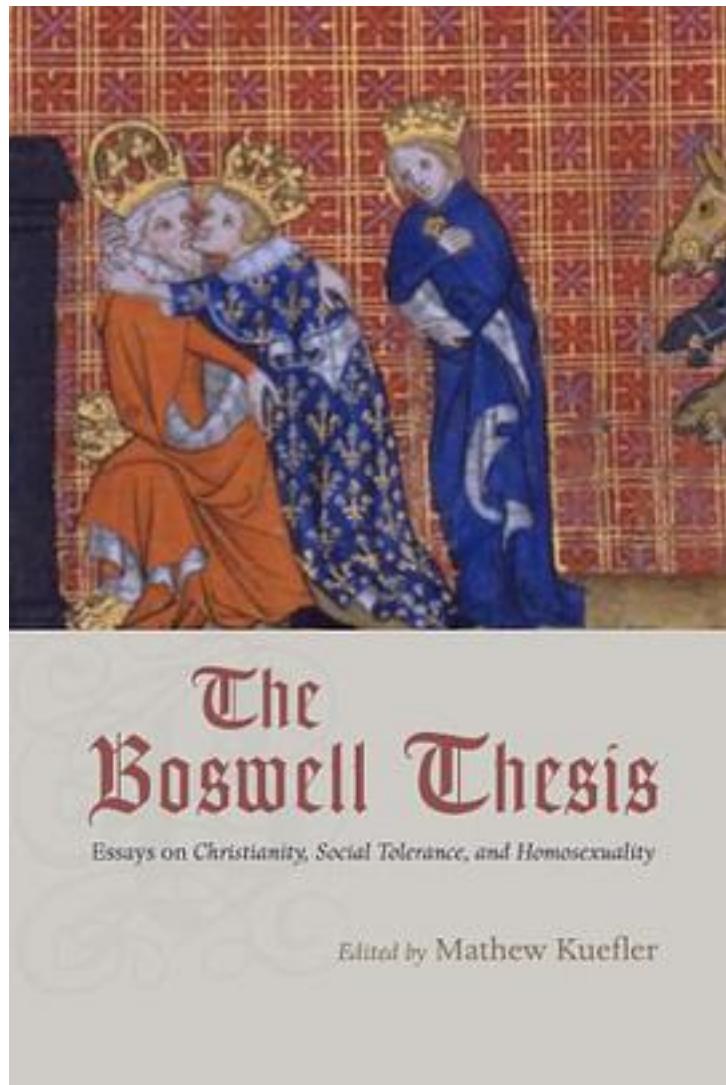


The Boswell Thesis



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Few books have had the social, cultural, and scholarly impact of John Boswell's "Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality". Arguing that neither the Bible nor the Christian tradition was nearly as hostile to homocroticism as was generally thought, its initial publication sent shock waves through university classrooms, gay communities, and religious congregations. Twenty-five years later, the aftershocks still reverberate. "The Boswell Thesis" brings together fifteen leading scholars at the intersection of religious and sexuality studies to comment on this book's immense impact, the endless debates it generated, and the many contributions it has made to our culture. The essays in this magnificent volume examine a variety of aspects of Boswell's interpretation of events in the development of sexuality from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages, including a Roman emperor's love letters to another man; suspicions of sodomy among medieval monks, knights, and crusaders; and the gender-bending visions of Christian saints and mystics. Also included are discussions of Boswell's career, including his influence among gay and lesbian Christians and his role in academic debates between essentialists and social constructionists. Elegant and thought-provoking, this collection provides a fitting twenty-fifth anniversary tribute to the incalculable influence of "Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality" and its author.

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