

## A Cultural History Of Sexuality In The Renaissance 1st Edition

"The 19th Century saw intense urbanization, the development of a consumer culture, the formalization of gender roles, the solidification of class structures, and various encounters with the exotic customs of the colonies--all of which contributed to enhance sexual anxiety among the middle classes. In response, new social conventions, sanitary prescriptions, practices of self-control, and policies of sex regulation and education were developed as a means to control disorderly sexual behavior. At the same time, though an ideology based on sexual respectability was largely promoted throughout society, significant individuals and subcultures often challenged both the principle and the practice of such morality. A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Age of Empire presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica."--Bloomsbury Publishing.

Whether enemy or ally, demon or god, the source of satisfaction or the root of all earthly troubles, the penis has forced humanity to wrestle with its enduring mysteries. Here, in an enlightening and entertaining cultural study, is a book that gives context to the central role of the penis in Western civilization. A man can hold his manhood in his hand, but who is really gripping whom? Is the penis the best in man -- or the beast? How is man supposed to use it? And when does that use become abuse? Of all the bodily organs, only the penis forces man to confront such contradictions: something insistent yet reluctant, a tool that creates but also destroys, a part of the body that often seems apart from the body. This is the conundrum that makes the penis both hero and villain in a drama that shapes every man -- and mankind along with it. In *A Mind of Its Own*, David M. Friedman shows that the penis is more than a body part. It is an idea, a conceptual but flesh-and-blood measuring stick of man's place in the world. That men have a penis is a scientific fact; how they think about it, feel about it, and use it is not. It is possible to identify the key moments in Western history when a new idea of the penis addressed the larger mystery of man's relationship with it and changed forever the way that organ was conceived of and put to use. *A Mind of Its Own* brilliantly distills this complex and largely unexamined story. Deified by the pagan cultures of the ancient world and demonized by the early Roman church, the organ was later secularized by pioneering anatomists such as Leonardo da Vinci. After being measured "scientifically" in an effort to subjugate some races while elevating others, the organ was psychoanalyzed by Sigmund Freud. As a result, the penis assumed a paradigmatic role in psychology -- whether the patient was equipped with the organ or envied those who were. Now, after being politicized by feminism and exploited in countless ways by pop culture, the penis has been medicalized. As no one has before him, Friedman shows how the arrival of erection industry products such as Viagra is more than a health or business story. It is the latest -- and perhaps final -- chapter in one of the longest sagas in human history: the story of man's relationship with his penis. *A Mind of Its Own* charts the vicissitudes of that relationship through its often amusing, occasionally alarming, and never boring course. With intellectual rigor and a healthy dose of wry humor, David M. Friedman serves up one of the most thought-provoking, significant, and readable cultural works in years.

Organizations pay or lose up to 5% or more of their sales revenue to payments authorization, clearing and settlement. This book provides a framework and strategies for uncovering profit improvement opportunities in all types of payments in and payments out systems. New management performance indicators are recommended to measure and track payments systems improvements and trends.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, as European cultures grappled with the challenges of emergent modernity, ideas about female same-sex relations became a flash-point for contests about authority and liberty, power and difference, desire and duty, mobility and change, order and governance. Exploring a wide range of texts from more than two centuries and multiple language cultures, this book argues for the significance of relations between women to the early modern social imaginary.

This agenda-setting text has been fully revised in its second edition, with coverage extended into the Christian era. It remains the most comprehensive and engaging introduction to the sexual cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. Covers a wide range of subjects, including Greek pederasty and the symposium, ancient prostitution, representations of women in Greece and Rome, and the public regulation of sexual behavior Expanded coverage extends to the advent of Christianity, includes added illustrations, and offers student-friendly pedagogical features Text boxes supply intriguing information about tangential topics Gives a thorough overview of current literature while encouraging further reading and discussion Conveys the complexity of ancient attitudes towards sexuality and gender and the modern debates they have engendered

Michel Foucault's seminal *The History of Sexuality* (1976–1984) has since its publication provided a context for the emergence of critical historical studies of sexuality. This collection reassesses the state of the historiography on sexuality—a field in which the German case has been traditionally central. In many diverse ways, the Foucauldian intervention has governed the formation of questions in the field as well as the assumptions about how some of these questions should be answered. It can be argued, however, that some of these revolutionary insights have ossified into dogmas or truisms within the field. Yet, as these contributions meticulously reveal, those very truisms, when revisited with a fresh eye, can lead to new, unexpected insights into the history of sexuality, necessitating a return to and reinterpretation of Foucault's richly complex work. This volume will be necessary reading for students of historical sexuality as well as for those readers in German history and German studies generally who have an interest in the history of sexuality.

