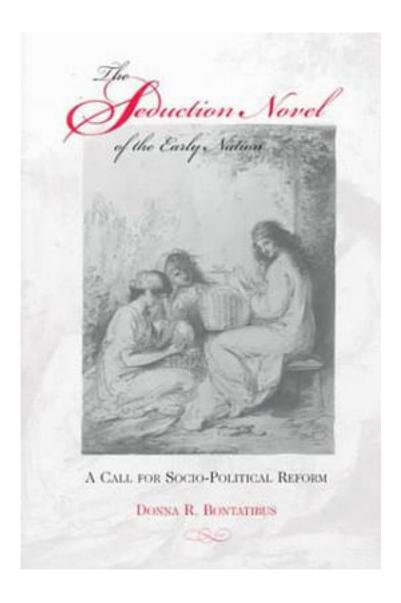
The Seduction Novel of the Early Nation



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Seduction, scandal, intrigue: all familiar themes to readers of contemporary American fiction. However, these elements are in no way modern ones. In this new study, Donna Bontatibus explores the roots of the seduction novel in early America and uses it to mirror societal structures in the fledgling nation.

The novels of Susanna Rowson, Tabitha Tenney, Hannah Webster Foster, and Judith Sargent Murray and their use of the seduction plot reveal a complex set of social and political problems experienced by middle-class women of the early nation. Using these novels, Bontatibus shows a strong link between women's status in America and the American Revolution's failure to free women from neo-colonialist oppression. She also explores seduction as a euphemism for the abusive means of maintaining women's allegiance to the new nation, depicting seduction/rape as the ultimate representation of women's colonization by a rape culture. Using current theories about gender, race, class, and colonization, "The Seduction Novel of the Early Nation" examines the relationship between seduction and the colonizer, and the colonized, required to maintain a rape culture.

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