



The Ovary of Eve: Egg and Sperm and Preformation

Clara Pinto-Correia

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The Ovary of Eve is a rich and often hilarious account of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century efforts to understand conception. In these early years of the Scientific Revolution, the most intelligent men and women of the day struggled to come to terms with the origins of new life, and one theory—preformation—sparked an intensely heated debate that continued for over a hundred years. Clara Pinto-Correia traces the history of this much maligned theory through the cultural capitals of Europe.

"The most wonderfully eye-opening, or imagination-opening book, as amusing as it is instructive."—Mary Warnock, *London Observer*

"[A] fascinating and often humorous study of a reproductive theory that flourished from the mid-17th century to the mid-18th century."—Nina C. Ayoub, *Chronicle of Higher Education*

"More than just a good story, *The Ovary of Eve* is an object lesson about the history of science: Don't trust it. . . . Pinto-Correia says she wants to tell the story of history's losers. In doing so, she makes defeat sound more appealing than victory."—Emily Eakin, *Nation*.

"A sparkling history of preformation as it once affected every facet of European culture."—Robert Taylor, *Boston Globe*

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