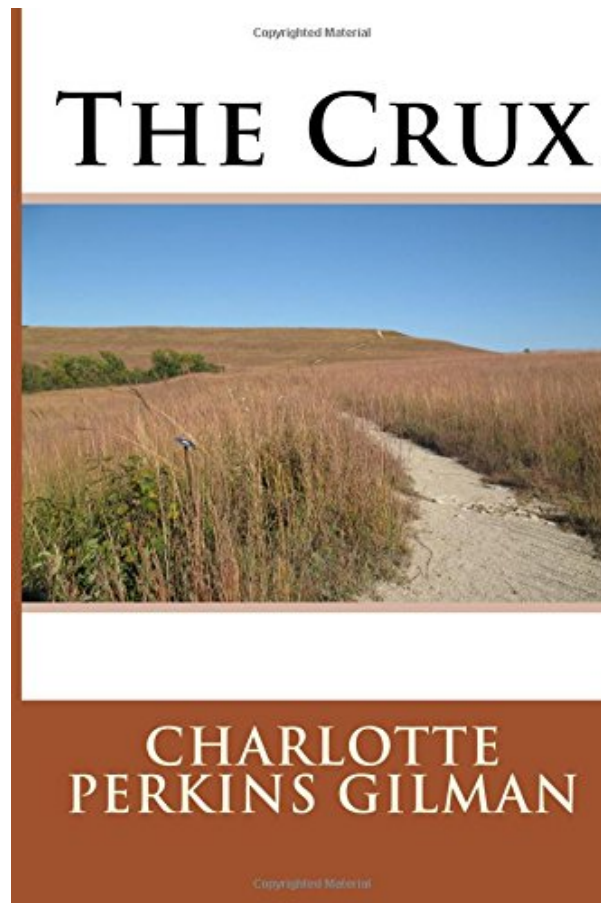


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## Review

“What a treat to have another Gilman novel—until now largely ignored—available. We are indebted to Duke University Press for publishing it as a separate piece and to Dana Seitler for her provocative and stimulating introduction. The Crux is in many ways a period piece embodying what today seems outmoded and sometimes outrageous views. Oddly, these same views are also startlingly and wickedly relevant today.”—Ann J. Lane, author of *To Herland and Beyond: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*

“With reproductive technologies at the center of feminist, medical, and national debate, *The Crux* offers a fascinating historical perspective on the relationship of reproduction and nationalism. Dana Seitler's introduction offers a useful context in which to read Charlotte Perkins Gilman's quirky, biology-based feminism, her depiction of a women's community in the west, and, generally, the relationship between fiction-writing and the fashioning of gender roles that fueled Gilman's particular brand of activism.”—Priscilla Wald, author of *Constituting Americans: Cultural Anxiety and Narrative Form*

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

Essential, entertaining reading for Gilman fans

By A Customer

The Crux is essential reading for anyone seriously interested in the writings of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Jennifer S. Tuttle's is to be commended for bringing it to readers in this excellent edition. After having read most of Gilman's other fiction, I will admit that I put off reading this one because of its reputation as "the book about venereal disease" (sexually transmitted diseases). I feared it would be didactic, heavy handed, and depressing. Instead, it's like the best of Gilman's "optimistic reform" books: it treats its serious subject with a light touch, conveying its important ideas through appealing characters and a strong plot with Gilman's typical "happy ending." (Some readers might argue that the ending is a bit implausible, but that's part of the interest of this set of Gilman's writings.) At times, it is laugh-out-loud funny. Also, it's not entirely accurate to say that the book is "about" venereal disease, for although the last third of the book discusses the dangers women faced from sexually transmitted diseases in the years before adequate cures had been discovered, there is much more to the story. It portrays the opportunities for self discovery open to women who move from the stultifying conditions of New England villages to the open life in a new city in the Colorado mountains. The women characters (on whom the story focuses) range from young unmarried women to a seemingly dried-up old maid, a woman doctor, and one of literature's most delightful grandmothers.

My only serious objection to this edition is that University of Delaware Press, for some unaccountable reason, has elected to publish this book only in an expensive hardback edition. The story, along with Tuttle's illuminating introduction and clear explanatory notes, would be highly suitable as a teaching text if the book were available in a reasonably-priced paper edition.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Should be studied more often

By Monica Rico

\_The Crux\_ isn't "great literature" but it is well worth reading for the insight into Charlotte Perkins Gilman's thinking about sexuality, gender, and health. In this text, you can trace some of the elements of her belief in eugenics, intertwined with her conviction that women should have satisfying careers and independent lives. In other words, as with so many of Gilman's contemporaries, the ideas that we think of as "progressive" and "reactionary" were, in this era, mutually constitutive. \_The Crux\_ makes for fascinating reading and lively discussion.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Recommended read, it's always interesting to see where Gilman ...

By Liz C

This is a fairly quick read of a book, longer than Gilman's usual short story, but not something that would take weeks to read either. This particular copy is a bit different than most books. This one is a reprint of a "historic book" which in this case seems to mean the original page numbers happen to be in the middle of paragraphs, sentences and sometimes even words. It's a bit distracting at first, but you get used to it after a page or two. Each page is laid out in three columns, and the whole thing is the size of a composition notebook, though not nearly as thick. If that layout would distract you, there are other printings available in "regular" paperback size, some are even anthologies. Recommended read, it's always interesting to see where Gilman went with her various works.

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