



# The Girls Club

*Sally Bellerose*

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## **The Girls Club** Sally Bellerose

*The Girls Club* is the coming-of-age story of a young, white, working-class woman. Set in the 1970s, the story revolves around Cora Rose as she copes with her emerging sexuality, an illness her sisters refer to as "the dreaded bowel disease," and the conflicts created by the growing disparity between her desires and her Catholic upbringing.

Part one deals with the three sisters' adolescent relationship to each other and their Catholic working-class world. Cora Rose's distress at being caught in an embrace with her best friend Stella leads her to sleep with the first boy who shows interest. She is married with a child at age eighteen.

Part two shows how the sisters help and hinder each other in their struggles to take control and responsibility over their lives.

Part three reveals Cora Rose's physical challenges, including an ostomy, that further complicate her feelings about her sexuality and increase her need for her sisters' support. She becomes involved with a woman she meets at a bar called The Girls Club. Marie and Renee play out their own struggles as Cora Rose leaves her husband, fights to keep her child, and overcomes religious and social prejudices that threaten her personal integrity.

**Sally Bellerose** was awarded a Fellowship in Literature from the National Endowment for the Arts based on an excerpt from this book. The manuscript was a finalist for the James Jones Fellowship, the Thomas Wolfe Fiction Prize, and the Bellwether Endowment. Sally Bellerose lives in Northampton, Massachusetts.

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