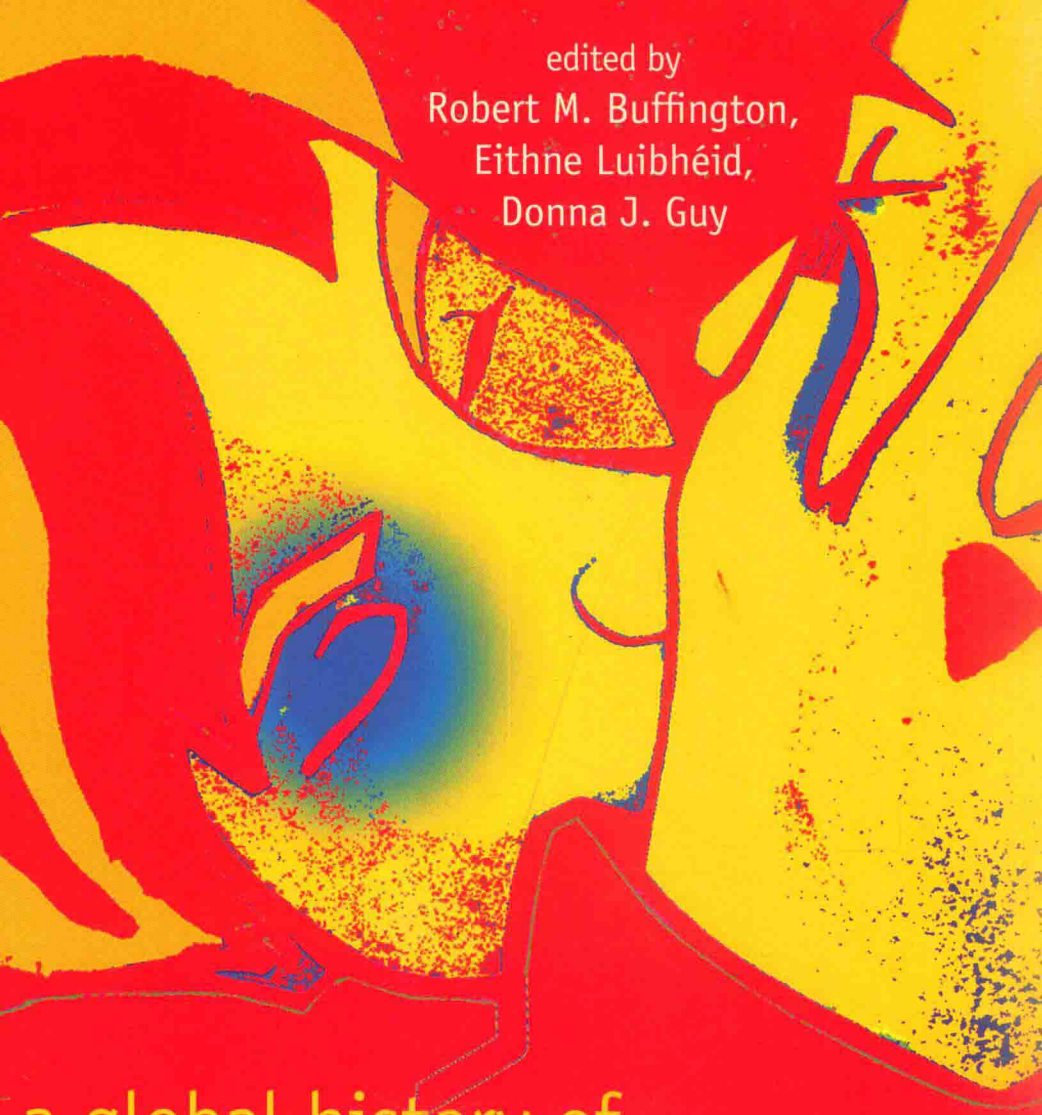


edited by
Robert M. Buffington,
Eithne Luibhéid,
Donna J. Guy

a global history of sexuality

the modern era

WILEY Blackwell

A Global History of Sexuality

The Modern Era

Edited by

Robert M. Buffington, Eithne Luibhéid,
and Donna J. Guy

WILEY Blackwell

This edition first published 2014

Registered Office
John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Offices
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK
The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services, and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com/wiley-blackwell.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A global history of sexuality : the modern era / edited by Robert M. Buffington, Eithne Luibheid, and Donna J. Guy.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4051-2048-7 (cloth) – ISBN 978-1-4051-2049-4 (pbk.) 1. Sex–History. 2. Sex customs–History. I. Buffington, Robert M.
HQ21.G586 2014
306.7–dc23
2013032340

