in common throughout this book is its honesty. It deals with unplanned pregnancy (and subsequent abortion), death, career stagnation, illness, uncertainty, neurosis, jealousy, and "the wandering eye". Through it all, it makes you laugh and occasionally touches your heart. The only complaint I have about the book is in Bob Fingerman's address to the reader where he states he has more of this story to tell, but he plans on telling it anywhere BUT in a comic book. Sadly, I don't know that he'll get the chance or that any other format will ever be able to match this work here.

A caustic and hilarious love story set in 1990s New York City. Bob Fingerman's *Beg the Question* tells the story of Rob and Sylvia, two twenty-somethings navigating the labyrinth of New York City life. Imagine a cross between *Seinfeld* and *Caligula*, set in Manhattan, and you'll have an idea of Fingerman's caustic wit. *Beg the Question* follows Rob and Sylvia's relationship through all of its ups-and-downs, from courtship to marriage, public sex to unwanted pregnancies, and everything in between. Performance art, extended families, the comic book industry and *Screw* magazine are just a few of the other topics subjected to Fingerman's satirical microscope. Fingerman's mid-1990s comic book series *Minimum Wage* was a breakthrough success for Fingerman, and this marks the first collection of the entire run, retouched (many pages are substantially or entirely redrawn) with added gray tones and almost 40 pages of never-before-published material. The deluxe hardcover format makes *Beg the Question* a perfect holiday purchase for Gen Xers facing the reality that *Nevermind* came out over a decade ago and the mortgage payment is due this week. Featuring an introduction by noted novelist and television writer Jerry Stahl.

From Publishers Weekly In this revision and expansion of Fingerman's acclaimed *Minimum Wage* series, the artist offers 40 pages of retouched and redrawn panels, enhanced by gray tones that add a rich tone and spatial volume to each drawing. Fingerman chronicles the daily lives of young lovers Rob Hoffman and Sylvia Fannucci and their motley crew of friends in 1990s Gotham. It's at once a veiled biography and convincing fiction. Rob makes his living drawing pornographic cartoons for an obese editor at *Pork* magazine, amusingly reminiscent of *Screw* magazine. Sylvia, a hairdresser, also writes, plays guitar and paints. Their friends are hipsters drawn from New York's dives and dead-end jobs, annoying yet comical. Rob and Sylvia are well developed characters, likeable despite plenty of obnoxious personal flaws. Wildly oversexed, the two can't keep their hands off each other. But when an unexpected pregnancy confronts them, readers learn of Rob's secret, violent psychological aversion to having children. Rob also struggles to jump-start his comics career, enduring humiliating interviews with art directors, and attends a comics convention complete with the requisite *Star Trek* nerds and Goth girls in spandex bikinis. Ridiculous subplots abound, from the jealous boyfriend of a topless dancer to the Martin Amis fan so obsessed with getting dozens of Amis

autographs he becomes a borderline stalker. This is not a plot-driven book, but a daily chronicle of scuffling, artsy New Yorkers. They go to Coney Island on a blistering summer day, down burgers at White Castle, attend obligatory family gatherings and have sex, letting readers tag along. Fingerman's dialogue is biting and realistic, and his drawing is exceptional. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Fingerman chronicled the young and underemployed in New York City in his mid-'90s alternative-comics series *Minimum Wage*. He has reworked those stories and added 40 pages of new material for this book. Although he employs a large and diverse cast, the focus is on caustic Rob Hoffman, a struggling artist who makes ends meet by drawing cartoons for a porno mag, and his high-strung girlfriend, Sylvia Fanucci. The strips follow the couple as they search for an affordable apartment, confront an unplanned pregnancy, and slowly creep up on the prospect of matrimony--and be advised, they have explicitly rendered sex frequently along the way. Distractions they enjoy include the performance-art scene, experimental filmmaking, and weekend escapes to Sag Harbor. Fingerman depicts their eventful if directionless lives with humor and empathy, and his cartoonish yet detailed drawing style, with its cramped and cluttered panels, effectively conveys the discomfort of urban life. Anyone who has lived or envied *la vie boheme* should relate to this dead-on evocation of a contemporary version of it. Gordon Flagg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A page-turner to read. And it's funny, to boot.... This is a highly recommended book. Grade: A. -- Jeremy Shorr, *Comics Buyer's Guide*, 6 September 2002 His characters suck in the reader and constantly surprise him or her. This is the definite article. Grade: A. -- S. A. Bennett, *Comics Buyer's Guide*, 6 September 2002 It's just about the most fun I've had reading anything in a long, long time.... Nice work, Fingerman. -- Tom De Haven, author of *Dugan Under Ground* Readers should get it for Fingerman's quirky-but-clear style, and his careful, faithful reproductions of dialogue, fashion...in NYC. Grade: A. -- Phil Mateer, *Comics Buyer's Guide*, 6 September 2002 The comic-book equivalent of a Kevin Smith film: Hip, clever, character-driven human interest stories. Grade: A+. -- Cliff Biggers, *Comics Buyer's Guide*, 6 September 2002 Vivid, ribald.... his dialogue is worthy of the stage it's terrific screwball-comedy byplay that rings true. [Grade]: A-. -- Entertainment Weekly, 10 January 2003, Ken Tucker Wow, I'd forgotten how striking this series was.... Dynamic. -- Robert Scott, *Comics Buyer's Guide*, 6 September 2002 [A] funny, heartwarming, and poignant work. It helps make the case for comics being the great American art form. -- Tony Isabella, "Tony's Tips," *Comics Buyer's Guide* #1519, 4 January 2003 [E]arthly realism so often missing from conventional prose novels.... Rob and Sylvia are vivid, unheroic heroes.... A-. -- Entertainment Weekly [R]emarkable.... [with] a funny and affecting focus. -- Time Out New York, 21 November 2002, Andrew Johnston