



# A Woman Scorned

*Peggy Sanday*

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**A Woman Scorned** Peggy Sanday

**2011 Edition with a New Afterword by the author**

The venerable and often misquoted phrase "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" continues to haunt American women who accuse men of sexual harassment and rape. In this bracing study of American sexual culture and the politics of acquaintance rape, anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday identifies the sexual stereotypes that continue to obstruct justice and diminish women.

Beginning with a harrowing account of the St. John's rape case, Sanday reaches back through British and American landmark rape cases to explain how, with the exception of earliest colonial times, rape has been a crime notable for placing the woman on trial. Whether she is charged as a false accuser, gold digger, loose or scorned woman, stereotypes prevail. American jurisprudence and the public at large remain divided on acquaintance rape.

With the passage of the Violence Against Women Act—one of the most important legislation for women—a new breed of antifeminists stepped up to the plate to subordinate women's bid for sexual autonomy and freedom. A groundbreaking, classic work of scholarship that coherently challenges the anti-rape backlash and its rhetoric, *A Woman Scorned* continues to bring a broad perspective to our understanding of acquaintance rape, even if its original vision of a new paradigm for female sexual equality awaits implementation.

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