



# What It Was All About: A Novel about Feminism and the Women's Movement

*Steven H. Propp*

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"The year is 1970: The Supreme Court has legalized abortion, "Equal Pay for Equal Work" is now the law, and Affirmative Action programs attempt to redress past injustices and inequities. Women are coming together nationwide in "consciousness-raising" groups, sharing their knowledge and experiences with each other.

A group of six women in Stentoria, California bond through such a group, and support each other as women in this new "Movement" are forming collectives; publishing their own books and periodicals; creating an exciting new genre of "Women's Music"; as well as starting their own bookstores, to make these new materials readily available to the community. New spiritual movements—focused on the "Divine Feminine" principle—are also beginning. Even some men are sympathetic and supportive of these ideals.

But as the 1980s arrive, the situation changes: the "backlash" against the women's movement in politics and the media seemingly turns into a full-fledged "war," specifically targeting the gains that women have achieved. Opposition from traditional religions hardens, and women's reproductive rights come under renewed attack; the Equal Rights Amendment fails, even as women themselves debate controversial questions: such as banning pornography, and how to view a rising "Third Wave" of the women's movement. Ominously, the threat of AIDS seemingly brings the era of "sexual freedom" to a close.

The six women deal with all these issues, as well as personal challenges—including balancing work and family responsibilities. As the new century begins, they reflect about what the women's movement ultimately accomplished. In a world now characterized by growing economic inequality, increasing low self-esteem for some women (exemplified by cosmetic surgery and "extreme makeovers"), legalized same-sex marriage, and media attention to Transgender issues, this book may help you to appreciate not only how far we've come, but how far we have yet to go."

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