



# The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination


*By Sarah Schulman*

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In this gripping memoir of the AIDS years (1981–1996), Sarah Schulman recalls how much of the rebellious queer culture, cheap rents, and a vibrant downtown arts movement vanished almost overnight to be replaced by gay conservative spokespeople and mainstream consumerism. Schulman takes us back to her Lower East Side and brings it to life, filling these pages with vivid memories of her avant-garde queer friends and dramatically recreating the early years of the AIDS crisis as experienced by a political insider. Interweaving personal reminiscence with cogent analysis, Schulman details her experience as a witness to the loss of a generation's imagination and the consequences of that loss.

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## The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination By Sarah Schulman Bibliography

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**Editorial Review**

Review

“This bracing, powerful, and well-reasoned work reaffirms the author’s stature as a distinctive American woman of letters. . . . Highly recommended.”

(Richard Drezen *Library Journal* 2012-03-02)

“The book that’s inspired me more than any other this year is Sarah Schulman’s *Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination*, a razor-sharp memoir of New York in the heyday of the AIDS crisis.”

(Jason King *Slate* 2012-12-26)

“Teeming with ideas, necessary commentary, refreshing connections and examination of the status quo.”

(*Lambda Literary* 2012-03-13)

“A brilliant critique of contemporary culture. . . . This is the most important book of the year.”

(Jeff Miller *Cult MTL* 2012-12-27)

“Schulman’s personal recollections... are sharp and vivid.”

(*Gay & Lesbian Review/Worldwide* 2012-08-01)

“This is a very good, very sad book about the aftershock of the AIDS crisis in New York. Schulman is a truly gifted thinker.”

(Alex Frank *Fader Magazine* 2012-05-18)

“The author, a true woman of letters, makes a persuasive case.”

(Roberto Friedman *Bay Area Reporter* 2012-03-15)

“This is why the book is so successful and demands our attention: through a focus on the pulse of the queer community (of the 80s), it touches upon the individual condition (of today).”

(Marcie Bianco *Velvetpark* 2012-03-20)

“A polemic, a passionate, provocative . . . account of disappearance, forgetfulness and untimely death.”

(Olivia Laing *New Statesman* 2013-03-07)

“No book has rocked my world in recent times more than Sarah Schulman’s ‘*The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination*’ . . . [it ranks] among the best alternative histories published in the last 50 years.”

(Don Shewey *Culturevulture.net* 2012-05-21)

“A galvanizing account of the transformation, both external and mental, in New York City life.”

(Emily Douglas *Los Angeles Review Of Books* 2012-06-08)

“The essence of what Schulman calls gentrification is to pretend that privilege and difference do not exist and that any attempt to remember that they do is mere ‘political correctness’ rather than facing up to the reality to who does what to whom. To forget these things, is to deceive ourselves—and Schulman’s harsh,

bitter prose is a useful way of waking ourselves up.”  
(Roz Kaveney *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)* 2012-04-13)

“It’s a beautifully written screed (not a bad word in my books). . . . Schulman shines when she taps her deep knowledge of the AIDS movement. . . . She can be brilliant.”  
(Susan G. Cole *Now* 2012-03-08)

From the Inside Flap

"Sarah Schulman, as always, hits the nail on the head. I can't imagine a more insightful probe into gentrification and its inhumane consequences. Everyone needs to read this book."—Martin Duberman, author of *Stonewall*

“Sarah Schulman's *The Gentrification of the Mind* is a bulwark against the collective loss of memory. AIDS, gentrification, the struggle for gay rights, the class war that has driven entire communities of artists, immigrants, and outsiders from the neighborhoods they created—all these things have been erased by the official culture. Schulman's book will make you rage and weep, and then—just maybe—organize.”—Luc Sante, author of *Low Life: Lures and Snares of Old New York*

"Hard-headed, sensitive, and informed, this book will make the confused world of urban redevelopment and gentrification make notably more sense. Schulman has a mind as clear as a bell in evening. You'll be glad you read it. I was."—Samuel R. Delany, author of *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*

About the Author

**Sarah Schulman**, Distinguished Professor of English at CUNY, Staten Island, is the author of nine novels, five books of nonfiction, plays, and films.

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