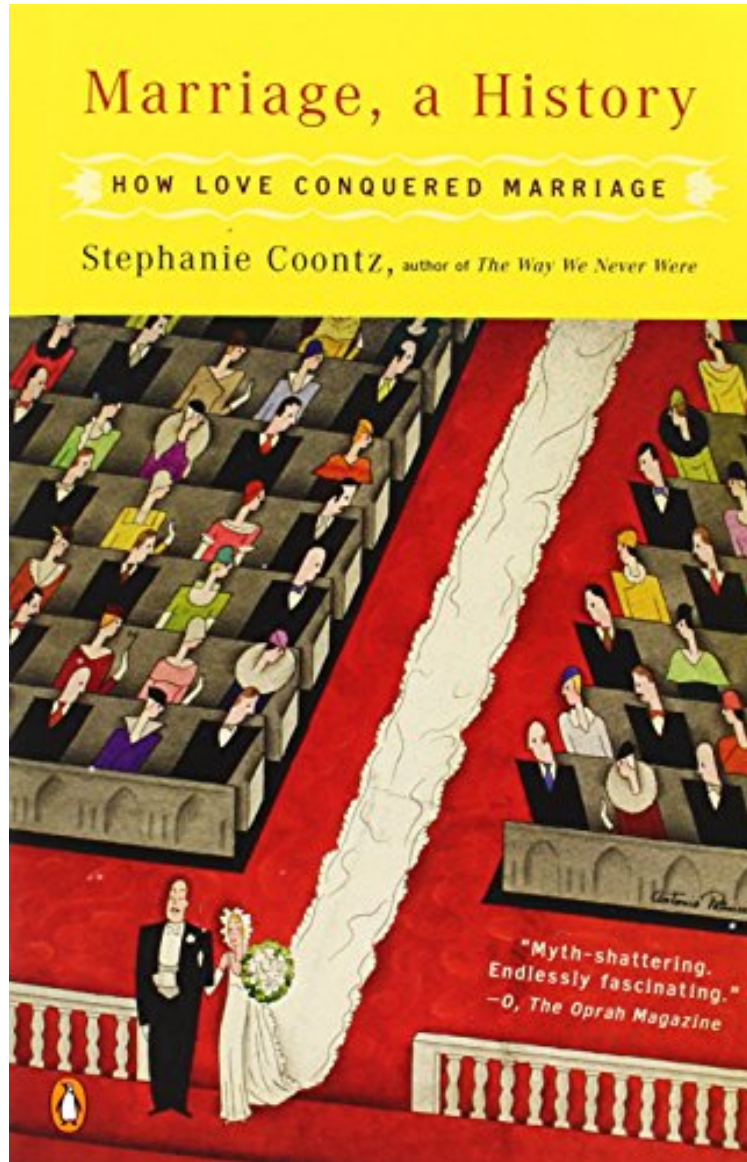


(Ebook pdf) Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage

Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage

Stephanie Coontz

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#82537 in Books Stephanie Coontz 2006-02-28 2006-02-28 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.39 x .93 x 5.501, .84 #File Name: 014303667X448 pages Marriage a History How Love Conquered Marriage | File size: 75.Mb

Stephanie Coontz : Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read, if a little ponderous. By Ron P. This is a fascinating read for anyone who ever wondered what marriage and interpersonal relationships in the western world looked like 100, 200, 300 years ago. We tend to operate under the assumption that the institution has always served pretty much the

same purposes it does today, but Coontz's book shows that nothing could be further from the truth. Marriage, in fact, has served so many varied economic, cultural, political and personal purposes over the centuries that it makes one wonder why people today get so worked up over gay marriage and other changes which continue to reflect the changing mores of western culture. That said, the first half of the book is a bit of a slog; the author giving far too many examples of little known historical characters and the oddities of their marriages. It picks up in the second half (I'm just now getting into that part) where she talks about changes brought about in the early 20th century by the industrial revolution and heightened expectations on the part of women at the end of the Victorian era. This part of the book is just easier to relate to by someone born mid-century like myself. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Much more than just about marriage By Waldir Pimenta While one might expect this book to cover topics like the evolution of the concepts of love, romanticism, sexuality, and yes, the economics of marriages (and especially arranged marriages), in the end it is really a book about human culture and history. It seems no other structure has been as central to our societies' organization, functioning and evolution as marriage and its relationship with family bonds, economic interactions, alliances and wars, and politics. It is clearly revealed how marriage has historically been about much more than two people, and that reducing the focus on love, partnership and companionship doesn't diminish its significance in the least -- on the contrary: pretending to treat it primarily as a romantic relationship is ignoring its greater role as one of the most powerful instruments in our history for mediating conflicts, establishing alliances, and in stabilizing tensions that could have been catastrophic otherwise. The history lessons presented by this book provide powerful perspectives that will forever change how you think about human relationships and reveal, on one hand, the complexity and intricacy of this vast network of interests and interactions, but on the other hand also the simplicity of core human drives that motivate pretty much all human activity. A fascinating read! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Writing By Elden This is an informative book on the history of marriage. At last written by someone who went to the trouble to find the factual content and write about it from an inside point of view. When you find the gems of truth about marriage it all makes sense. Who on earth started that tradition? Where did it come from, and why it was implemented? Really interesting read. Marriage is the one puzzling event we have in life that still does not make sense to us. Read this book it will explain it very clearly. Then we might change our view and adopt a more truthful idea of why a man and a woman want to get married.

