DESCRIPTION

The sexualization of girls has captured the attention of the media, advocacy groups and politicians in recent years. This prolific discourse sets alarm bells ringing: sexualization is said to lead to depression, promiscuity and compassion deficit disorder, and rob young girls of their childhood. However, measuring such claims against a wide range of data sources reveals a far more complicated picture.

*Becoming Sexual* begins with a simple question: why does this discourse feel so natural? Analyzing potent cultural and historical assumptions, and subjecting them to measured investigation, R. Danielle Egan illuminates the implications of dominant thinking on sexualization. The sexualized girl functions as a metaphor for cultural decay and as a common enemy through which adult rage, discontent and anxiety regarding class, gender, sexuality, race and the future can be expressed. Egan argues that, ultimately, the popular literature on sexualization is more reflective of adult disquiet than it is about the lives and practices of girls.

*Becoming Sexual* will be a welcome intervention into these fraught polemics for anyone interested in engaging with a high-profile contemporary debate, and will be particularly useful for students of sociology, cultural studies, childhood studies, gender studies and media studies.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R. Danielle Egan is professor and coordinator of gender and sexuality studies at St. Lawrence University, and a psychoanalytic candidate at the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis.

FEATURES

• A welcome intervention on the fraught polemics surrounding contemporary debates about the sexualization of girls

• Analyses potent cultural and historical assumptions and attitudes, subjecting them to measured investigation and testing against statistical evidence

• Argues that passionate feeling about this issue reveals more about adult anxiety regarding class, gender, sexuality, race and the future than the lives of girls

• Will be of particular interest to students and scholars of sociology, cultural studies, childhood studies, gender studies and media studies

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