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Uplift: The Bra in America

By Jane Farrell-Beck, Colleen Gau

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Over the years the bra has been stereotyped as an object of seduction, glamour, and even oppression. In *Uplift: A History of the Bra in America* Jane Farrell-Beck and Colleen Gau use this item of clothing to gauge the social history of women and to understand the business history of fashion. Viewing fashion as a means to entertainment, self-creation, and everyday art, the authors illuminate the effect the brassiere has had on women's lives—their style, health, and economic opportunity.

Rich in examples from advertising, movies, and other areas of popular culture, *Uplift* moves beyond featherbones and fiberfill to provide a sense of the dynamic relationship of the bra to wider issues in society.

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Uplift: The Bra in America By Jane Farrell-Beck, Colleen Gau Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In the 1890s, mail-order "bust girdle" advertisements were discreetly hidden in the back pages of women's magazines; by 1918, bras were a major staple of the fashion industry, with 52 different brands prominently displayed in department stores. In this good-humored yet careful examination of mainstream print advertisements and bra-industry publications such as the *Corset and Underwear Review*, Farrell-Beck, a professor of textiles and clothing at Iowa State University's College of Family and Consumer Sciences, and Gau, president of a home-based textile-conservation business, illuminate women's experience of this most everyday, functional yet still titillating and even scandalous garment. Less a history of the bra than a study of its relationship to history, the book traces public perception of the bra's foremost function: originally conceived as a garment meant to promote women's health, it came to be seen as one meant to improve their appearance. Bra design, the authors demonstrate, shifted endlessly in response to such factors as wartime rationing, the increasing number of women in sports and, of course, the feminist movement of the 1960s and '70s. Many of Farrell-Beck and Gau's discoveries are surprising: Who knew that the U.S. government commissioned Maidenform to design a vest for carrier pigeons during WWII or that one enterprising manufacturer marketed a bra with a tiny, zippered pocket intended to hold money? The 51 b&w illustrations add to the entertainment value of this fun, punchy book. (Dec.) Forecast: *Uplift* will appeal primarily to women's studies and pop culture scholars, and readers interested in the history of fashion. A word to the wise: don't confuse this work with another recent one sporting a similar title, *Uplift: Secrets from the Sisterhood of Breast Cancer Survivors*.

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Review

"Jane Farrell-Beck and Colleen Gau have collaborated to produce a minor miracle: an informal yet comprehensively researched work of history and sociology that isn't dull, isn't pretentious, isn't politically correct (or incorrect), and that's fun to read as well as being instructive."—Robert Gottlieb, *New York Observer*

"In this good-humored yet careful examination, Farrell-Beck and Gau illuminate women's experience of this most everyday garment. . . . A fun, punchy book."—*Publishers Weekly*

"*Uplift* is extremely well-researched, and is significantly better than previous histories of the brassiere."—Valerie Steele, Fashion Institute of Technology

About the Author

Jane Farrell-Beck is Professor of Textiles and Clothing at Iowa State University. Colleen Gau is President of CPRTex, Inc., a home-based conservation of textiles business and the author of articles on clothing and

health.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carolyn Treece:

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also become a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge even the information inside the book that will improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of book you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with training books but if you want truly feel happy read one along with theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. The actual Uplift: The Bra in America is kind of publication which is giving the reader erratic experience.

Sandra Leggett:

Reading a guide can be one of a lot of exercise that everyone in the world likes. Do you like reading book and so. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoy it. First reading a reserve will give you a lot of new info. When you read a guide you will get new information mainly because book is one of several ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, reading through a book will make you more imaginative. When you studying a book especially fictional works book the author will bring that you imagine the story how the personas do it anything. Third, it is possible to share your knowledge to other folks. When you read this Uplift: The Bra in America, it is possible to tells your family, friends as well as soon about yours book. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a guide.

Vanessa Gilliam:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their sparetime with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Do you wish to something different to fill your current free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book can be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the book untitled Uplift: The Bra in America can be great book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

Irene Hoyt:

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