



"This is the best book ever written about the South...And on top of that it's delectably funny." — *Chattanooga Times*

Southern Ladies and Gentlemen

Florence King

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Looking for guidance in understanding the ways and means of Southern culture? Look no further. Florence King's celebrated field guide to the land below the Mason-Dixon Line is now blissfully back in print, just in time for the Clinton era. The Failed Souther Lady's classic primer on Dixie manners captures such storied types as the Southern Woman (frigid, passionate, sweet, bitchy, and scatterbrained--all at the same time), the Self-Rejuvenating Virgin, and the Good Ole Boy in all his coats and stripes. (The Clinton questions--*is he a G.O.B. or isn't he?*--Miss King covers in her hilarious new Afterword.) No one has ever made more sharp, scathing, affectionate, real sense out of the land of the endless Civil War than Florence King in these razor-edged pages.

Southern Ladies and Gentlemen Details

Date : Published July 15th 1993 by St. Martin's Griffin (first published 1975)

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Author : Florence King

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From Reader Review Southern Ladies and Gentlemen for online ebook

Vivian says

First read this book many years ago, and I've never forgotten it. It may be that only real Southerners will appreciate it; I laughed all the way through.

Southern Ladies & Gentlemen

Kev says

Riot. So funny at times I could not read anymore. "The Self-Rejuvenating Virgin" is the only sex education any man or women needs! Listen, I was never upset at Bill Clinton's lying about Monica. Y'all just don't understand the Southern mind. It can rationalize anything. Of course it never happened. They didn't do anything in a bedroom ... after all. No gay guy can go without reading "He's a Little Bit Funny, But He's Nice." Southern rules for gay men in the south. King is rapier sharp.

Stephy says

This is the book that helped me understand my Mother, who was sometimes a Rock, other times a Dear Old Thing. I damned near fell out of my chair laughing as I recognized so many of my mother's traditional sayings and behaviors. I have since bought it for my siblings and many friends. I hope you like it as much as I do.

Stacy says

I read this book in college at the suggestion of a creative writing professor. I loved the wit and insight of Ms King. It is most enjoyed by Southerners, but could be appreciated by all. I have gone back to certain chapters over and over when I needed a good laugh. I'll let you read for yourself and guess at what those are!

Kate says

More uneven than Confessions of a Failed Southern Lady, but really shone in the anecdotes about her own life. The story about Mrs. Urquhart has stuck with me the most.

Catherine says

I'm not really sure if this paperback version is the same as the old hardcover edition my mother gave me years ago, but if it is, I loved the old one. It takes someone raised in the south by true southern women to appreciate and relate to this book. My, what memories I have!

Lori Brockelbank says

A laugh out loud book. Love it :)

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

Sanity holds no charm in the South.

Truth.

Kieffala says

This book is excellent. I love Florence King's unapologetic upfront writing. A definite must-read for anyone moving to the South from ANYWHERE else, but particularly from the North.

Josh says

A gift from a good friend. King is hilarious--a kind of cranky old Virginian Garrison Keilor, with her biting regional observations. I'm only a few pages in but find myself laughing and nodding my head at every paragraph. Admittedly, this is a nonscholarly approach that relies on anecdote, and that's why it's so enjoyable. In fact, King's thesis, one might say, is that any cold sociological approach to the quirks of southern culture is bound to fail miserably because it can't get inside the prickly skins of southerners and see the region from the inside out. This might be said of any distinct region, I suppose, and her book is a welcome antidote to academic writing of all kinds.

Molly says

Interesting but dated perspective on cultural habits in the south. funny from a historical perspective, and also as a debutante reading that old crap was funny. Found it in the Travel section at SF public library though ?!?!?

Amanda says

I know there are good writers and funny writers and every once in a while you get someone who is a great writer who can make you laugh. Florence King is one of those people. (She's also a great Southern Lady who was Raised Right, even if she did go a little off the tracks later.)

READ THIS. It's a fascinating look at how Southerners are and why they are that way.

From Chapter 5 "You Can Tell She's Got Good Blood. She's Delicate" or: Pelvic Politics and Bad Nerves

"Gentlemen planters do not take sturdy women of the people to wife. And so, in addition to being frigid, wanton, bitchy, virtuous, pert, and stupid, the lady of the manor had to have trouble whelping. This was not hard to arrange. Her "delicate parts" had long been at the mercy of the whalebone corset, and when she was not sunk in languid inactivity in the drawing room, she was twisted like a corkscrew and listing to starboard on a sidesaddle.

Victorian women did not know much about ovaries, tubes or cervixes, and they would never use the word "vagina," but the Southern ones all knew about the womb. It was respected as the Peck's bad girl in the female system, an agony-control-central that lurked in every well-bred lady's belly like a bad-tempered octopus, capable of making illness strike any part of her body.

The Southern woman is the world's foremost practitioner of pelvic politics. She has more power over men while she is sexually hors de combat than other women have in the middle of intercourse, for the Southern man's socioeconomic identity and masculine image are trapped in her bonny blue box. Being delicate means that she is both aristocratic and feminine - which means that he is both aristocratic and masculine. This pussy power in the most literal sense."

M.L. says

Funny and insightful and wicked, but not as clear and clean as some of her later writing or even as the re-written chapters from this book that made it into her anthology

Janis Ian says

I am forever grateful to Beth Flood, who handed me this and "Confessions of a Failed Southern Lady" when I first moved to Nashville from LA and told me I'd learn more about my new culture and home from them than I'd learn in a hundred years by myself. These books have saved me from abject humiliation on more than one occasion, and been a light in the darkness on many others. I keep 5 copies on hand at all times, to hand out to other foreigners moving south.

Charlotte Dauphin says

fantastically un-politically correct
