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David and Livvie are working on their term project together for their sex education class. Their project is to care for someone else for the semester. But when they choose a lonely, pregnant neighbor, they find that caring isn't as simple as it sounds. An ALA Best of the Best Books for Young Adults. A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year.

Sex Education Details

Date : Published October 1st 1995 by Laurel Leaf (first published 1988)

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Author : Jenny Davis

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From Reader Review Sex Education for online ebook

Robyn says

a little bit melodramatic and heavy-handed at times, but the characters are interesting and unique and it's definitely a gripping story. somehow i feel the story was predictable, yet it still made my jaw drop.

oh, also, it is kind of a downer.

Charles says

This is the story of a teen couple in a unique sex education class, a real page turner in the last half. Bad things happen to good people and it becomes a tale of survival despite not wanting to live. Boys will think of sex differently after reading this, or maybe not... This is not a happy book but the author manages to redeem it at the end, I did not see it coming.

Sunny says

From my Summer of Challenged Books.

You may think you know why *Sex Education* was challenged, if you have never read it, simply from the title, but I think it is more than that. The book is sort of an advertisement for apathy. The narrator cares, and therefore ends up in a mental hospital, her life in shambles. And the reasons for this have nothing to do with sex. Yes, sex is referenced, by all its 2000 parts, but that's not the gory part. If I were to say why this book was challenged, I would say it is 40% the title, 20% the actual sex talk, 20% the "disturbing nature" of the book, 10% the "good doesn't triumph/bad guys go unpunished" ending, and 10% profane language (I think she says "damn" in it somewhere).

Michael Burhans says

One of the youth librarians who knows of my interest in young Adult/New Adult fiction has set me up with a list of some of the founding books of the genres. This is one of them from back in 1988. I enjoyed it, well written, and heartfelt, but not as advanced as some of the stories today. well worth the read though.

Inoli says

Somewhere between a 3-1/2 and 4 for me. It wasn't a favorite but there was a lot to this story. What drew me to it was the last phrase in Ashley's comments on it - "and sometimes, there isn't a way to make everything better". It's important to end some stories with how perceptions were adjusted and how a character deals with something rather than how it was all neatly fixed. This was a very worthwhile read.

Ashley says

I read this one a while ago, and I was surprised by how much I enjoyed it. It's now as controversial as the title would lead you to believe. Rather, it's a very touchy story about growing up and learning that life isn't always easy, and sometimes, there isn't a way to make everything better.

Elizabeth says

I read this when I was in Junior High. I actually read it a couple of times because I liked it so much. I wish I could give it an actual review but it's been a while :) The most important thing is that it's less about sex and more about the characters learning about relationships.

Leigha says

Trigger warning: A Small part where they discuss abortion & rape.

Please don't let the title put you off! Amazing story. However, just a little warning, this book broke my heart. I had a vague sense of reading this before and realized I must have picked it up somewhere as a teen, so this is one of the books I read and forgot about ages ago. (I mean... that title lol)

Sex was a lot more taboo when I was kid/teen, so I probably read it and hid it, mistakingly thinking I was doing something "naughty" This book talks about sex in detail, not graphic though, but if you are uncomfortable about saying the proper terms for sex, human body parts...etc...well... this book might not be for you. Though I think you should still give it a chance! They also talk about abortion & rape.

Considering it is about sex education (and so much more) the book doesn't feel that outdated. This should be read by all ages, and of course for kids and teens also just learning about their bodies. It isn't a how-to guide by any means, but there is stuff in here that are important for all people to know/remember. Do we hide stuff about sex from our children and never let them be educated or do we let them learn about it and know how to handle themselves 1f/when they decide to have sex?

This book made me ugly cry.

Aidashs12 says

This was one of my favorite QR books this year (I've only had two). The characters were AMAZINGLY well-developed, the story-line impeccable, and the plot was what I call the "spiral" type: where it starts out big, and starts closing in and in and in, winding and winding, into its climax. I was almost in tears when I read the last few chapters. Thank goodness I didn't because I was in the library and didn't want people to stare. Anyway, the book is about two teenagers in love: David and Livvie. Livvie just moved to town (again), and she is in Ms. Fulton's Biology class, along with David. Ms. Fulton decides to dedicate the whole

first term to Sex Education, as she feels, after a summer of working with pregnant teens, that the teens in this town weren't getting educated enough. (This book was written in 1995, so it is a bit dated, as the Sex Ed now is much better than it was back then.) The big project for the term is to pick someone and care for them. Really care. So Livvie and David pick their pregnant neighbor, who just moved in. They don't realize how they have gotten themselves into something a lot bigger than just the two of them. This book is about what it really means to care, and how dangerous such a seemingly simple thing can be.

