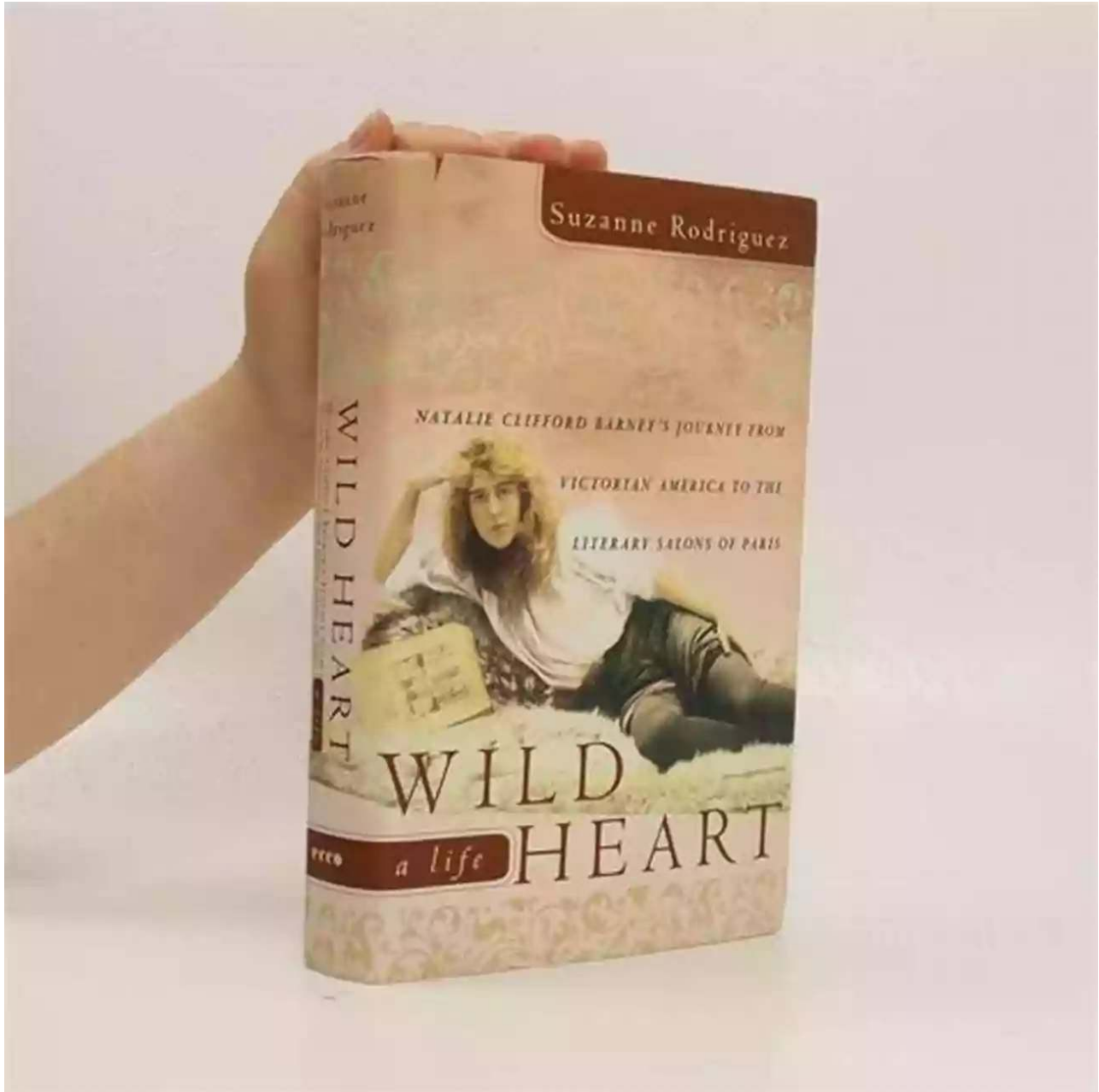


Natalie Clifford Barney And The Decadence Of Literary Paris

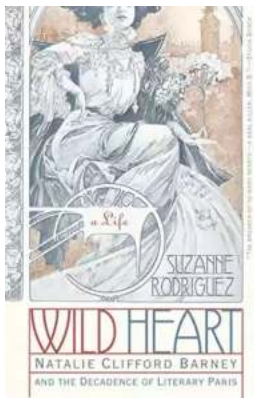


Paris has always been a city of creative inspiration, but during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it reached a whole new level of artistic decadence. Central to this period was the figure of Natalie Clifford Barney, an American writer and

patroness of the arts who became a prominent member of the literary and artistic circles in Paris.

