

# CLGBTH

## COMMITTEE ON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER HISTORY

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### CLGBTH

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### CHAIR'S COLUMN FALL 2009

I write just two weeks after the U.S. National Equality March, and on the eve of votes in Maine and Washington state to protect same-sex marriage equality and domestic partner benefits, respectively. As historians, we have varied scholarly and personal stakes in the outcome of these campaigns, and of the fallout from the passage of Proposition 8 in California last fall—whether exposing the historical arc of queer exclusion from full citizenship or critiquing the normative impulses shaping the battle for marriage rights; whether organizing to secure a host of benefits for our loved ones or working for a political order where all individuals have such benefits, regardless of relationship status or family structure. The upcoming annual meeting of the American Historical Association (January 7-10, 2010, in San Diego) will put these issues front and center, both in the meeting program and in the politics surrounding the conference.

As many of you know, there is an ongoing boycott of the Manchester Grand Hyatt, one of the two main AHA convention hotels in San Diego. The boycott is based on the large contributions made by Doug Manchester, the owner of the Manchester Grand Hyatt, to the campaign against same-sex marriage in California last fall. The boycott's organizers are Californians Against Hate and UNITE-HERE (see <http://saynotomanchester.org/>; <http://www.californiansagainsthate.com/>; <http://www.sleepwiththerightpeople.org/>). Equality California, the Courage Campaign, and various local labor coalitions in southern California have all endorsed the boycott. Because of the nature of the contract it signed with the Manchester Grand Hyatt several years ago, the AHA has decided that it cannot break its contract without suffering devastating financial penalties. But last January, the AHA decided to organize a miniconference at the Hyatt, in the context of the larger AHA meeting, that would address historical perspectives on same-sex marriage. (Please see Leisa Meyer's column about the miniconference and the

schedule inside this newsletter, as well as last spring's CLGBTH newsletter for further background.) The CLGBTH is co-sponsoring the miniconference, and many CLGBTH members are participating in the miniconference sessions.

Over the course of this fall, the CLGBTH will be discussing multiple actions that our members and allies can take to express their points of view at the miniconference, at the AHA convention, in San Diego, and elsewhere. Our first recommendation is that members and allies make informed decisions about accommodations in San Diego. Be advised that the AHA will suffer no financial penalties if conference attendees choose accommodations other than the Manchester Grand Hyatt. Nor will the AHA suffer any financial penalties if conference attendees refuse to patronize restaurants and other businesses at the Manchester Hotel. For those looking for other accommodations, be advised that the San Diego Marriott & Marina, the other conference co-host hotel, is not unionized, while the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, where the AHA has also reserved a large block of rooms, is unionized. For further information about accommodations, see: <http://www.historians.org/annual/2010/index.cfm#accommodations>.

Beyond the politics of marriage, one critical area of interest to our members and allies continues to be the discrimination facing LGBTQ historians in the hiring, promotion, and tenure processes. Members of the AHA's new Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Task Force (created in response to Karen Kraulik's proposal) have been conducting preliminary research on these matters, and I look forward to reporting their findings and proposals in future newsletters.

A few final thoughts: I would like to welcome Nicholas Syrett and Wesley Chenault to the Governing Board of the CLGBTH. I also want to draw your attention to this year's call for prize submissions, for the Audre Lorde, Gregory Sprague, and Allan Bérubé Prizes - especially our new Bérubé Prize for outstanding work in LGBTQ public history. I hope to see many of you in San Diego, at our panels, the business meeting, our reception, and the bar night we are co-organizing along with the OutHistory.org queer public history project, and I wish you all the best for a wonderful new year!

—Ian Lekus, with contributing material from Marc Stein

## REPORT ON 2010 AHA MINICONFERENCE ON **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE**

The passage of Proposition 8 in California in November 2008 prompted the submission of a resolution at the AHA Business Meeting in January 2009. The AHA membership voted to respond to the passage of Proposition 8 by forming the AHA Working Group for Historical Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage and by organizing a threaded miniconference at the 2010 meeting to explore histories of marriage, domestic union, family, and sexuality. Working group members are Kristin Hoganson (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) representing the 2010 Program Committee, Leisa Meyer (College of William and Mary) as co-chair of the AHA's LGBTQ Task Force, and James Green (Brown University) as well as the AHA vice presidents: Karen Halttunen (University of Southern California) of the Teaching Division, who also chairs the group, David Weber (Southern Methodist University) of the Professional Division, and Iris Berger (University of Albany, SUNY) of the Research Division. The AHA Council and AHA President Laurel Ulrich charged the group to "develop special events and sessions on the subjects of marriage, sexuality, and the social constructions of domestic union" (Karen Halttunen, *Perspectives*, October 2009). The working group's goal has been to include histories of marriage and sexuality that range across historical time, geographic space, and thematic focus. The miniconference created by the Working Group includes a broad range of panels including ones on same-sex marriage laws in Canada; comparative perspectives on marriage and race from the Atlantic World, Early America, Europe, and India; and sessions addressing biopolitical, transnational, interethnic, and medieval perspectives on marriage. There will also be a plenary session on lawyers and historians involved in same-sex marriage cases as well as several roundtables on topics including Prop 8, the work of Blanche Wiesen Cooke, and Peggy Pascoe's recent book on miscegenation law and marriage. And there will be a film screening of Matt Matsuda's film *An Island Calling* on the murders of a gay male couple in Fiji as well as a morning talk by John D'Emilio for the Committee on Women Historians breakfast. As Ian Lekus notes in his chair's column, several of the panels for this miniconference are co-sponsored by the CLGBTH. I and the many folks who have contributed to this miniconference believe it will represent a major contribution to the international conversation on marriage equality.

The objective of the miniconference is to highlight scholarly findings that should increase public understanding of the complexity and fluidity of marriage practices across time and place. And I expect that the work that has gone into these sessions will make a significant contribution to the local, state, national and transnational conversations on equality in marriage. The AHA intends to widely publicize these sessions and to open them to the public and is currently in conversations about the best ways to maximize the dissemination of the materials generated by this workshop to a national audience, including through possible publication and/or online access.

The boycott situation has been very challenging for many of us and there is no doubt that many of you who are planning to attend the AHA conference would prefer not to patronize or even enter the Manchester Hyatt. I would ask if you could think about the ways in

which we, as historians and interdisciplinary scholars, can contribute to the effort to critique Prop 8 and the politics of hate it symbolizes—as well as Douglas Manchester’s reprehensible role as a funder of the initial Prop 8 campaign—by adding the power of history to the local, national, and global conversation on marriage equality and by doing so from within Manchester’s own hotel. I realize that holding this miniconference in the “belly of the beast” might not be a tactic that everyone can embrace, but I also hold onto the comment from a queer historian who recently came to my campus to give an invited lecture. When I told him of the plans for the miniconference at the Manchester Hyatt he responded “Great! We’ll just flip him the bird in his own house!” I’ll leave you with that image and hope to see as many of you as possible in San Diego!

Leisa Meyer—with contributing material from Karen Haltunnen

# CLGBTH AHA 2010 SCHEDULE

## Thursday, January 7

3:00–5:00 p.m.

CLGBTH Session 1 (AHA Session 2), sponsored by the AHA Working Group for Historical Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage and the AHA Professional Division Hyatt, Manchester Ballroom G  
*Land of the Free and Home of the Brave: Same-Sex Marriage in Canada*

3:00–5:00 p.m.

CLGBTH Session 2 (AHA Session 29), joint with the AHA  
Marriott, Marina Ballroom Salon F  
*Continental Passions: Latin American (Homo) Sexualities in the Modern Era*

3:00–5:00 p.m.

CLGBTH Session 3  
Marriott, Carlsbad Room  
*Constructing Imagined Communities: The Impact of Cultural Production on Gay and Lesbian Identities in Canada and the United States*

## Friday, January 8

12:15–1:45 p.m.

Marriott, Century City Room  
CLGBTH Business Meeting

2:30–4:30 p.m.

CLGBTH Session 4 (AHA Session 71), sponsored by the AHA Working Group for Historical Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage and the AHA Professional Division Hyatt, Elizabeth Ballroom D  
*Gay Marriage and Proposition 8: Reflections*

4:30–6:30 p.m.

