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From Brand: NYU Press : Impossible to Hold: Women and Culture in the 1960s (American History and Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Impossible to Hold: Women and Culture in the 1960s (American History and Culture):

With Jackie in a pill-box hat and Marilyn crooning to the president, the 1960s opened with women hovering at the fringes of the public imagination and ended with a feminist movement that outpaced anything NASA could concoct. A compelling story, but did it really happen that way? Unlike many accounts of the era, *Impossible to Hold* revels in the complexities of female identity and American culture. The collection's sixteen original essays move beyond conventional discussions of hippie chicks and Weatherwomen to examine the diverse lives of women who helped to shape religion, sports, literature, and music, among other aspects of the cultural hodgepodge known as the sixties. From familiar names like Yoko Ono, Carole King, and Joan Baez to lesser-known figures like Anita Caspary and Barbara Deming, the women revealed in *Impossible to Hold* represent a variety of points on the celebrity and feminist spectrums. The book traces women who sought to break into male fields, women whose personae and work link the radical sixties to earlier cultural traditions, and those who consciously confronted power structures and demanded change. Separately and together, their cultural work informed the sixties and their biographies offer a lucid and complex picture of that proverbial long decade.

For too long, cultural historians of the Sixties have marginalized women, and women's historians of that period have privileged the political over the cultural. At last, Lauri Umansky and Avital Bloch have had the good sense to bring together women's history and cultural history in order to advance a gendered understanding of the cultural revolution of the Sixties. Through the lives of women as varied as folksinger Joan Baez, poet Sonia Sanchez, and artist Judy Chicago, *Impossible to Hold* reveals the centrality of women to the culture of the Sixties, and the significance of the cultural to women. -Alice Echols, Professor of English, USC, and author of *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* Too often we think that the women's movement burst onto the sixties scene late in the decade. Avital Bloch and Lauri Umansky have assembled a wonderful and varied set of essays to revise that notion. Here are women from throughout the era, staking their claims to central roles in American culture and, by their words and actions, demonstrating the centrality of the female experience to that culture. The array of subjects includes many names we have known—Joan Baez, Billie Jean King, Diana Ross, Yoko Ono, Jane Fonda—as well as many we will know now, because of this important and compelling collection. -Alexander Bloom, author of *Takin' It to the Streets and Long Time Gone: Sixties America Then and Now* One of the strongest aspects of this book is that it ignores the usual female suspects in discussions of the sixties. It also focuses on women and the culture of the sixties instead of feminism during the sixties. Almost none of the women profiled in the text self-identified as feminists, yet their cultural contributions helped make a huge impact for women of future generations. -Altar Magazine By emphasizing community, inclusivity, and the political dimensions of cultural change, the women in this volume forged and fostered an important set of alternatives to the dominant culture . . . As a result, these artists helped shift the mixed-gender mainstream by shaping countercultural trends and visions. They may have been 'impossible' to restrain, but the contributions they made to American culture and life were lasting and concrete. -H-Net A superb accomplishment that assembles lively, spirited writing about women, some well-known and others less so, who made a difference in the way we live our lives today. -The Journal of American History About the Author Avital H. Bloch is research professor at the Center for Social Research, University of Colima, Mexico, and author of *Politics, Political Thought, and Historiography in the Contemporary United States*. Lauri Umansky is Professor of History at Suffolk University and is the author of *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* and *"Bad Mother: The Politics of Blame in the Twentieth Century America*.