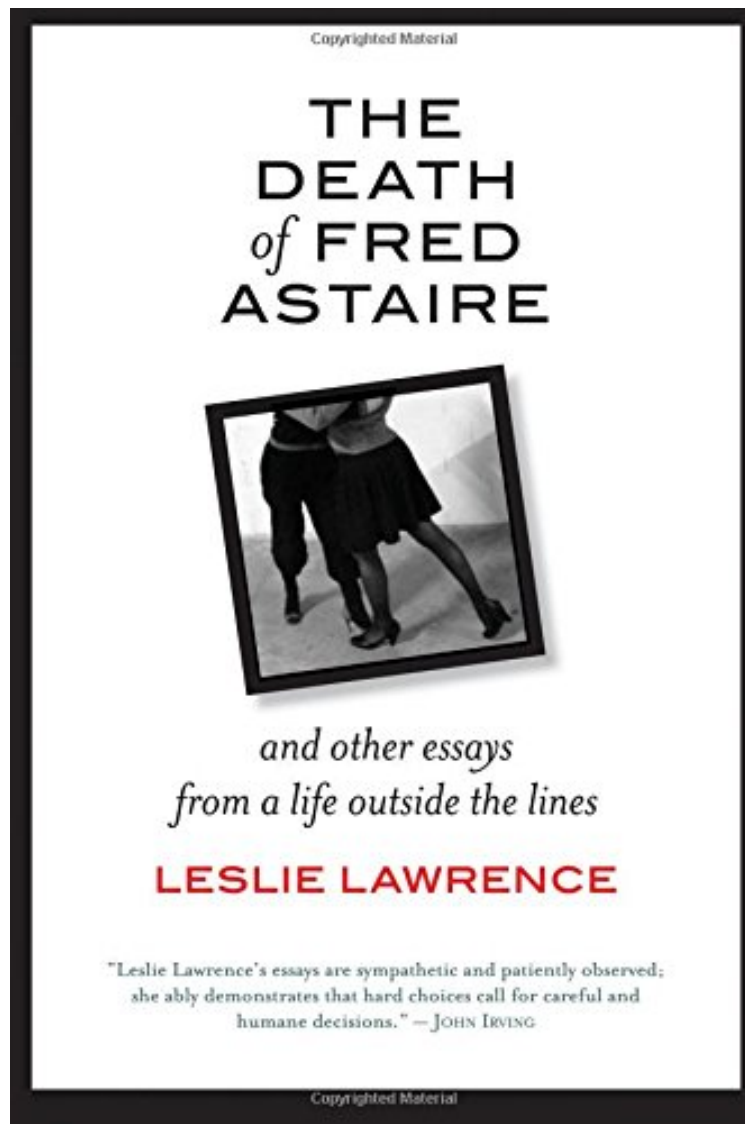


(Mobile ebook) The Death of Fred Astaire: And Other Essays from a Life outside the Lines (Excelsior Editions)

## The Death of Fred Astaire: And Other Essays from a Life outside the Lines (Excelsior Editions)

*Leslie Lawrence*

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**Leslie Lawrence : The Death of Fred Astaire: And Other Essays from a Life outside the Lines (Excelsior Editions)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Death of Fred Astaire: And Other Essays from a Life outside the Lines (Excelsior Editions):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. I'm conscious of how beautifully written these stories are By Medb

M. Sichko I'm conscious of how beautifully written these stories are, of how many strands the author weaves together to achieve the ultimate message. I love how in "Fits and Starts" she even analyzes the meaning of the word "fit" and this analysis doesn't seem unnatural or awkward--it fits! I remember as a college student trying to figure out how W.B. Yeats created his wonderful feeling of inevitability in his poems and I concluded it had something to do with his use of nature imagery. I think this author does it by weaving together different vignettes that build on each and at the end she pulls out one thread that clinches the meaning. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. For All Humans By John Smith Fantastic writing - to be read slowly and carefully as that gives attention to the care with which these essays are crafted. You will be hooked from the first chapter. Really moving perspectives on life experiences that many of us don't often stop and think closely enough about. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Lawrence's essays may be read separately as instances of revelation ... By Patricia Rosenblatt Lawrence's essays may be read separately as instances of revelation and recollection lovingly and skillfully rendered. Together, they form an examined life of experiences deeply felt and thoughtfully considered. They highlight the beauty and vitality that is contained in the acts and details of daily living. Within their lines is a tale of integrity that stems from having the courage to be true to oneself.

When, in the late eighties, the author chooses to raise a child with her lesbian partner, she embraces a life outside the lines one full of curious adventures as well as the usual catastrophes and everyday pleasures. As a child of the sixties, Leslie Lawrence knew she didn't want to duplicate her parents' lives, yet she never imagined she'd stray so far outside the lines of their and her own expectations. *The Death of Fred Astaire* opens with the story, both wrenching and funny, of how Lawrence says her goodbyes to the iconic images she's held since her youth; she then proceeds to bear a child and raise him with her lesbian partner. Some essays in this debut collection reflect on legacies Lawrence inherited from her Jewish family and culture. In others, she searches gamely for a rich, authentic life, a vocation, a community, even a god she can call her own. Always a seeker, an adventurer resisting fear, Lawrence, a city girl, creates a summer home in the back woods of the Live Free or Die state. She attempts the flying trapeze and takes part in a cross-dressing workshop. Traveling alone to Morocco, she assists a veterinarian tending to an ailing donkey. Teaching in a vocational high school in Boston, she questions her methods and assumptions about race and class. With rare honesty, she confronts the complexities of motherhood, of caring for her ill partner, and of widowhood. In *Wonderlust*, the collection's most ambitious piece, she explores the role of beauty and creativity in our spiritual lives, revealing how lifelong learning in dance, music, and the visual arts can make us all more alive even as we age. Ranging widely in length, subject, and style, these personal essays place Lawrence among today's most vital writers of creative nonfiction. Her warmth and wisdom, her distinctive blend of humor and pathos, her reverence for what sustains us—food and family, community and beauty—all make this a book you'll want to share with those you love. Leslie Lawrence's essays are sympathetic and patiently observed; she ably demonstrates that hard choices call for careful and humane decisions. John Irving *The Death of Fred Astaire* assembles a realistic and venturesome portrait of the author as writer, teacher, partner, mother, grieving partner, perennial seeker while capturing the complicated texture of the post-1960s decades of American life. Lawrence's reach is wide, her narrative skills highly honed, and her tone is resonant with a sense of truth being told. Sven Birkerts, author of *Changing the Subject: Art and Attention in the Internet Age* *The Death of Fred Astaire* is warm, wry, and rich in detail. A lovely read! Kate Clinton, comedian In this stirring collection, Lawrence boldly plumbs her many lives as lesbian mother, writer, widow, teacher, student, border-crosser each is rich beyond description. *The Death of Fred Astaire* is a marvelous book. Read it and rejoice through your tears! Hilda Raz, coauthor of *What Becomes You* This lively and eclectic collection of personal essays will appeal to a wide range of readers, educating some about an era of American cultural history and for others providing material for an associational romp through their own memories. Additionally, *The Death of Fred Astaire* will provide useful material for courses in education, nonfiction writing, cultural studies, and women's studies. Pamela Annas, University of Massachusetts Boston

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