This book presents the first assessment of one of the most rapidly expanding fields of research: the history of sexuality. From the early efforts of historians to work out a model for sexual history, to the extraordinary impact of French philosopher Michel Foucault, to the vigorous debates about essentialism and social constructionism, to the emergence of contemporary debates about historicism, queer theory, embodiment, gender and cultural history - we now have vast and diverse historical scholarship on sex and sexuality. 'Histories of Sexuality' highlights the key historical moments and issues: pederasty and cultures of male passivity in ancient Greece and Rome; the impact of early Christianity and ideals of renunciation on the sexual cultures of late antiquity; the sustained existence of homosexual cultures in medieval and renaissance Europe; the "invention" of homosexuality and heterosexuality in eighteenth century

Europe and America; the truth behind Victorian sexual repression; the work of reformers and scientists such as Havelock Ellis, Marie Stopes, Stella Browne, Margaret Sanger, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson.

"This is a superb work of scholarship, impossible to overpraise.... It marks a milestone in the 20-year rise of gay and lesbian studies."--Martin Duberman, *The Advocate*

The men of Renaissance Florence were so renowned for sodomy that "Florenzer" in German meant "sodomite." In the late fifteenth century, as many as one in two Florentine men had come to the attention of the authorities for sodomy by the time they were thirty. In 1432 The Office of the Night was created specifically to police sodomy in Florence. Indeed, nearly all Florentine males probably had some kind of same-sex experience as a part of their "normal" sexual life. Seventy years of denunciations, interrogations, and sentencings left an extraordinarily detailed record, which author Michael Rocke has used in his vivid depiction of this vibrant sexual culture in a world where these same-sex acts were not the deviant transgressions of a small minority, but an integral part of a normal masculine identity. Rocke roots this sexual activity in the broader context of Renaissance Florence, with its social networks of families, juvenile gangs, neighbors, patronage, workshops, and confraternities, and its busy political life from the early years of the Republic through the period of Lorenzo de' Medici, Savonarola, and the beginning of Medici princely rule. His richly detailed book paints a fascinating picture of Renaissance Florence and calls into question our modern conceptions of gender and sexual identity.

Discusses the worldly views of masturbation as transforming from an act of little concern in the ancient world to one of sinfulness and embarrassment in the twentieth century.

A sweeping survey of sexuality in Europe from the Greeks to the present, *Desire: A History of European Sexuality* follows changing attitudes to two major concepts of sexual desire – desire as dangerous, polluting, and disorderly, and desire as creative, transcendent, even revolutionary – through the major turning points of European history. Chronological in structure, and wide ranging in scope, *Desire* addresses such topics as sex in ancient Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, sexual contact and culture clash in Spain and colonial Mesoamerica, new attitudes toward sexuality in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and sex in Bolshevik Russia and Nazi Germany. The book introduces the concept of "twilight moments" to describe activities seen as shameful or dishonorable, but which were tolerated when concealed by shadows, and integrates the history of heterosexuality with same-sex desire, as well as exploring the emotions of love and lust as well as the politics of sex and personal experiences. This new edition has been updated to include a new chapter on sex and imperialism and expanded discussions of Islam and trans issues. Drawing on a rich array of sources, including poetry, novels, pornography, and film, as well as court records, autobiographies, and personal letters, and written in a lively, engaging style, *Desire* remains an essential resource for scholars and students of the

history of European sexuality, as well as women's and gender history, social and cultural history and LGBTQ history.

Sexual cultures have changed enormously in the 20th Century. We have greater sexual equality than ever before and homosexuality has shifted from being a crime, a sin, and a disease to an acknowledged and sometimes legally sanctioned variation. However, many sexual practices remain controversial, even demonized. The sexual revolution, psychoanalysis, changes in the law, medical advances, and the explosion of sexual imagery in the media have all contributed to a liberalization of sex. At the same time, Western cultures continue to think about sexuality as a desire shaped by nature, as of greater interest to men than women, as private, and as shaped by love. *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Modern Age* presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica.