The Rise of Natalie Clifford Barney

Born in 1876 in Dayton, Ohio, Natalie Clifford Barney moved to Paris in her early twenties and quickly became enamored with the city's vibrant cultural scene. She was known for her unapologetic non-conformity and refusal to adhere to societal norms, which made her a perfect fit for the experimental and avant-garde atmosphere of literary Paris.



Wild Heart: A Life: Natalie Clifford Barney and the Decadence of Literary Paris

by Suzanne Rodriguez-Hunter (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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| Language | : English |
| File size | : 973 KB |
| Text-to-Speech | : Enabled |
| Screen Reader | : Supported |
| Enhanced typesetting | : Enabled |
| Word Wise | : Enabled |
| Print length | : 456 pages |
| Paperback | : 30 pages |
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| Dimensions | : 8.5 x 0.08 x 11 inches |



Barney soon established her famous literary salon, which became a hub for artists, writers, and intellectuals from different disciplines and backgrounds. Writers like Gertrude Stein, André Gide, and Paul Valéry were frequent guests, as

well as painters such as Picasso and Matisse. Barney's salon quickly became a meeting place for the most groundbreaking minds of the time.

The Decadent Atmosphere

The atmosphere of Barney's salon was characterized by a sense of decadence and liberation. The attendees engaged in intellectual discussions, but also indulged in unconventional behavior and lifestyles, shocking the conservative society of the time. It was a place where ideas clashed, artistic boundaries were pushed, and unconventional relationships were explored.

Barney herself was openly lesbian at a time when homosexuality was heavily stigmatized. Her salon provided a safe and accepting space for members of the LGBTQ+ community to express themselves freely, which was particularly revolutionary for its time.

Love Affairs and Scandals

Barney's personal life was as unconventional as her salon. She had numerous love affairs with both men and women, causing scandals and rumors to swirl around her. Her relationships with women, such as the famous poet Renée Vivien and the dancer Liane de Pougny, were particularly scandalous in the conservative society of Paris.

The love affairs and scandals surrounding Barney added to her allure and cemented her reputation as an embodiment of decadence. She lived life on her own terms, defying societal expectations and embracing her identity as an independent woman.

Legacy and Influence

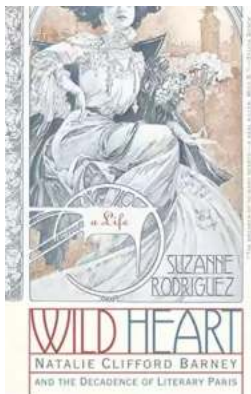
Despite the controversies surrounding her, Natalie Clifford Barney's contributions to the literary and artistic world can't be denied. She was a prolific writer herself, with works ranging from poetry to plays and novels. She also played a significant role in supporting and promoting other writers, often using her salon as a platform to showcase their talents.

Barney's legacy remains visible in today's artistic landscape. Her fearless pursuit of individuality and artistic expression continues to inspire countless creators around the world. Her literary salon set a precedent for creative spaces where artists can gather and exchange ideas freely, fostering innovation and pushing the boundaries of art.

The End of an Era

With the outbreak of World War II and the rise of a new cultural era, the decadence of literary Paris began to decline. Many artists, including Barney, sought refuge elsewhere, and the vibrant atmosphere that had once defined the city moved on to new horizons.

However, the impact of Natalie Clifford Barney and the decadence of literary Paris still lingers, immortalizing a moment in history where creativity knew no bounds. The echoes of those unconventional ideas and the pursuit of artistic freedom continue to resonate in the hearts and minds of artists today.



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Born in 1876, Natalie Barney—beautiful, charismatic, brilliant and wealthy—was expected to marry well and lead the conventional life of a privileged society woman. But Natalie had no interest in marriage and made no secret of the fact that she was attracted to women. Brought up by a talented and rebellious mother—the painter Alice Barney—Natalie cultivated an interest in poetry and the arts. When she moved to Paris in the early 1900s, she plunged into the city's literary scene, opening a famed Left Bank literary salon and engaging in a string of scandalous affairs with courtesan Liane de Pougy, poet Renee Vivien, and painter Romaine Brooks, among others. For the rest of her long and controversial life Natalie Barney was revered by writers for her generous, eccentric spirit and reviled by high society for her sexual appetite. In the end, she served as an inspiration and came to know many of the greatest names of 20th century arts and letters—including Proust, Colette, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Isadora Duncan, Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, and Truman Capote.

A dazzling literary biography, *Wild Heart: A Life* is a story of a woman who has been an icon to many. Set against the backdrop of two different societies—Victorian America and Belle Epoque Europe—*Wild Heart: A Life* beautifully captures the richness of their lore.



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