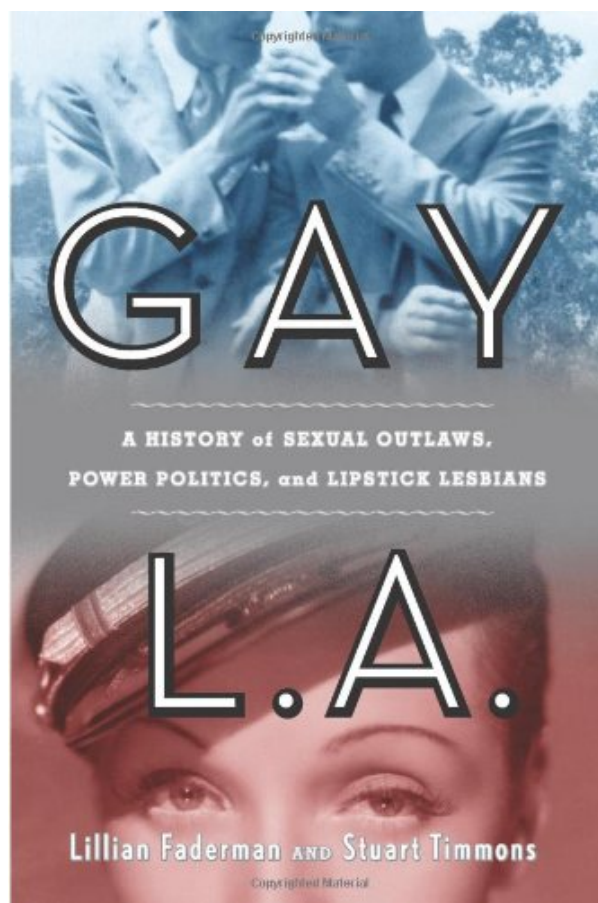
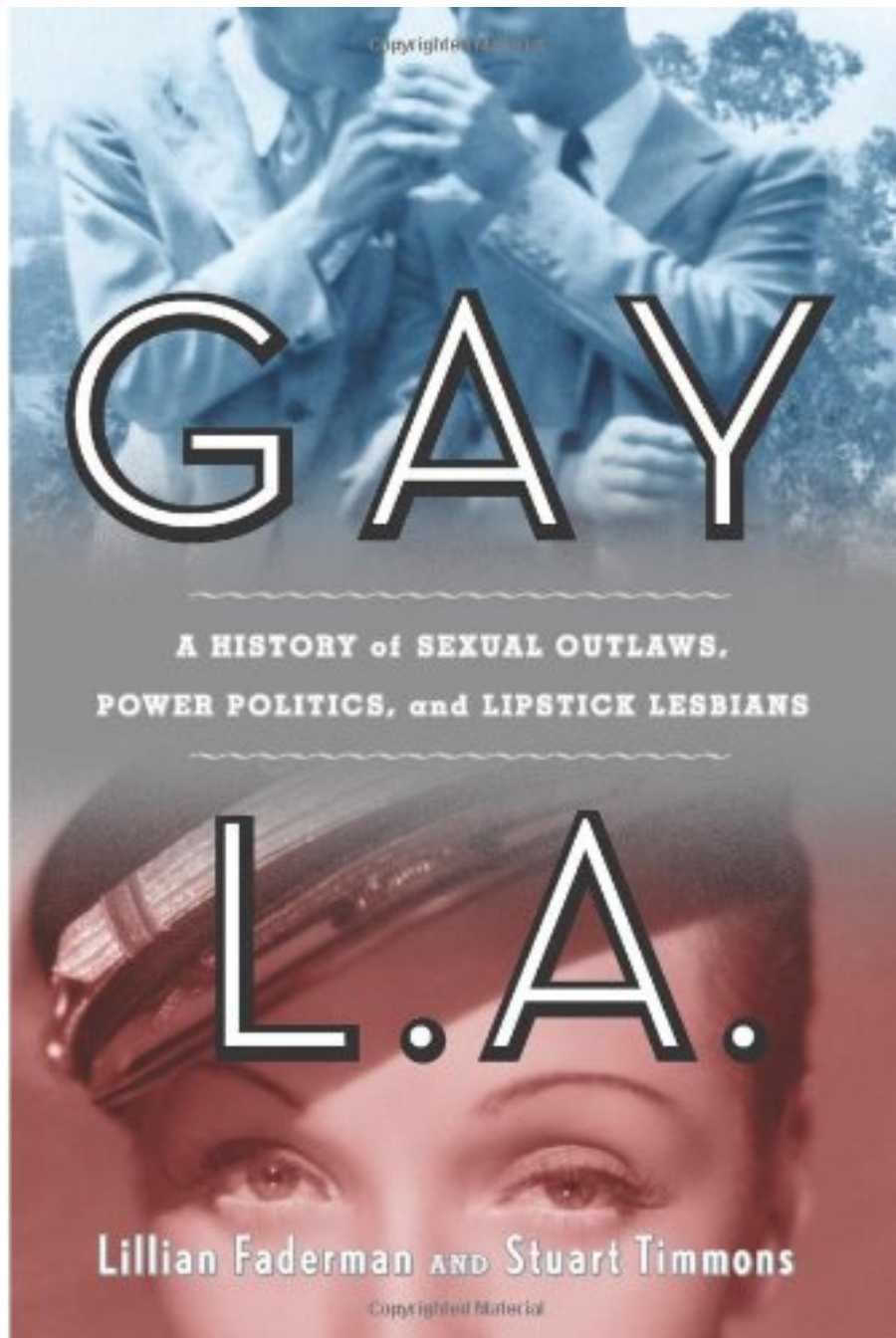


