



Sex and Buildings: Modern Architecture and the Sexual Revolution

Richard J. Williams

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Massive modern skyscrapers, obelisks, towers—all are structures that, thanks to their phallic shape, are often associated with sex. But other buildings are more subtly connected, as they provide the frameworks for our sexual lives and act as reminders of our sexual memories. This relationship between sex and buildings mattered more than ever in the United States and Europe during the turbulent twentieth century, when a culture of unprecedented sexual frankness and tolerance emerged and came to dominate many aspects of public life.

Part architectural history, part cultural history, and part travelogue, *Sex and Buildings* explores how progressive sexual attitudes manifest themselves in architecture, asking what progressive sexuality might look like architecturally and exploring the successes and failures of buildings' attempts to reflect it. In search of structures that reflect the sexual mores of their inhabitants, Richard J. Williams visits modernist buildings in Southern California, the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, the Playboy Mansion in Chicago, the Seagram in New York, communes from the 1960s, and more. A fascinating and often funny look at a period of extraordinary social change coupled with aesthetic invention, *Sex and Buildings* will change the way we look at the buildings around us.

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