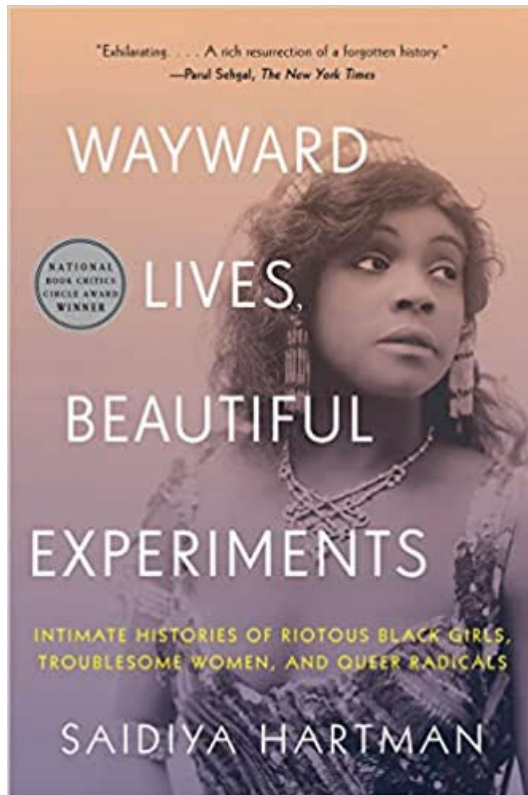


**B**eautifully written and deeply researched, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments* examines the revolution of black intimate life that unfolded in Philadelphia and New York at the beginning of the twentieth century.



In wrestling with the question of what a free life is, many young black women created forms of intimacy and kinship indifferent to the dictates of respectability and outside the bounds of law. They cleaved to and cast off lovers, exchanged sex to subsist, and revised the meaning of marriage. Longing and desire fueled their experiments in how to live. They refused to labor like slaves or to accept degrading conditions of work. Here, for the first time, these women are credited with shaping a cultural movement that transformed the urban landscape. Through a melding of history and literary imagination, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful*

*Experiments* recovers these women's radical aspirations and insurgent desires.