Though many of the sexual practices of the Ancient Greeks and Romans are known and accepted today, the meanings the Ancients associated with these acts were often utterly different from our own. Both idea and practice also varied within antiquity, shaped by locale, history, social class, age, legal status, and gender. Focusing on the cultures of the Mediterranean from 800 BCE to 350 CE, *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World* covers sexual practices, feelings, and ideas from the time of Homer to the transformation of the Roman Empire. *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World* presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica.

In this sequel to *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*, the brilliantly original French thinker who died in 1984 gives an analysis of how the ancient Greeks perceived sexuality. Throughout *The Use of Pleasure* Foucault analyzes an irresistible array of ancient Greek texts on eroticism as he tries to answer basic questions: How in the West did sexual experience become a moral issue? And why were other appetites of the body, such as hunger, and collective concerns, such as civic duty, not subjected to the numberless rules and regulations and judgments that have defined, if not confined, sexual behavior? In this study, Carolyn J. Dean focuses on the transformation of sexuality and its changing role in gender relations, politics, and culture. In Dean's view, a history of sexuality, by necessity, is a history of the changing relationship between sex and gender - that is, between our anatomy and our cultural expectations of what it means to be a man or woman. Dean examines how turn-of-the-century concerns about deviant sexual behavior and the changing role of women in society led to a radical restructuring of sex-gender connections in the early part of the 20th century. Her review of debates on pornography, obscenity, homosexuality, and the role of women demonstrates how many of the pressing issues from the beginning of this century continue to haunt us at its end.

Sexuality and Modern Western Culture makes a significant contribution to the nascent field of sexuality studies, bringing an innovative feminist approach to the current discussion of the body and the modern self. Dean's study is clear, concise, and comprehensive. It combines empirical research, theoretical sophistication, and historiographical contextualization, showing how cultural and intellectual history can be combined to illuminate an important and complex topic of pressing moral, political, and aesthetic concern.

This book provides a fascinating history of sexuality in twentieth-century Europe and North America. Angus McLaren draws upon legal, medical and literary sources to demonstrate how modern sexuality has been shaped by race, class, gender and generational preoccupations. Historians of sexuality have often assumed that medieval people were less interested in sex than we are. But people in the Middle Ages wrote a great deal about sex: in confessors' manuals, in virginity treatises, and in literary texts. This volume looks afresh at the cultural meanings that sex had throughout the period, presenting new evidence and offering new interpretations of known material. Acknowledging that many of the categories that we use today to talk about sexuality are inadequate for understanding sex in premodern times, the volume draws on important recent work in the historiography of medieval sexuality to address the conceptual and methodological challenges the period presents. *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Middle Ages* presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica.

*Alternative Histories of the Self* investigates how people re-imagined the idea of the unique self in the period from 1762 to 1917. Some used the notion of the unique self to justify their gender and sexual transgression, but others rejected the notion of the unique self and instead demanded the sacrifice of the self for the good of society. The substantial introductory chapter places these themes in the cultural context of the long nineteenth century, but the book as a whole represents an alternative method for studying the self. Instead of focusing on the thoughts of great thinkers, this book explores how five unusual individuals twisted conventional ideas of the self as they interpreted their own lives. These subjects include: \* The Chevalier/e d'Eon, a renegade diplomat who was outed as a woman \* Anne Lister, who wrote coded diaries about her attraction to women \* Richard Johnson, who secretly criticized the empire that he served \* James Hinton, a Victorian doctor who publicly advocated philanthropy and privately supported polygamy \* Edith Ellis, a socialist lesbian who celebrated the 'abnormal' These five case studies are skilfully used to explore how the notion of the unique individual was used to make sense of sexual or gender non-conformity. Yet this queer reading will go beyond same-sex desire to analyse the issue of secrets and privacy; for instance, what stigma did men who practiced or advocated unconventional relationships with women incur? Finally, Clark ties these unusual lives to the wider questions of ethics and social justice: did those who questioned sexual conventions challenge political traditions as well? This is a highly innovative study that will be of interest to intellectual historians of modern Britain and Europe, as well as historians of gender and sexuality.