Hyatt, Randle Ballroom D  
AHA Film Festival screening of *An Island Calling*, co-sponsored by CLGBTH and the AHA Working Group for Historical Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage

## Saturday, January 9

9:00–11:00 a.m.

CLGBTH Session 5  
Marriott, Carlsbad Room  
*Carnal Encounters at the Edges of Sinophone Culture*

11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

CLGBTH Session 6 (AHA Session 139), sponsored by the AHA Working Group for Historical Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage  
Hyatt, Elizabeth Ballroom F  
*Male Couples and the Meanings of Same-Sex Love in Turn-of-the-Century Europe and America*

2:30–4:30 p.m.

CLGBTH Session 7 (AHA Session 201), joint with the AHA  
Hyatt, Elizabeth Ballroom G  
*Rethinking the Queer 1970s: A Roundtable on Multiracial, Multi-issue, and Transnational Politics*

5:30–7:30 p.m.

Marriott, Cardiff Room  
CLGBTH Reception

Also, please consult the full AHA miniconference program for other LGBT history-themed panels, and check your email inbox for the time and date of the bar night (co-sponsored by Out-History.org) and a tour of the Lambda Archives of San Diego.

# QUEER IN THE ARCHIVE

This is the first part of a series of short reports on small, new, community-based, and less known archives that have strong LGBT/queer holdings. The series was inspired by a suggestion made by CLGBTH member Charles Gossett, and we thank him for it. If you have experience working in such an archive and would like to write a report, please contact the newsletter editor Christina Hanhardt ([hanhardt@umd.edu](mailto:hanhardt@umd.edu)).

## **The Black Gay and Lesbian Archive (BGLA)**

515 Malcolm X Boulevard New York, NY 10037

Hiram Perez, Vassar College

The Black Gay and Lesbian Archive (BGLA) was founded in 1999 by Steven G. Fullwood, a librarian at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Since then, the project has compiled donated materials relating to black LGBT, queer, and “inthe life” experience and cultural production both nationally and internationally, including organizational records, newsletters, copies of conference presentations and proceedings, monographs, posters, and ephemera. The archive holds several black LGBT magazines, including the groundbreaking newsmagazine *BLK* in its entirety, donated by publisher Alan Bell, along with several other of his publications.

Most of the BGLA’s collection dates from the mid-1950s to the present, in a sense picking up where Arturo Alfonso Schomburg left off, supplementing the research center’s impressive (and foundational) holdings documenting Harlem’s queer 1920s and 1930s. In fact, prior to housing the BGLA, the Schomburg boasted several other important black queer collections, including the papers of Joseph Beam, Melvin Dixon, and Assotto Saint. Just prior to starting the BGLA, Fullwood also acquired the records for the social service organization Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD). Adding to these considerable holdings on black queer writers and artists, the BGLA now also contains files on the filmmaker Michelle Parkerson and materials (books, personal photographs, essays) donated by poet, dramatist, and novelist Jewelle Gomez. Although organizational records and event ephemera primarily represent urban U.S. experiences (New York, Atlanta, Washington, DC, and Detroit), the collection also includes materials from the United Kingdom, Africa, and the Caribbean. Its strongest international holdings come from London, including newsletters from the Black Lesbian and Gay Centre,

the magazine *Wickers and Bullers*, and items relating to the Black Perverts Network, which organizes all-male sex parties.

As the BGLA is still being processed, there is currently no index for researchers. Once the collection is processed the finding aid will be available online. Researchers interested in accessing the BGLA’s records should contact Fullwood directly (at [sfullwood@nypl.org](mailto:sfullwood@nypl.org) or 212.491.2226) in order to arrange an appointment. Those seeking to donate materials should also contact Fullwood in order to determine if the items are appropriate for the BGLA or would be better suited for other repositories.

## **Leather Archives & Museum**

6418 N. Greenview Avenue Chicago, IL 60626

Rob Ridinger, North Illinois University

Mindy Chateauvert, University of Maryland, College Park

The unique Leather Archives & Museum located in Chicago’s Rogers Park neighborhood near Loyola University was founded at a meeting of the U.S. leather community called together by businessman and gay activist Chuck Renslow in 1991, following its incorporation as a nonprofit organization with the state of Illinois. The mission statement of the new organization called for “the compilation, preservation and maintenance of leather lifestyle and related lifestyles (including but not limited to the Gay and Lesbian communities) history, archives and memorabilia for historical, educational and research purposes.” Formats represented in LAM holdings are print books and periodicals, original art work in painting and photography, personal papers, oral histories (transcribed and in original form), physical artifacts and clothing/uniforms, films/videos, and organizational records. Access guides to many of the collections are available on the Archives homepage.

Among the institution’s notable strengths are the collection of record for the works of the erotic artist Dom

Orejudos (known as Etienne); extensive personal papers collections (such as those of Anthony De Blasé, creator of the Leather Pride flag); organizational files for the National Leather Association, Kris Studios, and the Illinois Gay Rodeo Association; and a large oral history collection which provides personal recollections of early gay men's motorcycle clubs, the bars and play space cultures of kink, queer, and sexual experimenters, as well as stories of the hidden lives of the sexual underground. Some of these oral histories are mounted as part of the permanent public exhibit galleries. Complete sets of *Drummer Magazine*, *Bound & Gagged*, *SandMtopia Guardian* and other magazines (totaling 12,000 issues) related to leather, sex, and kink are preserved. The in-house non-circulating Teri Rose Library also features a substantial collection of popular erotic ephemeral literature and other materials, from Tijuana bibles to first editions of works by John Preston, Laurie Antoniou, and Larry Townsend.

Offsite access to LAM holdings is provided through the LASH online catalog which can be found at: <http://24.43.241.163/leatherarchives/>. Reference assistance is available via email, chat, and by phone (773-761-9200), and research services staff may be contacted from 11AM to 5 PM Central Time, Thursday through Sunday. In 2009, the Mogul Visiting Scholar research fellowship was established, providing \$1000-\$1500 support for one recipient wishing to utilize the LAM collections ([www.leatherarchives.org/amlibweb/scholar.htm](http://www.leatherarchives.org/amlibweb/scholar.htm)). Donations are welcome and materials are sought from the full range of populations involved with aspects of the leather and BDSM spectrum.

**Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research**  
6120 S. Vermont Ave Los Angeles, CA 90044

Emily Hobson, University of California, Santa Barbara

The collection of the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research began in the 1930s when Emil Freed, a Los Angeles member of the Communist Party, began collecting left pamphlets, books, and other materials. In the 1950s, Freed's collection grew as activists fearing the House Un-American Activities Committee unloaded their personal files. Freed established the Library's first home in downtown Los Angeles in 1963; by 1973, the institution moved to its current

location in South Los Angeles. The Library holds over 30,000 books, over 3,000 periodicals, and special collections reflecting the work of at least a thousand grassroots organizations in L.A. and beyond. Since the 1990s, the Library has become a hub for radical activism present as well as past, particularly in racial justice, labor, and immigrant rights.

LGBT materials find a welcoming home in the Library's collections. Most LGBT-specific holdings are concentrated in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Organizational Files; these include materials on gay liberation, lesbian feminism, Briggs-era lesbian and gay organizing, and the 1970s Marxist-Leninist group Lavender & Red Union. Other holdings include the Jim Kepner and Los Angeles Women's Liberation Movement files; the *Frontline* photographs collection; and files from a 1986 anti-nuclear march headed by gay politico David Mixner. In addition to making use of these holdings, researchers might use the Library to study LGBT inclusion in the left more broadly, drawing on files of the Civil Rights Congress (a multiracial effort that communicated with homophile activists regarding police abuse), the local Black Panthers or other groups in the Third World Left, or labor unions. All this in addition to the personal music collection of Mattachine Society founder Harry Hay!

The Library prides itself on its accessibility both to researchers and to the community at large, particularly its working-class Latino and Black neighbors. Librarian Rukshana Singh provides excellent research assistance, and volunteers are always welcome. Some, but by no means all, of the Library's holdings can be searched in the Online Archive of California; a more complete database can be searched on-site. Researchers are permitted access to uncatalogued materials as needed. Additional information is available on their website: [www.socallib.org/](http://www.socallib.org/).

