

Sexual deviants

- Common accusation associated with sin & immorality
- Wide-ranging category: ideal = celibacy or marriage as channel for (restrained) lust; to refrain by mutual consent = unusual e.g. Margery Kempe, C15th mystic
- Restrictions even within marriage; focus on procreation but not preclude pleasure
- Fornication and adultery relatively common

- heterosexual vs homosexual = modern construct
- wide-ranging definition of sodomy
- relative leniency unless heinous or public scandal
- Italian Renaissance cities relative toleration for 'normal' practices
- Distinctive homosexual culture by C18th in London e.g. Mother Clap's molly house
- Lesbianism hard to trace, some evidence in nunneries
- Main concern passive vs active roles
- Hermaphrodites destabilising > gender identity e.g. Elana/Elano de Cespedes in C16th Spain
- Also transvestite prostitute John/Eleanor Rykener in C14th London

- Prostitution driven underground in C16th & C17th
- Middle ages taxed & many official bath-houses/bordellos
- Rape hard to prove unless young child involved
- Religious orders rehabilitating prostitutes
- Society for the Reformation of Manners vs brothels
- Concern that proscription lead to practice

- Political accusation e.g. Henry III of France
- Moral deviance reflected spiritual monstrosity
- Cf 'monsters' as product of sin & portents
- Need to protect society from sin
- 'natural' vs 'unnatural' practices determined by age & activity as much as gender or marital status
- Courts willing to let off on lesser charge of heretics > public humiliation vs burning