



# Hard Bargains: The Politics of Sex

*Linda R. Hirshman, Jane E. Larson*

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Men and women have always bargained for sex. In *Hard Bargains*, philosopher-lawyer Linda Hirshman and legal historian Jane Larson provide the first complete analysis of power in heterosexual relationships, combining an eye-opening legal history of sexual regulation with thought-provoking predictions of what the future might bring.

Hirshman and Larson tell a riveting tale that spans the centuries--from early accounts of adulterers hanging from the gibbet, to the impact of the Kinsey Reports and Hugh Hefner's playboy philosophy, to the 1960s judge who argued in favor of sex with eleven-year-olds. The book examines the factors that have shaped our notions of sex, from Catholic teaching to the theories of Sigmund Freud, and it explores the Supreme Court decisions of the last few decades that revolutionized the politics of sex. And *Hard Bargains* not only provides a deep understanding of historical and current disputes, it also offers striking predictions of what sexual bargaining will look like in the future--rape laws replaced by laws of sexual autonomy, adultery subjected to breach of contract action, fornicators responsible for each other's rent, prostitution considered an unfair labor practice. These are a few of the surprising--and surprisingly workable--solutions the authors foresee in the 21st century.

*Hard Bargains* takes a forthright and level-headed look at all aspects of one of the biggest controversies in contemporary American society--heterosexual sex--and delivers a radically new perspective on the sexual lives of women and men.

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