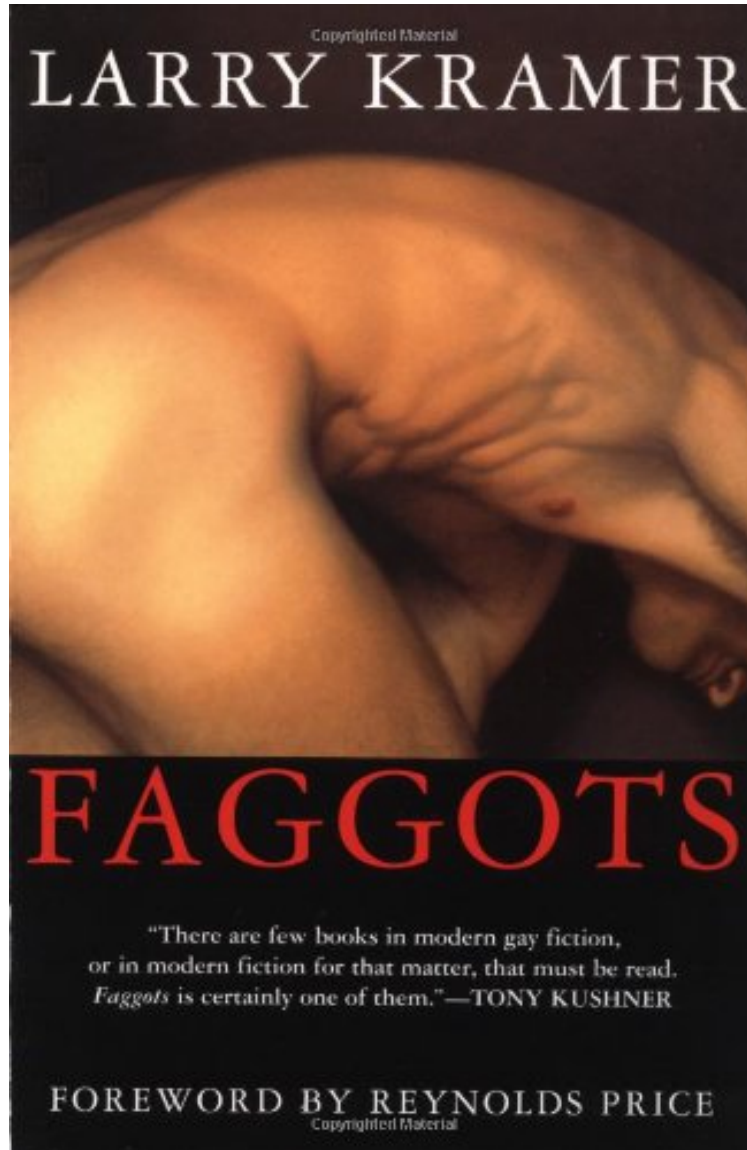


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Faggots

Larry Kramer, Reynolds Price
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Larry Kramer, Reynolds Price : Faggots before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Faggots:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mirror mirror on the pages.By Steve LaskinFair accurate and honest portrayal of part of gay male society at the time.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Book was in good condition and fast deliveryBy Rochelle UptonBook was in good condition and fast delivery. Subject matter was a little much. Was looking for something different from Larry Kramer.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A

very important novel that appears with a dishy and funny facade but lacks focus. The anger will pay off years later...By H. Williams

