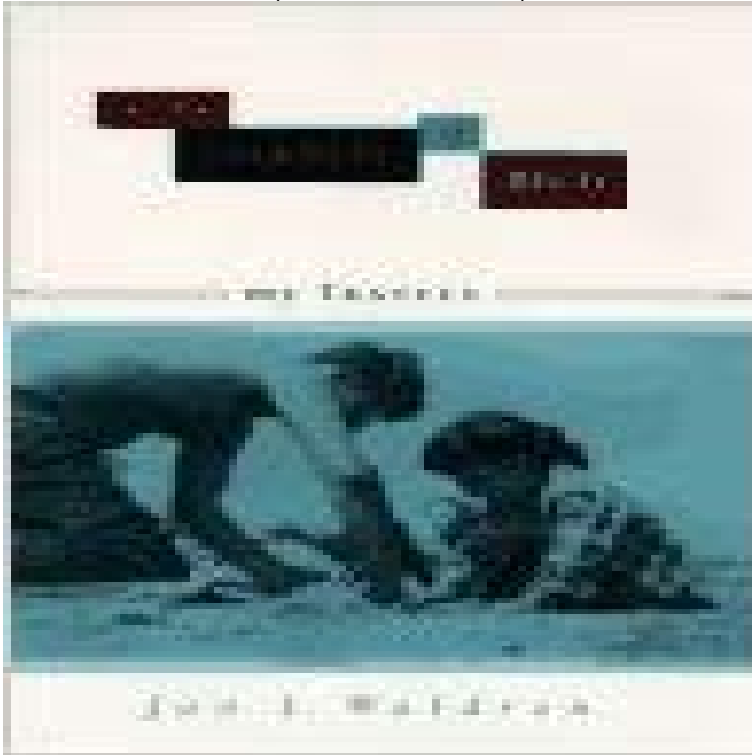


In the Country of Men: My Travels



Part memoir, part social commentary, Jan Waldron's *In the Country of Men* is a thoughtful and provocative exploration of the meaning of gender, male-female relationships, and manhood. Jan's powerful but warm voice both provokes and seduces as she exposes the folly of gender shtick while carefully unraveling the intricate stitching of her life vis-a-vis the men who contributed to her definition of manhood: her father, her brother, her lovers, her sons. Waldron begins with memories of her father, a boy who never really grew up, and her brother, a boy who had to grow up too fast. We experience the high drama of her first kiss, and the deep disappointment of her relationship with the father of her sons, who left the family when their two boys were four and five. She is frustrated with men and the trappings of manhood but has finally found a happy, lasting relationship with a man, and in raising her sons, she has found hope and a vision for the future of gender relations. Her boys, now sitting on the cusp of manhood, are the stars of this book. *In the Country of Men* is a book of experiences, insights, and impressions recalled and written with tenderness, humor, and great empathy for males. It is not a manifesto of absolutes or a male-bashing gripe; it is not aligned with a movement nor is it about men compared to women. Waldron is just as claustrophobic at a feminist rally as she is at a rowdy mens sports bar, and teenage boy humor cracks her up. She speaks boldly and authoritatively to both men and women alike because, as she sees it, the social imperative is for gender to take its place in the parentheses while freeing us all to find our humanity.

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