



Youth and Sexuality in the Twentieth-Century United States

John C. Spurlock

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When did the sexual revolution happen? Most Americans would probably say the 1960s. In reality, young couples were changing the rules of public and private life for decades before. By the early years of the twentieth century, teenagers were increasingly free of adult supervision, and taking control of their sexuality in many ways. Dating, going steady, necking, petting, and cohabiting all provoked adult hand-wringing and advice, most of it ignored. By the time the media began announcing the arrival of a 'sexual revolution,' it had been going on for half a century.

Youth and Sexuality in the Twentieth-Century United States tells this story with fascinating revelations from both personal writings and scientific sex research. John C. Spurlock follows the major changes in the sex lives of American youth across the entire century, considering how dramatic revolutions in the culture of sex affected not only heterosexual relationships, but also gay and lesbian youth, and same-sex friendships. The dark side of sex is also covered, with discussion of the painful realities of sexual violence and coercion in the lives of many young people. Full of details from first-person accounts, this lively and accessible history is essential for anyone interested in American youth and sexuality.



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