



## The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition

By Alan Downs

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Today's gay man enjoys unprecedented, hard-won social acceptance. Despite this victory, however, serious problems still exist. Substance abuse, depression, suicide, and sex addiction among gay men are at an all-time high, causing many to ask, "Are we really better off?" Drawing on contemporary research, psychologist Alan Downs's own struggle with shame and anger, and stories from his patients, *The Velvet Rage* passionately describes the stages of a gay man's journey out of shame and offers practical and inspired strategies to stop the cycle of avoidance and self-defeating behavior. Updated to reflect the effects of the many recent social, cultural, and political changes, *The Velvet Rage* is an empowering book that has already changed the public discourse on gay culture and helped shape the identity of an entire generation of gay men.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

With a title that plays on Janet Jackson's epochal 1997 LP *The Velvet Rope*, and its anatomy of unmet desire, therapist Downs's book describes the paradigmatic ways in which early childhood molds the future lives of gay men: scorned on the playground, disrespected by Dad, loved only by Mom until their first sex with men. Through this mechanism of rejection, gay men feel unlovable, correspondingly angry and, he says, driven to heights of creativity and "fabulousness"—in addition to shopping addiction and obsessions with fat, muscle and penis size—in a bid to distract themselves from their inner shame. For Downs, the only thing that will bring an end to this spiral of torment is, finally, "validation," which produces "authenticity." Downs is an engaging writer, though prone to repeating the same few points in different words, while his patients, quoted in sidebars, often make witty quips that rival Quentin Crisp for dry, bitter sarcasm. While many gay readers will fail to recognize themselves here, others will find Downs's logic warming and even generous. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Review

### *Philadelphia Gay News* bestseller, 5/11/12

"A groundbreaking examination of the psychology of homosexuality, why it leads to shame over one's identity and how to overcome it. This book has remarkable staying power."

### *Artvoice*, 11/26/15

"The clearest, most succinct delineation of the origins and consequences of internalized homophobia, and how to address them."

From the Inside Flap

"The most important issue in a gay man's life is not 'coming out,' but coming to terms with the invalidating past where we learned that we are shameful...."

The gay male world today is characterized by seductive beauty, artful creativity, flamboyant sexuality, and, encouragingly, unprecedented acceptability in society. Yet despite the progress of the past century, our intimate relationships are generally short-lived compared to straight relationships, sexually transmitted diseases among us are at epidemic proportions, and depression and suicide occur far more frequently than among straight men.

Even though an entire generation of us has openly and freely come out of the closet, we still find ourselves asking, "Are we really better off?" Through bravely honest individual stories and compassionate analysis, *The Velvet Rage* explores how our contentment has been destroyed by lingering, deep-rooted shame—a shame that can be traced to our childhood experiences of feeling "other" and perhaps emotionally abandoned by the first men in our lives, our fathers. Most of us rage quietly against the shame we feel so acutely, masking it behind a facade of beauty, creativity, or material success.

It doesn't have to be this way. There is a way out of this emotional bind.

Drawing on contemporary psychological research, the author's own journey to be free of anger and of shame, as well as the stories of many of his friends and clients, *Velvet Rage* outlines the three distinct stages to emotional well-being for gay men. Offering profoundly helpful strategies to stop the insidious cycle of avoidance and self-defeating behavior, *Velvet Rage* is an empowering book you'll wish you read long ago.

It's not too late to begin healing now.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **William Harris:**

The experience that you get from *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition* is a more deep you looking the information that hide within the words the more you get enthusiastic about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition* giving you joy feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by means of anyone who read that because the author of this e-book is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your own vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having this particular *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition* instantly.

#### **Sherman Etheridge:**

Exactly why? Because this *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition* is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will distress you with the secret it inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who else write the book in such incredible way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book possess such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I have been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

#### **Christopher Hill:**

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. One particular activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition details. Even you love *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition*, you may enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its called reading friends.

**Raymond Nelson:**

This *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition* is a great book for you because the content is full of information for you who have always dealt with the world and also have to make decisions every minute. This specific book reveals its facts accurately using great organized words or we can declare no rambling sentences inside it. So if you read the item hurriedly, you can have the whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but tricky core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World, Second Edition* in your hand like keeping the world in your arm, information in it is not ridiculous at all. We can say that no guide that offers you the world within ten or fifteen small pages but this book already does that. So, this is certainly a good reading book. Hey Mr. and Mrs. busy do you still doubt that will?

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