### **Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action**

University of the Witwatersrand, Braamfontein  
Johannesburg, South Africa

Amanda Lock Swarr, University of Washington, Seattle

Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA) is an archive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and intersexed (LGBTI) South Africans' lives and experiences. Its mission is to document LGBTI histories and thus contribute to the development of pride and rights

of LGBTI South Africans under the slogan: “without queer history there is no queer pride.” The archive was founded in 1997 as The Gay and Lesbian Archives by Graeme Reid to form an important historical record of previously unsecured materials. Presently, the archive contains extensive collections from individuals and organizations, including interviews, letters, photographs, films, books, media articles, legal records, and other personal documents and artifacts.

GALA is not simply an archive but has an important educational and outreach component. As a non-profit organization it takes an intentional activist role, initiating community projects with products including books, films, educational comics, and museum exhibitions on subjects ranging from gay and lesbian traditional healers to same-sex marriage, from gays and lesbians in the South African military to deaf gay culture. GALA is also currently launching Queerjozi, a digital collection related to LGBTI people who have lived in Johannesburg, which is unique for its contribution as a ‘living’ collection with open copyright licenses. Groups visiting GALA can arrange tours of “Queer Johannesburg” through archive staff. The archive is also developing partnerships with organizations in Malawi and Kenya.

GALA’s archival collections are housed in the Braamfontein section of Johannesburg at the University of the Witwatersrand in the Historical Papers Department. Those interested in using the archive should contact the staff before visiting to make an appointment. Archives are open Monday-Friday from 9-5 in the Historical Papers Reading Room at the William Cullen Library. Details about the collections available for public use can be obtained through the archive’s website ([www.gala.co.za](http://www.gala.co.za)) and in communication with director Anthony Manion ([anthony.manion@wits.ac.za](mailto:anthony.manion@wits.ac.za)). The related Gay and Lesbian Library is also located on Wits University campus at University Corner and houses books, videos, and relevant periodical subscriptions, as well as the administrative offices of GALA. Make sure to utilize both locations of Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action. The archive and the library welcome donations of relevant materials.

### **Stonewall Library & Archives**

1300 East Sunrise Boulevard Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304  
Gillian Frank, Rowan University

Founded in 1973 by gay activists Mark Silber and Joel Starkey, who collected GLBTQ materials in their

home, the Stonewall Library and Archives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida was opened to the public in 1984. It is now a spacious lending library and archive; it also serves as a GLBTQ community center. Specializing mainly in materials from the southeastern United States, the archive’s holdings include oral histories, local and national GLBTQ periodicals, and local business and association records. The archives also contain organizational records of local, regional, and national GLBTQ organizations such as the Dolphin Democratic Club, the Sunshine Athletic Association, the Dade Human Rights Foundation, and GLSEN of South Florida; oral histories of elderly community members; personal records of community members; an impressive serials collection; gay erotica; and a significant pulp fiction collection. Gems in the library’s holdings include: Vietnam-Era love letters written between Doug Pew and Don Croxton, the bulk of which were written when Croxton was serving in the U.S. Navy; copies of *The Bachelor* and *Vice Versa*, two of the oldest gay and lesbian periodicals in the United States; and organizational material and political memorabilia from the 1977-1978 struggle over the gay rights ordinance in Dade County (aka the Anita Bryant campaign).

Stonewall’s strength is its library, which is well staffed and contains over 18,000 books, sixty local and national periodicals, and a large collection of A/V materials. Stonewall’s archives are volunteer-run. The holdings are impressive, but it is important to note that there are no online finding aids and very few finding aids available within the library. It is necessary to make an appointment in advance and researchers should come prepared to dig through unprocessed materials. One of the nicest features of the archive is that it has inexpensive photocopying fees and generous reproduction policies. The Stonewall Library and Archives welcomes donations of organizational and of private materials (such as letters, books and a/v material), and encourages contact from community members should they wish to contribute to the library’s mission of preserving GLBTQ history. For more information visit their website at: <http://www.stonewall-library.org/>.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Regina Kunzel, *Criminal Intimacy: Prison and the Uneven History of Modern American Sexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

Reviewed by Karen Krahulik, Brown University

My fascination with prisons began when I was a child; our family lived a few short miles from a men's "correctional facility" and occasionally law enforcement authorities instructed us to stay inside and lock our doors because one or more inmates had escaped. I also had the unusual opportunity to visit the inside of this particular institution on multiple occasions—not as an inmate, but as a member of a local swim team that temporarily needed to use the prison's indoor pool. I remember quite vividly that random items of clothing often went missing from the women's (but not the men's) locker room. Until a few weeks ago, I thought the reasons why male inmates would steal women's clothing were obvious: these feminine items clearly aided all manner of heterosexual fantasy. Yet Regina Kunzel's brilliant book, *Criminal Intimacy*, calls this and other assumptions about sex behind bars into question: perhaps the men stole women's clothing for gender transgressive purposes—to complete the perfect outfit, to barter with a fellow punk, or to please a particular wolf.

Kunzel looks to religious reformers, physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, sexologists, correctional administrators, and sociologists to paint an expansive portrait of sex in prison from the early nineteenth to the late twentieth century. She complicates these narratives, however, with an array of cultural depictions from prison memoirs to prison films, from pulp novels to journalistic accounts. The intermingling of social and cultural history sources results in a sophisticated analysis of the ways in which narratives about sex in prison have worked to sustain, ignore, and dismantle dominant notions about sexuality in general. Rather than accumulating quotes to prove the "truth" about sex in prison, Kunzel uses a gentle poststructuralist approach; attending closely to the conventions of genre, she illuminates the work that stories do in the making of America's "modern" sexual systems.

*Criminal Intimacy* makes two sets of historiographical interventions. To begin, Kunzel argues that historians of sexuality have remained oddly incurious about sex in prison and that historians of prison life have glossed over the same topic. Its second and more compelling intervention challenges the developmental "acts-to-identities telos" (6) that has characterized histories of sexuality over the past two decades. Examining sex

in prison, Kunzel argues, proves that what historians have tracked in their analyses—the idea that from a nineteenth century pre-modern focus on sex acts emerges a modern twentieth century system of sexual identities—is "falsely even and misleadingly totalizing" (6). The sexual cultures that the inmates created and transported destabilize this neat trajectory.

Kunzel begins in the early nineteenth century with a helpful chapter on the background of the early prison system in the U.S. Focusing on reform and salvation, these institutions symbolized a progressive step away from the seemingly less humane forms of punishment that characterized colonial America. Although same-sex sex was nearly impossible because prisoners were isolated in single cells, masturbation apparently flourished. As the nineteenth century progressed, so did the number of prisoners, resulting in over-crowded conditions and a breakdown in the fantasy of successful penitence through solitary incarceration. By the late twentieth century, prisoners had more opportunities for sex as they shared cells and other prison spaces.

The emergence of "the homosexual" at the turn of the twentieth century had a profound influence on the way scientists and writers explained sex in prison. Rather than targeting men engaging in same-sex sex as isolated psychopaths, wardens, sociologists, and others began to name the activity and locate it as part of an emerging deviant culture. Memoirs by prisoners shifted during this time from a nineteenth century "confession-and-redemption" formula to a twentieth century practice of telling stories about everyday life behind bars. The new homosexual and its attending genre, Kunzel argues, made room for new ways to write and think about sex in prison during the 1920s and 1930s. Like the outside world, the gender transgressive female butches and male pansies in prison qualified as "congenital perverts" or constitutional homosexuals, while the otherwise "normal" men and women who succumbed to their charms were considered circumstantial homosexuals.

By the mid-twentieth century homosexuality moved from a focus on gender transgression—in the form of punks or daddies—to a focus on sexual object choice. "Active" gender normative players were now susceptible and "normal sexuality" became increasingly unstable. Prison memoirs told stories of "sex opportunists": "normal" men who turned to homosexuality in prison because of its unique conditions (99). Casting same-sex sex in this light allowed some men to retain a sense of normality by disconnecting desire from identity. Kunzel aptly argues that this "rhetorical maneuver" "contain[ed] the disruptive meanings of sexual acts apparently unlinked to, and therefore unsettling of, sexual identity" (102). The sto-

ries about sex in prison do not end here, however. Kunzel moves from scientific analyses that shored up normality regarding same-sex sex in prison to the ways popular culture turned this neat packaging on its head for erotic, titillating purposes. Kunzel summarizes: “concern about homosexuality in prison masked a deeper fear about the fragility and instability of heterosexuality” (108).

