

# Always Coca-Cola

By Alexandra Chreiteh

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## Always Coca-Cola By Alexandra Chreiteh

The story of three different young women marks the literary debut of an amazing writer from Lebanon

Always Coca-Cola is the story of three very different young women attending university in Beirut: Abeer, Jana, and Yasmine. The narrator, Abeer Ward (fragrant rose, in Arabic), daughter of a conservative family, admits wryly that her name is also the name of her father's flower shop. Abeer's bedroom window is filled by a view of a Coca-Cola sign featuring the image of her sexually adventurous friend, Jana. From the novel's opening paragraph When my mother was pregnant with me, she had only one craving. That craving was for Coca Cola first-time novelist Alexandra Chreiteh asks us to see, with wonder, humor, and dismay, how inextricably confused naming and desire, identity and branding. The names and the novel's edgy, cynical humor might be recognizable across languages, cultures, and geographies. But Chreiteh's novel is first and foremost an exploration of a specific Lebanese milieu. Critics in Lebanon have responded in a storm, calling the novel an electric shock and finding that the problems of its characters reflect grave social anomalies. Read Chreiteh and see what the storm is all about.

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## Always Coca-Cola By Alexandra Chreiteh Bibliography

- Rank: #436309 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Interlink Books
- Published on: 2012-01-02
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.90" h x .60" w x 5.20" l, .35 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 122 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### About the Author

Alexandra Chreiteh is pursuing a Ph.D. in comparative literature at Yale University. Michelle Hartman is an associate professor of Arabic and francophone literature at McGill University.

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