Just when the clamor over "traditional" marriage couldnt get any louder, along comes this groundbreaking book to ask, "What tradition?" In *Marriage, a History*, historian and marriage expert Stephanie Coontz takes readers from the marital intrigues of ancient Babylon to the torments of Victorian lovers to demonstrate how recent the idea of marrying for love is and how absurd it would have seemed to most of our ancestors. It was when marriage moved into the emotional sphere in the nineteenth century, she argues, that it suffered as an institution just as it began to thrive as a personal relationship. This enlightening and hugely entertaining book brings intelligence, perspective, and wit to today's marital debate.

.com Politics, economics, greed, sex, cars without them, matrimony wouldnt have caused the historical revolution ensuing today, concludes social historian Stephanie Coontz, in *Marriage, a History*. Modern marriage is in crisis; but dont pine for a return to "the good old days," when men earned money and women kept house. Dont even assume the crisis is all bad. For as Coontz reveals in this ambitious, multi-century trek through wedlock, marriage has morphed into the highest expression of commitment in Western Europe and North America; and though assumptions no longer exist regarding which partner may say "I do" to work, childcare, or other shared responsibilities, a clear set of rules about saying "I dont" (to infidelity and irresponsibility) rings loud as church bells. "This is not the book I thought I was going to write," Coontz admits. She intended to show that marriage was not in crisis; merely changing in expected ways. But her exhaustive research suggested the opposite was true. Tracing matrimony's path from ancient times (when some cultures lacked a word for "love" and the majority of pairings were attempts to seize land or family names) through present day, she closely examines the many external forces at play in shaping modern marriage. Coontz details how society's attempts to toughen this institution, have actually made it more fragile. Her rich talent for analyzing events, statistics, and theories from a myriad of sources and enabling the reader to put them all in perspective make this provocative history book an essential resource. --Liane Thomas From Publishers Weekly Starred . When considered in the light of history, "traditional marriage" the purportedly time-honored institution some argue is in crisis thanks to rising rates of divorce and out-of-wedlock births, not to mention gay marriage is not so traditional at all. Indeed, Coontz (*The Way We Never Were*) argues, marriage has always been in flux, and "almost every marital and sexual arrangement we have seen in recent years, however startling it may appear, has been tried somewhere before." Based on extensive research (hers and others'), Coontz's fascinating study places current concepts of marriage in broad historical context, revealing that there is much more to "I do" than meets the eye. In ancient Rome, no distinction was made between cohabitation and marriage; during the Middle Ages, marriage was regarded less as a bond of love than as a "career" decision; in the Victorian era, the increasingly important idea of true love "undermined the gender hierarchy of the home" (in the past, men rulers of the household were encouraged to punish

insufficiently obedient wives). Coontz explains marriage as a way of ensuring a domestic labor force, as a political tool and as a flexible reflection of changing social standards and desires. She presents her arguments clearly, offering an excellent balance between the scholarly and the readable in this timely, important book. Agent, Susan Rabiner. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From The New Yorker Coontz confirms what many traditionalists have claimed: the fifties were the Golden Age of marriage. She also confirms what many progressives have claimed: the conditions that made the Golden Age possible were so fragile that they could not endure. Rising educational levels for women made it impossible to confine feminine ambition to ever more spotless floors, and the postwar boom made single-earner households less viable. More broadly, Coontz stresses the historical specificity of marriage based on love, tracing it from its emergence in Western Europe some two hundred years ago to modern manifestations like single-sex marriages and stay-at-home dads. Less successful are her attempts to provide an anthropology of spousal strategies across cultures. Current divorce statistics notwithstanding, Coontz sees marriage as an infinitely adaptable human achievement. Copyright 2005 The New Yorker