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Cover image: © IMAGEZOO / SuperStock
Cover design by Simon Levy Associates

Set in 10.5/13 pt Minion Pro by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited
Printed in Malaysia by Ho Printing (M) Sdn Bhd

1 2014

A Global History of Sexuality

Notes on Contributors

Katherine E. Bliss is Senior Associate with the CSIS Global Health Policy Center in Washington, DC. The author of books, articles, and policy reports regarding gender, sexuality, global health, and foreign policy, she is currently writing a book about public health and political surveillance in Mexico during the Cold War.

Robert M. Buffington is Associate Professor of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. His research focuses on the intertwined histories of gender, sexuality, and crime in modern Latin America, especially Mexico. His books include *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico*, *Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America* (coedited with Carlos Aguirre) and *True Stories of Crime in Modern Mexico* (coedited with Pablo Piccato).

Sabine Frühstück teaches in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Mostly concerned with the history and ethnography of modern Japanese culture and its relations to the rest of the world, she has authored *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan* and *Uneasy Warriors: Gender, Memory and Popular Culture in the Japanese Army*, and most recently coedited *Recreating Japanese Men*.

Jonathan Garcia is an Associate Research Scientist in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia University. His research and publications focus on intersecting elements of lived experience (sexuality, gender, and class) that drive or hinder community-based responses to health issues (HIV, food security, and substance use) among racial-minority populations.

Donna J. Guy is Distinguished Professor of Humanities and History at Ohio State University. Her research interests include women's history, the history of sexuality, Latin American history, Argentine history, and

economic history. She is the author of numerous books and articles including *Women Create the Welfare State: Performing Charity and Creating Rights in Argentina, 1880–1955*; *White Slavery and Mothers Alive and Dead: The Troubled Meeting of Sex, Gender, Public Health and Progress in Latin America*; and *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina.*

Eithne Luibhéid is Associate Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Arizona. Her research explores the intersections between sexualities, racialization, and migration in transnational contexts. She is the author of *Pregnant on Arrival: Making the "Illegal" Immigrant* and *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border*, and coeditor of *Queer Migrations: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship, and Border Crossings.*

Laura McGough is a consultant based in Accra, Ghana. With a PhD in history from Northwestern University and postdoctoral work in STDs at Johns Hopkins University, she has taught at several universities, including the University of Ghana. She is the author of *Gender, Sexuality and Syphilis in Early Modern Venice* and several articles on STDs and public health.

Richard Parker is Professor of Sociomedical Sciences and Anthropology and a member of the Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University in New York City, where he also directs the Center for the Study of Culture, Politics and Health. He is the founder and Co-Chair of Sexuality Policy Watch (http://www.sxpolitics.org) and the author of numerous books and articles.

Hai Ren is Associate Professor of East Asian Studies and Anthropology at the University of Arizona. His current work focuses on the sociocultural effects of globalization on everyday life. His books include *Neoliberalism and Culture in China and Hong Kong: The Countdown of Time* and its sequel, *The Middle Class in Neoliberal China: Governing Risk, Life-Building, and Themed Spaces.*

Mytheli Sreenivas is Associate Professor of Women's Studies and History at The Ohio State University. She has research interests in women's history, the history of sexuality and the family, colonialism and nationalism, and the cultural and political economy of reproduction. Her book, *Wives, Widows, Concubines: The Conjugal Family Ideal in Colonial India*, was awarded the Joseph Elder Prize from the American Institute of Indian Studies. Her current project examines the cultural history of population and reproduction in modern South Asia.

