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History**Sexual Revolution in Early America (Book)**

Godbeer, Richard

Sexual Revolution in Early America

Johns Hopkins May 2002 c.432p. permanent paper. index

LC 2001002304 ISBN 0-8018-6800-9 \$34.95 HIST

According to this meticulously researched study, the Puritan roots of America's sexual mores are deep and surprisingly complex. Covering more than two centuries of early American history and most of British North America, Godbeer (history, Univ. of California, Riverside; *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*) examines how the attitudes, reform agendas, and social dynamics that shaped this country's sexual culture reflect its progress toward a larger moral and civic identity. Early chapters explore how the early Colonial enterprise frustrated a genuinely strong Puritan drive for sexual reform and moral order while the latter ones analyze the interplay of sex and race in American history. Moving into the 18th century, the book recounts the development of an increasingly permissive moral climate in the United States and the pragmatic regulatory ethos that sought to contain it. Godbeer utilizes an impressive array of sources, from private writings, print, and ephemeral materials to court depositions, didactic literature, and official documents for his original research. The result is a valuable contribution to American social history that, given its conceptual language and style, is recommended for academic and large public libraries.

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By Antoinette Brinkman, Evansville, IN

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