



## Strange Sisters: The Art of Lesbian Pulp Fiction 1949-1969

By Jaye Zimet

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**Strange Sisters: The Art of Lesbian Pulp Fiction 1949-1969** By Jaye Zimet

A vivid, sexy, and titillating journey into the steamy underworld of the dime novel.

In the scandalous world of pulp fiction in the 1950s and into the 60s, detectives, gangsters, and mad doctors were joined on the racks by bad girls, dissolute youths, drug-crazed beatniks, and other assorted miscreants and misfits. Where romance met with soft porn there was also a surprisingly large population of butch brunettes pursuing and seducing blond femmes. This was an alternate universe of erotic pulp fiction where gals and dolls were exploring the illicit pleasures of lesbian love--much to the delight of a largely male, heterosexual readership. Before the sexual revolution of the 1960s, these books offered a thrilling peek into the deviant underworld of wild passion and scandalous sex.

*Strange Sisters* is a collection of the cover art of these wildly wicked novels. The women who writhe across the covers of books such as *Strange Lust* ("She Wanted a Woman--Then She Met Another Woman Obsessed by the Same Burning Hunger") and *Women's Barracks* ("The Frank Autobiography of a French Girl Soldier") sizzle with sexual energy and freedom--in a high-camp defiance of the prudish, conservative 1950s. Bold, kitschy-colorful, and fraught with sexual tension, the covers of *Strange Sisters* are a siren call to the retro-groovin' man, or woman, in your life.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Do you walk alone, a twilight lover? Odd one out? Warped? Troubled? Twisted? Jaye Zimet, a Brooklyn book designer and collector, has filled *Strange Sisters* with over 200 sleazily appealing book covers from the boom years of the lesbian pulp novel, arranging them in groups from "Positive Portraits" and more ambitious "Cliterature" to "Psycho-Babble" and an entire section devoted to cleavage. Although large numbers of their original readers in the '50s and '60s were lesbians or protolesbians hoping for a glimpse of themselves or for some tenuous connection to an almost mythical community of "unnatural lovers," the covers of these books were clearly targeted to a primary audience of furtive young men. Scantly clad, buxom blondes simper under the gaze of older, "experienced" brunettes sometimes wearing trousers or short hair but never without lipstick. To the eye of Ann Bannon and her contemporaries, these women seemed as "straight as a pine tree." But "despite the almost comical distance between the covers and the contents," Bannon concludes in her foreword, "the books found both their intended audiences.... If there was a solitary woman on the cover, provocatively dressed, and the title conveyed her rejection by society or her self-loathing, it was a lesbian book." --*Regina Marler*

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**William Luke:**

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