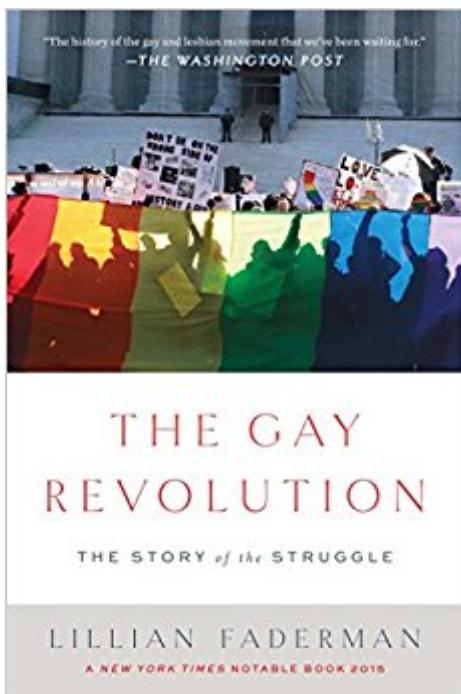


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# The Gay Revolution: The Story Of The Struggle



## Synopsis

The sweeping story of the struggle for gay and lesbian rights—based on amazing interviews with politicians, military figures, and members of the entire LGBT community who face these challenges every day: “This is the history of the gay and lesbian movement that we’ve been waiting for” (The Washington Post). The fight for gay and lesbian civil rights—the years of outrageous injustice, the early battles, the heart-breaking defeats, and the victories beyond the dreams of the gay rights pioneers—is the most important civil rights issue of the present day. In “the most comprehensive history to date of America’s gay-rights movement” (The Economist), Lillian Faderman tells this unfinished story through the dramatic accounts of passionate struggles with sweep, depth, and feeling. The Gay Revolution begins in the 1950s, when gays and lesbians were criminals, psychiatrists saw them as mentally ill, churches saw them as sinners, and society victimized them with hatred. Against this dark backdrop, a few brave people began to fight back, paving the way for the revolutionary changes of the 1960s and beyond. Faderman discusses the protests in the 1960s; the counter reaction of the 1970s and early eighties; the decimated but united community during the AIDS epidemic; and the current hurdles for the right to marriage equality. “A compelling read of a little-known part of our nation’s history, and of individuals whose stories range from heart-wrenching to inspiring to enraging to motivational” (Chicago Tribune), The Gay Revolution paints a nuanced portrait of the LGBT civil rights movement. A defining account, this is the most complete and authoritative book of its kind.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[T]his volume will deservedly become a standard in the field." ---Library Journal Starred Review  
--This text refers to the MP3 CD edition.

Lillian Faderman is an internationally known scholar of lesbian history and literature, as well as ethnic history and literature. Among her many honors are six Lambda Literary Awards, two American Library Association Awards, and several lifetime achievement awards for scholarship. She is the author of *The Gay Revolution* and the *New York Times* Notable Books, *Surpassing the Love of Men* and *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers*.

The author's literary skill is beyond praise, superior to that of most celebrated novelists. Of course the stories she tells, sometimes grim, sometimes encouraging, are true. They combine acknowledged sources with original research and interviews. As one would expect with an established lesbian scholar who has worked well with men, there is a good balance of male and female material. To be sure, it is not so much a history as a series of telling tableaux. There are some contextual limitations. Faderman starts the story in the immediate aftermath of World War II, with only a slight glance at such earlier figures as Magnus Hirschfeld and Henry Gerber. There is little acknowledgement of sources abroad. For example, the word "homophile," dominant in US movement circles after 1950, was coined by a German scholar, Gunther Heimsoth, in 1925. A more significant omission is that of England's Wolfenden Report of 1957, and the decriminalization there ten years after. These events gave great encouragement to our own efforts at law reform. All in all, though, this book is a brilliant success, and may be heartily recommended, both to newcomers and accomplished researchers.

I heard Lillian Faderman speak at the Cleveland City Club giving a very interesting overview of gay American history. I immediately checked out her book but was put off by its length of over 800 pages; I thought it might be too dense in less interesting detail. Once I started reading, this was not a problem at all. The book held my interest all the way through. The value for me was getting the big picture of how all the different gay groups evolved and how their different approaches were complementary to achieve progress in attaining the goals of the gay movement. The tension between organizations who wanted to promote gays as distinct subculture versus assimilationist groups and ideas seemed to result in successful strategies in the long haul. The book was also good in portraying how many brave individuals stepped forward at great personal expense to move

the slow process toward justice. I liked the author's emphasis on the role lesbians all throughout the history of the movement. I think this may have been short changed in a lot of previous accounts. She echoed Chuck Renslow's analysis that although Lesbian groups pretty much broke diplomatic relations with gay male groups in the early 80s, they stepped in with lots of help to AIDS organizations even though few lesbians actually got the disease. I appreciated her chapter on how in the late 90s Hawaii did all the legal groundwork to start the domestic partnership / Marriage process, but I was amazed she treated the history of Gay Marriage only tangentially. I would think the events leading Mass. to be the first state with marriage equality would have rated a summary in her book but I could find nothing on this. She may have weighted events and groups in LA and the west coast more heavily than other areas. With such a thorough, scholarly account Faderman had to limit her topic. She chose to treat the gay movement in the US from the 1950s through the present. So she had to leave out interesting topics of the movement in other countries and earlier important data such as the work of Magnus Hirschfeld and the German homophile magazines in the early 20th Century. In all this book is very well written and comprehensive. It is amazing how much progress gay rights has achieved in the last 60 years. Faderman's book gives us a great perspective in how this all came about.

A pretty exhaustive review of our history. It moves back and forth in time which at times can be a little confusing. As I lived through the entire period, much of the early history was a revelation. As a People, the LGBT community needs a historical presence, and I am grateful to Faderman for her largely successful effort.

This is the most extensive and enjoyable book on lesbian and gay history that I've come across. It's entertaining and readable and does a great job of surveying both gay and lesbian history equally. Each vignette adds color to the fabric of the story. I really enjoyed this book and have purchased and shared several copies with friends.

I only read 1/4 of the book and it really blew my mind, this is the book everyone should read so they can understand the struggles these people have been through.

It proved to be an amazing read, and it's something a lot of people my age really should take the time to learn. Absolutely inspiring, and artfully written!

This book is written so well it is universal. It will speak to any reader of any age of any sexual orientation or any gender identity. Lillian's eye is steady and honest. I don't think she missed any part of the struggle. I am only halfway through but will be recommending it to everyone. This book is very important for the advancement of all human rights.

The most complete and actuate book I have ever read on this subject. Little know facts about the Atlanta library raid in the 1950's.

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