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## The Lives of Older Lesbians

Jane Traies

Coming June 2016

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Jane Traies is a Research Associate at the Sussex Centre for Cultural Studies and a member of the Sussex Centre for Life History and Life Writing, University of Sussex, UK.

'Based on the only national survey of older lesbians in the UK, this book conveys a great deal of information about its subjects, in their own words and through the author's keen analysis. *The Lives of Older Lesbians*, nuanced, stimulating, and clearly written, should find a wide audience in English-speaking countries and beyond.'

– Margaret Cruikshank, University of Maine, USA

'What a welcome study! The lives of lesbians over 60 have too long been neglected and this challenging, original and important study brings them into clear focus. Lush in stories and rich in analysis, Jane Traies helps us to see the complexities of these lesbian worlds and gives us a compelling read.'

– Ken Plummer, University of Essex, UK

'Jane Traies provides a compelling, sophisticated narrative about the invisibilities faced by older lesbians in the UK, both in existing academic research about LGBT ageing and in wider society. With a keen eye on history and culture, Traies traces different facets of older lesbian lives and provides eloquent and critical insights; these not only provoke new understandings, but challenge the reader to think about this group of women in new ways. An outstanding and timely book that I wholeheartedly recommend.'

– Andrew King, University of Surrey, UK

'*The Lives of Older Lesbians* is a carefully considered account of those still "hidden in plain sight", packed with profound and compelling empirical examples, and forcing theoretical and methodological re-consideration across inter-disciplinary social sciences. It re-evaluates social-cultural and policy changes, historicizing the 'spaces of liberation', while placing these alongside everyday intimacies of those inhabiting sexual-gendered margins. Traies impressively places sexual-ageing subjectivity, beyond a snapshot of 'age', blending histories, presences and futures to weave a textured and vibrant contribution. The book pointedly demands that "now you see me", and indeed provides an extensive vision of the ways of seeing, witnessing and re-telling sexual stories.'

– Yvette Taylor, University of Strathclyde, UK

#### About the book

This unique book sheds new light on the most invisible members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. Hidden from view by a combination of prevailing cultural assumptions and their own unwillingness to be seen, older lesbians have been consistently under-represented in both popular culture and research. This ground-breaking study, based on an unprecedentedly large research sample of nearly four hundred lesbian-identified women between the ages of 60 and 90, offers a fascinating insight into the lives of older lesbians in the UK. Drawing on data from a comprehensive questionnaire survey and illustrated with vivid personal testimonies, it explores both the diversity and the distinct collective identity of the older lesbian community, arguing that understanding their past experience is crucial to providing for their needs in the future. It is essential reading for scholars in the fields of women's studies and genders and sexualities, and will also appeal to sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, social and cultural historians, and experts in ageing, gerontology, nursing and social work.

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