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LIPSTICK LESBIANS BY LILLIAN
FADERMAN, STUART TIMMONS**



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From Publishers Weekly

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Review

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The exhortation to "Go West!" has always had a strong hold on the American imagination. But for the gays, lesbians, and transgendered people who have moved to L.A. over the past two centuries, the City of Angels has offered a special home--which, in turn, gave rise to one of the most influential gay cultures in the world. Drawing upon untouched archives of documents and photographs and over 200 new interviews, Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons chart L.A.'s unique gay history, from the first missionary encounters with Native American cross-gendered "two spirits" to cross-dressing frontier women in search of their fortunes; from the bohemian freedom of early Hollywood to the explosion of gay life during World War II to the underground radicalism sparked by the 1950s blacklist; from the 1960s gay liberation movement to the creation of gay marketing in the 1990s. Faderman and Timmons show how geography, economic opportunity, and a constant influx of new people created a city that was more compatible to gay life than any other in America. Combining broad historical scope with deftly wrought stories of real people, from the Hollywood sound stage to the barrio, Gay L.A. is American social history at its best.

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A major monograph, long needed

By Wayne Dynes

The new book by Faderman and Timmons fills a major lacuna. For some years we have had the benefit of monographs on the gay and lesbian history of such major American cities as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. Los Angeles, in some ways the most important city of all in this respect, has been missing. All in all, the new book was well worth waiting for. Clearly written and well-documented with footnotes, it presents a historical account from the pre-Hispanic berdache, through the early decades of Anglo LA, the movie colony, the rise of the gay movement, the development of gay institutions, and on down to a brief look at the present. A particular strength is the material on women, which must be credited to the diligence and resourcefulness of the senior author, a distinguished scholar in the field of lesbian studies.

Quite properly, the authors reject the stereotypes that Easterners (still!) cherish about Los Angeles. It is only fair that they should do a little boasting of their own. The city has its own particular aura, its genius loci. It is in this connection, though, that I detect the one flaw in the book. The authors give an account of the rise of the first substantial American gay movement in the years 1947-51, with the work of Harry Hay, Edith Eyde, Dorr Legg and others. However, they do not offer a convincing explanation of why this event, which has been of epochal and enduring significance to American gays and lesbians, should arise in that particular American city. A half century ago, other cities, with older traditions and more substantial populations, might have been expected to make the great leap forward. Instead it was done in Los Angeles. Why?

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Important, timely and well-written history

By Bobla

"Gay L.A." is an important, very comprehensive and inspiring book--one that we've all been waiting for! It is packed with two-centuries worth of fascinating information, but it doesn't read like a boring history book at all. I was intrigued by all stuff I didn't know: the role of gay people in the city's early formation and especially the decades of corrupt oppression that were to follow. There is also a lot of new information about the Hollywood-studio era and the beginnings of the gay liberation movement in Los Angeles. This book really held my interest throughout. The Los Angeles Times gave it a full-page rave review, which "Gay L.A." certainly deserves.

14 of 17 people found the following review helpful.

Great book

By Amy S.

I read about gay rights in the news every week, but never knew much about the background of this movement. Gay L.A. is a great read and opens up a new world of activism, secret lives, and entire underground societies. It's easy to think that New York and San Francisco were responsible for all the gay breakthroughs, but Los Angeles has an amazing story. This book also tells the story of gay women as well as gay men, which is fascinating. This book is carefully footnoted, but is written like an epic novel, reaching back into the 1800s. It's free of the political dogma and academic jargon that can weigh down similar books. Like it or not, L.A. is one of America's major cities, and what's so interesting is that it's a bunch of small towns, beaches, immigrants and Hollywood all rolled into one. You learn so much about the city itself as well as the gay world, which had to be hidden until recently. I strongly recommend it.

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