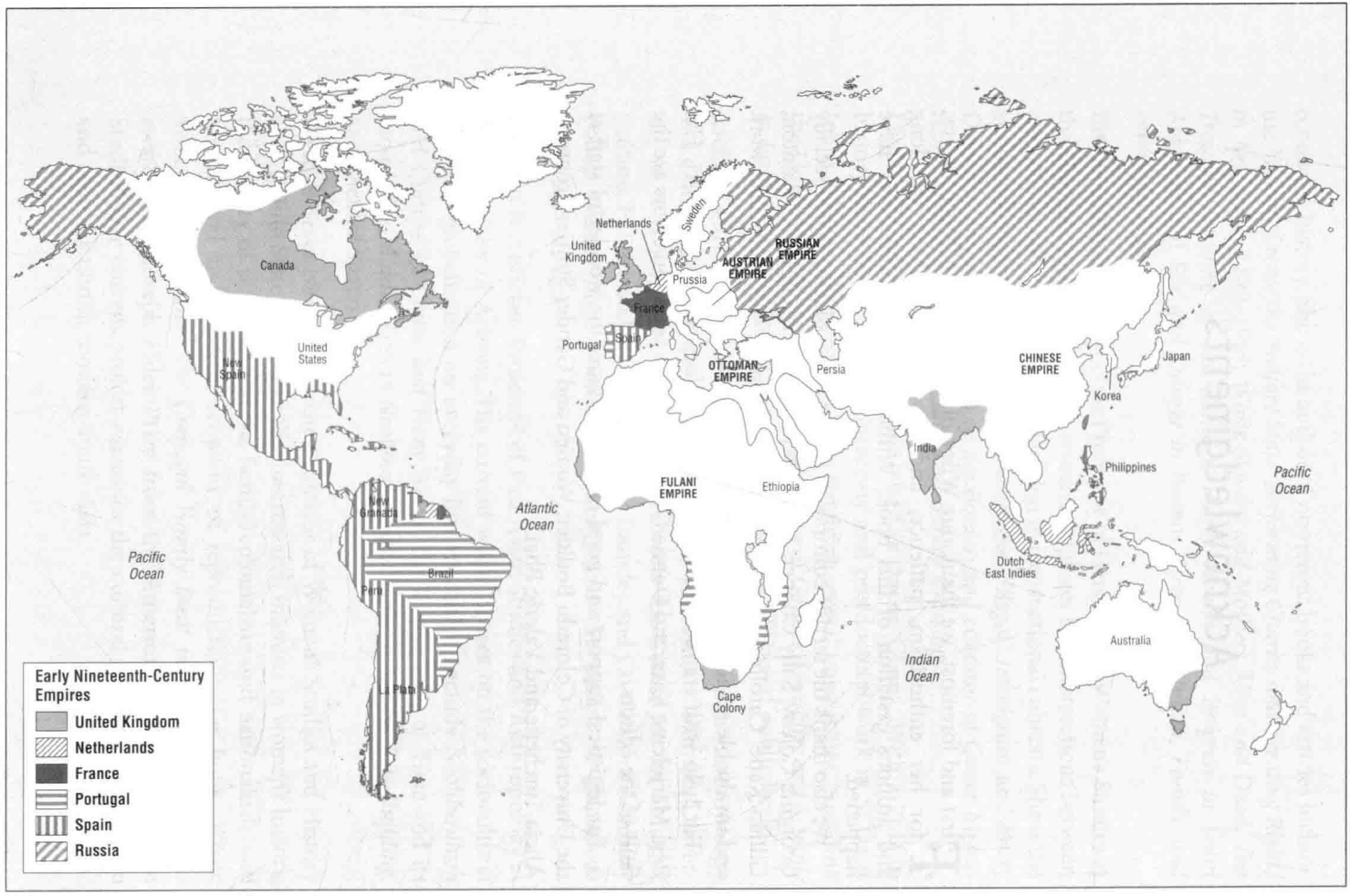
Acknowledgments

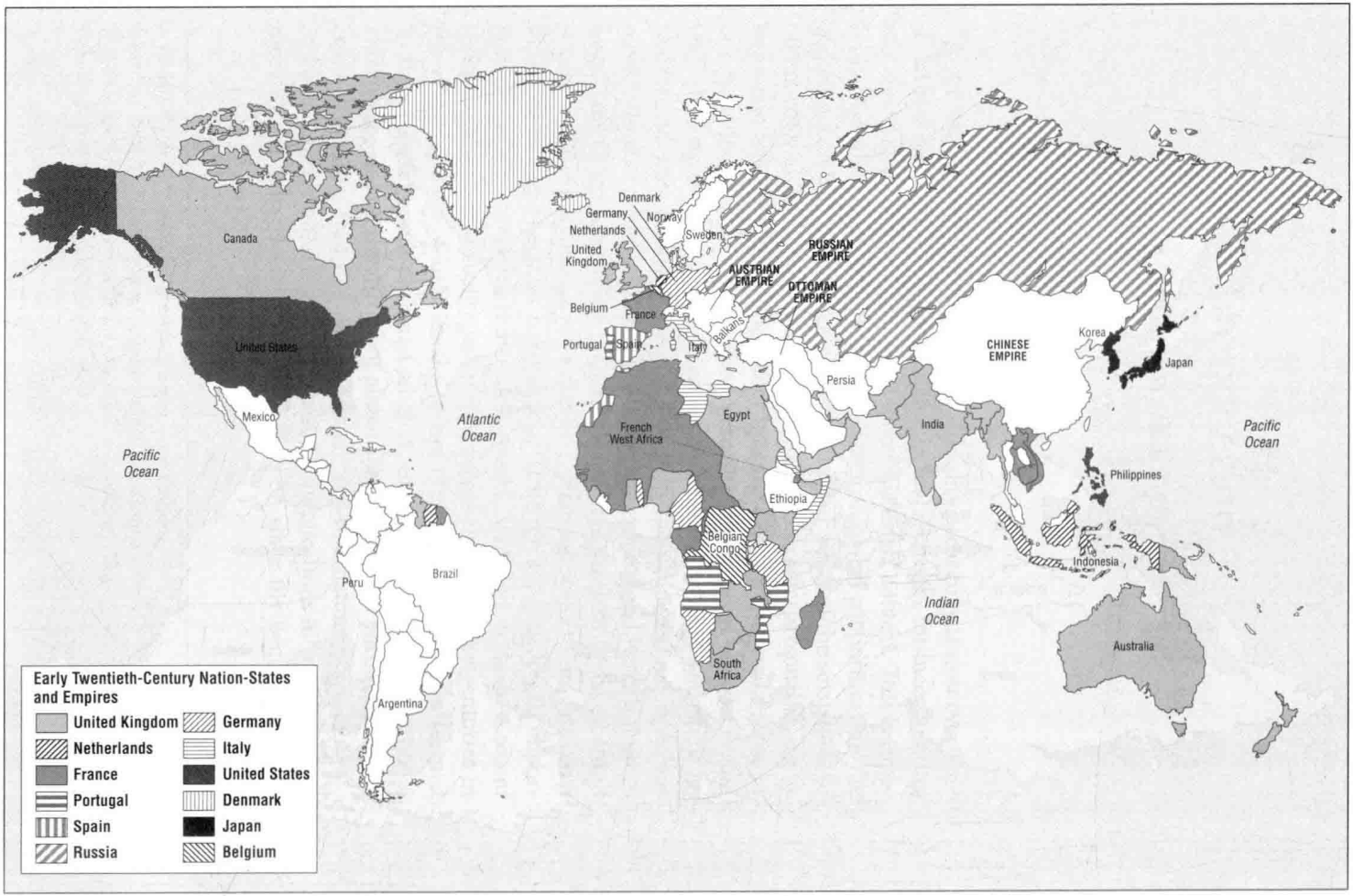
First and foremost, we thank our Wiley Blackwell editor, Tessa Harvey, for her enthusiasm, patience, and support throughout the long and arduous gestation of this book. Without her, it would never have happened.

