[https://literariness.org/2021/05/27/american-lesbian-short-stories/](https://literariness.org/2021/05/27/american-lesbian-short-stories/" \t "_blank)

Terms such as female friendships and Boston marriages, both commonly used in the 19th century to describe intimacy between women

Adrienne Rich’s essay “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence”

In 1970 the New York group Radicalesbians distributed a pamphlet that began with the question “What is a lesbian?” As answer they wrote, in part: “A lesbian is the rage of all women condensed to the point of explosion. . . . She may not be fully conscious of the political implications of what for her began as personal necessity, but on the same level she has not been able to accept the limitations and oppression laid on her by the most basic role of her society—the female role.”

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| 1880s | 1890s | 1900s | 1910s | 1920s | 1930s | 1950s | 1970s | 1980s | 1990s |
| **Mary E. Wilkins Freeman’s “Two Friends” (1887)** | **Sarah Orne Jewett’s “Martha’s Lady” (1897)** | **Josephine Dodge Daskam’s collection of Smith College Stories (1900)** | ***Catherine Wells’s “The Beautiful House” (1912)*** | **Gertrude Steins “Miss Furr and Miss Skeene” (1923)** | **Sherwood Anderson’s “That Sophistication” (1933)** | **“**[**The Price of Salt**](https://amzn.to/3avzGsp)**” Patricia Highsmith (1952)** | ***Joanna Russ, in “When It Changed” (1972)*** | **Dorothy Allison’s “A Lesbian Appetite” (1988)** | **Emma Perez in “Gulf Dreams” (1991)** |
|  | ***Mary E. Wilkins Freeman “The Long Arm” 1895*** |  | **Helen Hull’s “The Fire” (1917)** | **Radclyffe Hall “The Well of Loneliness” 1928** |  |  |  | **Joan Nestle’s “Liberties Not Taken” (1987)** | **“Stone Butch Blues” Leslie Feinberg 1993**  **Basada en 1970** |
|  |  |  |  | **Gertrude Stein "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene" 1922** |  |  |  | ***Joan Nestle’s “Liberties Not Taken” (1987)*** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Jane Rule’s “His Nor Hers” (1985)** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Leslie Lawrence’s “My Lesbian Imagination” (1987)** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Becky Birtha’s “In the Life” (1987)** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **“Annie on my Mind” Nancy Garden 1982** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **“**[**The Color Purple**](https://amzn.to/3AxyeQR)**” Alice Walker (1982)** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **“**[**Zami: A New Spelling of My Name**](https://amzn.to/2YMgQus)**” Audre Lorde (1982)** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **“Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café”** [**Fannie Flagg**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fannie_Flagg) **1987** |  |

**Directly lesbians**

**Directly lesbians NOVELS**

**Indirectly lesbians**

Terms such as female friendships and Boston marriages, both commonly used in the 19th century to describe intimacy between women, were quickly discarded in the early decades of the 20th century when sexological theories about the “female invert” reduced woman-to-woman intimacies, emotional or physical, to aberrant sexuality.

New England “spinsters”, who, despite opportunity to marry, preferred to remain with each other in a “Boston marriage.”

Often the plot focused on one of the seemingly innumerable “crushes” or “smashes” or “spoons” that developed between two female students, usually of different ages.

When she did resurface in American fiction, it was in the pulp novels of the 1950s and 1960s.

During the 1970s, however, in the hands of women who were involved in the awakening politics of feminism, civil rights, and gay liberation, the lesbian in the American short story began to enjoy a more liberated existence; through the rise of feminist bookstores, journals, and publishing houses, she was given a space in which to thrive.

ESSAYS:

Adrienne Rich’s “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” (1980): Lesbian visibility. “as a part of the [radical feminism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radical_feminism) movement”.

Havelock Ellis’s 1902“The SchoolFriendships of Girls,” Ellis suggests that lesbianism is an “abnormality” that affected any woman who had a “crush”; according to “authorities,” this entailed more than 60 percent of students at women’s colleges.

[Mildred Berryman's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mildred_J._Berryman) 1930's groundbreaking[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_lesbianism_in_the_United_States" \l "cite_note-Study-24): 897–898[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_lesbianism_in_the_United_States#cite_note-Mildred-25) *The Psychological Phenomena of the Homosexual*[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_lesbianism_in_the_United_States#cite_note-Dynamics-26): 223, 228 on 23 lesbian women

EXTRA:

Two stories published in popular periodicals examine liaisons within the girls’ school: “The Lass of the Silver Sword” by Mary Constance Dubois (published serially in St. Nicholas in 1908–1909) and Jeanette Lee’s “The Cat and the King” (published in the Ladies’ Home Journal in 1919).

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Gertrude Stein, Alice Walker, Jullie Anne Peters, Virginia Woolf (and her ex-lover, Vita Sackville-West), Audre Lorde, and Emily Dickinson.