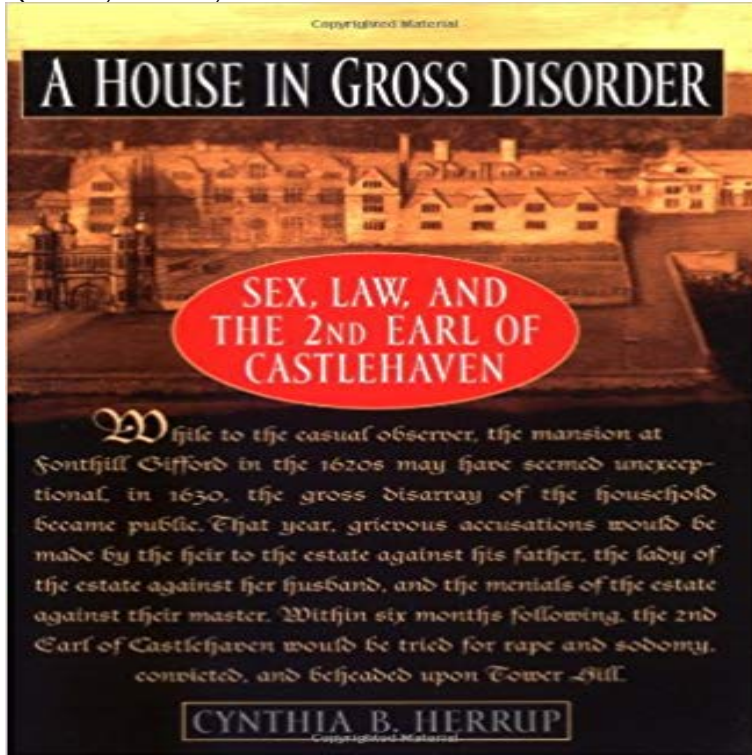


## A House in Gross Disorder: Sex, Law, and the 2nd Earl of Castlehaven (Sex, Law, and the Second Earl of Castlehaven)



Sex, privilege, corruption, and revenge--these are elements that we expect to find splashed across today's tabloid headlines. But 17th century England saw a sex scandal that brought disgrace to the ruling class and ended with the beheading of an earl. In *A House in Gross Disorder*, Cynthia Herrup presents a strikingly new interpretation of the case of the 2nd Earl of Castlehaven and of the sexual and social anxieties it cast into such bold relief. Castlehaven was convicted of assisting in the rape of his own wife and of committing sodomy with his servants. But more than that, he stood accused of inverting the natural order of his household by reveling in rather than restraining the intemperate passions of those he was expected to rule and protect. Herrup argues that because an orderly house was considered both an example and endorsement of aristocratic governance, the riotousness presided over by Castlehaven was the most damning evidence against him. Avoiding simple conclusions about guilt or innocence, Herrup focuses instead on the fascinating legal, social and political dynamics of the case and its subsequent retellings. In riveting prose, she reconsiders a scandal that still speaks to contemporary anxieties about sex, good governance, and the role of law in regulating both.

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