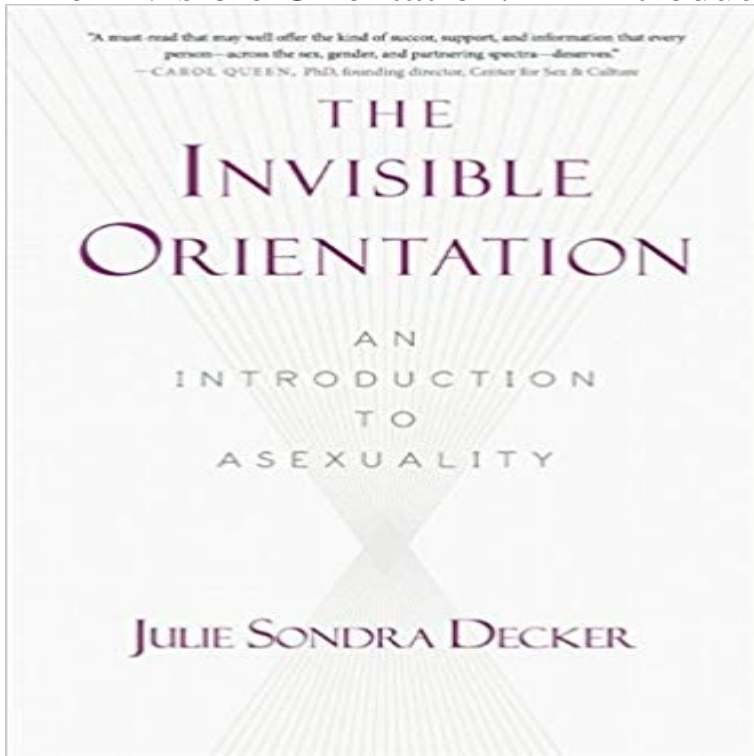


The Invisible Orientation: An Introduction to Asexuality



A finalist for the 2015 LAMBDA Literary Award. What if you weren't sexually attracted to anyone? A growing number of people are identifying as asexual. They aren't sexually attracted to anyone, and they consider it a sexual orientation like gay, straight, or bisexual. Asexuality is the invisible orientation. Most people believe that everyone wants sex, that everyone understands what it means to be attracted to other people, and that everyone wants to date and mate. But that's where asexual people are left out—they don't find other people sexually attractive, and if and when they say so, they are very rarely treated as though that's okay. When an asexual person comes out, alarming reactions regularly follow; loved ones fear that an asexual person is sick, or psychologically warped, or suffering from abuse. Critics confront asexual people with accusations of following a fad, hiding homosexuality, or making excuses for romantic failures. And all of this contributes to a discouraging master narrative: there is no such thing as asexual. Being an asexual person is a lie or an illness, and it needs to be fixed. In *The Invisible Orientation*, Julie Sondra Decker outlines what asexuality is, counters misconceptions, provides resources, and puts asexual people's experiences in context as they move through a very sexualized world. It includes information for asexual people to help understand their orientation and what it means for their relationships, as well as tips and facts for those who want to understand their asexual friends and loved ones.

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