While gangs, sex, and violence began to characterize men’s prisons, Kunzel demonstrates how “lesbianism” became the “single most salient feature of the life of women behind bars” (113). Sociologists, prisoners, films, and novels often depicted a system of “women’s prison families” with mothers, daughters, sisters, daddies, uncles, and brothers. These units were described as serving “primarily affectional, social, and economic roles rather than protective ones” like the gang system in men’s prisons (119). At a time when women’s roles nationwide were in flux, sociologists and others portrayed these families as a “normal” recreation of women’s roles on the outside. Kunzel’s analysis of these stories is brilliant: “explaining the participation of women in prison families and lesbian relationships as evidence of the importation of feminine sex roles and expectations required willful inattention to its meaning for prisoners who fulfilled the roles of husbands, grandfathers, uncles, and brothers and entered into romantic and sexual partnerships with femmes” (132).

To say that *Criminal Intimacy* does not disappoint is an understatement. Kunzel is at her best when she turns her focused analytic lens to the sources she has collected so scrupulously. In addition to illuminating the insidious ways in which narratives about sex in prison were racialized and classed to protect the reputation of white inmates (and free people), Kunzel reveals how these narratives reflected not only the politics of sex behind bars but also the politics of race, class, and gender taking place at specific historical moments nationwide. Still, I was left wondering if there were regional differences amongst narratives about sex in prison as well as amongst the sexual cultures created in prisons. Did inmates incarcerated in the South “carry on” in the same fashion as those behind bars in the Northeast or Southwest? Did regional publications portray sexual violence and vice in similar ways? And what about sex between prisoners and guards or wardens? Kunzel touches upon this trajectory briefly, yet one cannot help but wonder what other stories might be told and analyzed. This, I imagine, Kunzel hopes other scholars will pursue.

*Criminal Intimacy* successfully shifts the way historians of sexuality ought to think about and write the history of the field. It has moved our debates in refreshing new directions and it provides the perfect model for

how to produce a theoretically rigorous text grounded solidly in social history foundations. An immediate seminal text in the field, any course on the history of sexuality will be incomplete without it.

**Terence Kissack, *Free Comrades: Anarchism and Homosexuality in the United States, 1895-1917* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2008).**

Reviewed by David S. Churchill, University of Manitoba

Though U.S. scholars have excavated a rich social history of same-sex sexuality in North America, we know little of the intellectual and political advocacy around homosexuality that existed in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. Terence Kissack provides an important corrective with his new book *Free Comrades: Anarchism and Homosexuality in the United States, 1895-1917* by revealing a history of contentious debate and sustained defense of homosexuality within the pages of the nation’s vibrant anarchist press. Kissack provides a more complicated picture of the place of sexuality within the history of the Left, which too often cleaved to normative conceptualizations of sexual modernity, purity, and morality. In contrast to most socialists, anarchists saw homosexuality as central to ethical and political considerations of state power and individual autonomy. This discussion was not at the very margins of public discourse. As Kissack reminds us, anarchism in the United States—at least prior to WWI—was part of a larger working-class political movement with a mass following that sustained its many publications and ensured large and attentive audiences at rallies and lectures by prominent anarchists such as Emma Goldman and Benjamin Tucker.

Beautifully written and vastly informative, Kissack’s book places anarchism at the very center of discussions on homosexuality at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Indeed, the anarchist press and the writings of leading anarchists such as Emma Goldman, Benjamin Tucker, and Alexander Berkman were nearly the only sites for any sort of sustained political defense of homosexuality in North America. Kissack argues that many anarchists, including both socialist anarchists and individualist anarchists, were predisposed to take same-sex sexuality seriously for a number of reasons. First, they embraced a genuine commitment to equality and a rejection of social hierarchies. As a result, feminist politics were an essential part of the anarchist movement and women were central to its leadership. In their advocacy of free love, criticism of the institution of marriage, and belief in female sexual agency and erotic pleasure, anarchists developed a sophisticated

sexual politics that Kissack argues was “grounded in a feminist analysis of sexuality.” In addition, anarchists had expansive notions of radical social change that went beyond critiques of political economy, seeking to overturn Victorian conventions and the restrictive constraints of bourgeois culture. Though support for homosexuality was far from universal, in anarchist circles it nonetheless received sustained discussion, and in many cases, strong statements of solidarity.

Kissack argues that Oscar Wilde’s 1895 trial “was a critical turning point” for U.S. based anarchists’ thinking on homosexuality. Wilde’s ordeal, imprisonment, and sentence to hard labor instigated debate and commentary among anarchists on the subject of homosexuality. Prior to the Wilde trial there were few “mentions of homosexuality” by anarchists and these “tended to be negative in tone.” Afterward, homosexuality increasingly became a topic for discussion and was treated in a “favorable light.” What should account for such a change? Kissack suggests a number of explanations. For anarchists critical of the intrusive reach of state power, Wilde’s predicament was a vivid example of the regulatory apparatus of government and the way it could criminalize individual actions and behaviors. Here anarchist writers may not have endorsed or approved of Wilde’s sexuality but they saw his incarceration and the censorship of his writing as emblematic of the hypocrisy and moral double standards of late nineteenth century bourgeois culture.

While Wilde was an over-determined figure to be defended or denounced, the American writer Walt Whitman represented a more ambiguous subject for anarchists. What contributed to this ambiguity according to Kissack, were shifting understandings and interpretations of Whitman’s writing. “While some saw in his celebration of comradeship a representation of same-sex desire,” Kissack writes, “others read an affirmation of intense friendship and social bounds.” Building on the work of Jonathan Ned Katz, Kissack argues that Whitman’s portrayals of romantic friendships and male intimacy were not seen in an erotic light because they eschewed inversion or the transgression of normative gender roles. During the nineteenth century Whitman’s comrades in effect *passed* as normal because they were not overtly feminized and their physicality could be seen as part of the supposedly authentic culture of working men. As emergent taxonomies of sexual modernity increasingly took hold, Whitman’s cult of male friendship became sexually suspect, just as homosexuality itself became increasingly (though never fully) decoupled from gender inversion.

One of the richest and most provocative chapters in Kissack’s book is his treatment of Alexander Berkman and Berkman’s book *Prison Memoir of an Anarchist*

that recounts the fourteen years Berkman spent incarcerated for the failed attempt on the life of industrialist Henry Clay Frick. Kissack shows that *Prison Memoir* is both an important ethnography of same-sex culture in turn-of-the century America and a political critique of the power relations implicit in that culture. Berkman’s tale of “kids” and “kid men” is one of sexual exploitation, possession, and even violence. What distinguished Berkman’s account from other Progressive Era exposés of perversion amongst incarcerated populations was his account “of loving, mutually supportive relationships among prisoners.” Indeed, Kissack argues that Berkman provides one of the first affirmative examples of the inherent value and worth of same-sex erotic love, one that offered solace and an affirmative counterpoint to the dehumanizing brutality of prison life.

No figure embodies the transnational dynamic of turn of the century anarchism better than Emma Goldman. Indeed, Goldman appears everywhere in *Free Comrades* as a powerful and persistent voice for serious consideration of sexuality and “the politics of personal life.” Kissack argues that Goldman and other anarchists such as Benjamin Tucker saw an emancipatory potential in new scientific writing on sex, particularly European sexology literature, that they hoped would supplant moralistic and restrictive understandings of sexuality. Though not uncritical of sexologists—or for that matter those who would ascribe homosexuality to women who flaunted social and gender conventions by refusing feminized norms—Goldman nonetheless argued that homosexuality was neither vice nor illness but rather an aspect of human sexuality. That said, Kissack reminds us that Goldman was always “critical of single-issue style homosexual politics” and that her defense of homosexuality was part of a larger revolutionary struggle. Rights for homosexuals, criticism of marriage, dissemination of birth control materials, advocacy of gender equality—these were all part of that greater political project to radically transform society.