The last twenty years have seen a growth in multi-disciplinary work in the area of sexuality, culture and health. What was once a set of specialist concerns has been steadily mainstreamed. Alongside this, a broader interest has developed in 'social' and 'cultural' factors relating to sexuality and sexual health, from family planning and STI management to gender and intimate partner violence and the technologisation of sex. This book offers a research-based overview of key topics relevant to social and cultural perspectives on sexuality and sexual health. Beginning with an extended introduction and divided into six sections, it looks at culture, sex and gender, sexual diversity, sex work, migration and sexual violence.

Each section opens with an editorial discussion which places the theme, and the chapters that follow, in a contemporary context. Six additional substantive chapters can be accessed online at [www.routledge.com/cw/aggleton](http://www.routledge.com/cw/aggleton). Including cutting-edge conceptual and empirical material from around the world, this is a key resource for students in, and across, a variety of academic disciplines in the social and health sciences. It is especially suitable for readers from sexuality studies, gender studies, development studies, anthropology and sociology as well as those with public health and social work backgrounds.

The fourth and final volume in Michel Foucault's acclaimed History of Sexuality, completed just before his death in 1984 and finally available to the public. One of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century, Michel Foucault made an indelible impact on Western thought. The first three volumes in his History of Sexuality--which trace cultural and intellectual notions of sexuality, arguing that it has been profoundly shaped by the power structures applied to it--constitute some of Foucault's most important work. This fourth volume posits that the origins of totalitarian self-surveillance began with the Christian practice of confession. The manuscript had long been secreted away, in accordance with Foucault's stated wish that there be no posthumous publication of his unpublished work. With the sale of the Foucault archives in 2013, Foucault's nephew felt that the time had come to publish this final volume in Foucault's seminal history. Philosophically, it is a chapter in his hermeneutics of the desiring subject. Historically, it focuses on the remodeling of subjectivity carried out by the early Christian Fathers, who set out to transform the classical Logos of truthful human discourse into a theologos--the divine Word of a pure sovereign. What did God will in the matter of righteous sexual practice? Foucault parses out the logic of the various responses proffered by theologians over the centuries, culminating with Saint Augustine's fascinating discussion of the libido. Sweeping and deeply personal, Confessions of the Flesh is a tour de force from a philosophical master.

"Though many of the sexual practices of the Ancient Greeks and Romans are known and accepted today, the meanings the Ancients associated with these acts were often utterly different from our own. Both idea and practice also varied within antiquity, shaped by locale, history, social class, age, legal status, and gender. Focusing on the cultures of the Mediterranean from 800 BCE to 350 CE, A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World covers sexual practices, feelings, and ideas from the time of Homer to the transformation of the Roman Empire. A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica."--Bloomsbury Publishing.

This work offers an introduction to the central debates in sexuality research. Among the issues examined are the social and cultural dimensions of sex, human sexuality and sex research. A Cultural History of Sexuality presents an overarching survey from ancient times to the present. With six volumes covering 2800 years, this is the most authoritative history of sexuality in all its many forms across Western cultures. Volume 1: A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World Edited by Mark Golden, University of Winnipeg, and Peter Toohey, University of Calgary Volume 2: A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Middle Ages Edited by Ruth Evans, Saint Louis University Volume 3: A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Renaissance Edited by Bette Talvacchia, University of Connecticut Volume 4: A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Enlightenment Edited by Julie Peakman, Birkbeck College, University of London Volume 5: Sexuality in the Age of Empire Edited by Chiara Beccalossi, University of Queensland, Australia, and Ivan Crozier, University of Edinburgh Volume 6: A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Modern Age Gert Hekma, University of Amsterdam Each volume discusses the same themes in

its chapters: 1. Heterosexuality; 2. Homosexuality; 3. Sexual Variations; 4. Sex Religion, and the Law; 5. Sex, Medicine and Disease; 6. Sex, Popular Beliefs and Culture; 7. Prostitution; 8. Erotica. This means readers can either have a broad overview of a period by reading a volume or follow a theme through history by reading the relevant chapter in each volume.

The 19th Century saw intense urbanization, the development of a consumer culture, the formalization of gender roles, the solidification of class structures, and various encounters with the exotic customs of the colonies – all of which contributed to enhance sexual anxiety among the middle classes. In response, new social conventions, sanitary prescriptions, practices of self-control, and policies of sex regulation and education were developed as a means to control disorderly sexual behavior. At the same time, though an ideology based on sexual respectability was largely promoted throughout society, significant individuals and subcultures often challenged both the principle and the practice of such morality. *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Age of Empire* presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica.

Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* is one of the most influential philosophical works of the twentieth century and has been instrumental in shaping the study of Gender, Feminist Theory and Queer Theory. But Foucault's writing can be a difficult book to grasp as Foucault assumes a familiarity with the intellectually dominant theories of his time which renders many passages obscure for newcomers to his work. *The Routledge Guidebook to Foucault's The History of Sexuality* offers a clear and comprehensive guide to this groundbreaking work, examining: The historical context in which Foucault wrote *A critical discussion of the text, which examines the relationship between The History of Sexuality, The Use of Pleasure and The Care of The Self* The reception and ongoing influence of *The History of Sexuality* Offering a close reading of the text, this is essential reading for anyone studying this enormously influential work. This book offers an overview of approaches, methods, recent work and major debates in the history of sexuality. The two decades since the publication of Michel Foucault's seminal *History of Sexuality* have witnessed both a proliferation of empirical and theoretical historical studies and an increasing divergence in approaches to the writing of histories of sexuality in Europe and North America. Yet while these centrifugal trajectories have been identified in many edited collections, there has been no coherent attempt to address, or draw together, this diversity of practice and methodology. This collection aims to do just this, drawing on contributions from a range of scholars, each examining the past, present and future of the exploration of sex, as a social, cultural and historical phenomenon.

In this multidisciplinary study of human sexuality, an international team of scholars looks at the influences of nature and nurture, biology and culture, and sex and gender in the sexual experiences of humans and other primates. Using as its center the idea that sexual pleasure is the primary motivational force behind human sexuality and that reproduction is simply a byproduct of the pleasurability of sex, this book examines sexuality at the individual, societal, and cultural levels. Beginning with a look at the evolution of sexuality in humans and other primates, the essays in the first section examine the sexual ingenuity of primates, the dominant theories of sexual behavior, the

differences in male and female sexual interest and behavior, and the role of physical attractiveness in mate selection. The focus then shifts to biological approaches to sexuality, especially the genetic and hormonal origins of sexual orientation, gender, and pleasure. The essays go on to look at the role of pleasure in different cultures. Included are essays on love among the tribespeople of the Brazilian rain forest and the regulation of adolescent sexuality in India. Finally, several contributors look at the methodological issues in the study of human sexuality, paying particular attention to the problems with research that relies on people's memories of their sexual experiences. The contributors are Angela Pattatucci, Dean Hamer, David Greenberg, Frans de Waal, Mary McDonald Pavelka, Kim Wallen, Donald Symons, Heino Meyer-Bahlburg, Jean D. Wilson, Donald Tuzin, Lawrence Cohen, Thomas Gregor, Lenore Manderson, Robert C. Bailey, Alice Schlegel, Edward H. Kaplan, Richard Berk, Paul R. Abramson, Paul Okami, and Stephen D. Pinkerton. Spanning the chasm of the nature versus nurture debate, *Sexual Nature/Sexual Culture* is a look at human sexuality as a complex interaction of genetic potentials and cultural influences. This book will be of interest to a wide range of readers—from scholars and students in psychology, anthropology, sociology, and history to clinicians, researchers, and others seeking to understand the many dimensions of sexuality. "If we ever expect to solve the sexually based problems that modern societies face, we must encourage investigations of human sexual behavior. Moreover, those investigations should employ a broad range of disciplines—looking at sex from all angles, which is precisely what *Sexual Nature, Sexual Culture* does."—Mike May, *American Scientist* "...This timely and relevant book reminds us that we cannot rely on simple solutions to complex problems. It represents a transdisciplinary approach integrating knowledge from diverse fields and provides the reader with a challenging and rewarding experience. Especially for those who are involved in teaching human sexuality to medical students and other health care professionals, this book is highly recommended."—Gerald Wiviortt, M.D., *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* "In short, this volume contains much to stimulate, inform, and amuse, in varying proportions. What more can one ask?"—Pierre L. van den Berghe, *Journal of the History of Sexuality* "...the book succeeds in bring together some of the sharpest thinkers in the field of human sexuality, and goes a long way toward clarifying the diverse perspectives that currently exist."—David M. Buss and Todd K. Shackelford, *Quarterly Review of Biology*

