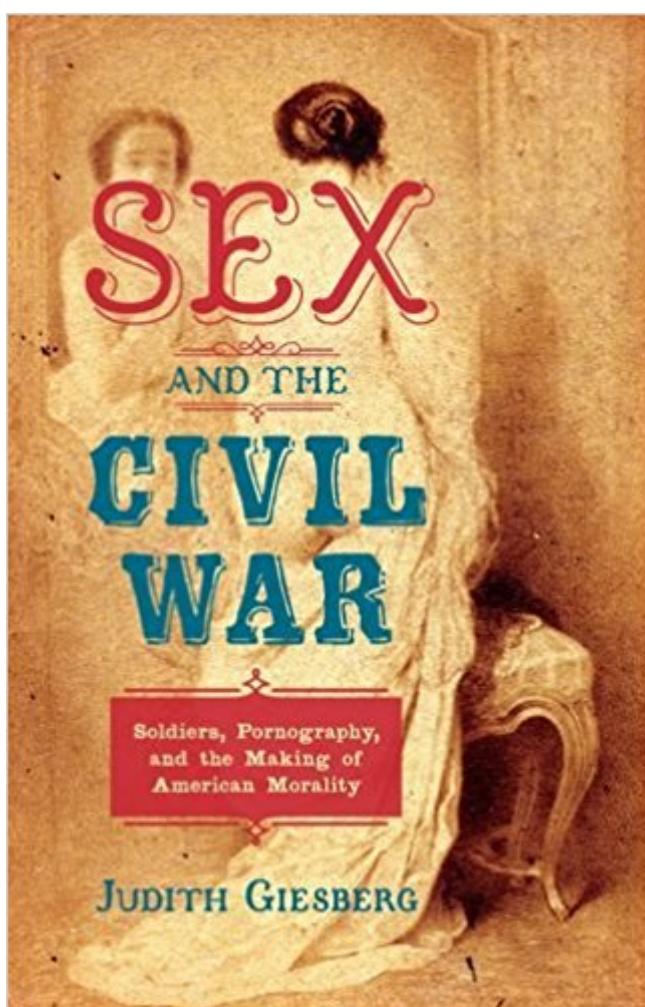


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Sex And The Civil War: Soldiers, Pornography, And The Making Of American Morality (The Steven And Janice Brose Lectures In The Civil War Era)





Synopsis

Civil War soldiers enjoyed unprecedented access to obscene materials of all sorts, including mass-produced erotic fiction, cartes de visite, playing cards, and stereographs. A perfect storm of antebellum legal, technological, and commercial developments, coupled with the concentration of men fed into armies, created a demand for, and a deluge of, pornography in the military camps. Illicit materials entered in haversacks, through the mail, or from sutlers; soldiers found pornography discarded on the ground, and civilians discovered it in abandoned camps. Though few examples survived the war, these materials raised sharp concerns among reformers and lawmakers, who launched campaigns to combat it. By the war's end, a victorious, resurgent American nation-state sought to assert its moral authority by redefining human relations of the most intimate sort, including the regulation of sex and reproduction—most evident in the Comstock laws, a federal law and a series of state measures outlawing pornography, contraception, and abortion. With this book, Judith Giesberg has written the first serious study of the erotica and pornography that nineteenth-century American soldiers read and shared and links them to the postwar reaction to pornography and to debates about the future of sex and marriage.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A well-grounded analysis of some less-studied aspects of the war.--Civil War NewsWell worth the consideration of both general and academic audiences. . . . Giesberg relates government efforts, including acts of Congress, to protect young soldiers during the war, and into the 20th century, by

suppressing gay rights, birth control, and abortion.--America's Civil War

Judith Giesberg's "Sex and the Civil War" is a much-needed examination of an understudied facet of one of America's greatest conflicts. Provocative and informative, Giesberg challenges and changes the way we think of the Civil War and sexuality.--Nina Silber, author of "Gender and the Sectional Conflict" In her brilliantly conceived and executed book, Judith Giesberg offers a sharp and relevant history of pornography in the Civil War, its effects on soldiers, and how the federal government's response to the 'moral crisis' is still felt today.--Stephen Berry, University of Georgia

Enlightening and informative, a must read for any history buff wanting to learn about the unknown history of our nation.

This book is a great look at the role of pornography in Civil War camps. It shows that pornography played a complex role in camp life and then into life after the end of the war. I would recommend this to anyone who wants to learn about an unique aspect of life during the Civil War.

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