



What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution

By John Heidenry

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A history of the last three decades of sexual culture. The author details the rise of the science of sexology, the burgeoning of pornographic works which fanned controversies over freedom of expression, the homosexual and other minority lobbies, and the effect of all this on society as a whole.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

John Heidenry, a former editor at *Penthouse Forum*, has lived on the frontlines of the sexual revolution and knows whereof he writes in *What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution*. Despite its bodice-ripper title, the book is a serious look at modern sexual mores and issues. Heidenry is unabashedly pro-sex, but responsibly so. As he chronicles the coming of age of sexology, the growth of pop-culture pornography in *Screw* magazine or the film *Deep Throat*, and the legal battles fought by gays and lesbians, he is as forthcoming about the idiocies his subjects often fall into as he is about their heroics. He gives equally scathing treatment to people he views as crass opportunists (the porn-star John Holmes, for example) and anti-sex moralists on the right.

Heidenry is particularly sympathetic toward those who occupy the margins of mainstream sexuality--the bisexuals, transsexuals, and homosexuals, the prostitutes and pornographers. In these cases, he focuses on shared qualities: a need for love, for pleasure, for intimacy. *What Wild Ecstasy* is a frank, humane, and open-minded discussion of a subject that many people still find it difficult to talk about. Readers who approach Heidenry's book in the same spirit in which he writes will find, perhaps to their surprise, that underneath all the hoopla surrounding the sexual revolution, sex is still just one part of life, not the whole enchilada.

From Library Journal

This is an interesting, well-written account of an aspect of popular culture that still generates controversy?the so-called sexual revolution that began in the Sixties. Heidenry, former editor of *Penthouse Forum*, writes an entertaining account of the developments in the field of human sexuality from 1965 to the present. He discusses sex research, pornography, sexual minority groups, and contemporary sexual movements and their adherents and opponents. Readers will learn about the pill, abortion, Kinsey, Masters and Johnson, and Ted McIlvenna, as well as Annie Sprinkle, Bob Guccione, Hugh Hefner, Al Goldstein, and Larry Flynt. The author strives for balance in presenting the views of religious fundamentalists and both liberal and radical feminists, along with those who favor total sexual freedom. He also provides an extensive list of sources. At a time when the First Amendment and personal civil liberties are threatened, this timely book is highly recommended for all collections.?Barbara M. Bibel, Oakland P.L., Cal.

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From Kirkus Reviews

A detailed and engrossing history of the sexual revolution, though at points marred by an uneven understanding of the landscape. Heidenry (*Theirs Was the Kingdom*, 1993), former editor of *Penthouse Forum*, chronicles some 30 years of our changing sexual culture--sexology and sex therapy; gay liberation; pornography and censorship; controversies over the female orgasm; swinging; sadomasochism, and much more. Heidenry has an eye for a good story, and there are plenty of stories here--including gossip about figures on the sexual landscape from author Gay Talese to porn star Annie Sprinkle to legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon. But Heidenry indulges in more than his share of wild exaggeration. He claims, for instance, that Andrea Dworkin and MacKinnon were, respectively, Marat and Robespierre ``in the radical feminist Reign of Terror against men that was to wash over the country." Similarly absurd is his claim that in the '80s the sexual revolution ``shut down altogether"; certainly there was and is conservative backlash, but the changes continue, and popular morality will never be the same again. Also, it is clear that Heidenry is an outsider--albeit generally sympathetic--to gay and feminist struggles; this leads him to some odd choices. He begins his gay liberation chapter, for instance, with a lengthy account of a transsexual's personal torment and

eventual operation, even though he knows perfectly well (and states later) that transsexuals and gays have always been politically and socially separate, even at odds. Also, there is not always enough interpretation to lend shape to this rather sprawling narrative; at too many points he lets his anecdotes stand on their own, without speculating on their social significance. Plenty of pleasurable encounters, though not always satisfying. -- *Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Tietjen:

The reserve untitled What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution is the e-book that recommended to you to read. You can see the quality of the e-book content that will be shown to you actually. The language that creator use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The author was did a lot of investigation when write the book, to ensure the information that they share to your account is absolutely accurate. You also will get the e-book of What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution from the publisher to make you more enjoy free time.

Aaron Covington:

Why? Because this What Wild Ecstasy: The Rise and Fall of the Sexual Revolution is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap it but latter it will shock you with the secret the idea inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who write the book in such wonderful way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your talent and your critical thinking means. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I had been you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

Keith Lugo:

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