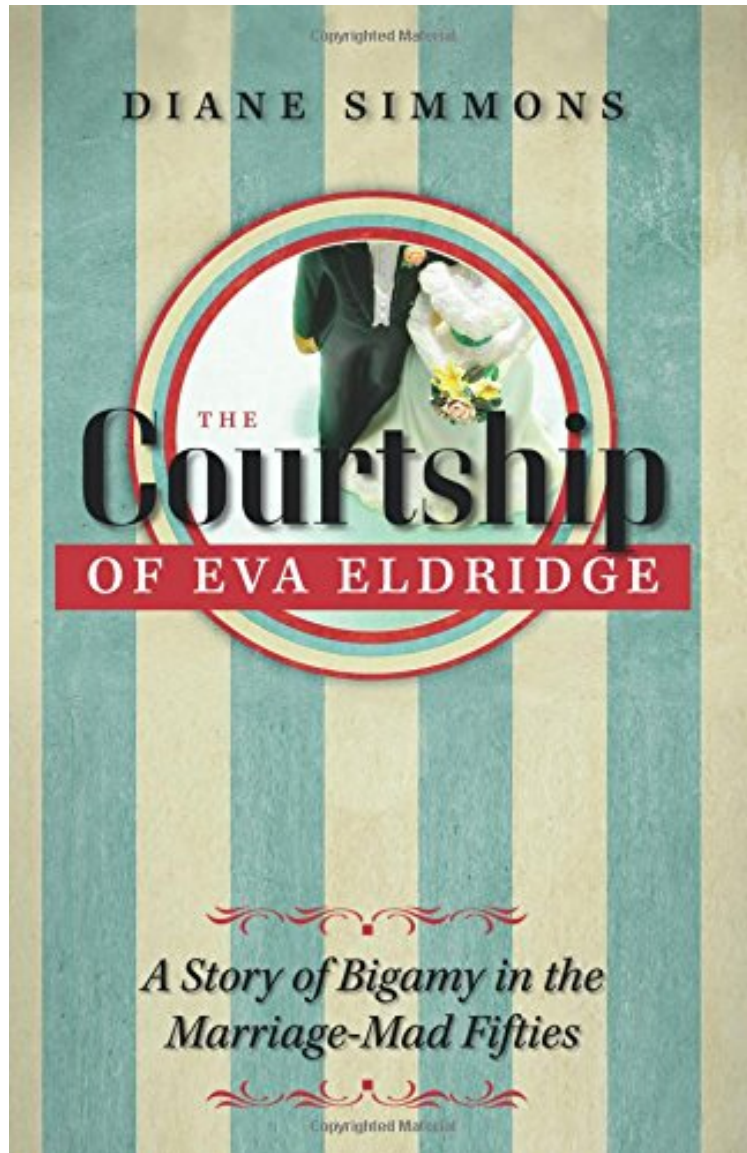


[Download] The Courtship of Eva Eldridge: A Story of Bigamy in the Marriage Mad Fifties

The Courtship of Eva Eldridge: A Story of Bigamy in the Marriage Mad Fifties

Diane Simmons

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#701319 in Books 2016-08-15 2016-08-15 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .90 x 6.00l, .0 #File Name: 160938461X272 pages | File size: 56.Mb

Diane Simmons : The Courtship of Eva Eldridge: A Story of Bigamy in the Marriage Mad Fifties before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Courtship of Eva Eldridge: A Story of Bigamy in the Marriage Mad Fifties:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating and insightful storyBy Bob M.The Courtship of Eva

