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Odd Girls And Twilight Lovers: A History Of Lesbian Life In Twentieth-Century America



Synopsis

As Lillian Faderman writes, there are "no constants with regard to lesbianism," except that lesbians prefer women. In this groundbreaking book, she reclaims the history of lesbian life in twentieth-century America, tracing the evolution of lesbian identity and subcultures from early networks to more recent diverse lifestyles. She draws from journals, unpublished manuscripts, songs, media accounts, novels, medical literature, pop culture artifacts, and oral histories by lesbians of all ages and backgrounds, uncovering a narrative of uncommon depth and originality.

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Customer Reviews

Faderman charts the evolution of the concept of the "lesbian" as a 20th-century social construct and shows how love between women, once known at the turn of the century by such terms as "romantic friendship" or "sentimental friendship," came to be called "lesbianism." What was once not a realistic alternative to marriage became possible as women became educated, demanded equal rights, and came out of the home and into the workforce. With increased opportunities for independence, women no longer needed men's financial support to survive and, as a result, love between women was no longer perceived as innocently as it had been in the past. This is a much-needed book and is highly recommended for all public libraries both for its information about the perception and treatment of this particular minority group in America, as well as for its historical and sociological contribution. Its scholarly approach and content also make it a necessity for women's studies collections.- Patricia Sarles, Mt. Sinai Medical Ctr., New YorkCopyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Odd Girls reverberates with the powerful voices of people speaking for themselves.... Faderman empowers her subject; instead of allowing lesbian lifestyles to be defined from the outside, her voice and those of other women transcend destructive stereotypes and misconceptions. Odd Girls offers a lucidly written and moving narrative of lesbian culture and community during its formative years. (The Village Voice) Fascinating... poignant and moving... Odd Girls is full of facts and wonderful details that readers may not have encountered, things that are a pleasure to learn and that seem valuable to know. (Los Angeles Times Book Review) One has to respect the tenacity of Lillian Faderman for making sense of the evolution of lesbian life in twentieth-century America.... This is a remarkable social history.... Her study attains the depth and evenhandedness of a scholarly classic. (Susan Brownmiller The Washington Post Book World) An important and challenging work for lesbians and heterosexuals alike.... Odd Girls is a key work, the point of reference which all subsequent studies of twentieth-century lesbian life in the United States will begin. (San Francisco Examiner) Faderman's sweeping, mesmerizing prose accentuates the magnificent scholarship in this definitive account of lesbian life in the past 100 years.... Faderman has combined her talent and experience to accomplish this wonder. (Barbara Grier Lambda Book Report) Nothing odd about Odd Girls; it combines clear prose with meticulous research. This book is an important contribution to understanding America and its people in our time. (Rita Mae Brown, author of Rubyfruit Jungle) A grand narrative synthesis of the cultural, social, and political history of lesbian life since the late nineteenth century.... Engaging and deeply moving stories. (New York Times Book Review) A splendid, uplifting achievement. (The Independent)

Very educational. I felt like I was reading a college textbook, but it was incredibly long, drawn out and redundant.

No one ever told me about all this stuff. I'm so glad there is a book laying it all out. A very great read.

So impressed with Lillian Faderman. Terrific research and insights into that culture, and the rest of our culture. What this book needs more than anything else is to fill in the 20 year gap between when it was written and today. Thank you Ms Faderman. Wow!

Filled with a lot of information about early 20th century lesbian relationships and how so much was

hidden because of society ideals. I used it for research.

Very interesting...a great read !!!

Although slightly outdated as it was published in the early 90s (very minor differences in some terminology) this book is a wonderful compilation of lesbian AND bisexual women's history in the United States. Not only was it a fun read (not totally dry, like some nonfiction) it had tons of primary texts cited. It really goes into depth on all of the combining factors that led to widespread homophobia in the United States too, as well as social dynamics in queer circles in the past. A very interesting read and the photos are a nice addition as well.

This is a great book and gives history of gay and lesbian people in history.

I love this book. I am reading it for a class and it is so interesting.

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