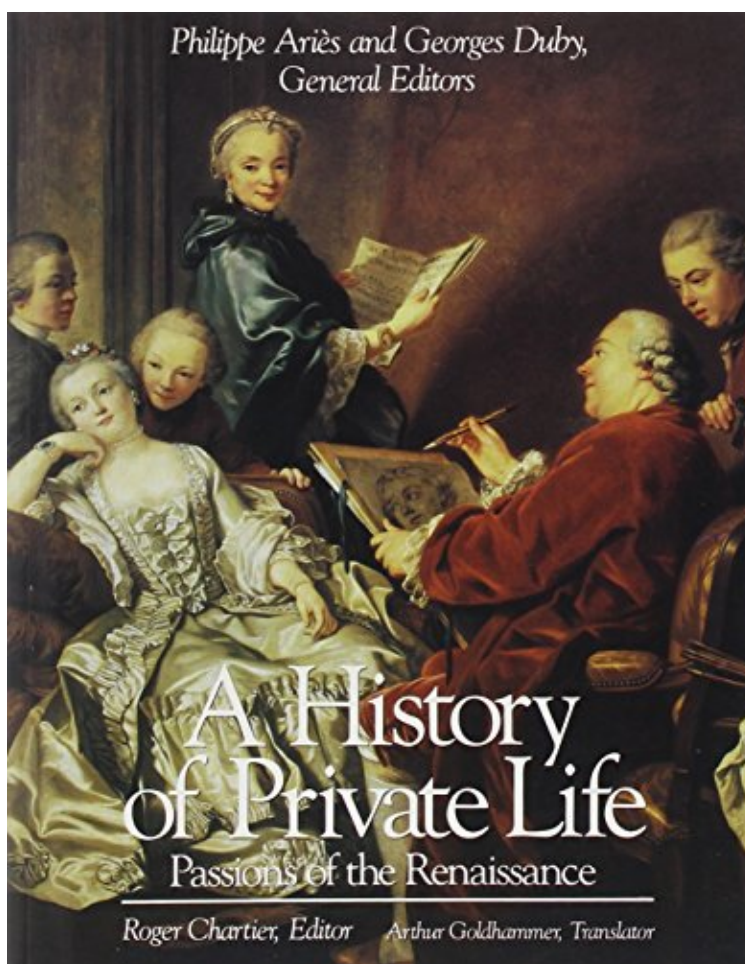


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A History of Private Life, Volume III: Passions of the Renaissance (History of Private Life (Paperback))

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From Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press : A History of Private Life, Volume III: Passions of the Renaissance (History of Private Life (Paperback)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A History of Private Life, Volume III: Passions of the Renaissance (History of Private Life (Paperback)):

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three. My reviews of the first two books in this series have garnered a fat total of 0 votes, positive or negative, so I'll make this review brief. This book charts the transition from the middle ages to the beginnings of the modern period. In the introduction by Aries (whose scholarship is the inspiration for this project), he makes a claim that this time period deserves to be treated as a separate "early modern" period. It's a noble thought, but the book reads more like one would expect: a lot of the middle ages and a little of modernity, but a lack of the coherence that one sees in volumes I, II and IV. The authors are mostly concerned with discussing two (seemingly) contradictory trends: the attempt by families to develop "private space" and the attempt by the state to intrude on that private space. Chapter two deals mostly with the first statement, chapter three with the second. You have to keep an open mind with the Annales school of scholarship. The writers favor open ended generalizations to conclusive statements and are just as interested in providing ideas for further study as they are in answering questions.

Readers interested in history, and in the development of the modern sensibility, will relish this large-scale yet intimately detailed examination of the blossoming of the ordinary and extraordinary people of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. This third in the popular five-volume series celebrates the emergence of individualism and the manifestations of a burgeoning self-consciousness over three centuries.

From Library Journal These volumes, edited by Philippe Aries and Georges Duby, are aimed at both the scholar and layperson who wonder how people lived and behaved from ancient times to the present: "their thoughts, their feelings, their bodies, their attitudes, their habits and habitations, their codes, their marks, and their signs." The focus is on western European life, primarily French. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. In the original sense of the term, *A History of Private Life* is a series of essays: attempts at a new, non-narrative kind of history. Sumptuously illustrated with pictures, maps, and photographs, the book is a feast for the eye; it is fascinating, often compelling in its exquisite details. A kaleidoscopic effect is doubtless part of the authors' purpose: to question our assumption that we understand the history of Renaissance individualism and make us realize that it is as complicated as the variety of traces left by three centuries of private life. (Maureen Quilligan *New York Times Book*) This is a bold and seductive book. Richly illustrated, with contributions from foremost French historians, it is set fair to become the authoritative history of intimacy in the early modern West. (Lyndal Roper *Times Higher Education Supplement*) Its broad chronological scope, its remarkable effective integration of essays by different historians, and above all its ability to represent the seemingly frivolous details of private life in a challengingly theoretical matrix make this an important and exciting work for historians of Early Modern Europe. (Lawrence Wolff *Journal of Social History*) About the Author: Georges Duby, a member of the Académie Française, is Professor of Medieval History at the Collège de France.