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# Dear John, I Love Jane: Women Write About Leaving Men For Women



## Synopsis

The new buzzword in female sexuality is 'sexual fluidity'—the idea that for many women, sexual identity can shift over time, often in the direction of same-sex relationships. Examples abound in popular culture, from actress Cynthia Nixon, who left her male partner of 15 years to be with a woman, to writer and comedienne Carol Leifer, who divorced her husband for the same reason. In a culture increasingly open to accepting this fluidity, *Dear John, I Love Jane* is a timely, fiercely candid exploration of female sexuality and personal choice. The book is comprised of essays written by a broad spectrum of women, including a number of well-known writers and personalities. Their stories are sometimes funny, sometimes painful—but always achingly honest—accounts of leaving a man for a woman, and the consequences of making such a choice. Arousing, inspiring, bawdy, bold, and heartfelt, *Dear John, I Love Jane* is an engrossing reflection of a new era of female sexuality.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In "Dear John, I Love Jane" those of us who came out later in our lives, and especially after serious relationships with men (and often after having children), have found a place where (as editor Candace Walsh puts it) we could find "retreat that involved a tall stacked-stone fireplace and tumblers of shiraz." I wanted to connect. But the lesbians I met were not like me. They were Gold Star, they were kids, they had played both sides and were just deciding. They'd always known. In this book I found women like me. I appreciated their stories that shared SO MANY elements with my life. They were honest. They helped me be so as well. They said the things out loud that I was still

afraid to say. They used exact terms that floated through my head over these past three years. They described feeling powerful, and feeling lost. They cried over missed events with children, or never looked back on their marriages. Most of them had been with men they described as "good, loving, kind, understanding." They had been in relationships with their best friends. But still they needed to leave. Needed to explore and understand the turmoil inside of them. I wish I had this book when all this started. Or maybe I don't. Maybe you do need to find some of these things out for yourself. In any case, the book is here now. And it gives a loud and strong voice to women who find their truth in a variety of ways. I didn't always agree with the "hows" but I strongly identified with all the "whys." The writing is varied and runs from easy and conversational to more disjointed prose. Some of the stories flow effortlessly to a joyous conclusion - some end in pain, and give the impression of one foot in the past, one in the present. Not a great way to live, but very much part of the process.

At 47, after 13 years of marriage to a man, and a life lived completely straight, I was suddenly and inexplicably attracted to a woman. I was sure I'd lost my mind, or was at least having the worst mid-life crisis on record. I frantically, desperately searched for stories of other women like me: women who had always been straight - truly straight - and had only ever been attracted to men. I wasn't secretly gay, nor was I carelessly disregarding life-long lesbian urges. I scoured my history, but recalled no crushes on female teachers or confusing attractions to my college roommates. I was straight. I'd simply always been a girl who only liked boys. So, what was happening to me, now!?! My research turned up little. I felt completely alone in my experience with no point of reference until Dr. Lisa Diamond's "Sexual Fluidity" *Sexual Fluidity: Understanding Women's Love and Desire* was released in 2008. Diamond's book reads like the long research paper it is, but her findings were a relief. For the first time, I knew there were other women like me! Yet, Diamond's book gave me only tiny glimpses into the lives of women who have loved men, but now love women. I desperately wanted to know how other women navigated the transition from straight to lesbian. "Dear John, I Love Jane" gives voice to these women. The stories are recounted by smart, brave women who listen to their hearts and somehow find the courage to pursue the love they most desire. They are honest and unapologetic. Remarkably, all are incredibly gentle with the boyfriends, husbands, children, parents, friends and colleagues who journey with them.

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