Maura says

Definitely not a happy story, but still a worthwhile read. Livvie and David are good characters, well portrayed as teens learning to love, deal with emotions and facing uncomfortable realities regarding their project subject. The ending is of course really depressing, but understandable. It's a shame this book is challenged.

Krista says

Fictional narrative that follows the story of Olivia Sinclair who is recalling her freshman year in a new city and high school. During this year, she meets her first "love", David, in a biology class which turns into an untraditional, exploratory, and eye-opening sex education class. As a project for this class, Olivia and David decide to become friends with a mysterious new neighbor, Maggie, who is enduring a difficult pregnancy and harboring a painful secret that will change all of their lives.

Interesting approach, in both format and character development, to have the narrative "caged" on either end to formulate the story as a flashback. However, though by the last "epilogue" the character of the biology teacher insinuates that about a year has passed, the narrative structure would have benefited from a firm, forthright mention of how much time has passed, how old the main character is now, in order to see a greater (or lack thereof) growth. On the other hand, Davis does a good job in presenting very traditional foils, in the characters of Olivia and David, though it would have been nice to have a same-sex counterpart for each of them too; the closest comparison for another girl we seem to get (at least for Olivia) is Helen.

There were moments when I felt that both Olivia and David were a bit naïve for their age, and I was surprised that the author did not allow them to uncover Maggie's "secret" until it was too late. However, I was also surprised by the ending of the book (I did not expect David to die, if anyone, I expected Maggie), so perhaps that speaks to the strong writing of Davis, and how she can easily manipulate a reader into being optimistic and hoping for an outcome where David and Ophelia can secretly and successfully help Maggie. Also, a few scenes during the biology class verge on the didactic, but over all, it is a unique approach to easing in a young reader to begin thinking about difficult topics surrounding sex, politics, and responsibility. Overall, a good quick read. It would be nice to have a reprint of this title, with an update, new cover, for today's readers. With the exception of a few slang phrases (i.e. "far out"), the themes and issues are timeless.

Chintushig Tumenbayar says

Za yostoi anh udaa belgiin bolovsorliig iim nariin hemjeend usvur nasnii huuhded olgoj boloh talaar olj

medlee. Ter dund minii ch medehgui yum ih olon yum. Bagachuud herhen yaj anhnii oilgolt avdag yagaad udtal sonirhoj baisnaa genet etseg eh ergen toirniihnoosoo ogt asuuhaa bolichihdog suuldee ter taliin medeeleel hav dardag talaar olon arvan surgagch bagsh humuujuulegch nariin setgegdel, sanalasuulguudiig unshaad ireeduid huuhedtei bolvol yag yaj yamar zamaar medleg olgoh vee gesen bodol toruulj baina. Dan gants toiruu hariult uguud yavaad baihn uneheer hangalttgui yum gedgiig l olj medlee

Beth says

Livvie is the new girl in town when she meets David in her biology class. The topic of the semester is sex education: a concerned teacher's campaign to prevent teen pregnancy, and to help young people make more informed and hopefully safer choices. Through a variety of assignments, she teaches her students not only the facts and statistics about disease and pregnancy prevention, but also how to care for someone in a non-sexual way, and how to express themselves. The teacher's realistic message is "wait as long as you can." The main project of the semester is "to care about another person." David and Livvie choose to work together, befriending Livvie's new neighbor, a frail and timid pregnant woman who seems to desperately need someone to care about her.

The best part about this book is Davis' sensitive writing. We experience everything through Livvie's naive eyes, especially the growing affection between her and David and the joys of first love. By contrast, the problems in the marriage of the new neighbors reveal themselves bit by bit. The horrifying climax reveals the reason Livvie pens her story from an insane asylum. Readers will feel her shock, grief and anger. The deep empathy with Livvie shows strong characterization, and the plot is much more complex than one would guess from the title.

This is a book that made me smile with fond memories of my own first love, and weep for the characters. Sex Education is a must have for any young adult library.

Robert B. Miller says

Olivia and David have a class project to take care of Maggie, a pregnant teen. The story unfolds with much compassion and love for this girl. The horror of the abuse by her husband leads them to help her out of the situation. Neither Olivia or David realized this action would change their lives forever. Shelly Fall '09

Gina says

This book was the best book i ever read in my life <3

I really liked it even thought the end is sad but i think its a great book because its can make u laugh,cry and both at the same time.

And the title is misleading a lots of people , so many people in my calls taught its a sex book but i told them its not its a really nice book and told them they should read it and its not related to sex at all . The title is Sex Ed because David and Livve met in that class and that class was the beginning of everything
