

## SUMMER READERS, SOME ARE NOT

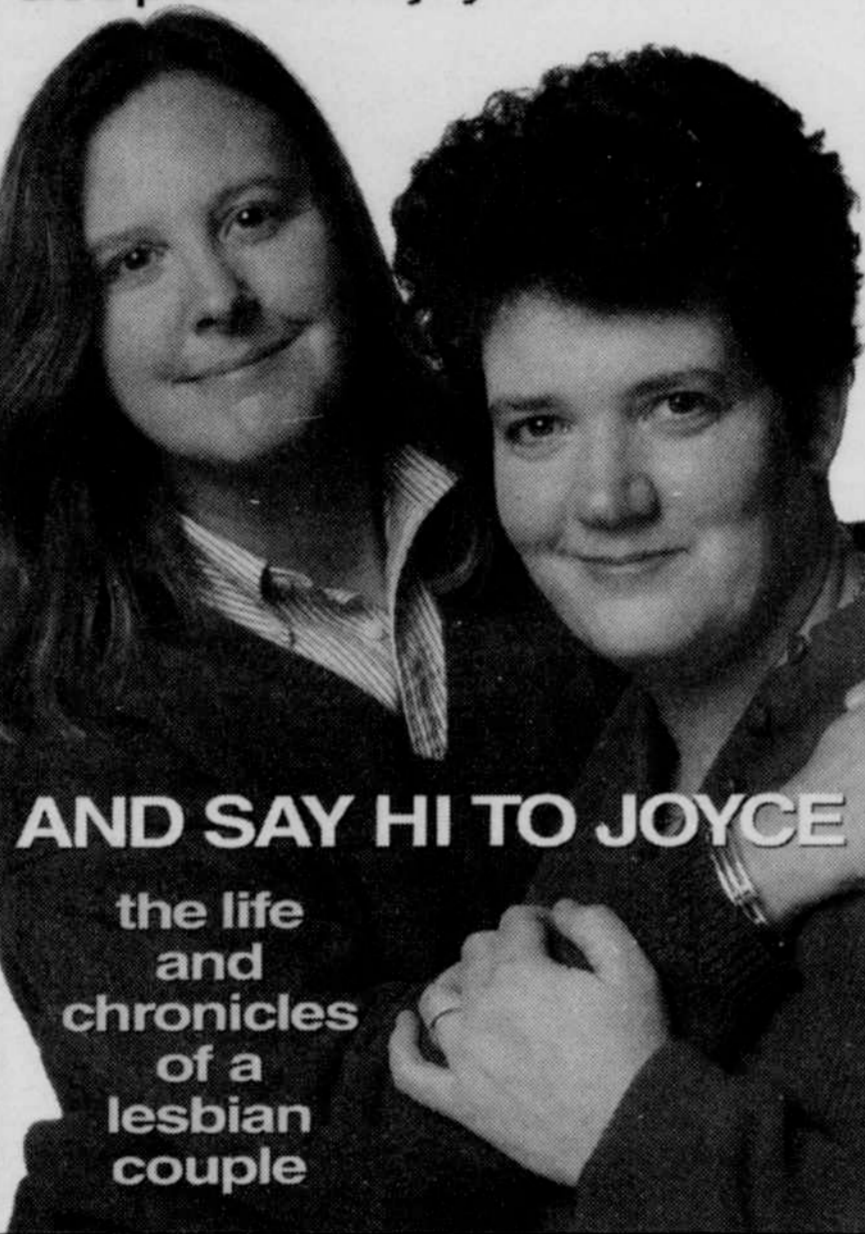
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short story. Although it is a little on the short side, it's definitely not light reading: It's the fictionalized autobiography of a gay teenager living in 1950s Canada (scary!), who is obsessed with fireworks, carnivals and self-destructive behavior. As in those ancient and bulky masterpieces *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Vanity Fair*, the midway is not just set dressing, it is a metaphor for life. Of course, this is the Cliff's Notes version with a more James Deane-esque protagonist, so don't be put off by the literary allusions.

**Flashpoint: Gay Male Sexual Writing** edited by Michael Bronski. Richard Kasak, 1996; \$12.95. Finally, erotica with a brain! This collection of short fiction was compiled with cultural analysis in mind. Of course, it's not all erotic (unless you're so depraved that simply reading the word "intercourse" is enough to make you "pitch a tent," or you've been sublimating your desire for so long that you can only get off intellectually), because sex itself isn't always that way. One thing all the stories do is to show the adaptation of major intellectual and literary trends to a gay experience and lifestyle.