Kissack stays near to his sources, providing close readings of the political commentaries and debates between various anarchist writers. At times a fuller treatment of the social history literature would have enriched and helped to contextualize his somewhat genealogical reading of anarchism and homosexuality. For example an engagement with the literature on manhood, and a fuller explication of anarchists’ notions of gender norms would have helped to fill out parts of the analysis. That said, Kissack has produced an elegant and engaging book that makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the place of homosexuality within radical public culture in turn of the century of America. It is a crucial addition to the intellectual and political history of sexuality.

C. Todd White, *Pre-Gay L.A.: A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

Reviewed by Craig M. Loftin, California State University, Fullerton

*Pre-Gay L.A.* is a compelling exploration of the 1950s American gay civil rights movement (or “homophile movement” as it was called at the time). The homophile movement is hardly a new topic for scholars, but C. Todd White’s book is the first devoted to the movement’s overlooked middle child: the organization known as One, Inc. White’s analysis of the day-to-day operations of this fascinating organization challenges the pessimistic account of the homophile movement offered in John D’Emilio’s highly influential monograph *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, which characterized the 1950s movement as a “failure” due to its “conservative” turn after the expulsion of Mattachine Society founder Harry Hay. Though beset by infighting and a lack of resources, One, Inc. survived the grim McCarthy years and established daring new standards of gay visibility a full decade and a half before Stonewall. Its survival was a testament to the creativity, energy, and dedication of homophile movement activists, persons often overshadowed by the 1970s gay liberation movement and a rather obsessive scholarly focus on Harry Hay. Hay was undoubtedly important, but White shows that there were many other people who deserve credit and recognition for their efforts on behalf of gay people in the 1950s and early 1960s.

One, Inc. was founded in 1952 in order to create the first gay magazine. *ONE* magazine, a fixture on urban newsstands nationwide from 1953 to the late 1960s, was the first American publication to openly declare itself a “homosexual magazine” and openly cater to gay and lesbian readers. The magazine contained essays on politics, science, and culture, reports of gay persecution around the country, and poetry, fiction, artwork, and letters to the editor. Its modest circulation of 5000 monthly issues reflected the dangers of being gay in the McCarthy era, a period when getting caught with such a magazine could end a person’s career. *ONE* is best known for a 1958 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that declared the magazine lawful and not obscene—this ruling paved the way for the flood of gay publications in subsequent decades.

White shows there was far more to One, Inc. than just the establishment of the first gay magazine. One, Inc. also published books and the first gay-themed academic journal. It had a social service department that connected gay people with lawyers and jobs. In 1956, “The One Institute” began offering college-level courses studying gay themes in lit-

erature, history, and the social sciences. One, Inc. even organized the first “gay tours” of Europe for American gay and lesbian travelers.

White tells the story of One, Inc. largely through “ethnobiographies” of the organization’s key personalities. The book’s hero is Don Slater, a passionate and feisty *ONE* editor who tirelessly devoted himself to the magazine. The book’s villain is Dorr Legg, also a tireless, devoted activist, but one who saw the organization’s future in its educational efforts, not *ONE* magazine. By the mid-1960s, tensions boiled over between the two men, and Legg used sneaky underhanded tactics to vote Slater out of the organization’s leadership. Incensed, Slater responded by showing up with a moving truck, removing everything from One’s offices, and relocating the materials across town. Slater, Legg, and their respective followers spent the next two years sorting out the mess in courts. The episode serves as the dramatic climax of White’s narrative and an overlooked yet pivotal moment in the history of the American gay rights movement. White notes, “Although both of these men [Legg and Slater] deserve recognition as the pioneers and leaders that they were, they also deserve criticism for having put their own needs before ONE’s and for allowing their differences to tear the organization apart” (106).

*Pre-Gay L.A.* has many strengths. White effectively uses sources such as meeting minutes and correspondence to create a “fly on the wall” quality to his narrative. The reader gets an excellent sense of what it was like to be a gay activist in the 1950s. It nicely details the issues facing this group of activists: the triumphs, failures, and frequent conflicts within this group of strong-minded, stubborn people (and there were *many* conflicts besides those of Legg and Slater). White’s writing is clear, engaging, and readable and he provides an excellent sense of detail. The chronological organization provides a good sense of change over time. The mundane details of publishing the first gay magazine are interesting, but the lengths to which these activists went in trying to put so many ambitious ideas into practice makes for dramatic reading.

The book has weaknesses as well. White offers little in the way of historiography or theory, except for passing asides. This lack of broader scholarly engagement means that his dynamic narrative exists somewhat in a vacuum, unconnected to concurrent historical events or trends in the study of human sexuality. There is a minor tendency towards hagiography, and, towards the end, White inserts himself into the narrative in a way that will discomfort many historians.

My biggest complaint, however, is the title. The title *Pre-Gay L.A.* derives from White’s claim that the word “gay” was “most often used as an insider’s parlance,

an indexical trope that never, in the entire run of *ONE* magazine, takes on the personal and political ramifications it would develop in the mid- to late 1960s” (55). This is highly debatable and the point is incidental to the narrative and should not be the basis of the book’s title. Nor is there anything really about “Los Angeles” in the book, except that One, Inc. happened to exist there. Finally, White refers to his study as a “social history,” but this is not accurate. It is social *movement* history. The distinction is important. To be a “social history of the movement,” as the cover claims, the book would have to go beyond the rather claustrophobic world of a dozen or so activists whose actions comprise 90% of the book’s contents and consider a broader sample of gay people.

Despite these criticisms, the book sheds important light on a long overdue subject. It should become an essential book in the literature of the homophile movement and postwar American civil rights movements more generally. It superbly refutes the notion that the homophile movement was a failure, and it is written with detail, care, and passion.

**Nicholas L. Syrett, *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).**

Reviewed by Jim Downs, Connecticut College

In *The Company He Keeps*, Nicholas L. Syrett investigates changing understandings, assumptions, and performances of masculinity. To chart this massive transformation from the antebellum period to the present, Syrett turns to the history of white college fraternities. Relying on diaries, correspondences, university records, alumni reports, and newspapers as well as other ephemera, Syrett provides the first historical study that charts the growth of fraternities in the United States. He uses this dazzling assortment of evidence in order to evaluate how white men’s ideas and enactment of, what he calls, “fraternal masculinity,” changed over time.

By examining the experience of fraternity men during the antebellum period, the postbellum decades, the turn of the century, and finally in the 1920s, Syrett does an excellent job of powerfully demonstrating how ideas of “fraternal masculinity” underwent major transformations during these four distinct watershed moments. The origins of “fraternal masculinity” can be traced to a fateful meeting of five undergraduates at Union College in Schenectady, NY in 1825, which led to the founding of Kappa Alpha Society—the first college fraternity in the U.S. Throughout the early part of the nineteenth century, college fraternities func-

tioned mostly as literary societies. The rebellious nature which has come to typify fraternal life today was present even in the decades prior to the Civil War. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Syrett explains, fraternities “gave students a way to rebel against college authorities and assert some version of manhood in contradistinction to the way they were treated by the tutors and faculty who disciplined and taught them” (p.49). By the end of the nineteenth century, the literary element that had characterized fraternities in the antebellum period began to recede, as fraternities began to adopt a more “aggressive” and “virile” notion of masculinity. During this period, university men also began to define “fraternal masculinity” in terms of athletic ability, wealth, and social standing. By the 1920s, Syrett posits “fraternity men in larger part completed the transition to a standard of masculinity that is recognizable to us today” (p. 185). It was during this period, the 1920s, that the notion of masculinity very much became attached to sexual identity. By discussing their sexual exploits and dating experiences and by casting off effeminacy as a sign of “moral degeneracy,” fraternity men began to articulate sexually charged behavior as part of the meaning of “fraternal masculinity.”

Syrett’s analysis of “fraternal masculinity” is less concerned about the idea of men as gendered subjects. He is, however, deeply invested in how white men enact ideas of masculinity and how these enactments affected women, racial and ethnic minorities, and those white men who were excluded from fraternities. For example, Syrett points to the sexual violence committed against women during the postwar years as evidence of the consequences that “fraternal masculinity” had for those living in proximity of fraternity men. Syrett further defines “fraternal masculinity” as the result of a larger social anxiety that fraternity men had about not living up to the ideals of manhood. Fraternities, therefore, enabled men to overcompensate in this regard, as they consolidated their power and formed exclusive networks that reified their conceptualizations of manhood.

