



Lesbian Dames: Sapphism in the Long Eighteenth Century

By John C. Beynon, Caroline Gonda

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How are romantic and erotic relationships between women represented in the literature of the long eighteenth century? How does Sapphism surface in other contemporary discourses, including politics, pornography, economics and art?

After more than a generation of lesbian-gay scholarship that has examined identities, practices, prohibitions and transgressions surrounding same-sex desire, this collection offers an exciting and indispensable array of new scholarship in gender and sexuality studies. The contributors - who include noted writers, critics and historians such as Emma Donoghue, George E. Haggerty, Susan S. Lanser and Valerie Traub - provide varied and provocative research into the dynamics and histories of lesbianism and Sapphism. They build on the work of scholarship on Sapphism and interrogate the efficacy of such a notion in describing the varieties of same-sex love between women during the long eighteenth century.

This groundbreaking collection, the first multi-authored volume to examine lesbian representation and culture in this era, presents a diversity of theoretical and critical approaches, from close literary analysis to the history of reading and publishing, psychoanalysis, biography, historicism, deconstruction and queer theory.

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Editorial Review

Review

'Tory lesbians, Gothic prioresses, female husbands, coquettes, tommies and tribades: these eighteenth-century figures, so important in lesbian history, are brought together for the first time in this lively and thorough anthology. The first collection to focus on women's same-sex desire in the long eighteenth century, *Lesbian Dames* is an indispensable resource for students, scholars and readers.' Lisa L. Moore, The University of Texas at Austin, USA 'This collection of classic and new essays on intimacies between women covers a long historical range, from the seventeenth into the nineteenth century. Some of the best theorists and historians of female and queer sexualities contribute to the broadest and richest historical vision of lesbian identities and relations to date, a vision that promises a future lesbian historiography integrating work across literary and historical periods and theoretical viewpoints.' Kristina Straub, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA

About the Author

John C. Beynon is Associate Professor in the English Department at California State University, Fresno. He served as assistant editor for 'The Encyclopedia of Gay Histories and Cultures' (2000) and has published essays on Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 'Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure', and William Beckford's childhood. He is currently working on a study of the role tea plays in early modern British culture. Caroline Gonda is a Fellow and Director of Studies in English at St Catharine's College, UK. Her essays have appeared in 'Romanticism: The Journal of Romantic Culture and Criticism', 'Women's Writing', 'The British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies', and 'SEL: Studies in English Literature'. She is the author of 'Reading Daughters' Fictions, 1709-1834: Novels and Society from Manley to Edgeworth', (1996).

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