**Penguin Book of International Gay Writing** edited by Mark Mitchell. Penguin, 1996; \$14.95. That old saw about never judging a book by its cover is only half true with this anthology. The two suggestively posed hunky sailors on the cover are not to be found inside—at least not until after you've waded through the historical selections and appropriations, which range from Plato to Camus. There is also quite a bit of new work included, some of which is rather steamy. The introduction by David Leavitt should provide you with enough assurance of this book's quality.

debprice and joycemurdoch



AND SAY HI TO JOYCE

the life and chronicles of a lesbian couple

**Three-Hand Jax and Other Spells** by Staszek. Permeable Press, 1995; \$9.95. Seattle author Stan Henry's first book-length collection (of previously published works) includes the "true" story of an infamous—though anonymous—Paul Dahlquist model, which is the most erotic and least challenging piece in the book. The real meat of this book is not the stories' occasionally bizarre eroticism, rather it is the continually disturbing excavation of the characters' psyche(s) and the relentless pursuit of a broader philosophical understanding of personal psychology. And it's funny too, even while performing mental acrobatics.

**Traitor to the Race** by Darieck Scott. Plume, 1995; \$10.95. Between the dedication and the prelude there is a quote from Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*—a tough act to follow, and reason enough to believe this is a powerful book. Scott paints a vivid picture of homophobia and self-hatred in the black community and the doubly difficult predicament of the protagonist, who is both gay and black and is involved in an interracial relationship. Members of the "religious white" should be Clockwork Orange'd by being tied up and forced to listen to this book over and over...

### LESBIAN NONFICTION

**Heterosexual Plots and Lesbian Narratives** by Marilyn R. Farwell. NYU Press, 1996; \$17.95. A collection of essays from this erudite but accessible professor at the University of Oregon. Discusses the nature of modern and postmodern lesbian literature.

**The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner** edited by Claire Harman. Virago, 1996; \$19.95. Another classic. Rich, varied, complex. Open to any page and find a beautifully written gem of one of life's precious

moments by a prolific writer of novels and other fare lately admitted to the lesbian literary hall of fame.

**Transgender Warriors** by Leslie Feinberg. Beacon, 1996; \$27.50. A history of "people who defy cultural barriers of sex and gender." Photos and more of the story Feinberg began in *Stone Butch Blues*.

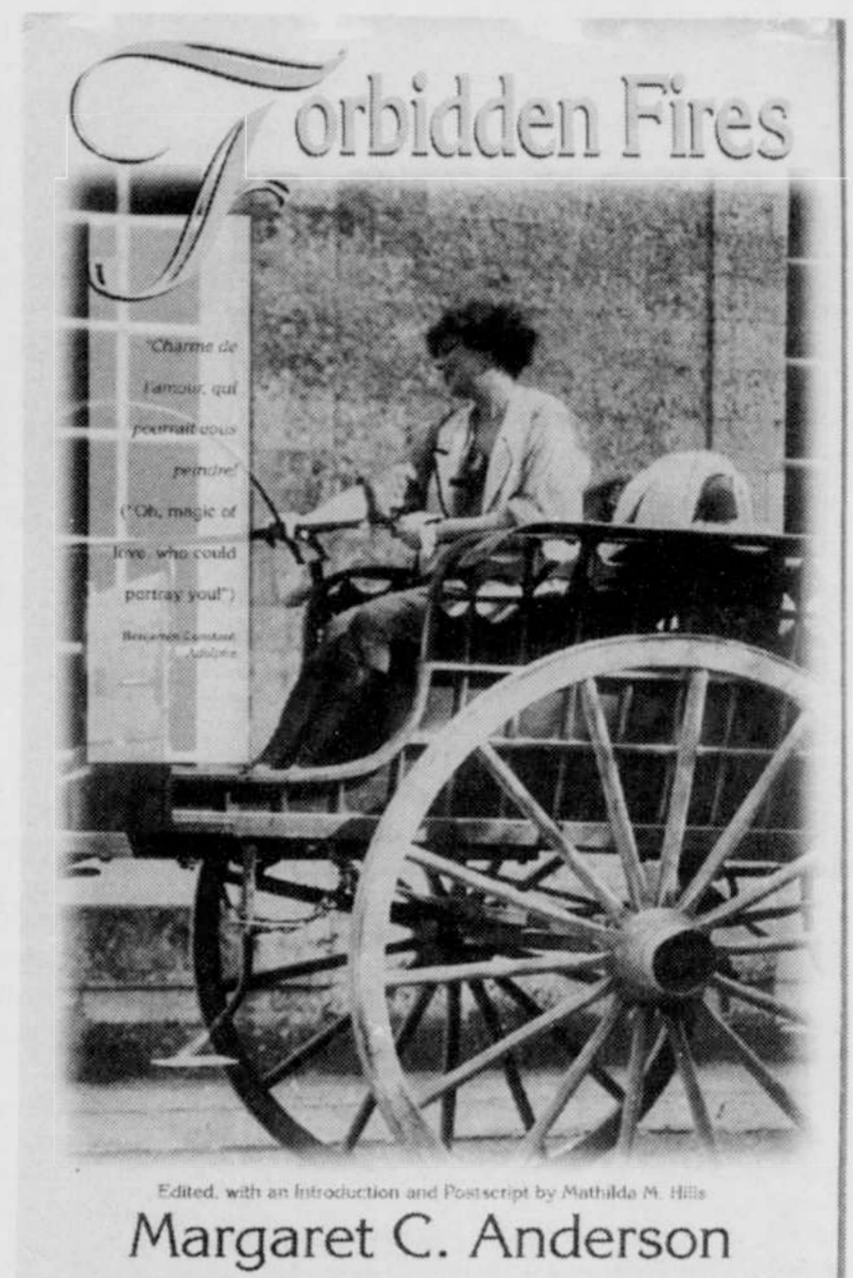
**And Say Hi to Joyce: The Life and Chronicles of a Lesbian Couple** by Deb Price and Joyce Murdoch. Doubleday, 1996; \$12.95. Includes the best of Price's pioneering out gay columns for the mainstream media and the story behind them as told by Murdoch.