Additionally, Syrett carefully addresses how ideas about race and class shaped the development of fraternal masculinity. Not only is his book aptly subtitled, “A History of White College Fraternities,” but throughout the text, Syrett pays close attention to how “whiteness” connoted privilege. He notes, for example, that many of the university men consciously created barriers that discriminated against the rising number of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities who began pursuing college degrees in the early twentieth century. He also reveals that fraternities that did begin to integrate after WWII were often in the Northeastern part of the U.S., while Southern fraternities remained segregated and held onto the notion of Southern man-

hood as only applying to white men. “Fraternal masculinity” thus became formulated as part of a new gender script for how to behave in an all-male sphere, but was very much rooted in the ways in which certain college men intentionally attempted to create an archetype of masculinity that was based on whiteness.

*The Company He Keeps* firmly situates itself in the fields of gender studies, the history of education, and the social and cultural history of the United States. The larger theoretical and historiographical contributions that Syrett’s book makes are often deceptively hidden in the footnotes. Syrett is a great storyteller who can easily traverse the reader from the snowy climes of Schenectady, NY to the plush, green Southern campus of Trinity College (now Duke University) in the turn of a page. Yet his footnotes reveal his thorough engagement with the historiography and his meticulous research in archival collections from New Hampshire to California.

Finally, they say you cannot judge a book by its cover, but the publication of *The Company He Keeps* suggests that the popular adage may not be true. *The Company He Keeps* is finely wrapped in a captivating turn-of-the-century photograph of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity. Even a quick glance at this photograph by an untrained historical eye would immediately pick up on the body language of the group of men posed in semi-formal wear—some donning ties and hats, all of them in some version of a suit coat. They lounge on each other, arms resting on their fraternity brother’s legs—legs crossed and folded intimately near each other, while many of them relax in the lap of their fellow brother. The photograph brilliantly illustrates Syrett’s thesis. In 1893, when it was shot, the idea of “fraternal masculinity” was in the midst of a transition; fraternities were no longer the bastions of literary exchange and were increasingly invested in ideas of masculinity that accentuated athletic ability, “social breeding,” and wealth. The idea of heterosexuality that would become a defining marker of masculinity in the 1920s and continue to the present had not yet been introduced as a component of fraternal masculinity. Consequently, to late nineteenth century observers, the positioning of the men’s bodies so closely and intimately touching each other would not signal alarms of homosexuality or strike anyone as odd. Yet the introduction of new ideas about sexuality in the third decade of the twentieth century would indelibly change that. When fraternity men began to articulate a definition of masculinity based on heterosexuality, they simultaneously repudiated any semblance of homosexual behavior or identity as aberrant. Yet, when the photograph was taken in 1893, these ideas had yet to develop—proving Syrett’s thesis that masculinity has a history that connoted different meanings at different times. In fact,

the 1893 photograph suggests a more elastic version of masculinity that viewed male intimacy as emblematic enough of their fraternity experience to capture it and then memorialize in the annual group photo.

Syrett brilliantly articulates how this notion of masculinity changed and when it changed. While there are stories of homosexuality sprinkled throughout *The Company He Keeps*, the book is much more invested in the radical transformation that gender underwent over the past 200 years which, Syrett implies, ultimately paved the way for the articulation of multiple meanings, understandings, and performances of masculinity that shaped, among other things, contemporary understandings of homosexuality.

**Matt Cook with H. G. Cocks, Robert Mills, and Randolph Trumbach, *A Gay History of Britain: Love and Sex Between Men Since the Middle Ages* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007).**

Reviewed by Nikolai Endres, Western Kentucky University

There has been a proliferation of studies of (male) homosexuality in Great Britain since the late 1990s. What makes this volume different is its generous historical compass and its collaborative effort. In the introduction, Matt Cook negates the assumption that homosexuality is a transhistorical phenomenon. The word “gay” in the title, therefore, applies only “to the last thirty years of the millennium under discussion” (xi). Instead, the authors are interested in how emotional or sexual relationships were understood by various same-sex lovers and their bystanders throughout the ages. A wide range of terminology necessarily results: “mollies,” “sodomites,” “maryannes,” “queens,” and “queers.” The sources are equally pervasive: literature, drama, art, private records, legal documents, newspapers, scientific writings, oral interviews, and film. Finally, Cook stresses that a gay history is not only a minority study, for homosexuality is also implicated in class, gender, ethnicity, politics, and law. Lesbianism, he points out, will be dealt with in a subsequent volume.

Robert Mills, in “Male-Male Love and Sex in the Middle Ages, 1000-1500,” attempts to clarify the medieval line between love and sex. For example, when we read accounts of Richard Lionheart’s involvement with the King of France, we assume he was gay, but did the future King of England see himself that way? And how about his contemporary audience? “If gay identity is an entity that can be subjected to historical enquiry, what are the contours of that history, how far back does it extend and at what point does its appropriation by modern scholars spill over into anachronistic modes of identification?” (2-3). Mills offers a constructionist and essentialist com-

promise: “the history of sexuality is best interpreted as a series of competing, if partially overlapping, models—all of which have contributed, in some measure, to current ideas about gay identity through a process of accretion and historical overlay” (5). Mills looks at sodomy (an elusive concept, often appropriated morally and politically, not always synonymous with anal sex and effeminacy), homosocial bonds of brotherhood, age-differentiated relationships, cross-dressing, and passivity. He also surveys some of the perennial favorites in “gay” literature: William Rufus, Edward II, Richard II, the Albigensians, and the Knights Templar. He concludes with everyday experiences of same-sex love and arrives at “a queerer, more unruly understanding of sex and love in the medieval past” (43).

Randolph Trumbach, in “Renaissance Sodomy, 1500-1700,” argues that most Renaissance adult males were bisexual, loving both adolescent boys and their own wives, with four roles available to a male attracted to other males: adult penetrating male, passive/penetrated boy, passive married adult, and transvestite prostitute. At the same time, there were two competing moralities: sex as practiced exclusively in marriage for procreation only and sex as an assertion of phallic power. In fascinating detail, Trumbach turns to sodomy in monasteries, at court (especially King James), between masters and servants (notably in the Earl of Castlehaven’s household), in the village, on the London stage, and in Restoration London society. Trumbach authoritatively contends: “There were no modern homosexuals to be found among them” (75).

The next chapter, also by Trumbach, “Modern Sodomy: The Origins of Homosexuality, 1700-1800,” chronicles a watershed: the homosexual was now deviant, despised for his effeminacy, living in a subculture, thought to be exclusively attracted to males, and associated with dubious professions such as hairdresser or mercer. Now these are grand claims (and contra Foucault) with sweeping statistical numbers about how much of what percentage may have been attracted to another percentage. But Trumbach provides no further explanation, only a nod to some of the other major changes of the period: the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and a modern public-credit economy. Trumbach then pays special attention to the molly house, where gay men congregated for sex, but where they also enacted various rituals, such as mock birthings and marriage vows; to same-sex behavior outside the London subculture, such as on ships; and to contacts between sodomites and non-sodomites, which often led to blackmail.

H. G. Cocks, in “Secrets, Crimes and Diseases, 1800-1914,” analyzes a period that is so well known that it suffers from a cliché: all Victorian homosexuals were like Oscar Wilde. It is true that a lot of gay men were

arrested, yet when one looks at the erotic vocabulary—e.g. “unnatural” “abominable,” “unspeakable”—one already sees a number of discourses at work. When considering drag, Cocks asks:

There were groups of men who adopted feminine habits and deportment as a sign of their desire. However, the question remains whether this was how they were universally understood. And if it was the case that sodomy was merely the preserve of a particular group, how could it be assumed that anyone might succumb to its charms simply by hearing of its existence? Moreover, was the ‘modern homosexual’ only one type, only one way of being to which all those who felt same-sex conformed? (120)

Based on a famous trial of Frederick Park (“Fanny”) and Ernest Boulton (“Stella”), two cross-dressers with a large following who were acquitted of sodomy, Cocks presents evidence that by the 1870s, the connection between transvestism/effeminacy and homosexuality was not yet widespread. Only in the 1890s was gender bending labeled as sexual preference. Cocks ends with a succinct survey of various gay scandals (including that of Wilde) and sexology, all of which contributed to the formation of the homosexual as radically different.

