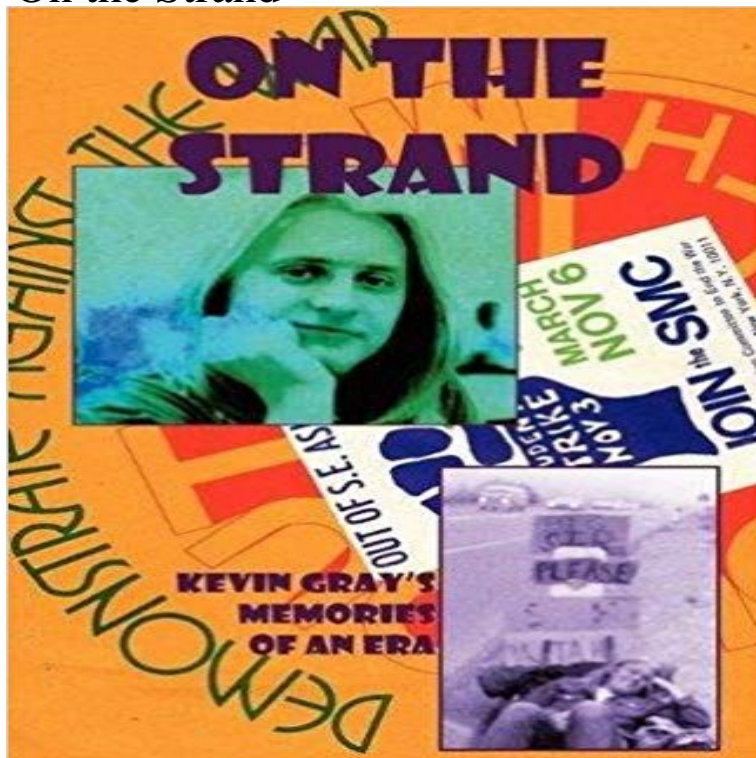


On the Strand



On the Strand Kevin L.Gray World Audience 303 Park Avenue South, Suit 1440, New York, NY 10010-3657 978193544405. \$20 What we have here is an autobiography about growing up in Virginia, getting married, moving to Kansas that reads like a classic American novel. Gray really gets inside feelings and brings the reader adroitly into the heart of his own life. As classic as *Catcher in the Rye* and the basis of what could be great film. ---Dr. Hugh Fox Was it fate or responsibility that brought me to the plains? Or an escape? And why Kansas? Certainly a girl was involved. Three for sure! The reason for heading west from my home in Virginia and making a new one in Kansas is long and complicated. Maybe this is why I always looked at myself as the silent observer, as well as the kid who continually questioned his actions. When I finished my original manuscript, a memoir called *On the Strand* for Antioch University, I asked an old friend, who happens to be a character in this story, how she remembered me from age 11, when we first met, to 21 the last time we talked in a favorite Richmond bar, until I tracked her down via the internet in 2001, and she wrote, Kind, shy, quiet, and very loyal. You had a dry sense of humor and were on the wild side and always ready for something different--always questioning things and authority: **REBELLIOUS!!** She ended her memory with a telling statement: You were hard on yourself and did not believe in Kevin. She pegged me alright! I began publishing my memories with *Waking Up in the Studebaker* (2009), which covers my childhood in Richmond, Virginia's suburbs, through entering high school. *On the Strand* (2010) carries my story forward through high school and leaving Virginia to give college a try in Kansas. What an East Coast attitude I took with me: Im here to get the bullshit classes out of the way and return to a good college

in Virginia. Life happened. And what a ride, including the girls, endless trips to Virginia Beach, keeping track of and protesting the war (Vietnam), defeating the high school dress code, the Atlantic City Pop (Pot) Festival, bars and clubs, the Fillmore East, the Valencia Hotel in Greenwich Village, knowing a long-haired Bruce Springsteen - prior to beginning the E Street Band, the 1970 draft lottery, the 1971 march in Chicago to stop the war, cross country hitch hiking and trips in my Fastback VW, and constantly wondering how I could make something of myself, when I had barely graduated from high school. Would college be any different? Would I be able to get past the bullshit given students by teachers and from both private and public school curriculum expectations back in the grades? Would I stop feeling like the dumbass? Who knows, but I knew travel would be required to place me in Pittsburg, Kansas, in 1971, and that sounded damn good to me, the wayward kid with no set direction. Little did I know I had chosen Playboy magazines latest first place choice for the national Small College Party School, dominated by dime pitchers, bucket night, Coors (not sold east of the Mississippi), and Rod Stewarts Maggie May. This is my story, the one so many of my high school and community college English students asked about for so many years, when their curiosity spoke, and they asked, Why Kansas Gray? As if I had been a nut for leaving Virginia, they would ask, But dont they have the ocean and the mountains? And, so, I had to answer with whatever sounded good but for the most part still ended up skirting the truth. Against the odds, I became an English teacher, journalist and columnist. Not bad for a shy, asthmatic kid, who hated school and especially English classes for so many years. Not bad at all. I invite you to read On the Strand due to publish in January, 2010.

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