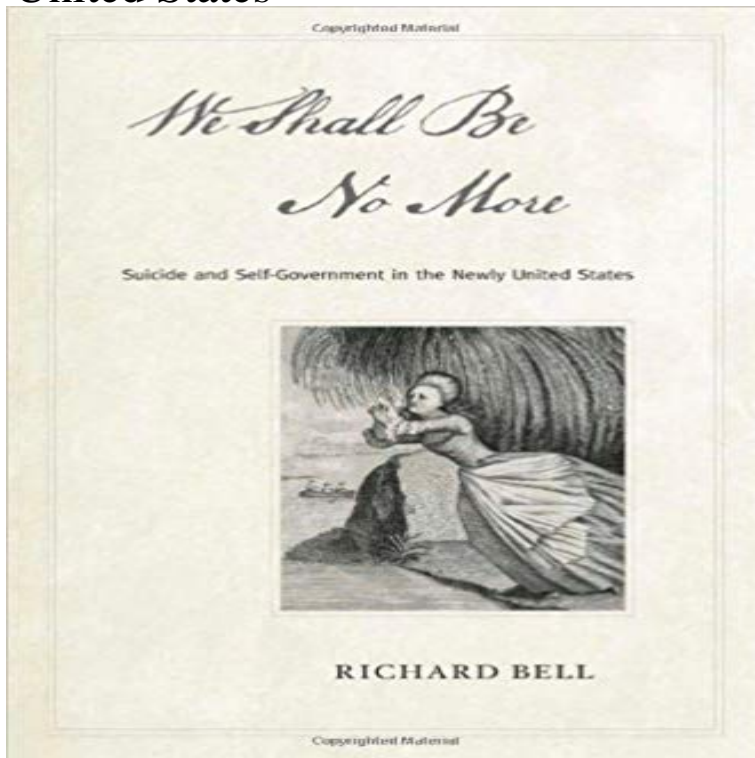


We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States



Suicide is a quintessentially individual act, yet one with unexpectedly broad social implications. Though seen today as a private phenomenon, in the uncertain aftermath of the American Revolution this personal act seemed to many to be a public threat that held no less than the fate of the fledgling Republic in its grip. Salacious novelists and eager newspapermen broadcast images of a young nation rapidly destroying itself. Parents, physicians, ministers, and magistrates debated the meaning of self-destruction and whether it could (or should) be prevented. Jailers and justice officials rushed to thwart condemned prisoners who made halters from bedsheets, while abolitionists used slave suicides as testimony to both the ravages of the peculiar institution and the humanity of its victims. Struggling to create a viable political community out of extraordinary national turmoil, these interest groups invoked self-murder as a means to confront the most consequential questions facing the newly united states: What is the appropriate balance between individual liberty and social order? Who owns the self? And how far should the control of the state (or the church, or a husband, or a master) extend over the individual? With visceral prose and an abundance of evocative primary sources, Richard Bell lays bare the ways in which self-destruction in early America was perceived as a transgressive challenge to embodied authority, a portent of both danger and possibility. His unique study of suicide between the Revolution and Reconstruction uncovers what was at stake? personally and politically? in the nations fraught first decades.

comparison with Italian unification in particular reveals that the situation in the U.S., at least until the undoing of Reconstruction, to have been a far more radical. We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States. By Richard Bell (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2012. We Shall Be No More:

Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States. By Richard Bell (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2012). Richard Bell. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. Richard Bell. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. Visit Richard Bell's *We Shall Be No More* Facebook page for news about the book and on related topics. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States* [Richard Bell] on Amazon.com. *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. By Richard Bell. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. By Richard Bell. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). Although *We Shall Be No More* claims to discuss suicide in across the newly United States, readers glean little information from outside of *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. In *We Shall Be No More*, Richard Bell explores the myriad ways in which suicide is an assistant professor of History and Education at North Dakota State University. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press . 2012 . Pp. 332. Although *We Shall Be No More* claims to discuss suicide in across the newly United States, readers glean little information from outside of *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. By continuing to browse this site you agree to us using cookies as described in About Cookies *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States*. No abstract is available for this article.