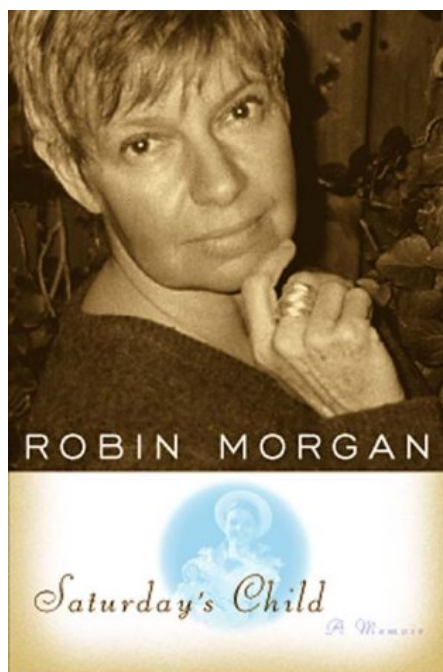




Saturday's Child: A Memoir

Robin Morgan

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Saturday's Child: A Memoir Robin Morgan

Robin Morgan is known as a prize-winning author, a political theorist, and a founder of the contemporary women's movement. But these adult accomplishments eclipsed an earlier fame. "Saturday's child has to work for a living," and Morgan has--since the age of two. She was a tot model, had her own radio show at age four, and was a child star on television, including on the popular series "Mama." Unlike most child actors, she emerged to reinvent a life filled with literary achievement and constructive politics.

Here Morgan tells the whole story--the years as a child so famous she was named "The Ideal American Girl," her fight to become a serious writer, marriage to a fiery bisexual poet, motherhood, lovers (male and female), and decades working on civil rights, the radical underground, and global feminism. This is the intensely personal, behind-the-scenes story of her life.

Saturday's Child: A Memoir Details

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From Reader Review Saturday's Child: A Memoir for online ebook

Roy says

Lengthy on her childhood history as a child star with her mother and aunt using her as their means of livelihood... Her life is no model to follow, but is an inspiring example of survival and service in a spirit of both compassion and tenacity.

Faith Reidenbach says

Read for the prologue, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Memoir"

Karen says

Robin Morgan has written a riveting, passionate, politically inspiring memoir. I was fascinated by the stories she told about her childhood as a radio and TV child actress and her emergence as one of the leaders of the second wave of feminism. This memoir is a perfect example of how the personal and political inform each other and I rooted for the author as she as she painstakingly began to listen to her own voice. She is honest about her flaws and of her sorrows and of her determination to create a useful life. This included a model of parenting that is based on supporting the integrity and personhood of her child which has caused a re-examination of my own parenting philosophy and style. One of my favorite parts of the book is when she states that she does not miss the "old days" of an earlier type of political organizing and firmly informs us that there is plenty (politically) to do without being stuck in false nostalgia. I agree. There is plenty to do and this memoir helps me keep on doing it.

Thank you Netgalley for giving me this opportunity to review this book.

Jodie says

Robin is a fantastic storyteller, she weaves you through her world with a window into becoming and the wild road it is messed with a sharp political eye witnessing all she passes. Inspiring, engaging and deliciously feminist.

Michelle L says

Being a contemporary of Robin Morgan, with memories of her childhood acting career, and having been very conscious of the women's movement, in fact, modifying my views and life because of it, Ms Morgan has had my admiration and respect for decades. No less so now that I have read a large portion of this purposeful and involving memoir. The only reason I haven't finished it is that the drama level in my own life has been somewhat on the upswing and it wasn't going to work, sharing her increasingly intense life experiences at the same time. Not when they brought back so many contemporary recollections of my own that it felt that I had known her and her pain back then. She has really turned out a vivid testimony here, no

surprise, and no one interested in the state of womanhood in the second half of the 20th Century (and for all I know the beginnings of the 21st), should deny themselves this experience. Especially at this time in the civic life of these United States.

