



A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s

Stephanie Coontz

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In 1963, Betty Friedan unleashed a storm of controversy with her bestselling book, *The Feminine Mystique*. Hundreds of women wrote to her to say that the book had transformed, even saved, their lives. Nearly half a century later, many women still recall where they were when they first read it.

In *A Strange Stirring*, historian Stephanie Coontz examines the dawn of the 1960s, when the sexual revolution had barely begun, newspapers advertised for “perky, attractive gal typists,” but married women were told to stay home, and husbands controlled almost every aspect of family life. Based on exhaustive research and interviews, and challenging both conservative and liberal myths about Friedan, *A Strange Stirring* brilliantly illuminates how a generation of women came to realize that their dissatisfaction with domestic life didn’t reflect their personal weakness but rather a social and political injustice.

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