

The who's who of stupid women

Female Difficulties: Sorority Sisters, Rodeo Queens, Frigid women, Smut Stars and Other Modern Girls
Bantam Books
by E. Jean Carroll

review by Ann Grever

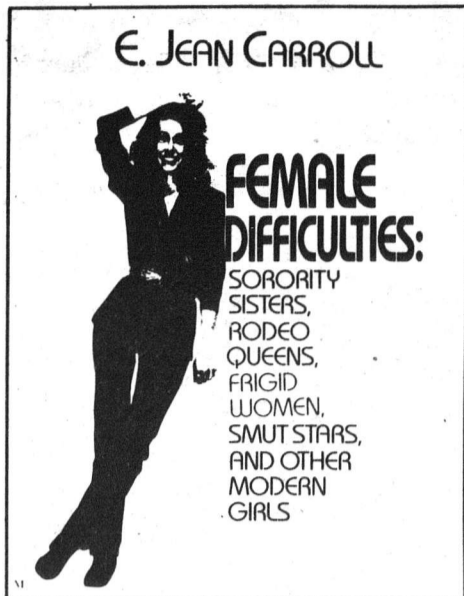
This book is the 1980's version of everything you ever wanted to know about dumb women. It tries to be funny and revealing. It fails.

The story is made up entirely of anecdotes from Carroll's interviews and experiences researching "why women act so strange because of the way men see them." She goes to Real Men/Real Women workshops, Romantic Book Lovers' conferences, a National Finals Rodeo, Camp Ella J. Logan for girl scouts, the Harmony Burlesque Theater, the UCLA cheerleader tryouts, self expression workshops, the Good Lookers Club meetings, and to the Pi Beta Phi rush.

The book is full of examples of how strange, superficial, and often plain idiotic women can be for men and because of men. All seem to be obsessed with their looks and their orgasms. Sorority girls cry a lot, cheerleaders jump sky high, girl guides giggle, sex therapists talk endlessly and smut stars make lasagna. And all this because of the way different types of men see different types of women.

What the book succeeds in doing is a nice little cutdown of women. Some stories are funny especially when she cuts into the types we all love to hate. Sorority sisters are revealed as particularly idiotic.

"Not that I'm a dummy," said Dotty, a freshman going through rush, "but these sorority girls are so intelligent. Like, I'm at this one house the first round, and I go, 'I had a great time over Christmas,' and this sorority girl goes, 'I had an enjoyable holiday, but I was looking forward to returning to my academics. 'Jesus!' I go, 'Whoa! Me too!' And



then she says she's going to be a physicist. That's cool. And I go, 'Well I want to work with crippled children.' And she goes, 'My cousin works with crippled children. She kinda looks like you.' Then we talked about

"In this book all women act strangely because of the way men see them."

how people who work with crippled children look."

This chapter was sharp, and to the point. The humor is sustained throughout until one gets a good idea of why they kicked Carroll out of the sorority.

There are also passages that bite, but with a personal edge. These reveal the most about the universality of being self conscious and stupid.

"I... am back in New York... celebrating twenty years of undying friendship with Marsha Pinkstaff, Air Angel, Miss Butler Uni-

versity, Homecoming Princess, Indianapolis 500 Princess and Miss Indiana. Marsha was the first woman in American history to be an advance person for a presidential candidate and she is now a very successful business woman and is tall and blonde and my best

friend... Pepe, the maitre d, and Alvarista, the waiter come in with a sparkler in a mug and sing, "Happy Anniversary, Marsha and Jean." Marsha looks around at the people in Elaine's... She looks at my face and inclines her head toward me. She clears her throat. I think she is going to say, 'To a great 20 years Jean!' or 'To the best friend I ever had!' I lean forward and gaze at her fondly through the sparks. She lowers her voice and says: 'How do I look in this light?'