Donna Davis says

Robin Morgan is one of the mothers of contemporary feminism. She has charted history, together with other women and those who support them, in more ways than I can even keep track of. Although she was once famous for her performances as a child actor, it is for her feminism that I know her, and for that reason I was eager to read her memoir. Thank you to Net Galley and Open Road Integrated Media for the ARC.

Now a social warrior of advanced age, she is still undoubtedly one of the most articulate individuals alive. However the heat that came from her discussion of her childhood all but singed my eyebrows. Some of us grow mellow with age and learn to let go of things that happened when we were small, but I suppose for some, outrage and sorrow compound faster than interest on a credit card.

You see, Morgan was raised as a child celebrity. From the age of two years her life was a constant swirl of organdy dresses, auditions, and performances. She rode in parades and promoted a doll that resembled her, though she was not permitted to play with one. She wasn't allowed to nurture friendships, and would not have had time for them in any case. Work, education, and rehearsal took up all of her time, and special arrangements had to be made in order for her education to be completed because of her exhausting schedule. She was a highly capable student and is clearly extremely literate, but her formal education ended with high school; her mother, who lived off of Morgan's pay from Morgan's toddlerhood until her death (including investments that lived on after Morgan retired from show business), told her that college was out of the question. She deals articulately and extensively with issues surrounding the exploitation of child actors by adults during this period, as well as the surprise revelation that came about when she tracked down the father she had never known.

I found my long dead and slightly famous great-uncle buried in her text; Sherman Billingsley, owner of The Stork Club, named a drink for her, similar to a Shirley Temple, but with a chunk of pineapple. Funny stuff, though Morgan's childhood experiences were mostly grim.

The rest of the book gave me what I came for. Morgan came of age during the antiwar era of the late 1960's and early 1970's. The era of protest surrounding the US war against the people of Vietnam radicalized the youth who participated in it; the women who had been side-lined during this time period by their male counterparts began to realize that they should be taking part in the decision-making process instead of rustling up sandwiches and coffee while the men talked politics.

"Free love" really meant group sex, and Morgan learned quickly that it was not liberating for her, but rather it was traumatic. From Eldridge Cleaver to Abbie Hoffman, one radical male after another showed himself to be a member of the old boys' club where women were concerned. It gave her and several other women pause, and soon led to a number of publications, including *Sisterhood is Powerful*, an anthology I treasure to this day. Morgan's energy and achievements appear to have been boundless.

The urban myth in which feminists all burn their bras appears to have originated with Morgan and other feminists' boycott and picket of the Miss America Pageant in 1968. At this event a certain amount of street theater took place to draw attention to the objectification and trivialization of women in US society. One of these involved whirling bras, symbol of the restriction and shaming of women, in the air and then dramatically dropping them in trash cans. (No fire.)

Morgan's achievements are too many to enumerate here, but her history, and that of other feminists, from Betty Friedan, bell hooks and Bella Abzug to Gloria Steinem, founder of Ms. Magazine, should be part of every general course in American history, and here the author weighs in once more. She is absolutely correct in reminding us all that the history of women does not belong isolated in a women's studies department, but is a part of history in general. Pick up a textbook and list the names; how many are male, and how many are female, even for the relatively recent period since World War II? Nor is this problem limited to the USA; in fact, it appears to extend all over the world. There can be no post-feminist era until women enjoy social, political, and economic equality. It hasn't happened yet.

In fact, Morgan's internationalism, which has been a large part of her career since the first publication of *Sisterhood is Global*, is where she shines brightest.

After reading *Saturday's Child*, I have found myself once more becoming conscious of the imbalance in the world around me. I have noted that if I mention in one instance or another that women are under-represented, even my own children give me a look that says I am bringing up trivial, petty matters that I should have let pass. And then I hear Morgan, reminding me that trivializing women is part of the problem.

If you are a woman, or if you love one, reading *Saturday's Child* may leave you feeling dissatisfied and in need of social change. And until the world becomes equal for everyone, that is as it should be. If Morgan's legacy is that more women raise hell for their reproductive freedom and economic equality until both are gained, then what better thing could she have done for the world?
