

**a:e BOOKS**

# Lesbian Communities

## Festivals, RVs, and the Internet

REVIEW BY GLO DALEY

As a person of almost no academic orientation, unlike the editors and some of the writers, I approached *Lesbian Communities* with some wariness, fearing a bit of a dry read. I was, happily, quite wrong in my prejudice.

This book presents a broad spectrum of views and experiences about what we loosely call "lesbian communities"... and what an amazing, varied and colorful spectrum to behold. Clearly, this can only be a sampling of communities. However, it covers many of the possibilities and potentialities of old and new ways that lesbians were and are able to come together to support living, working, playing and problem-solving.

Editors Esther Rothblum and Penny Sablove have gathered the words of women from many diverse lesbian communities including womyn who are urban, country, young, old, radical, conservative, Japanese, African American, and even a couple of virtual communities.

Highlights for me were the surprising piece by Elena Dyke-woman, in which she draws comparisons between churches and lesbian communities, coming up with some specific and down-to-earth ways we might function better for the good of the group if we looked to see



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what churches might have to offer which we (as lesbians) don't necessarily. That's a very open-minded and brave proposition for someone who, with a radical feminist reputation, also identifies as an atheist and a Jew.

In another work by Jane Dickie et al. on the conversations between the 2nd and 3rd Wave feminists, the writers talk of "Speaking across Generations: A Radical Act." Rachel Gazda of this group writes, "Traditionally in the patriarchy, generations are not supposed to talk to each other. The younger generation is supposed to rebel

against the older generation - that is the response, distance is communicated. We listened to women's stories; we recorded them. That is a powerful process. It is intimate and real and so many of us are changed through this way of being."

One group talked of keeping their community together through "myth making" and "high play," concepts that seem quite useful and, to my mind, deserve more study, contemplation and checking out. Kathleen Liddle wrote about the continuing relevance of feminist bookstores and their importance as a center.

This book is loaded with important information, ideas, and wisdom. As Susan Krieger says in her article, "there is no one view or definition of lesbian community; there never can be ... I am grateful to all other women who, with their lives ... speak up, who say "here I am," who attempt to form bonds with other lesbians - both individual couple bonds and social bonds that extend beyond the couple. These are women whose past lovers become friends, who feel a unique and exciting kinship with other women who also love women, who burn with a love that still often dares not speak its name." ▼

➔ Glo Daley is a longtime creator and member of lesbian community in Huntington.

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