What is unfortunate is that she doesn't include a bit more of the personal. The section on girl guides for example is her own

friend... Pepe, the maitre d, and Alvarista, the waiter come in with a sparkler in a mug and sing, "Happy Anniversary, Marsha and Jean." Marsha looks around at the people in Elaine's... She looks at my face and inclines her head toward me. She clears her throat. I think she is going to say, 'To a great 20 years Jean!' or 'To the best friend I ever had!' I lean forward and gaze at her fondly through the sparks. She lowers her voice and says: 'How do I look in this light?'

What is unfortunate is that she doesn't include a bit more of the personal. The section on girl guides for example is her own

Some of the types Carroll comes up with are truly irrelevant. Who decides what kind of person typifies a frigid woman or why a Real Man/Real Woman conference symbolizes modern men and women? These classifications are often arbitrary — whether a grovelling, martyr type would be classified under Rodeo Queens or Smut Stars, the anecdote would be the same — but these classifications are also as superficial as the Good Looker classifying herself as a winner or women with inconsiderate husbands classifying themselves as frigid. It's not done for a purpose but merely for the hell of it and this draws away from the real issue of female difficulties. She ends up doing no such thing. She only points fingers at women, classifying them and dismissing them.

So, in this book, all women act strange because of the way men see them. Even women who don't like men are influenced by them. Any women fits into Carroll's broad generalizations, and put downs. She ridicules all of womanhood that has, according to her, gone boy crazy. But even if I personally don't like sorority sisters, rodeo queens, good lookers, or pop psychologists and I certainly relish those cruel anecdotes that cuts them down, but after a while there must be more to these female difficulties than just men. The few stories that are funny are just not worth the \$10.75.

AM records & tapes

Have **CLASSES** Started yet??



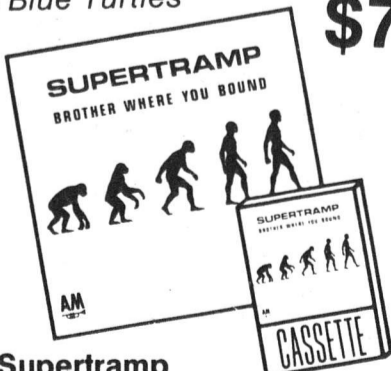
■ Sting
Dream of the Blue Turtles

\$7.50



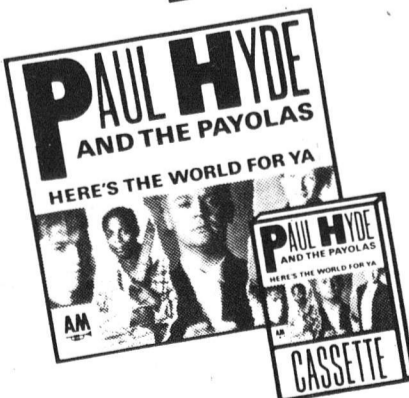
■ Suzanne Vega

\$7.50



■ Supertramp
Brother Where You Bound

\$7.50

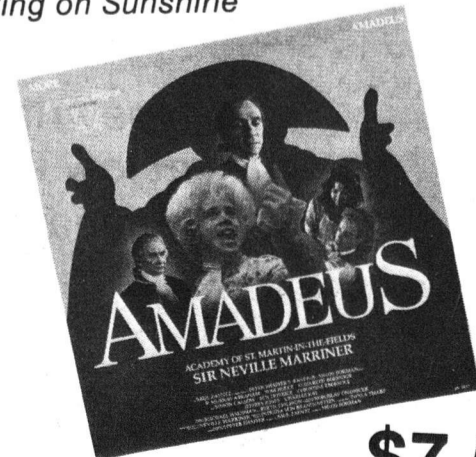


■ Paul Hyde and the Payolas
Here's the World for Ya



■ Katrina and the Waves
Walking on Sunshine

\$7.50



■ Amadeus... More
single LP with additional tracks from the movie

\$7.50



■ Limited Quantities ■ All titles available on cassette

9200 - 112 Street ■ HUB Mall ■ 432-5024
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 9:30 - 5:30, Thursday 9:30 - 9:00

The Home of the Hits