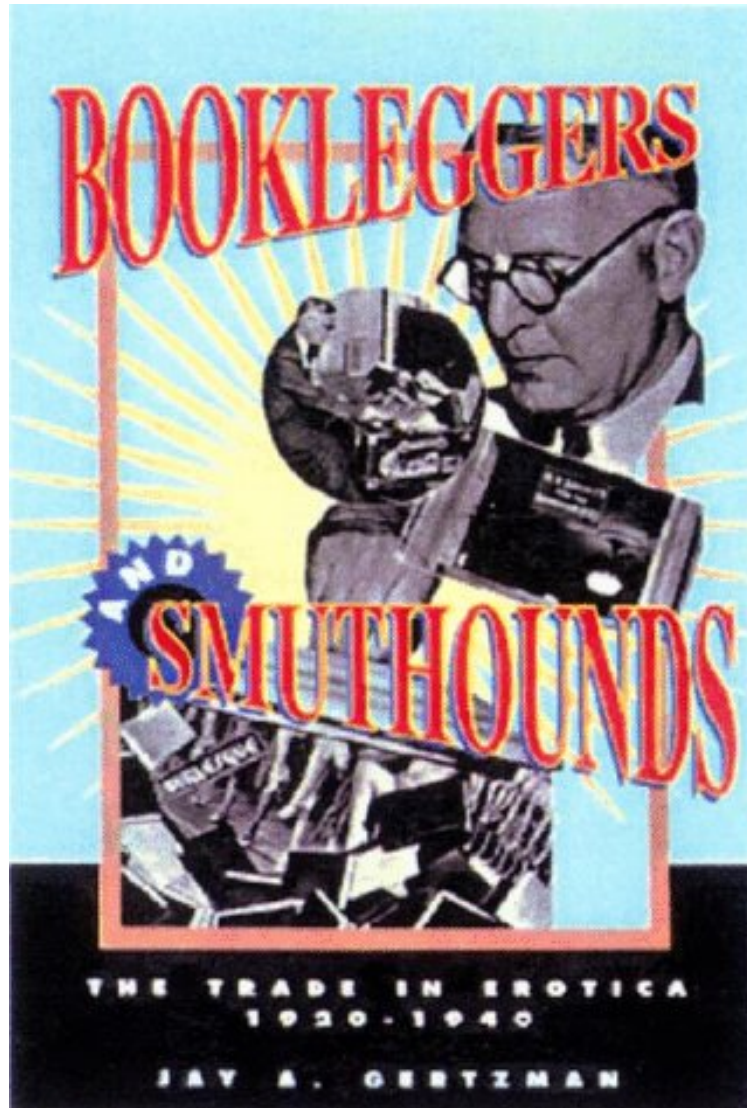


(Ebook pdf) Bookleggers and Smuthounds: The Trade in Erotica, 1920-1940

Bookleggers and Smuthounds: The Trade in Erotica, 1920-1940

Jay A. Gertzman

DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#2418430 in Books 1999-06 Original language: English PDF # 1 1.17 x 6.28 x 9.481, #File Name: 0812234936418 pages | File size: 51.Mb

Jay A. Gertzman : Bookleggers and Smuthounds: The Trade in Erotica, 1920-1940 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bookleggers and Smuthounds: The Trade in Erotica, 1920-1940:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An entertaining history of publishing censorship By A Customer This is a very readable, entertaining and well researched study of a period of American book publishing equivalent to the previous century's "Wild West". There are the "bad guys" (the censors) and the "good guys" (the authors and publishers and free speech attorneys) and all are presented as the idiosyncratic characters that they were. There is also

an explanation of the whole social milieu that created the battlefield in which this struggle for the freedom to read took place. A great deal of previously unpublished bibliographic material about American erotica is presented, and the footnotes, set at the end of the book to be non-intrusive, contain additional wealths of information for the scholar and academic. The text is enhanced by many vintage illustrations and photographs, often gleaned from private collections.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. *Erotica and Censorship* By Joseph Slade This is a wonderfully conceived and splendidly executed history of the most important formative period of American erotica. Here, thanks to Gertzman's scholarship, the reader will find information available nowhere else: on marginal publishers and sexy books, and on the police and officials who tried to suppress them. The book chronicles investigations and campaigns by assorted smuthunters such as the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, the Post Office, ambitious district attorneys, and the FBI. Gertzman breaks out the huge volume of erotica from underground presses into useful categories, and discusses each in detail, having drawn on neglected archives and hard-to-find resources. For all its careful scholarship, the book is a fine read. The discussion of Samuel Roth, perhaps the most notorious of all American pornographers, is itself worth the price of the book, because it allows Gertzman to speculate on the essential value of pornographers to a culture.⁵ of 6 people found the following review helpful. *Interesting Story of the Jewish Presence in the Erotica Business* By Adele Greenberg The author tackles the question of why people who distributed books which were banned or criticized as pornography were often Jewish. He has done his homework, digging up prominent examples, and makes comparisons between the other kinds of dirty jobs immigrants and their sons did, and the publishing and selling of smut. Sometimes, this "smut" was great literature; sometimes it was just plain curious and brought in good money during the depression. You get to know some of these men pretty well. You do not like them much, maybe, but you do understand. The author does a good job of explaining the career of the most famous of these publishers, a very complex and haunted man you dislike, but feel sorry for too.

Bookleggers and Smuthounds vividly brings to life this significant chapter in American publishing history. Jay Gertzman offers unforgettable portrayals of the "pariah capitalists" who shaped the industry, and of the individuals, organizations, and government agencies who sought to control them. Among the most compelling personalities we meet are the notorious publisher Samuel Roth, "the Prometheus of the Unprintable", and his nemesis, John Sumner, head of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, a man aggressive in his pursuit of pornographers and in his quest for a morally united -- and ethnically homogeneous -- America. If the book is about individuals and the books they published, sold, or seized, it is equally about prurience: how it affects the mind, how it has been used to make judgments about proper and illicit behavior, and how it has been used to make laws. Gertzman contends that publishers of erotica and the moralists who attacked them during the mid-twentieth century had a subtle symbiotic relationship. As good businesspeople, erotica distributors necessarily appealed to prurient interests. They invited their clients to indulge curiosities that kept intact the association of sex with obscenity and shameful silence. He delves into the psychological and social pressures of publishing and selling erotica, and proves that whatever stage of a sexual revolution America may be in, prurience is just as powerful a catalyst to action now as it ever was. This first examination of the trade in erotica during the 1920s and 1930s provides a basis for understanding the evolution of both obscenity law and sexual explicitness in literature, and raises fascinating issues about the relationship between moral control, idealism, and the marketplace in ways that continue to resonate today.

"This excellent study deserves to be read by any lawyer and jurist. . . . It raises profound questions, which still haunt the legal scene." *New York Law Journal* [An] absorbing account of an often overlooked corner of American publishing history. *Publishers Weekly* "A major work of scholarship." *AB Bookman's* "A detailed and fascinating study." *The Library* "Gertzman's book is important; it opens a new topic of study and establishes groundwork for debate." *Journal of American History* About the Author Jay A. Gertzman is Professor Emeritus of English at Mansfield University and has been actively involved with the National Coalition Against Censorship based in New York.