



Against Normality

Original title: Mot normalt
 Publisher: Samlaget, 2020
 Genre: Narrative non - fiction
 Pages: 104 pages
 English sample



Bjørn Hatterud
 Photo: Agnete Bruun

Against Normality

Against Normality is a book about breaking up, and breaking away - and the art of returning home. A book about social mobility and belonging to different worlds. And about the demise of the village community, as it gasps for air. Poised and intelligent, Hatterud’s uncomplicated pen produces a work of remarkable poignance about what it means to be human in our present-day world.

Against Normality is an odyssey fraught with obstacles and challenges, littered with failures, but also illuminated by glittering prizes. Gay, upwardly mobile, hampered by clubfoot and spina bifida, Hatterud knows what it means to be set apart from the rest. Falling short against the requirements of normality, the author develops his own peculiar strategies to grow as a person – and gradually develop as a musician, art critic, curator and writer.

Hatterud delivers keen and contemplative observations on the village of his childhood and youth, on disability and growing up, his mother and father, gay culture, the art scene and academic life. Elegant and compelling, *Against Normality* drills into the seams of structural and personal experience and is, in its every sentence, the work of a consummate reader and writer seeking to navigate in life while being different. It is a triumph about - and for - those who don’t fit. And who among us actually does?

Harbouring feelings of belonging, of love for and pride in a place, at the same time as acknowledging the need to leave it, is no easy matter. But my goodness, what a work of literature it yields!

Jonas Bals, Klassekampen

Hatterud’s book is a brilliant read, showing us how much love and defiance it takes to wrestle free.

Lars Kolbeinstveit, www.minervanett.no

Bjørn Hatterud

Bjørn Hatterud is an Oslo-based writer, musician, and art curator, who grew up gay and disabled in a working-class family in a rural Norwegian community. He has experienced national success with his first two critically acclaimed books, *Against Normality* (2018) and *Me, Mum and Mjøsa* (2020). In his books, Hatterud writes about his life’s extraordinary trajectory, and about how growing up as an outsider led him to forge a pathway into art, literature and non-mainstream culture – the spaces where he discovered identity and

freedom. *Bjerke Tower Block* is his third book, which confirms his position as one of Norway's leading narrative non-fiction writers. He has been awarded Fritt Ords Pris (Free Speech Award) and Kritikerprisen (The National Book Critics' Award) for his writing.