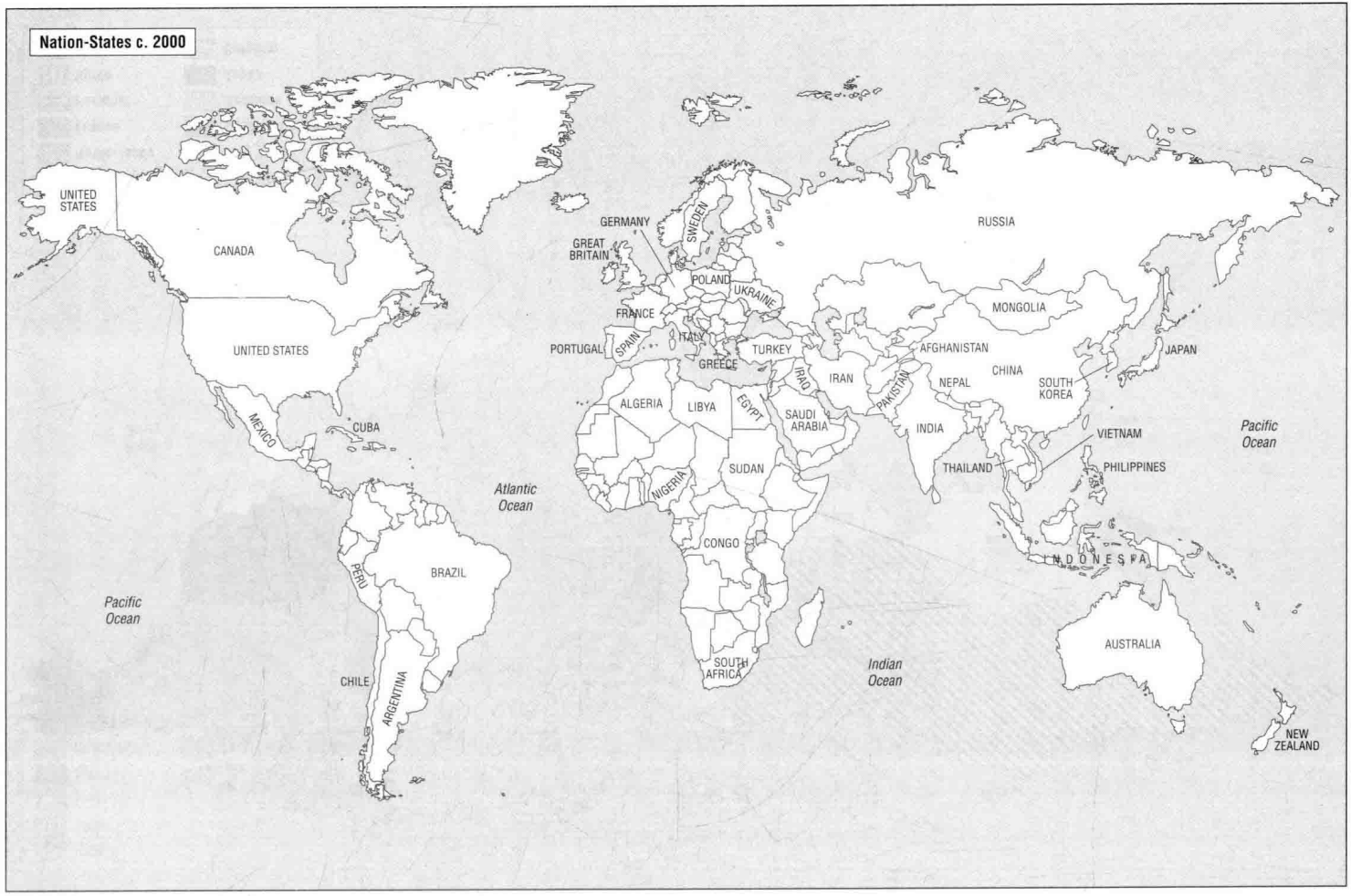
We also thank the terrific editors and staff at Wiley Blackwell—especially Georgina Coleby, Sally Cooper, Julia Kirk, Anna Mendell, Isobel Bainton, Gillian Kane, Caroline Hensman, and Hazel Harris—for their hard work and invaluable advice along the way.

For help with translation, we thank our colleagues Deepti Misri, Hai Ren, Marjoleine Kars, and Donna Goldstein. Any translation errors are the fault of the editors.

For logistical support and good cheer, we thank the wonderful staff at the University of Colorado Boulder, Women and Gender Studies Program: Alicia Turchette and Valerie Bhat.


Early Nineteenth-Century Empires
United Kingdom
Netherlands
France
Portugal
Spain
Russia
Canada
United States
New Spain
New Granada
Brazil
Peru
La Plata
Pacific Ocean
Atlantic Ocean
Netherlands
Sweden
United Kingdom
Prussia
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
AUSTRIAN EMPIRE
France
Portugal
Spain
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Persia
FULANI EMPIRE
Ethiopia
Cape Colony
CHINESE EMPIRE
Japan
Korea
India
Philippines
Dutch East Indies
Australia
Indian Ocean
Pacific Ocean