Matt Cook, in “Queer Conflicts: Love, Sex and War, 1914-1967,” begins with how the stereotype of sodomy as a foreign/unpatriotic vice was exploited during the Great War, while the trenches provided a homosocial setting. World War II led to a general breakdown of conservative inhibitions, but homosexuality also came to be perceived in psychoanalytical terms. Cook chronicles a vibrant queer subculture, mostly in London but also around the UK; decodes gay signs used to make contact and foster a feeling of belonging (“Wilde” or “Dorian Gray” were favorites, or camel coats, Liberty silk ties, and green outfits); discusses all-important class divisions; attempts to reconstruct committed relationships; and ends with the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, which decriminalized private homosexual acts between consenting adults over the age of twenty-one in England and Wales.

Cook, in “From Gay Reform to Gaydar, 1967-2006,” takes into account manifestations of gay pride by the Gay Liberation Front but also increasing resistance to (homo)sexual permissiveness (especially during the Thatcher era). The legal situation improved for gay men in Scotland in 1980 and two years later in Northern Ireland; yet in a police raid on Gay’s The Word bookstore in 1985, works by Wilde, Tennessee Williams, Allan Ginsburg, Jean Genet, and Jean-Paul Sartre were cited as evidence of immorality! The fabulous disco nights of the Seventies gave way to the

disenchantment of AIDS, which was initially met with ignorance and denial but then found fitting champions in Princess Diana, director Derek Jarman, the Terrence Higgins Trust (named after one of the first people to die from HIV-related diseases in the UK), and ACT UP. The Internet became another cultural turning point. Cook ends the chapter cautiously optimistic, lamenting generational misunderstandings and more subtle yet wide-spread homophobia.

The book contains copious notes, plus suggestions for further reading arranged by period. There are also a large number of supportive illustrations in black and white. (A couple of mistakes: Havelock Ellis was not Australian [135] and *Gay News* was first published in 1972, not 1974 [182]). This is an eminently readable history, theoretically informed yet void of offensive jargon.

**Kenneth Borris and George Rousseau, eds. *The Sciences of Homosexuality in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).**

Reviewed by Michael A. Ryan, Purdue University

In the introduction to this collection of essays, Kenneth Borris notes that the study of the history of same-sex desire and actions in medieval and early modern Europe has been dominated by the disciplines of theology and law. It is true that the particular sources on which those studies focus—theological proscriptions against same-sex erotic behavior and the punishments meted out to those accused of transgressing both canon and civil law—readily lend themselves to analysis of the contours of premodern ideas about same-sex desire and deeds. The sciences, unfortunately, have received short shrift within this scholarly discourse. This is a profound shame, since “the sciences, though influenced by those [legal and theological] views, nonetheless provided alternate modes of thought, inquiry, and explanation that promoted curiosity about the causes, purposes, analysis, and classification of natural phenomena and any apparent anomalies” (6). Moreover, Borris argues that despite the desire of scholars to rectify this situation, they have fallen into the same traps they purportedly sought to avoid. One such example is Arnold I. Davidson and his 2001 publication, *Emergence of Sexuality*. Although Davidson wishes to show the role the sciences played in understanding the history of homosexuality, he still falls back on the definition of homosexuality as created through the legal and theological sources that did not utilize a scientific method of investigation. In Borris’s estimation, Davidson thus perpetuates the “acts paradigm” that uncritically views the emergence of the term homosexuality in the nineteenth century, as opposed to embracing earlier

understandings of same-sex acts as sodomy. This “acts paradigm” thus eschews fundamentally other reckonings and definitions, especially scientific ones, of homosexuality. With the publication of this present volume, the co-editors, Borris and George Rousseau, seek to fill this scholarly lacuna.

Borris and Rousseau divide the essays into three parts. Part one, “Medicine,” focuses on the premodern medical community’s definitions and investigations of homosexuality. Derek Neal studies Jacques Despars’s commentary on Avicenna’s *Canon of Medicine*. A fifteenth-century Parisian physician, Despars relies upon the “assumed common experience of male author and male reader” (44) to simultaneously classify and condemn same-sex activities. Faith Wallis provides a translation of the commentary from the fourteenth-century Genoese physician, Giulio Guastavini, of the important pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* 4.26, which discusses why some men adopted the passive role in sex, whereas others preferred the active role. Guastavini, like Despars, thickly painted his commentary with a moral brush by addressing the matter of free will, “and hence full moral responsibility” (57), for those who would engage in homosexual activities. George Rousseau analyzes the *Quaestiones medico-legales*, compiled in the 1620s by Paolo Zacchia. Rousseau especially focuses on Zacchia’s discussions surrounding the discernment of *stuprum*, sodomitical anal penetration, which was obtained by physically inspecting the anuses and penises of those accused of the deed, thus demonstrating the importance of Zacchia within the realm of early modern forensic theory. Cristian Berco’s elegantly written analysis of Juan Calvo’s 1580 piece, *Tratado del morbo gálico*, a medical work that focused on the emergence and spread of syphilis, demonstrates that Calvo strategically avoided the issue of same-sex transmission of the ailment, in light of “a local social crisis manifested in the widespread prosecution of sodomy” (93). This strategic silence appears also in the early modern English accounts of transmission of the pox, which doctors kept hidden, lest they lose their professional reputations and clientele, and on which Kevin Siena focuses in the final essay of this first part of the book.

The second part, “Divinatory, Speculative and Other Sciences” collates studies that focus on the occult disciplines of astrology, physiognomics, chiromancy, and alchemy, since the medieval and early modern boundaries that separated those fields of study from medicine were more permeable than today. As such, these disciplines had much to offer regarding identifying and policing those who engaged in same-sex behavior. Kenneth Borris turns to the reliance of early modern physicians, such as Bartolommeo della Rocca, also known as Cocles, upon physiognomics and chiromancy to ascertain the

physiological characteristics that identified potential pederasts. Cocles's sixteenth-century *Anastasis*, which focused on these issues, was popular and influential enough among readers to be glossed, edited, and condemned by the Dominican monk Patricio Tricasso. P. G. Maxwell-Stuart studies how some early modern reckonings contended that astrological texts demonstrated that the stars could determine, but not incline, certain individuals toward sodomitical activities. One of the most (in)famous early modern astrologers, the sixteenth-century Girolamo Cardano, is the subject of H. Darrel Rutkin's study, as the Italian humanist engaged in the tendentious practice of casting unauthorized horoscopes for contemporary celebrities as he also claimed that celestial bodies determined their sexual predilections. This was a potentially dangerous practice, as Cardano focused on constructing the genitures of the renowned humanist, poet, and courtier, Francesco Filefo, as well as an unnamed "effeminate," and Cardano eventually found himself on trial for heresy for casting other horoscopes. Cardano himself was no stranger either to same-sex activities or accusations and, as Guido Giglioli demonstrates, the figure of the young male musician was a fraught one for Cardano, as he held for him a simultaneous erotic fascination and physical repulsion. Alison Kavey completes the second part of the book focusing on the occult sciences with her analysis of the hermaphroditic alchemical figure of mercury, which could fluidly change its sex and couple with other male or female elements in order to generate the philosopher's stone.

"Science and Sapphisms" is the third and final section to the book. The theme of hermaphrodites, and the intrigue they generated in early modern society, is the focus of Winfried Schleiner's brief article. As Schleiner shows, early modern physicians seemed to be unable to wrap their heads around the premise of female same-sex relations and tended to contextualize them within the categories of hermaphroditism, as seen in Giles Jacob's *De Hermaphroditis*, published in England in 1718. With the final essay in the book, Harriette Andreadis argues that potential future avenues for research in understanding the contours of premodern same-sex desire have been generated through recent breakthroughs within the field of neuroscience. Neuroplasticity research has demonstrated that sexual pleasure and stimulation do not need to be genital-centered in order to elicit orgasm. Thus, in investigating the history and depictions of premodern same-sex eroticism, one must regard "non-genital expressions of desire," such as Shakespeare's localization of the palms, as erogenous zones.

