



Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America

Karen Lystra

Download now

[Click here](#) if your download doesn't start automatically

Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America

Karen Lystra

Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America Karen Lystra

In January 1862, Charles Godwin courted Harriet Russell, ultimately unsuccessfully, with the following lines: "Like cadences of inexpressibly sweet music, your kind words came to me: causing every nerve to vibrate as though electrified by some far off strain of heavenly harmony." Almost ten years later, Albert Janin, upon receiving a letter from his beloved Violet Blair, responded with, "I kissed your letter over and over again, regardless of the small-pox epidemic at New York, and gave myself up to a carnival of bliss before breaking the envelope." And in October 1883, Dorothea Lummis wrote candidly to her husband Charles, "I like you to want me, dear, and if I were only with you, I would embrace more than the back of your neck, be sure."

In Karen Lystra's richly provocative book, *Searching the Heart*, we hear the voices of Charles, Albert, Dorothea, and nearly one hundred other nineteenth-century Americans emerge from their surprisingly open, intimate, and emotional love letters. While historians of nineteenth-century America have explored a host of private topics, including courtship, marriage, birth control, sexuality, and sex roles, they have consistently neglected the study of romantic love. Lystra fills this gap by describing in vivid detail what it meant to fall in love in Victorian America.

Based on a vast array of love letters, the book reveals the existence of a real openness--even playfulness--between male and female lovers which challenges and expands more traditional views of middle-class private life in Victorian America. Lystra refutes the common belief that Victorian men and women held passionlessness as an ideal in their romantic relationships. Enabling us to enter the hidden world of Victorian lovers, the letters they left behind offer genuine proof of the intensity of their most private interactions, feelings, behaviors, and judgments. Lystra discusses how Victorians anthropomorphized love letters, treating them as actual visits from their lovers, insisting on reading them in seclusion, sometimes kissing them (as Albert does with Violet's), and even taking them to bed. She also explores how courtship rituals--which included the setting and passing of tests of love--succeeded in building unique, emotional bonds between lovers, and how middle-class views of romantic love, which encouraged sharing knowledge and intimacy, gave women more power in the home.

Through the medium of love letters, *Searching the Heart* allows us to enter, unnoticed, the Victorian bedroom and parlor. We will leave with a different view of middle-class Victorian America.

 [Download Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Lo ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America Karen Lystra

From reader reviews:

Jane Garner:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important act, like looking for your favorite reserve and reading a book. Beside you can solve your problem; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America. Try to face the book Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America as your pal. It means that it can to become your friend when you experience alone and beside regarding course make you smarter than in the past. Yeah, it is very fortunated for yourself. The book makes you far more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let us make new experience as well as knowledge with this book.

Linda Henderson:

What do you concerning book? It is not important together with you? Or just adding material if you want something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your time? Or are you busy man? If you don't have spare time to perform others business, it is gives you the sense of being bored faster. And you have spare time? What did you do? All people has many questions above. They must answer that question due to the fact just their can do that will. It said that about publication. Book is familiar on every person. Yes, it is suitable. Because start from on pre-school until university need that Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America to read.

Scott Settle:

You may spend your free time you just read this book this publication. This Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America is simple to deliver you can read it in the park your car, in the beach, train as well as soon. If you did not have much space to bring the actual printed book, you can buy the particular e-book. It is make you easier to read it. You can save the actual book in your smart phone. And so there are a lot of benefits that you will get when one buys this book.

Joan Munoz:

Many people spending their period by playing outside together with friends, fun activity with family or just watching TV all day long. You can have new activity to invest your whole day by examining a book. Ugh, think reading a book really can hard because you have to use the book everywhere? It fine you can have the e-book, taking everywhere you want in your Smartphone. Like Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America which is getting the e-book version. So , why not try out this book? Let's notice.

Download and Read Online Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America Karen Lystra #A3NMCGI0BLS

Read Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra for online ebook

Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra books to read online.

Online Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra ebook PDF download

Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra Doc

Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra Mobipocket

Searching the Heart: Women, Men, and Romantic Love in Nineteenth-Century America by Karen Lystra EPub