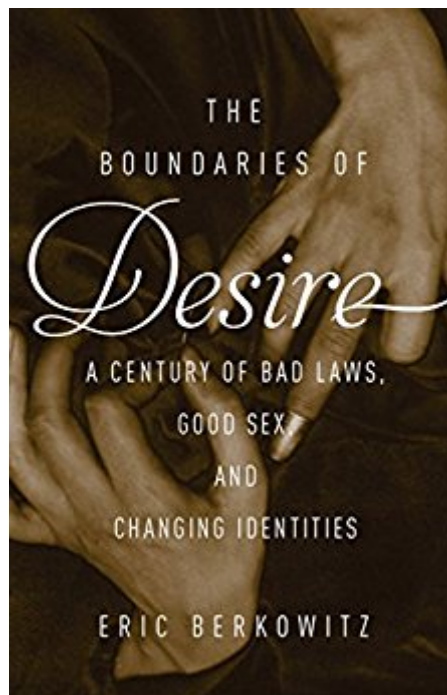




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The Boundaries Of Desire: A Century Of Good Sex, Bad Laws, And Changing Identities



Synopsis

The act of reproduction, and all of its variants, have been practiced in roughly the same ways since the beginning, but our ideas about the meaning and consequences of sex are in constant flux. At any given point in time, some forms of sex have been encouraged, while others have been punished without mercy. Jump forward or backward a century, or cross a border, and the harmless fun of one society becomes the gravest crime in another. Beginning at the point when courts guarded the sanctity of the family home by permitting men to rape their wives, continuing on through the sexual revolution, a period that transformed traditional notions of childhood and marriage, and extending into the present day (where debates surrounding gay marriage, sex trafficking, and sex on the internet are part of our daily lives), Berkowitz explores the ways nearly every aspect of Western sexual morality has been turned on its head, with the law always one or two steps behind. By focusing on the experiences of real people who played central roles in the formation of our sexual rights, Berkowitz adds a compelling human element to what might otherwise be faceless legal battles; ultimately arguing that compassion for others is always preferable to sanctimonious condemnation, and that questions about morals and sexual laws are too complicated and volatile to resolve through simple, catch-all solutions.

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Customer Reviews

Mr. Berkowitz, an attorney and journalist, has delivered a very enjoyable and thoughtful survey of how society in the twentieth century has attempted to regulate sex, marriage, homosexuality and a broad range of sexual issues. To say the least, it has been a wild and woolly century regarding sex and the law. The level of research is quite outstanding. There are some real astounding nuggets in here, and it makes one grateful for how far we've come. This is the rare book of history that is so readable that it's actually a page-turner. It's quite enlightening to realize how pervasive the tug-of-war between personal sexual practices and the prerogatives of the state have been, and at times how absurd and wrong-headed. This book not only illuminates the past, it shines a light on debates that still are going on today.

A provocative, studious, and helpful guide to understanding the human brain under the influence of addictions. There are no simple solutions -- like 12-Step interventions -- that by themselves offer realistic hope for recovery. This book is especially valuable for individuals and therapists seeking innovative, but scientifically solid, approaches to remediating opiate addictions -- from prescription pain pills and anxiety drug, to heroin.

Perfect and timely delivered to Raleigh, NC.

Very informative. He is a wonderful writer.

Commit your time and you want be disappointed!

Informative, accurate, and entertaining.

Good breadth of content & highlighted many important issues -- but seemed rather biased. Would have benefited from a woman's input.

The Boundaries of Desire is a compellingly written history of sex laws over the past century. Without

being explicit, the book manages to put in historical context a number of the burning issues of our day – including marital rape, sexual harassment, the treatment of homosexuality (from sin to sickness), child sexuality, prostitution, sex trafficking, and the ever evolving issues presented by pornography. We learn chilling facts - the sterilization of the poor under the pseudoscience of eugenics, the presence of the “rape you wife” privilege under US law until 1993, the appalling treatment of poor and working-class girls and the gross misuse of sex-offender registries that can effectively condemn children to a lifetime of suffering and misery. The stories in this book will blow your mind. A fascinating read that adds a welcome human voice to a discussion too often dominated by fear, ignorance, stupidity and blind malice.

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