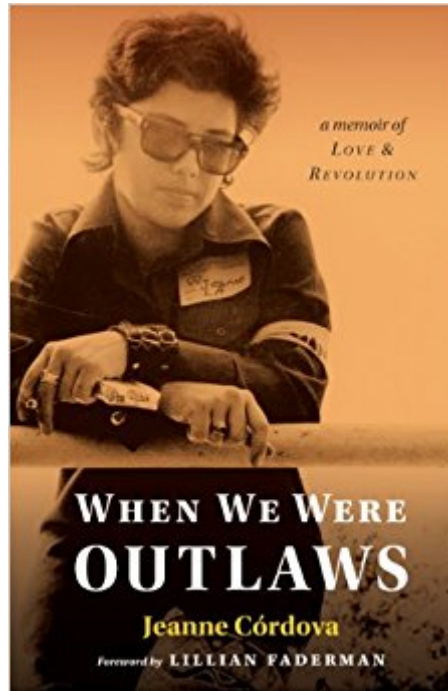




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When We Were Outlaws



Synopsis

A sweeping memoir, a raw and intimate chronicle of a young activist torn between conflicting personal longings and political goals. *When We Were Outlaws* offers a rare view of the life of a radical lesbian during the early cultural struggle for gay rights, Women's Liberation, and the New Left of the 1970s. Brash and ambitious, activist Jeanne Cordova is living with one woman and falling in love with another, but her passionate beliefs tell her that her first duty is 'to the revolution' to change the world and end discrimination against gays and lesbians. Trying to compartmentalize her sexual life, she becomes an investigative reporter for the famous, underground L.A. Free Press and finds herself involved with covering the Weather Underground, Angela Davis; exposing neo-Nazi bomber Captain Joe Tomassi, and befriending Emily Harris of the Symbionese Liberation Army. At the same time she is creating what will be the center of her revolutionary lesbian world: her own newsmagazine, *The Lesbian Tide*, destined to become the voice of the national lesbian feminist movement. By turns provocative and daringly honest, Cordova renders emblematic scenes of the era; ranging from strike protests to utopian music festivals, to underground meetings with radical fugitives; with period detail and evocative characters. For those who came of age in the '70s, and for those who weren't around but still ask 'What was it like?' *Outlaws* takes you back to re-live it. It also offers insights about ethics, decision making and strategy, still relevant today. With an introduction by renowned lesbian historian Lillian Faderman, *When We Were Outlaws* paints a vivid portrait of activism and the search for self-identity, set against the turbulent landscape of multiple struggles for social change that swept hundreds of thousands of Americans into the streets.

Book Information

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Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Social Activists #540 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Specific Groups > LGBT](#) #5311 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Specific Groups > Women](#)

Customer Reviews

"A riveting unique first hand telling of a dangerous, fractious, creative lesbian time, the lesbian feminist 70s with their messy, sexy, bold social and personal visions live again on Cordova's pages; she was thick in the middle of things, as a journalist, as an activist, as a lover."--Joan Nestle, editor of *A Persistent Desire*, *A Femme Butch Reader* and *GENDERqUEER*, *Voices from Beyond the Sexual Binary*. For LGBT people who care about activism, especially those young enough to have no memory of those iconic times, Cordova's "memoir of love and revolution" should be a must-read. [Filed By Patricia Nell Warren](#)

"When We Were Outlaws is content-rich and driven by a compelling plot. These two things make reading *When We Were Outlaws* a joy."--Lambda Literary, *The Gay & Lesbian Review* by Julie R. Enszer

"When We Were Outlaws, is such an important addition to the literary cannon of LGBT non-fiction. The book manages to be captivating, heartbreaking, and gratifying all at once."--*The Advocate* by Diane Anderson Minshall

Cordova's previous books include *Kicking the Habit*, *A Lesbian Nun Story*, and *Sexism; It's a Nasty Affair*. Her essays appear in numerous anthologies such as *Persistent Desire*, *A Femme Butch Reader*, and *Love, West Hollywood*.

I am a bit biased, but this book is an incredibly well written and fascinating view of the 1970s Lesbian and Women's Rights movement. Jeanne Cordova writes with incredible honesty about her own feelings and reactions to the time period without any hesitation or self promotion. The ugly personal thoughts are open and exposed along side of the hopes and loves of this woman. The author shares her views on the politics of the time period with a first person account of the hard struggle for equality. For Cordova, the women's rights movement and the Lesbian movement are the same and are fought for the same reasons. The Civil Rights Movement and the anti-establishment are represented in the trenches and on the battlefield of the streets of Los Angeles, California. The romantic struggle is as real for any gender or preference as it was for her. Torn between loves and making the same mistakes we all have between work, love and friendship.

I was a volunteer physician for the Gay Community Services Center in 1974 when they fired the women and some of the men who then started a strike against the Center. This is an accurate description of what happened and the few personalities that I can remember from that long ago. It's also a pretty accurate description of the types of relationships women were having in the community at the time, although I can't vouch for any of the specifics. I wasn't in on the gossip. But as a physician they'd come to me with their tales of woe when they broke up with someone and were having trouble sleeping, etc. Jeanne Cordova has done a terrific job conveying the feelings and facts of the time about LGBT issues, interpersonal issues, the Free Press, Lesbian Tide magazine and the radical groups of the time including the SLA and the Weathermen. Anyone with any political consciousness in the community had to ask ourselves how far we would go if confronted with a situation. Would we hide a fugitive from the SLA or Weathermen if asked? Jeanne describes it clearly and absolutely accurately as far as I remember.

Honest and bold story of one creative and inspirational lesbian leader who collaborated with diverse groups in Los Angeles to form a strong grassroots lesbian presence politically, and socially.

Great book about the gender and gay/lesbian issues of the 1970's - with a sweet love story thrown in.

Story of a life well lived by a strong woman.

I was there in parts of this book - so love reading about another's perspective of that time in my life. Highly recommend - well written and keeps your interest.

Jeanne Cordova gives her own personal history of being a lesbian during the 70's. the personal is political as you will discover by reading this book.

This book was phenomenal. The history, the love story, the background on so many activist movements: This was a priceless look into the past for me as a reader.

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