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Moscow Spring

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William Taubman, Jane Taubman : Moscow Spring before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Moscow Spring:

From Publishers Weekly Most taxi drivers in Moscow seem to think that glasnost is not worth a damn, and the much-heralded new openness in Soviet society has hardly made a dent on sex-role stereotyping or on Russians' prudish sexual attitudes. These observations, made by the Taubmans during their six-month stay (Jan.-June 1988) in the U.S.S.R., are typical of the candid firsthand reportage in this refreshingly down-to-earth, unpretentious travelogue. Both specialists in Soviet affairs at Amherst College (he in political science, she in Russian literature), this husband-wife team analyze Gorbachev's attempted restructuring of the Soviet Union as "a contradictory hybrid . . . a democratic revolution from above." Despite the fierce conservative opposition Gorbachev faces, the authors see optimistic signs of change in workplace elections, a press that is no longer monolithic and in the stream of formerly suppressed books, films and music being released and discussed. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal The Taubmans are a university couple with an obvious love of Russia and a deep knowledge of Soviet affairs. Their most recent visit took place during the first half of 1988, as Gorbachev's campaign to rebuild his country got

under way. The authors see a revolution in the making as momentous as that of 1917. The intoxicating excitement of their meetings with Moscow intellectuals and others leaps off the page. What a change since Michael Binyon's *Life in Russia* (LJ 5/1/84), a mere five years ago! The Taubmans point out that public openness (glasnost) is proving much easier than reconstruction (perestroika), though the country's desperate need of both is made very plain. A fascinating book about a topic of vast importance, as much to Westerners as to the Soviet people.- R.H. Johnston, McMaster Univ . , Hamilton, OntarioCopyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.