



Daring to Find Our Names: The Search for Lesbigay Library History (Beta Phi Mu Monograph Series; 5)

James V. Carmichael

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Outlines theoretical and methodological problems in documenting lesbian history generally (and specifically, the history of lesbian professionals, particularly those in the feminized professions like librarianship). This book will appeal especially to historians of traditionally underrepresented populations (women, Native Americans, African Americans, lesbians). In particular, chapters on methodological problems in lesbian research, separatism, and biases created by gender bias will pull together for the first time integrated feminist/radical perspectives on library history. The authors call for more responsible treatment of such subjects as the outing of historical figures, and conversely, a more open approach to research on gender outlaws in the workplace.

Heralds a new era in historical research in which the collective subjective of a particular group of hidden minority voices is given front stage. Leading scholars from a variety of disciplines examine the theoretical and methodological problems of lesbian history and apply them to librarianship, one of the despised feminine professions. Founders and early leaders of the Task Force for Gay Liberation of the American Library Association, the oldest professionally endorsed gay task force in the world, reflect on their early struggles to gain recognition, and describe how sexism, homophobia, and discrimination have taken a toll in their personal and professional lives.

These stories challenge the notion that libraries have unequivocally defended the intellectual freedom and integrity of all their citizens, and provide a poignant counterpoint to the culture wars and political correctness debates within the lesbian community. Because of societal taboos, until recently, lesbian history has been invisible to the majority of its participants. Directors and workers in some of the world's leading gay and lesbian archives also share their experiences in collecting and making accessible ephemera and other partial historical remains to restore a heritage and identity to lesbian citizens.

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