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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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009578073

DOI: 10.1017/9781009578103

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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009578103

First published 2025

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Bull, Sarah, author.
Title: Selling sexual knowledge : medical publishing and obscenity in Victorian Britain /
Sarah Bull.
Description: [New York] : Cambridge University Press, [2025] | Includes bibliographical
references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2024050812 | ISBN 9781009578073 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009578080
(paperback) | ISBN 9781009578103 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Sex – Great Britain – Public opinion – History – 19th century. | Sex –
Information resources – Great Britain – History – 19th century. | Medical publishing – Great
Britain – History – 19th century. | Great Britain – History – Victoria, 1837–1901.
Classification: LCC HQ18.G7 B85 2025 | DDC 306.770941/09034–dc23/eng/20250306
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024050812

ISBN 978-1-009-57807-3 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-009-57808-0 Paperback

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