Eldridge is a fascinating story and an insightful window into a piece of American history that is slowly but surely disappearing from first-hand memory. Diane Simmons happened upon a story whose main characters she knew personally while they were alive, without knowing in that time many of their secrets which she would eventually uncover. The result is both fun to read and captivating. While it is apparent from the second part of title that criminal bigamy is central to the story, Ms. Simmons lets the full extent of the transgressions drive a story where the ultimate interest is not so much the who or the what but the why these events took place. The result is a page-turner whose major impact was to help me understand the transformation of a segment of American culture during the key period of World War II and the decade or so that followed. Specifically she goes deeply into the individual consequences of the mobilization for that war on gender roles in middle-class white American families. The story of Eva Eldridge, and Ms. Simmons efforts to make sense of it, enriched my understanding of others from that period who I only knew later in their lives, but who even decades later still bore signs of the consequences of that period. Ms. Simmons previous works appear to be novels and short stories, hence her ability to keep this story captivating. I appreciate that in this work she stayed very close to the available documents. There are times where I wanted to know more of the intimate details than she had evidence to supply. I guess in the end I was glad she chose not to speculate and forced me to imagine the unknown parts of their lives, but my how curious I am to know those lost details of these compelling characters.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Coming of Age in a World Upside Down By Reader from New Jersey I love this wonderful nonfiction book THE COURTSHIP OF EVA ELDRIDGE, where author Diane Simmons explores not only one woman's strange experience with marriage but also a world "turned upside down, one in which her parents' beliefs seemed only dimly relevant and that right or wrong she too had tried to follow her heart." Set during the second world war when women were encouraged--even propagandized--to go to work in war industry, and then afterward, when the propaganda told them to go home and take care of their men, it covers the rich excitement and confusion of the times with ease and panache--and a darn good story.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Western Noir By roger Reading The Courtship of Eva Eldridge was like watching a Western Noir. Eva becomes the dark heroine as she heeds the call of the War World II propaganda machine and leaves the family farm in arid eastern Oregon for the steamy ship building yards of Portland. She works hard during the day, flirts with sailors, and stays out late at night. Shes a looker in her tight sweaters, bullet bras, and high heels and likes to have fun. Shes fully bought into the War-time message that women are needed, desired, and rewarded in the workplace. But then the War ends and the ship yards close and the propaganda machine changes its tune. Suddenly, maybe it isnt such a great idea for women to work. Men need jobs. Women need to stay home, mind the kids, cook meals, and polish the kitchen to a holy shine. Marriage is the new normal. To remain single is an oddity, maybe a sign of psychological imbalance. Eva isnt immune to these 1950s social mores, but she embraces them grudgingly. Shes better suited to the single, independent life of a working woman in a big city. Of course, throughout the War shes patriotic and corresponds with a hometown boy, Dave, who serves in brutal battles, but she puts off the idea of returning home to marry him. Besides, Dave is a basket case of PTSD by the time he gets back to the US. Eventually, she instead marries Jimmy, another soldier but also an alcoholic. Divorce soon follows. Eva settles in Boise, Idaho, where she becomes the cigarette girl in the lobby of the fancy Boise Hotel. She lives alone in a tiny basement flat. She still likes to flirt and go out at night. Why not? Of course, it would be nice to have a man And then the perfect one comes along: Virgil (Vic) Vickers. Vic has also been a soldier, a veteran of both Canadian and American military units. Hes Evas match in urban looks: slicked back hair, shiny shoes, socks with clocks on them, and fine shirts and slacks. And new cars. Vic really likes new cars. He also likes marriages. Why wouldnt he? Hes a bigamist. This is perhaps the greatest noir aspect of the book, and Vic, the perfect villain. The bigamy of Vic is an ironic reversal of 1950s gender roles and obsession with marriage. He embraces marriage to a far greater degree than most women of the time did. By the end of the book hes racked up ten marriages. Eva marries a few times, too, but unlike bigamous Vic, she divorces one husband before marrying the next. What drives Vic, besides societal demands about marriage? Does he suffer post-traumatic shock from the War? Has he figured out how to finance a low-level Playboy life-style, in which a train of bigamous marriages gives him a little walking around money and perhaps a new car? Is he a psychopath? And what about Eva? Why does she think shes found her soul mate in Vic as she tries to follow the script of the time, which reads that single women are losers, or worse. Evas own psychological foibles make her susceptible to a man like Vic. She believes their marriage is the only real one Vic has had, despite his history of bigamy. Eva holds out hope as other wives come forward and throughout Vics trial, conviction, imprisonment, and probation. She doesnt give him up until a dying mother brings her home. She later marries a good man, that is, one who isnt an alcoholic or a bigamist, and lives with him until he dies. Ms. Simmons tells the story of Eva and Vic layer by layer as though shes peeling an onion. Her writing is fascinating not only because she shows the role of social mores in determining the fate of one woman and one man but also because of the vast amount of research that underlies the narrative. Ms. Simmons starts with a box of letters, documents, and photographs and through hard-boiled detective work hours of searching on the internet, sifting through and requesting government and military documents, tracking down relatives and ex-wives and their descendants, visiting places where Eva and Vic worked and lived, and interviewing experts she builds her case: the dark mid-20th century script about women and marriage led to unhappiness and impoverishment that took women the rest of their

lives to recover from, if they ever did. The Courtship of Eva is the perfect companion to this seasons presidential campaign, in which societys views of women and what men think they can get away with have exploded on the front page.

Everyone got married in the 1950s, then moved to the suburbs to have the children of the soon-to-be-famous baby boom. For Americans who had survived the Great Depression and World War II, prosperous married life was a triumph. The unwed were objects of pity, scorn, even suspicion. And so in the 1950s, Eva Eldridge, no longer so young and marginally employed, was the perfect target for handsome Vick, who promised everything: storybook romance, marital respectability, and the lively social life she loved. When he disappeared not long after their honeymoon, she was devastated. Eva hadnt always been so vulnerable. Growing up pretty and popular in rural Oregon, she expected to marry young and live a life much like that of her parents, farming and rearing children. But then the United States threw its weight into World War II and as men headed to battle, the government started recruiting women to work in their places. Eva, like many other young women, found that life in the city with plenty of money, personal freedom, and lots of soldiers and sailors eager to pay court was more exhilarating than life down on the farm. After the war, she was ambivalent about getting married and settling down at least until Vick arrived. Refusing to believe her brand-new husband had abandoned her, Eva set about tracking down a man who, she now believed, was more damaged by wartime trauma than she had known. But instead of a wounded hero, she found a long string of women much like herself hard-working, intelligent women who had loved and married Vick and now had no idea where or even who he was. Drawing on a trove of some eight hundred letters and papers, Diane Simmons tells the story of Evas poignant struggle to get her dream husband back, as well as the stories of the women who had stood at the altar with Vick before and after her. Evas remarkable life illuminates womens struggle for happiness at a time when marriage and the perfect husband meant everything.

"In *The Courtship of Eva Eldridge*, Diane Simmons traces one womans story through hundreds of wartime letters and papers, ultimately uncovering postwar Americas rampant bigamy and the women who overcame it."