The Book Discussion group discussed this novel by Larry Kramer at the LGBT Center in NYC in May 2014. We chose to read it some time ago, but it turns out to be perfect timing with Larry Kramer's movie "The Normal Heart" appearing on HBO on May 25. An early scene in the movie shows the handsome and popular boys on Fire Island telling the less-attractive and definitely out-of-favor Larry Kramer (in the character of "Ned Weeks," played by the devilishly handsome Mark Ruffalo) that "he isn't wanted on Fire Island after that horrible book" (meaning this book - which can't be named in an review). And this sets the tone perfectly for our reading of the novel. While a few readers liked the book and thought that it was significant, the majority of us didn't care for it for three major reasons: (1) The writing style is repetitive, too list-like in many places, and just not very interesting. In general, the lists are funny and informative in a historical kind of way, but they don't help define the characters or the plot. Too many sentences just run on and on. (I found his use of odd punctuation and long sentences good to re-create speech and thought patterns.) (2) There are way too many characters and they are all too thinly drawn. They do things without motivation. And then they continue to do them. Or disappear. And the leading character Fred Lemish (aka Larry Kramer) is genuinely unlikeable, which doesn't make a novel bad, but it makes it a chore. One of the fun things about the novel was the wacky names that Kramer used in this thinly veiled "roman à clef." (3) The plot is small and inconsequential while the book is overloaded with events and crammed full of activity. It's a book of small and humorous observations blown up into a novel-length weekend. Having established that we didn't care for it much, we all agreed that it's a significant novel that completely describes and explains the late 1970's and early 1980's, and especially the weekend of May 25, 1977. The novel begins promisingly enough and seems entertaining for a while, but then it goes on a bit long and keeps going. Much of it is immediately forgettable. The book doesn't really work as satire, but it does a terrific job of limiting the action to the long Memorial Day weekend when all the well-to-do gay men leave the city for Fire Island. It includes the real event of the fire at The Everard (Everhard) Baths, the invention of disco, and a fictionalized version of the Samuel Bronfman kidnapping case. It's very interesting to note that Andrew Holleran's romantically titled and lyrically written "Dancer from the Dance" takes place during the same summer. But "Dancer from the Dance" is elegiac and sad, rather than scattershot and angry. A short time later, Armistad Maupin would release the full "Tales of the City," which takes place at the same time but offers a West Coast corrective to these two East Coast novels about night life, promiscuity, and death. Edmund White wrote "Forgetting Elena" about Fire Island at the same time as this novel but "Forgetting Elena" takes place at a slightly earlier period, imagined as a straight stage with drugs and manners rather than a gay back room. The new paperback edition of this book has an introduction by Reynolds Price. It has the completely wrong tone to try to rehabilitate this novel, and is also incomprehensible. Why did they ask Price to do this? It makes no sense. Don't read it. Don't try to make sense of it. The novel is a flawed dish but the perfect appetizer for Kramer's main course, "The Normal Heart." (His upcoming "The American People: A History," at 2000+ pages, will be his great 26-course dinner.) Understanding this novel paves the way for the irritating main character in "The Normal Heart" and points toward the heart-breaking anger that Mr. Kramer was required to use to found the GMHC. Eventually, his founding of ACT-UP and the recognized changes he made to the medical world for the treatment of men with AIDS will justify all the shouting and fighting and rage. One might argue that this shadow appears on the edges of this novel as a premonition for poor Fred Lemish who wants both love and monogamy, but gets neither. But Mr. Kramer's 100% redemption via ACT-UP is a long way off.

Larry Kramer's *Faggots* has been in print since its original publication in 1978 and has become one of the best-selling novels about gay life ever written. The book is a fierce satire of the gay ghetto and a touching story of one man's desperate search for love there, and reading it today is a fascinating look at how much, and how little, has changed.

.com Very few writers have the prescience or audacity to produce one of the standard works of their era--not a classic, necessarily, but a book that defines its own cultural moment in startling new terms, like *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* or *Portnoy's Complaint*. Activist and rabble-rouser Larry Kramer has the distinction of having written not only one of the earliest and best-known plays on AIDS, *The Normal Heart*, but also the astonishing satire of gay urban sexual mores *Faggots*, perhaps the most reviled novel in the gay literary canon. A grim, graphic expansion on John Rechy's *Numbers*, which chronicled a hustler's soulless game of sexual conquest, Kramer's pornopticon turns off many readers by about page 3, when its hero, the screenwriter Fred Lemish, is offered an array of dubious pleasures in a private room at the infamous Everard Baths in New York. What Lemish really wants, of course, is true love, preferably from his elusive boyfriend, Dinky Adams. But as long as he's in the room... Celebrated and excoriated when it first appeared in 1978, this reprint of a gay anticlassic is not for the faint of heart. For the rest of us, it is a harsh, fascinating, and somewhat eerie revisitation of the carnal excesses of a generation that couldn't hear the bell tolling over the disco beat. From the Inside Flap Graphically sexual and one of the all-time best-selling gay novels, *Faggots* is the story of Fred Lemish, who at thirty-nine has built up his body into a fatless state of being in Great Shape. Lemish is ready to find Mr. Right. But from the Everhard Baths to the Pines on Fire Island to that place of myth and story, *The*

