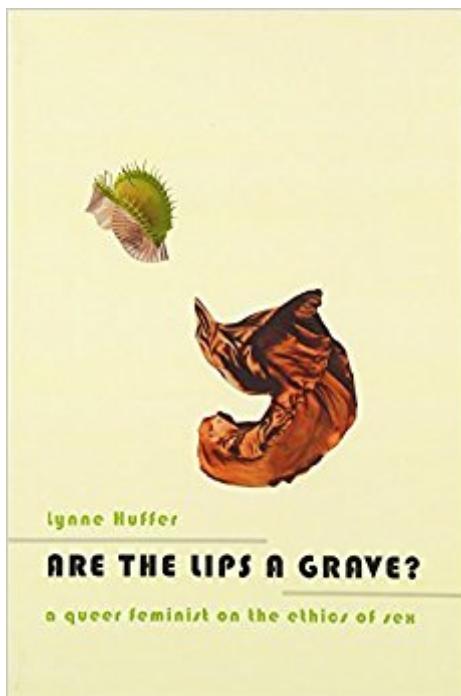


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# Are The Lips A Grave?: A Queer Feminist On The Ethics Of Sex



## Synopsis

Lynne Huffer's ambitious inquiry redresses the rift between feminist and queer theory, traversing the space of a new, post-moral sexual ethics that includes pleasure, desire, connection, and betrayal. She begins by balancing queer theorists' politics of sexual freedoms with a moralizing feminist politics that views sexuality as harm. Drawing on the best insights from both traditions, she builds an ethics centered on eros, following Michel Foucault's ethics as a practice of freedom and Luce Irigaray's lyrical articulation of an ethics of sexual difference. Through this theoretical lens, Huffer examines everyday experiences of ethical connection and failure connected to sex, including queer sexual practices, sodomy laws, interracial love, pornography, and work-life balance. Her approach complicates sexual identities while challenging the epistemological foundations of subjectivity. She rethinks ethics "beyond good and evil" without underestimating, as some queer theorists have done, the persistence of what Foucault calls the "catastrophe" of morality. Elaborating a thinking-feeling ethics of the other, Huffer encourages contemporary intellectuals to reshape sexual morality from within, defining an ethical space that is both poetically suggestive and politically relevant, both conceptually daring and grounded in common sexual experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is an important and timely intervention into current debates within queer and feminist theory on the respective limits of these scholarly fields. By recuperating a rich sense of 'ethics,' Lynne Huffer argues we must rethink the false boundaries between these two fields to arrive at a

more robust understanding of the ethics of sexuality, sexual difference, and gender. (Shannon Winnubst, Ohio State University) *Are the Lips a Grave?* is unique in its careful presentation of an ethics that does not fall squarely in either the queer camp or the feminist but negotiates significant contributions of both. In this sense, it offers something very important and original to theory debates heated along just these lines. (Cynthia Willett, author of *Maternal Ethics and Other Slave Moralities*) Against the persistent rumor that feminism and queer theory can never be friends, Lynne Huffer recovers a wideÂ¢â ¸ and at times wildÂ¢â ¸ range of shared political and critical lineages. Provocative, impassioned, and at times deeply personal, *Are the Lips a Grave?* is the first full-length defense of 'queer feminism.' It is about time! (Robyn Wiegman, Duke University) Finally, a queer feminist reading that will return us to the healthy art of disagreement. Lynne Huffer joins other queer feminists who argue against the queer subject's radical instability and regounds our theorizing in feminist practices and discourses surrounding the ethical. At one point, she observes, 'Every snapshot is a singular story; at the same time, each story is another story retold.' The stories are (re)told here in often brilliant readings, not the least of which is a thoroughgoing remapping of the place of *Lawrence v. Texas* in the narrative of queer freedom. As I read this book, I began to unravel some of the most persistent narratives of queerness, reimagining a place for feminist and queer practice along the way. (Sharon Holland, Duke University) Beautifully written and stimulating for the theorist and non-theorist alike... *New Books in Gender Studies* (*New Books in Gender Studies*)

Lynne Huffer is Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Emory University and author of *Mad for Foucault: Rethinking the Foundations of Queer Theory*; *Maternal Pasts, Feminist Futures: Nostalgia, Ethics, and the Question of Difference*; and *Another Colette: The Question of Gendered Writing*.

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