Early Twentieth-Century Nation-States and Empires
United Kingdom
Netherlands
France
Portugal
Spain
Russia
Germany
Italy
United States
Denmark
Japan
Belgium
Canada
United States
Mexico
Pacific Ocean
Atlantic Ocean
Peru
Brazil
Argentina
Denmark
Germany
Norway
Netherlands
Sweden
United Kingdom
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
AUSTRIAN EMPIRE
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Belgium
France
Balkans
Portugal
Spain
Italy
Persia
CHINESE EMPIRE
Korea
Japan
Pacific Ocean
French West Africa
Egypt
India
Philippines
Ethiopia
Belgian Congo
Indonesia
Indian Ocean
South Africa
Australia


Nation-States c. 2000
UNITED STATES
CANADA
UNITED STATES
MEXICO
CUBA
PERU
BRAZIL
CHILE
ARGENTINA
Pacific Ocean
Atlantic Ocean
GERMANY
GREAT BRITAIN
SWEDEN
POLAND
UKRAINE
FRANCE
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
ITALY
GREECE
TURKEY
ALGERIA
LIBYA
EGYPT
NIGERIA
SUDAN
CONGO
SOUTH AFRICA
SAUDI ARABIA
IRAQ
IRAN
RUSSIA
MONGOLIA
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
INDIA
NEPAL
CHINA
SOUTH KOREA
JAPAN
VIETNAM
THAILAND
PHILIPPINES
INDONESIA
Pacific Ocean
Indian Ocean
AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND

Contents

1

Introduction

Robert M. Buffington

Although questions about sex and sexuality preoccupy almost everyone these days, we are offered few intellectual strategies for incorporating our concerns and obsessions into a larger historical context. This is especially true when historical perspective takes on global proportions. In the contemporary world, our own sexuality and our sense of the sexualities of others color all aspects of contemporary life, from interpersonal relations to foreign affairs. We literally cannot imagine our world or make sense of our place in it without referencing sexuality. Those of us who write and teach history thus have an obligation to help our readers and students understand how sexuality "works"—to help them understand how our most intimate concerns intersect with complex global and historical processes. This obligation (which is also a pleasure) is the driving force behind *A Global History of Sexuality*. To that end, the book seeks to provide not a titillating catalog of past sexual practices (although sex is clearly an important part of our story) but rather an accessible synthesis of the best recent research into what sexuality has meant across the past three centuries in the everyday lives of individuals; in the imagined communities formed by the powerful bonds of shared religion, ethnicity, language, and national citizenship; and on the turbulent global stage of cultural encounter, imperialist expansion, transnational migration, and international commerce.

Humans have obsessed about sex and it implications for reproduction, morality, intimacy, social stability, and so on since the beginning of the

A Global History of Sexuality: The Modern Era, First Edition.
Edited by Robert M. Buffington, Eithne Luibhéid, and Donna J. Guy.

Published 2014 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

historical era (and certainly long before that), but the history of sexuality—as a recognizable subfield of the discipline of history—is relatively recent. This is not to suggest that until the late twentieth century scholars had avoided the subject out of academic prudishness, fear of ridicule, lack of interest, or because they considered it trivial. Indeed, an influential generation of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century (mostly) European "sexologists" went to great lengths to collect and synthesize everything they could find on past and present human sexual attitudes and behaviors. Some scholars used this impressive body of historical evidence to demonstrate considerable variations in human sexual expression across time and across cultures—at times with the worthy goal of promoting greater understanding and tolerance of sexual difference in their own societies and at other times in order to articulate racist colonial norms that justified and reinforced social inequalities. Despite their efforts to document human sexual diversity, early sexologists had little interest in analyzing the particular historical and social conditions that had produced these diverse expressions (Phillips and Reay 2002, p. 13; Cocks and Houlbrook 2005, p. 4). Moreover, the rising tide of psychoanalytic thought, especially founding father Sigmund Freud's insistence on ascribing sexual behavior to universal human "drives" and "taboos" that transcended cultural and historical differences, further discouraged scholarly inquiry into the historical particularities of human sexuality.[1]

Throughout the 1960s and afterward, most scholars in the social sciences and humanities—anthropologists, sociologists, historians, literary critics, etc.—followed the lead of sexologists (collecting examples of sexual customs) or psychologists (finding evidence of universal drives and taboos) or some combination of the two approaches. Although studies of sexuality per se remained marginalized in many disciplines, anthropologist Kath Weston argues that:

> from the beginning, assumptions about sexuality infused social science concepts such as normality, evolution, progress, organization, development and change. Likewise, judgments about sexuality remain deeply embedded in the history of scholarly explanations for who acquires power, who deserves it, and who gets to keep it. The same can be said for a multitude of theories about cognition, reciprocity, gender, race, and many other stock concepts in social science. (Weston 1998, p. 20)

Although historians typically operate at the humanistic edge of the social sciences, in this instance, their reliance on the "sexuality infused social science

concepts" identified by Weston for the social sciences in general supports a similar interpretation of their work.

By the early 1970s, the intellectual tide had begun to turn as "social constructionists" such as philosopher–historian Michel Foucault developed compelling critiques of "essentialist" notions of human sexuality and noted its central role in producing and maintaining social inequalities of power and privilege. Social constructionist critics rejected the essentialist idea

> that beating at the centre of [the varieties of sexual experience] was a core of natural sexuality, varying in incidence and power, no doubt, as a result of chance historical factors, the weight of moral and physical repression, the patterns of kinship, and so on, but nevertheless basically unchanging in biological and psychological essence. (Weeks 2000, p. 30)

Instead, they insisted that human sexuality at any given moment in time was the product of distinct and changeable social circumstances, especially discourses around sexuality, which determined the "nature" of all sexual experience. This emphatic rejection of an essential human sexual nature had political repercussions, including for sexual rights advocates who feared that the denial of the natural roots of sexual differences would undermine their efforts to promote sexual variation as "normal" and thus worthy of protection rather than persecution (through efforts to reprogram homosexuals for example). And some scholars objected to what they considered an unwarranted denial of biological factors in sexuality, arguing that basic sexual orientations such as hetero, homo, and bisexuality, firmly grounded in human biology, have characterized all societies, albeit under different names (Cocks and Holbrook 2005, pp. 9–10).

In response to these objections, sexuality scholars (including historians) have begun to challenge the sharp binary that characterized the essentialist–social constructionist debate, arguing that the physiological aspects of human sexuality shape its social construction and vice versa in a continual spiral between natural influences on one hand and cultural influences on the other. Nonetheless, most historians of sexuality would agree that social constructionist scholarship on human sexuality provided the intellectual foundation for most subsequent histories of sexuality and for its recognition as a viable, important, and vibrant subdiscipline of history. While the authors included in this book have gone to considerable trouble to avoid a doctrinaire approach to the subject—as the very different histories of sexuality reflected in each chapter will attest—we are still deeply indebted to

the work of social constructionists. In his 2000 book, *Making Sexual History*, historian–sociologist Jeffrey Weeks summarized the basic elements of a social constructionist approach with "five broad categories of social relations, which are both constructed around and in turn shape and reshape sex and gender relations":

> First, there are the kinship and family systems that place individuals in relationship to one another, and constitute them as human subjects with varying needs and desires, conscious and unconscious. Second, there are the economic and social organizations that shape social relations, statuses and class divisions, and provide the preconditions and ultimate limits for the organization of sexual life. Third, there are the changing patterns of social regulation and organization, formal and informal, legal and moral, populist and professional, religious and secular, unintended consequences as well as organized and planned responses. Fourth, there are changing forms of political interest and concern, power and policies. Finally, there are the cultures of resistance which give rise to oppositional subcultures, alternative forms of knowledge and social and sexual movements. (Weeks 2000, p. 132)

Nearly fifteen years later, these five general categories of social relations continue to ground most histories of sexuality, including those in this book.

What distinguishes this present volume from previous histories of sexuality is its synthetic approach to the *global* history of sexuality. By and large, the most influential histories of sexuality that have come out in recent years have focused—as Foucault did—on the West, defined as beginning with Greco-Roman antiquity and continuing to the present day. Many of those histories have taken even more narrow regional, national, and local approaches. Other parts of the world have sometimes entered the historical frame as Western attitudes toward sexuality spread through imperial conquest. And edited volumes of scholarly essays that include non-Western case studies in the history of sexuality have appeared with increasing frequency. Still, we believe that this book represents the first attempt to produce a truly global history of sexuality in the modern era aimed primarily at a general audience.