Meat Rack, he is looking for his dream lover in all the wrong places. Faggots is a fierce satire of the gay ghetto and a touching story of one man's desperate search for permanence, commitment, and love. "A Vesuvian explosion about the gay life that spares no one and no thing...there is much truth and honesty to be found here."--Seymour Krim, Chicago Tribune "True comic brilliance--a vicious Swiftian satire that, like all satire, contains a strong moral voice."--New York "Faggots, for all its excesses, is frequently right on target and, when it is on target, is appallingly funny."--Edward Albee "Larry Kramer has more than come out of the closet, he's housecleaned the neighborhood. Faggots is a novel of courage...a journey worth the chronicle...a noble gesture."--Baltimore Sun "Larry Kramer is one of America's most valuable troublemakers. I hope he never lowers his voice."--Susan Sontag "The liberation of sexuality from the bonds of moralism has left in its wake a crying need for principled, intelligent, vigorous explorations of how a genuine morality can be introduced to our newly minted freedom. This exploration is a central part of Kramer's historically significant literary work, of which Faggots constitutes an important beginning and a key. As a documentation of an era, as savage and savagely funny social parody, as a cry in the wilderness, and as a prescient, accurate reading of the writing on the wall, the novel is peerless and utterly necessary. It is brilliant, bellicose, contemptuous, compassionate and--as is true of everything Kramer writes--behind its delectable, entertaining, sometimes maddening harshness is a profoundly moving plea for justice and for love. There are few books in modern gay fiction, or modern fiction for that matter, that must be read. Faggots is certainly one of them."--Tony Kushner "Since his screenplay for D. H. Lawrence's Women in Love in 1969, Larry Kramer has been a prophet of psychic health and catastrophe among us--a prophet unmatched for the accuracy of his omens and the reliability of his anathemas and remedies. His uncannily foresighted novel Faggots appeared in 1978 just as the AIDS virus flooded whole wings of the American bloodstream; now its Swiftian portrait of an all but vanished subculture stands as that culture's visible memorial. His later plays have been clear as firebells, memorable as tracer bullets."--The American Academy of Arts and Letters citation, May 1996 "[Faggots] sends up New York's self-imposed gay ghetto, doing for its gyms, discos, orgy rooms, army fatigues, mustaches, and advertising agencies what Portnoy's Complaint did for Mom and masturbation. Faggots is the Uncle Tom's Cabin for homosexual men whose worst oppression is their lack of courage to change the way they live."--Library Journal "A corrosive study of the gay underbelly of New York.... Faggots has the air of a Restoration comedy in its mix of Baroque style and bawdy, scathing humor."--Women's Wear Daily "A book of major historical importance--the first contemporary novel to chronicle gay life with unsparing honesty and wild humor. Larry Kramer has changed the way we think about gay men. He is one of our great humanists."--Erica Jong "Writing as always from an affirmatively homosexual point of view, Kramer in this novel conveys a sense of premonitory unease, even foreboding, about the spread of promiscuity, sadomasochism and narcotics among the homosexual population...more graphic than James Baldwin or Hubert Selby."--Times Literary Supplement "It would come to resemble her, Picasso said of his Stein portrait--and so with Kramer's of New York gay life, which I had thought so entertaining, so extravagant, ever so preposterous a lustrum ago. It has come to resemble it, in tr