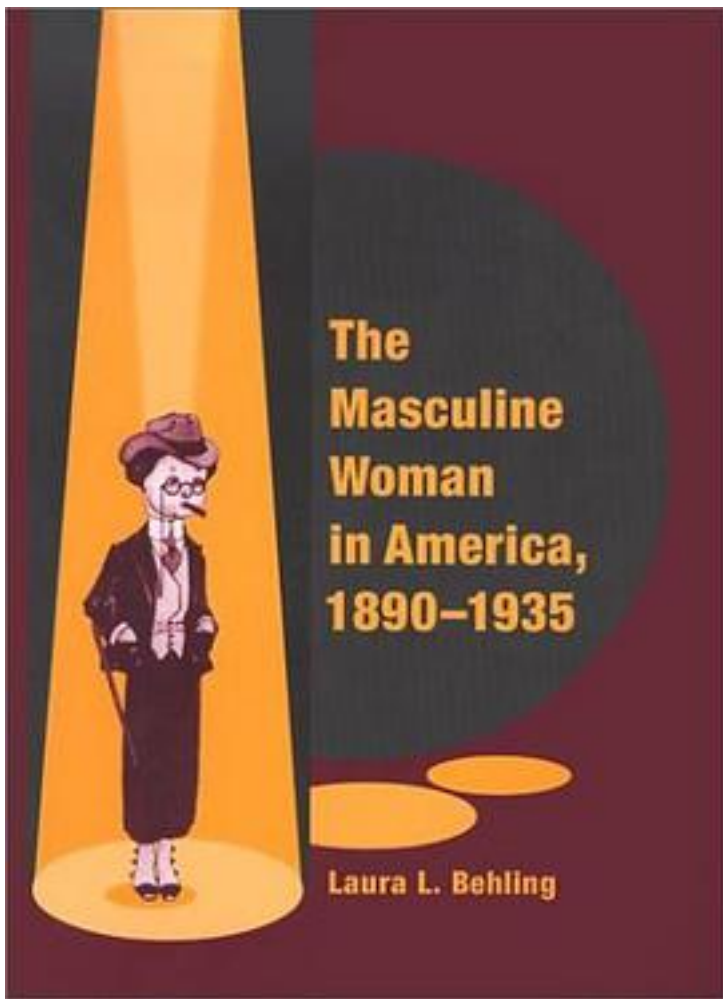


# The Masculine Woman in America, 1890-1935



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"The Masculine Woman in America, 1890-1935" examines how the suffrage movement's efforts to secure social and political independence for women were

translated by a fearful society into a movement of unnatural "masculinized" women and dangerous "female sexual invert". Scrutinizing depictions of the masculine woman in literature and the popular press, Laura L. Behling explicates the literary, artistic, and rhetorical strategies used to eliminate the "sexually inverted" woman: punishing her by imprisonment or death; "rescuing" her into heterosexuality; subverting her through parody; or removing her from society to some remote or mystical place. Behling also shows how fictional same-sex relationships in the writings of Henry James, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Gertrude Stein, and others conformed to and ultimately reaffirmed heterosexual models. "The Masculine Woman in America, 1890-1935" demonstrates that the women's suffrage movement did not so much suggest alternatives to women's gender and sexual behavior as it offered men and women afraid of perceived changes a tangible movement on which to blame their fears. A biting commentary on the insubstantial but powerful ghosts stirred up by the media, this study shows how, though legally enfranchised, the new woman was systematically disfranchised socially through scientific theory, popular press illustrations, and fictional predictions of impending sociobiological disaster.

作者介绍:

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