



# Airless Spaces

By Shulamith Firestone

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## Airless Spaces By Shulamith Firestone

In 1970, at the age of twenty-five, Shulamith Firestone wrote and published *The Dialectic of Sex*, immediately becoming a classic of second wave feminism across the world to this very day. It was one of the few books that dared to look at how radical feminism could and should shape the future; and one whose predictions (the cybernetic revolution, for example) proved startlingly prescient of issues today. Published by Semiotext(e) in 1998, *Airless Spaces*, Firestone's first work of fiction, is a collection of short stories written by Firestone as she found herself drifting from the professional career path she'd been on and into what she describes as a new "airless space." These deadpan stories, set among the disappeared and darkened sectors of New York City, are about losers who fall prey to an increasingly bureaucratized poverty and find themselves in an out of (mental) hospitals. But what gives characters such as SCUM-Manifesto author Valerie Solanas their depth and charge, is their the small crises that trigger an awareness that they're in trouble. Some time later, after I had moved to St. Mark's Place, I saw Valerie in the street. She asked me for a quarter, and I saw that she was begging. She had lost her apartment, and presumably her welfare. Later, a friend of mine who ran a store on St. Mark's Place said that Valerie had approached him for shelter. She was covered with sores, and wearing only a blanket to beg in. She had been out on the street approximately three months without shelter. Not long after that, she disappeared from the street entirely.

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## Airless Spaces By Shulamith Firestone Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1009933 in Books
- Published on: 1998-03-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.00" h x .31" w x 4.50" l, .28 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 160 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

"In the century I'm most familiar with, the 20th, the explosion was never-ending, the pieces tinier and tinier. Shulamith Firestone, in her radical insider's tale, informs us repeatedly like lightly pelting rain that all of us are vanishing in a century of institutions that take and take until everyone has gone away and there's no one left to shut the door." Eileen Myles

"This book comes out of a long lonely adventure. A season in hell. The result is a series of devastating observations made entirely without rhetoric. It operates like a parable—deceptively simple and stark, almost imagistic as little pieces fits together with little pieces, pretending to be about small outcast lives when in fact it is an encyclopedia of our age—a harrowing record of what really goes on among us where the wounds of life bring on the invasion of institutions which inflict still more suffering—a stifling atmosphere of isolations where souls are automatically and needlessly lost. This is a prophetic book with enormous consequences since the airless paces multiply now and begin to take over." Kate Millet

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **James Senters:**

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