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Acquired Community

Jane Byers



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Jane Byers' Acquired Community is both a collection of narrative poems about seminal moments in North American lesbian and gay history, mostly post-World War II, and a series of first person poems that act as a touchstone to compare the narrator's coming out experience within the larger context of the gay liberation movement. The "parade" poems such as "Celebration Was a Side Effect, 1992" explores the important role parades have played in the queer movement and how they have transformed from activism to celebration. "St Patrick's Day Parade, 2014" takes the Boston St. Patrick's Day committee's homophobia to task, reminding us that this is not ancient history, but an ever-transforming experience. In her long poem, "Keen," Byers imagines a dialogue between a young queer university student and Michael Lynch, an AIDS activist, poet and scholar who helped found many gay community institutions. In this compelling poem we are reminded that the AIDS epidemic had a rippling effect, touching the lives of everyone within the gay community and well beyond.

In this second book by Byers her poems go beyond the historical perspective of LGBT rights and are living examples of progress. Acquired Community examines and celebrates community resilience.

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