



Sex and the Gender Revolution, Volume 1: Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society)

Randolph Trumbach

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A revolution in gender relations occurred in London around 1700, resulting in a sexual system that endured in many aspects until the sexual revolution of the 1960s. For the first time in European history, there emerged three genders: men, women, and a third gender of adult effeminate sodomites, or homosexuals. This third gender had radical consequences for the sexual lives of most men and women since it promoted an opposing ideal of exclusive heterosexuality.

In *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, Randolph Trumbach reconstructs the worlds of eighteenth-century prostitution, illegitimacy, sexual violence, and adultery. In those worlds the majority of men became heterosexuals by avoiding sodomy and sodomite behavior.

As men defined themselves more and more as heterosexuals, women generally experienced the new male heterosexuality as its victims. But women--as prostitutes, seduced servants, remarrying widows, and adulterous wives-- also pursued passion. The seamy sexual underworld of extramarital behavior was central not only to the sexual lives of men and women, but to the very existence of marriage, the family, domesticity, and romantic love. London emerges as not only a geographical site but as an actor in its own right, mapping out domains where patriarchy, heterosexuality, domesticity, and female resistance take vivid form in our imaginations and senses.

As comprehensive and authoritative as it is eloquent and provocative, this book will become an indispensable study for social and cultural historians and delightful reading for anyone interested in taking a close look at sex and gender in eighteenth-century London.

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