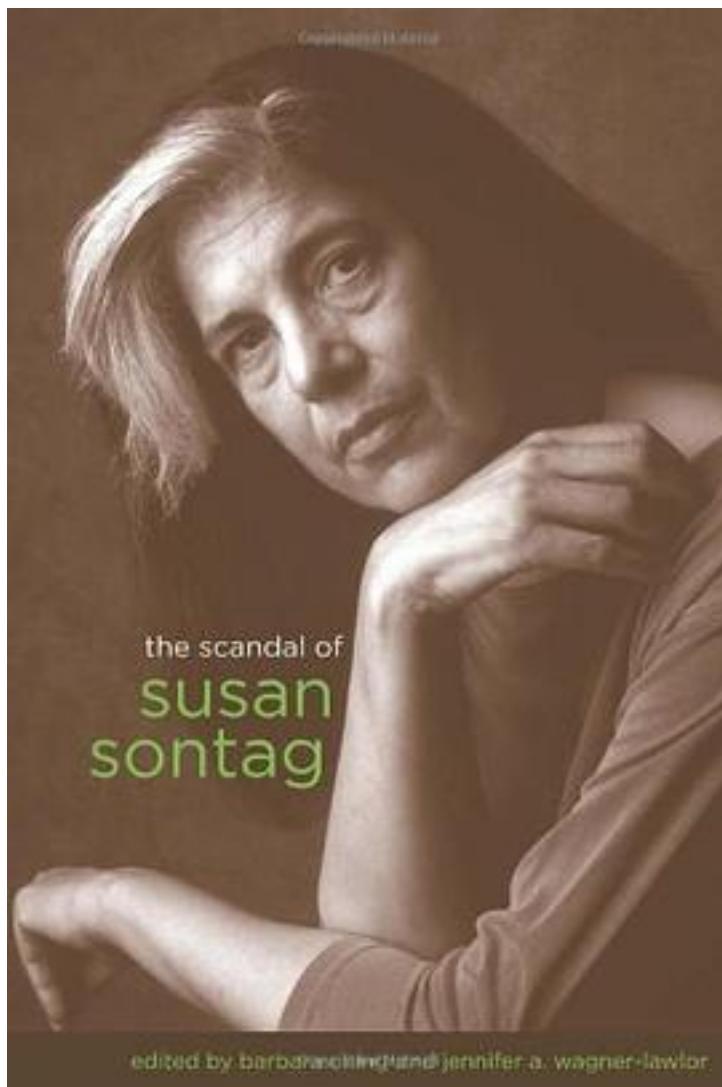


The Scandal of Susan Sontag



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Susan Sontag (1933-2004) spoke of the promiscuity of art and literature--the willingness of great artists and writers to scandalize their spectators through critical frankness, complexity, and beauty. Sontag's life and thought were no less promiscuous. She wrote deeply and engagingly about a range of subjects--theater, sex, politics, novels, torture, and illness--and courted celebrity and controversy both publicly and privately. Throughout her career, she not only earned adulation but also provoked scorn. Her living was the embodiment of scandal. In this collection, Terry Castle, Nancy K. Miller, Wayne Koestenbaum, E. Ann Kaplan, and other leading scholars revisit Sontag's groundbreaking life and work. Against Interpretation, "Notes on Camp," Letter from Hanoi, On Photography, Illness as Metaphor, I, Etcetera, and The Volcano Lover--these works form the center of essays no less passionate and imaginative than Sontag herself. Debating questions raised by the thinker's own images and identities, including her sexuality, these works question Sontag's status as a female intellectual and her parallel interest in ambitious and prophetic fictional women; her ambivalence toward popular culture; and her personal and professional "scandals." Paired with rare photographs and illustrations, this timely anthology expands our understanding of Sontag's images and power.

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