



Shady Ladies: Nineteen Surprising and Rebellious American Women

Suzann Ledbetter

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Suzann Ledbetter has researched and written about American history for almost twenty years. The depth of her work is reflected in these well-crafted and enormously entertaining biographies of little-known---till now---Shady Ladies. Some were crackpots, some criminals, some charlatans, some genuine talents, but almost all have been sadly forgotten.

Unsung though they may be, these defiant women challenged post-Victorian society in an era when females were second-class citizens. They are every bit as intriguing as their more famous sisters. Who knew Harriet Hubbard Ayer and her cosmetic concoctions predated Helena Rubenstein, and that Ayer virtually invented the newspaper advertorial?

Photographs of Lydia Pinkham were the first photos ever used in advertising. A century after her death, modern science has confirmed that her black cohosh--laced elixir is a viable treatment for menopausal symptoms.

"The way to a man's heart is through his stomach" was coined by Fanny Fern, aka Sara Parton, who, unlike the better-known Nellie Bly, became the highest-paid newspaper columnist in the country. And Laura Fair was as dangerous to men as Calamity Jane ever was . . . and faced up to the Supreme Court no less. *Shady Ladies* is the story of early American rebels and a fascinating view of the lives of seventeen notorious and notable women. Suzann Ledbetter chronicles the exploits of feminist pioneers, bringing them to life with humor, empathy, and meticulous research.



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