Writing a global history of sexuality that would be accessible to a general readership involved making choices, some of them quite complicated. One of the most difficult to resolve was the book's title. Given the breadth of the subject matter, the decision to avoid the authoritative "the" in favor of the more modest (and truthful) "a" was simple. Everyone involved in this project has struggled mightily to synthesize and frame the material as

clearly and conscientiously as possible, but none of us would contend that our respective chapters or this book as whole represent *the* global history of sexuality.

If the decision to write *a* global history was easy, decisions about the rest of the title were more tricky. Our collective debt to *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*, philosopher and historian Michel Foucault's (1978) seminal study of sexuality in modern Western societies, will be obvious to fellow academics, and is openly acknowledged in several chapters. So it made sense to add "global" to his famous title both as an act of homage and to point out the difference between our project and his. But the debt runs deeper than a borrowed title. Like Foucault, we have taken the eighteenth-century rise of the nation-state in the "West" and elsewhere as our starting point—even through Foucault himself went on to write histories of sexuality in ancient Greece and Rome, and despite convincing arguments from fellow historians for including the histories of premodern sexualities (Foucault 1998, 1990; Canaday 2009, pp. 1253–4).

The obvious reason to start with the eighteenth century was to keep things manageable in terms of length for our readers and in terms of conceptual framework for our authors. Less obvious to those unacquainted with Foucault's periodization, but crucial to the conceptualization of this book, is the profound sea change in the meanings ascribed to sexual behavior that occurred, especially but not exclusively in the "West," during this period. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault illustrates this radical shift with an apparently innocuous anecdote about a simple-minded French farmhand who is arrested by local authorities on reports that "he had obtained a few caresses from a little girl, just as he had done before and seen done by the village urchins round about him." In answer to the rhetorical question "What is the significant thing about this story?" Foucault responds:

> The pettiness of it all, the fact that this everyday occurrence in the life of village sexuality, these inconsequential bucolic pleasures, could become, from a certain time, the object not only of a collective intolerance but of a judicial action, a medical intervention, a careful clinical examination, and an entire theoretical elaboration. (Foucault 1978, p. 31)

The chapters that follow, then, explore in different ways and in different contexts (individual, cultural, institutional, etc.) "a constant optimization and an increasing valorization of the discourse of sex . . . meant to yield

multiple effects of displacement, intensification, reorientation, and modification of desire itself," a process that began in earnest in the eighteenth century and has yet to run its course (Foucault 1978, p. 23).

In sum, beginning sometime in the eighteenth century in the "West" and occurring at different times and in different ways in other parts of the world, the formation of the "modern" nation-state, in particular new notions of national belonging and citizenship, led to an increased focus on sex that produced what Foucault calls "multiple effects." Societies became structured in large part through sexual and intimate norms, which were not everywhere and always the same yet almost invariably privileged sexuality channeled into childbearing within male–female marriage among the dominant group while generating continually changing specifications of "perversions" and dangers against which society had to guard. The radical shift theorized by Foucault, with its "constant optimization and . . . increasing valorization of the discourse of sex," has meant that in modern times concerns about sexuality have become central to apparently nonsexual domains of social life (displacement), become more acute in all domains of social life (intensification), taken on new meanings (reorientation), and changed the ways in which we experience desire (modification). As anthropologist Gayle Rubin points out, sex "at any given time and place" has always been in some sense political, "but there are also historical periods in which sexuality is more sharply contested and more overtly politicized" than others (Rubin 1984, p. 267). Our premise is that the eighteenth century marks the beginning of just such a historical period—and so our story starts there. At the same time, the production of sexuality in the West was inseparable from European colonial projects in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Anthropologist Ann Stoler reminds us that imperial governance required "natural" social categories such as colonizer/colonized, European/non-European, white/nonwhite, categories that were secured, contested, and remade "through forms of sexual control" that linked colonial projects with nation building at home (Stoler 2002, pp. 42–7).

With regard to the book's title, the most difficult decision of all involved the apparently innocuous word "global." In recent years, scholars have hotly debated the proper term for histories that "break out of the nation-state or singular states as the category of analysis, and . . . eschew the ethnocentrism that once characterized the writing of history in the West" (Bayly et al. 2006, pp. 1441–2). That debate has produced at least five viable candidates—comparative, international, world, global, and transnational history—each of which has taken on different methodological and ideological connota-