Selling Sexual Knowledge

Bringing together perspectives from the histories of medicine, sexuality, and the book, Sarah Bull presents the first study of how medical publications on sexual matters were made, promoted, and sold in Victorian Britain. Drawing on pamphlets, manuals, textbooks, periodicals, and more, this innovative book illustrates the free and unruly circulation of sexual information through a rapidly expanding publishing industry. Bull demonstrates how the ease with which print could be copied and claimed, recast and repurposed presented persistent challenges to those seeking to position themselves as authorities over sexual knowledge at this pivotal moment. Medical publishers, practitioners, and activists embraced allegations of obscenity and censorship to promote ideas, contest authority, and consolidate emergent collective identities. Layer by layer, their actions helped create and sustain one of the most potent myths ever made about the Victorians: their sexual ignorance. This title is also available as open access on Cambridge Core.

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Selling Sexual Knowledge

Medical Publishing and Obscenity in Victorian Britain

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