



The Technology of Orgasm: "Hysteria," the Vibrator, and Women's Sexual Satisfaction (Johns Hopkins Studies in the History of Technology)

Rachel P. Maines

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From the time of Hippocrates until the 1920s, massaging female patients to orgasm was a staple of medical practice among Western physicians in the treatment of "hysteria," an ailment once considered both common and chronic in women. Doctors loathed this time-consuming procedure and for centuries relied on midwives. Later, they substituted the efficiency of mechanical devices, including the electric vibrator, invented in the 1880s. In *The Technology of Orgasm*, Rachel Maines offers readers a stimulating, surprising, and often humorous account of hysteria and its treatment throughout the ages, focusing on the development, use, and fall into disrepute of the vibrator as a legitimate medical device.

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