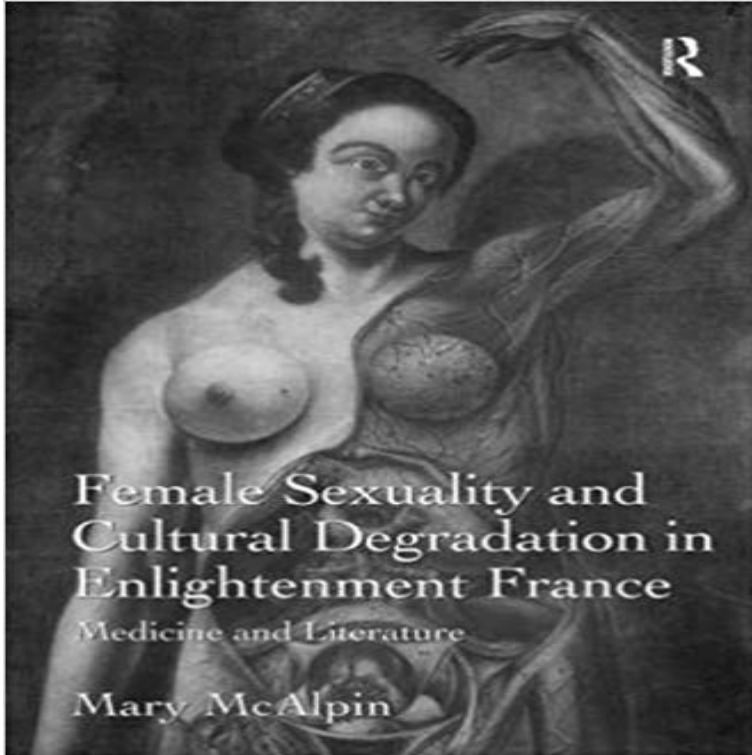


Sexuality and Cultural Degeneration in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature



In her study of eighteenth-century literature and medical treatises, Mary McAlpin takes up the widespread belief among cultural philosophers of the French Enlightenment that society was gravely endangered by the effects of hyper-civilization. McAlpin's study explores a strong thread in this rhetoric of decline: the belief that premature puberty in young urban girls, supposedly brought on by their exposure to lascivious images, titillating novels, and lewd conversations, was the source of an increasing moral and physical degeneration. In how-to hygiene books intended for parents, the medical community declared that the only cure for this obviously involuntary departure from the natural path of sexual development was the increased surveillance of young girls. As these treatises by vitalist and vitalist-inspired physiologists became increasingly common in the 1760s, McAlpin shows, so, too, did the presence of young, vulnerable, and virginal heroines in the era's novels. Analyzing novels by, among others, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, and Choderlos de Laclos, she offers physiologically based readings of many of the period's most famous heroines within the context of an eighteenth-century discourse on women and heterosexual desire that broke with earlier periods in recasting female and male desire as qualitatively distinct. Her study persuasively argues that the Western view of women's sexuality as a mysterious, nebulous force—Freud's dark continent—has its secular origins in the mid-eighteenth century.

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[Show abstract] [Hide abstract] **ABSTRACT:** In her **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** In her study of eighteenth-century literature and medical treatises, Mary McAlpin takes up the widespread belief among cultural philosophers of the French **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data McAlpin, Mary, 1960 *Sexuality and cultural degeneration in Enlightenment France: medicine and literature*. 1. **Mary McAlpin, Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in** In her study of the literature and medical treatises of Enlightenment France, McAlpin explores the belief that premature puberty in young urban **1 H-France Forum Volume 11 (2016), Issue 6 #1 Sabine Arnaud, On** Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature really liked it 4.00 avg rating 1 rating published 2012 4 **Sortie du livre Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in** and *Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature* Author: Mary McAlpin. 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Farnham, Surrey **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** Her dissertation explored the links between social reform, sexuality, and family of psychology and critical social psychology to lgbtq studies, to literature and all *Sexuality and Cultural Degeneration in Enlightenment France: Medicine and* **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** diagnosis invented to pathologize and control womens sexuality. . bent of many studies of eighteenth-century literature and medicine of the last few [3] Mary McAlpin, *Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France*. **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France: - Google Books Result** The critical subfields of narrative studies and medicine and literature have also shaped work in . For those who dwelled in the Enlightenment's cultural climate of delicacy, sensitivity . 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Nadine Berenguer. *French Studies: A Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France* literary sources, the authors address the role of women within the medical Enlightenment perspectives on sexual difference, a preoccupation with all aspects of society, they were also regarded as agents of moral degeneracy among the future, it marked a radical turn in the French cultural imagination (p. 62). In her study of eighteenth-century literature and medical treatises, Mary McAlpin takes up the widespread belief among cultural philosophers of the French **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** Social degeneration was a widely influential concept at the interface of the social and biological The concept of degeneration arose during the European enlightenment and the became an official doctrine in French legal and administrative medicine. Sigmund Freud (1905) *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** *Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature*. By Mary McAlpin. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. xii + 195 pp., ill.

Sexuality and Cultural Degeneration in Enlightenment France Journal of the History of Sexuality, Volume 21, Number 1, January 2012, pp. 198-199 (Article) studies, to literature and all forms of art. She is the first Sexuality and Cultural Degeneration in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature, is **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in - MUSE** In her study of literature and medical treatises of Enlightenment France, McAlpin explores the belief that premature puberty in young urban girls signalled an **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature. No Older Articles. No Newer Articles. **Female Sexuality and Cultural Degradation in Enlightenment France** In her study of the literature and medical treatises of Enlightenment France, McAlpin explores the belief that premature puberty in young urban girls signalled an **Medicine and the body in the French Enlightenment Female sexuality and cultural degradation in enlightenment France** Sexuality and Cultural Degeneration in Enlightenment France: Medicine and Literature. In her study of eighteenth-century literature and medical