"Europe saw such revolutionary cultural change between 1450 and 1650 that those who witnessed the transformations conceived of the period as a time of rebirth. Ideas and practices around sexuality were transformed as much as any other aspect of society. Religious change, the growth of empires, educational development, social mobility, the theater and the printing press, and medical advances all radically reshaped sexuality in the West. Focusing on texts, images, and social practices, this volume examines the changing attitudes to sexuality during the Renaissance and the strategies used both to enforce and subvert public assumptions and standards. *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Renaissance* presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica."--Bloomsbury Publishing.

"Humans have always had sex. But look through the keyhole of history and you will see

they have not always had sex in the same manner, with the same kinds of people or with the same beliefs about whether what they are doing is right or desirable.” So writes Charlie McCann in this fascinating study of sex and sexuality through the ages. Beginning with the world of antiquity and ending with the present, she traces our changing attitudes to our bodies and what we do with them, conducting us on a tour which takes in the gymnasiums of ancient Greece, where men seduced boys, to the caves occupied by Christian ascetics, to the fashionable drawing rooms of Georgian London, where libertines hunted for women to prey on, and the clubs of Weimar Berlin, where lesbians debated the nature of their desire. Nowadays, in Europe and North America, the way we think about sexuality is a fundamental part of our identity. To a greater extent than ever, we are defined by our sexual preferences. Sexuality matters more than it ever has before. We need to understand it to understand ourselves. In the period between 1650 and 1820 new worlds of sex opened up. This was a pivotal time when old religious beliefs and medical theories about sexuality and the body clashed with innovatory ideas emerging from natural science and philosophy. In addition, a burgeoning print industry fed a rapidly expanding reading public with erotica. With the breakdown of old community networks and increased urbanization, authorities reacted to increased sexual license with a raft of new regulations designed to curtail variations in sexual behaviour. *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Enlightenment* presents an overview of the period with essays on heterosexuality, homosexuality, sexual variations, religious and legal issues, health concerns, popular beliefs about sexuality, prostitution and erotica. *The Routledge History of American Sexuality* brings together contributions from leading scholars in history and related fields to provide a far-reaching but concrete history of sexuality in the United States. This interdisciplinary group of authors explores a wide variety of case studies and concepts to provide an innovative approach to the history of sexual practices and identities over several centuries. Each chapter interrogates a provocative word or concept to reflect on the complex ideas, debates, and differences of historical and cultural opinions surrounding it. Authors challenge readers to look beyond contemporary identity-based movements in order to excavate the deeper histories of how people have sought sexual pleasure, power, and freedom in the Americas. This book is an invaluable resource for students or scholars seeking to grasp current research on the history of sexuality and is a seminal text for undergraduate and graduate courses on American History, Sexuality Studies, Women's Studies, Gender Studies, or LGBTQ Studies.

To understand why the concept of aesthetic sexuality is important, we must consider the influence of the first volume of Foucault's seminal *The History of Sexuality*. Arguing against Foucault's assertions that only *scientia sexualis* has operated in modern Western culture while *ars erotica* belongs to Eastern and ancient societies, Byrne suggests that modern Western culture has indeed witnessed a form of *ars erotica*, encompassed in what she calls 'aesthetic sexuality'. To argue for the existence of aesthetic sexuality, Byrne examines mainly works of literature to show how, within these texts, sexual practice and

pleasure are constructed as having aesthetic value, a quality that marks these experiences as forms of art. In aesthetic sexuality, value and meaning are located within sexual practice and pleasure rather than in their underlying cause; sexuality's *raison d'être* is tied to its aesthetic value, at surface level rather than beneath it. Aesthetic sexuality, Byrne shows, is a product of choice, a deliberate strategy of self-creation as well as a mode of social communication.

Michel Foucault offers an iconoclastic exploration of why we feel compelled to continually analyze and discuss sex, and of the social and mental mechanisms of power that cause us to direct the questions of what we are to what our sexuality is.

Using case material presented by distinguished authorities in the fields of psychotherapy, sex therapy, couples therapy and family therapy, this edited book addresses issues in sexuality that are often raised in psychotherapy (individual, marital and family therapy) across diverse cultures.

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