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978-1-107-01536-4 - Sexual Politics in the Work of Tennessee Williams: Desire Over Protest

Michael S. D. Hooper

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## SEXUAL POLITICS IN THE WORK OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Michael S. D. Hooper reverses the trend of regarding Tennessee Williams as fundamentally a social writer following the publication of plays from both ends of his career – the ‘proletarian’ apprentice years of *Candles to the Sun* and *Not About Nightingales* and the once overlooked final period of, amongst many other plays, *The Red Devil Battery Sign*. Hooper contends that recent criticism has exaggerated the political engagement and egalitarian credentials of a writer whose characters and situations revert to a reactionary politics of the individual dominated by the negotiation of sexual power. Directly, or more often indirectly, Williams’s writing expresses social disaffection before glamorizing the outcast and shelving thoughts of political change. Through detailed analysis of canonical and recently discovered texts, the book sheds new light on Williams’s work, as well as on the cultural and social life of mid-twentieth-century America.

MICHAEL S. D. HOOPER is Head of English at Princess Helena College in Hertfordshire, England. He is the editor of the Methuen Student Drama edition of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (2009).

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*Desire Over Protest*

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107015364](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107015364)

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First published 2012

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Hooper, Michael S. D., 1965–

Sexual politics in the work of Tennessee Williams : desire over protest /

Michael S.D. Hooper.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-01536-4 (hardback)

1. Williams, Tennessee, 1911–1983—Criticism and interpretation.

2. Desire in literature. I. Title.

PS3545.L5365Z696 2012

812'.54—dc23

2011052726

ISBN 978-1-107-01536-4 Hardback

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## *Acknowledgements*

I should like to express my deepest gratitude to Chris Bigsby for reading and commenting on the drafts of this book. His extensive knowledge and advice have always been invaluable. I also wish to acknowledge the kind help of John Bak in tracking down unpublished prose manuscripts.

My wife has borne much whilst I have been undertaking this project: disrupted holidays and more Tennessee Williams productions than any normal person should have to bear. Her patience and support have been greatly appreciated. My parents have encouraged me in all that I have done, and this book is dedicated to them in thanks for their immeasurable generosity.

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