



Genealogy Of Queer Theory (American Subjects)

William Turner

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Who are queers and what do they want? Could it be that we are all queers? Beginning with such questions, William B. Turner's lucid and engaging book traces the roots of queer theory to the growing awareness that few of us precisely fit standard categories for sexual and gender identity. Turner shows how Michel Foucault's work contributed to feminists' investigations into the ways that power relates to identity. In the last decades of the twentieth century, feminists were the first to challenge the assumption that a claim to universal identity the white male citizen should serve as the foundation of political thought and action. Difference matters. Race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality interact, producing a wide array of identities that resist rigid definition and are mutable. By understanding the notion of transhistorical categories woman, man, homosexual, and so forth feminist and gay male scholars launched queer theoretical work as a new way to think about the politics of gender and sexuality. "A Genealogy of Queer Theory" probes the fierce debates among scholars and activists, weighing the charges that queer readings of texts and identity politics do not constitute and might inhibit radical social change. Written by a historian, it considers the implications of queer theory for historical inquiry and the distinction between philosophy and history. As such, the book will interest readers of gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender studies, intellectual history, political theory, and the history of gender/sexuality. Author note: William B. Turner is a Visiting Assistant Professor of History at Middle Tennessee State University. He is the co-chair of the "Lesbian and Gay Coalition for Justice", and the co-editor of the forthcoming book "Creating Change: Public Policy, Civil Rights and Sexuality".

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