### GAY MEN'S NONFICTION

**Becoming Gay: The Journey to Self-Acceptance** by Richard Isay, MD. Pantheon, 1996; \$23. Attention self-help groupies: Dr. Isay has written another insightful psychoanalytic treatise (is that an oxymoron?) on the psycho-social development of gay men. For the cautiously curious, Isay's discussion of coming out and denial and the psychological effects of HIV and AIDS will raise some issues worth consideration, but it should all be taken with a grain of salt. (Warning: after reading this book, the hem of your Freudian slip may be showing.)

**An Evening at the Garden of Allah: A Gay Cabaret in Seattle** by Don Paulson with Roger Simpson. Columbia University Press, 1996; \$34.95. Fascinating history of the hub of gay life in Seattle after World War II. Oral history of drag performers and patrons; a chapter on lesbians. (LL)

**Stud: Architectures of Masculinity** edited by Joel Sanders. Princeton Architectural Press, 1996; \$19.95. If you know what "architectonics" means, you probably already own this book; if you're serious (or pretentious) about art, it may be of interest (to your coffee table); if you have a genuine interest in the fabrication of male



Edited, with an Introduction and Postscript by Mathilda M. Hills  
Margaret C. Anderson

identity and the construction and gendering of space (from fashion trends to skyscrapers), you should definitely read it. One of the featured authors is Matthew Barney, a former football player and J. Crew model, whose installations and short films (currently showing at the SF MOMA) make one wonder what really goes on in the locker room.

**Truth Serum: Memoirs** by Bernard Cooper. Houghton Mifflin, 1996; \$21.95. Amy Tan likes this book (even though it's not an unbearably sad story about how traumatizing it is to be a modernized, Americanized child of traditional Asian parents), and here's why: Though it's no *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, this coming-out story has all the essential coming-of-age ingredients found in much of Tan's work and tells the age-old cross-cultural tale of the life-long struggle to understand one's self and place in the world.

### LESBIAN HUMOR

**Liliane in Butchy Dykes** by Leanne Franson. 1995; \$1.50. Available from Franson at PO Box 274, Succ Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec, Canada, H2W 2N8. No. 25 of the Liliane comic books really gets at the essence of butch.

**Roberts' Rules of Lesbian Living** by Shelly Roberts. Spinners Ink, 1996; \$5.95. A little book of truisms all our own. One of my favorites: "If male homosexuals are called 'gay,' then female homosexuals should be called 'ecstatic.'"

**The Butches of Madison County** by Ellen Orleans. Laugh Lines Press, 1995; \$7.95. Not having had the pleasure (?) of seeing the film that was obviously inspired by Orleans' book, I can't compare the two. But I'll bet you'll like this book version better.

Lesbians write gay male erotica...

SWITCH HITTERS

EDITED BY Carol Queen AND Lawrence Schimel

...and gay men write lesbian erotica

MEMOIRS