The collection of essays is superb overall, and Borris and Rousseau have woven together the disparate themes of

the essays flawlessly and fluidly. Scholars of medieval and early modern European history and literature, gender and sexuality, and science and magic will find Borris and Rousseau's collection to be a most valuable contribution to the scholarship within each of these fields. The contributors to this volume demonstrate that the scientific reckonings, definitions, and analyses of same-sex desire in premodern Europe laid the foundation for the understandings, issues, and debates that we currently discuss in the twenty-first century.

**E. Patrick Johnson, *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).**

Reviewed by Tristan Cabello, Northwestern University

In the introduction to his groundbreaking work, *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South*, E. Patrick Johnson explains that the American South is "a land of contradiction." As relics of the most violent periods in the history of the United States, the states of the former Confederacy have come to symbolize slavery, racism, and lynching in contemporary American culture. At the same time, however, the South is known for its warm hospitality, kindness, good manners, and beautiful landscapes. Immersed in this atmosphere of racial segregation, religious fundamentalism, magnolia perfume, and the sweetness of the local dialect, *Sweet Tea* records the history of African-American gay men in the South. Johnson's work demonstrates that these men, members of a persecuted group within an already oppressed minority, live ordinary lives, discretely and quietly integrated into the culture of their surroundings.

E. Patrick Johnson is a professor of Performance Studies and African American Studies at Northwestern University, and himself a native of Hickory, North Carolina. By emphasizing the importance of Southern culture and the black community in the lives of these men, Johnson demonstrates that African American gay men of the South are an integral part of a culture that at first seems hostile toward them. Seventy-two interviews form the basis for the study.

The book's title, *Sweet Tea*, perfectly expresses the tensions at work in Johnson's research. "Sweet tea" is the cool and sugary drink enjoyed by Southerners on sunny afternoons. It is also a Southern slang expression, meaning "gossip" or "rumors" (as in "pouring tea," or "spilling the tea"). Adding to this complexity, the term "tea" is also a code word for "gay" among Southern blacks. In both its literal and figurative sense, the title serves as a commentary on a series of touching narrations, halfway between a confession and a secret, between concealing and sharing.

In his work, Johnson deconstructs stereotypes. Some of his narrators are former professional football players, family men, or career members of the military. Many of his informants, however, do work in fashion, theater, or music, and fulfill certain clichés. Their profiles are diverse: Harold and Harold, an interracial couple who have been together for forty years; Countess Vivian, a former soldier in the Second World War reborn in the professional female impersonator circuit in New Orleans; Chaz, a young transsexual who lives as a woman six days a week, but wears a man's suit to church on Sunday; and Lady Chablis of Savannah, Georgia's most famous drag queen. Johnson gives us a glimpse into the life of gay men attending black churches, as well as the life of cross-dressing students at black colleges; all the while, he shows us that the African American community in the South has often adopted a "don't ask, don't tell" policy toward homosexuality. Though this consensual silence has often been beneficial, it has also had deadly consequences, particularly when it comes to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the South.

*Sweet Tea's* first chapter focuses on the narrators' childhoods and adolescences. Racism is a fact of life for all of Johnson's narrators in the ultra-segregated environment of Southern cities. Johnson depicts the lives of young gay men who study at mainly black high schools, as well as those who studied at integrated schools. Surprisingly, most of the narrators state that they never felt "lonely," and most of them recall having one or two friends who acted "like them." Flamboyant and visible gay men were an inspiration to others. The acceptance of gays by their family units, their churches, and by their schoolmates deconstructs the widely spread myth that the African American community is more homophobic than the white community. The second chapter attempts to deconstruct the concept of the "closet" so ubiquitous in contemporary scholarly literature. Johnson illustrates that the "closet," as well as the concept of "coming out," are often not recognized in the South and asserts these concepts often fail to provide compelling frameworks of analysis for the study of these communities. In Southern African American communities, the private, the intimate, or the "sexual" are often not displayed in public. Many of the subjects reject the terms "gay" or "queer," which they often associate with the white homosexual community. The third chapter analyzes religion's role in the men's lives. From their first steps into church choirs to the decision to confess their homosexuality to their pastors, Johnson demonstrates how the narrators have navigated the contradictory attitude toward homosexuality within the black church. In black churches that oppose gay marriage but tolerate homosexual members, the pastors engage in a sort

of doublespeak, defining homosexuality as a sin, all the while utilizing gay members for their talent.

The fourth chapter deals with sexuality, illustrating what an integral part of public life it is. The men are asked if they "get down," which is a euphemism for homosexuality. Homosexual activity was open, visible, and at times in the most unexpected of places, including dormitories at black universities, locker rooms for the most popular football teams, and on military bases. In the fifth chapter, the reader receives a glimpse into the lives of people who cross gender lines, such as transgender or transsexual individuals. Chaz/Chastity lives openly, in the light of day. As a young transsexual, he opened his own hair and makeup salon in a rural Southern town where the majority of his customers are women who accept the fact that their hair stylist is "who *she* is." Chapter six deals with love, death, and emotional relationships. Johnson records the stories of two men who have lived together for decades. Harold and Harold have been together for forty years: the racial conflicts in American history unfold throughout their personal history. One of them is black, the other white. The interracial character of their relationship rather than their homosexuality was often what disturbed their family and friends. Chapter seven compares the stories of the two oldest and the two youngest participants in the study, bringing their similarities to light. We see that few things separate them, as they are affected in the same way by poverty, racism, and the AIDS epidemic.

This work is so riveting that the reader would like for Johnson to delve deeper still. *Sweet Tea* is comprised of first hand accounts and the analysis is therefore at times lacking. The reader immerses him- or herself in the testimonies, without always picking up on Johnson's analytical contributions. If, as the author states, the goal of his book is to provide a forum for historically lost voices and a foundation on which future academic analyses can be built, some more historical, geographical, and cultural clarifications would have been beneficial. Studies on gender might have also opened the door to interesting analyses, and lesbians are absent from the study. Finally, the thematic organization of the book does not facilitate its reading and sometimes even creates confusion for the reader who must remember recurrent narrators and their previous appearances in the book.

These shortcomings are slight in relation to the massive achievements produced by this book. The research that Johnson has undertaken is remarkable and compelling. Giving a voice to these men who are so often neglected in academic literature is a significant contribution to the field.

# Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Membership Form for New Members and Renewals

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To check, look at the mailing label on your newsletter. Across from your name is a number or the letter "L." The number indicates the last year you paid. The "L" indicates Life Member status. If you are not paid up, please renew your membership now. We try to continue to send the newsletter to those who are behind in paying, but this puts a strain on finances. If you do not think the number on your newsletter accurately reflects your last dues payment, or if you don't have the newsletter but still want to check on this, please contact the Committee on LGBT History Secretary, Charles Upchurch, at [cupchurch@fsu.edu](mailto:cupchurch@fsu.edu).

**Become a fan of the Committee on LGBT History on Facebook!** This Facebook page exists primarily to allow members to connect with one another independently, and to ensure that we do not lose touch with members as addresses and university email accounts change. Search for "Committee on LGBT History" on Facebook to find the page.

**Donations and dues support Committee on LGBT History activities at the AHA annual meeting and other conferences, our prizes, our newsletter, and our other projects. Mail membership forms, dues, and donations to:**

**Ian Lekus,  
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 Barker Center, 12 Quincy St.  
 Cambridge, MA 02138 USA**



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# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR 2010 CLGBTH PRIZES

## Call for Submissions: 2010 Audre Lorde and Gregory Sprague Prizes

The Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History, an affiliate society of the American Historical Association, will award the Audre Lorde and Gregory Sprague Prizes in 2010:

The **Audre Lorde Prize** for an outstanding article on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, and/or queer history published in English.

The **Gregory Sprague Prize** for an outstanding paper or chapter on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, and/or queer history completed in English by a graduate student (the Sprague Prize is underwritten by the Gerber/Hart Library, Chicago, Ill.).

Papers and chapters written and articles published in 2008 or 2009 are eligible. Materials may be submitted by students, faculty, authors, readers, or publishers. Self-nominations are encouraged. Published articles by graduate students may be submitted for both the Lorde and Sprague Prizes. Please label whether the submission is for the Sprague Prize, the Lorde Prize, or both.

Please send one *print* copy of your submission to *each* of the three Prize Committee members listed at the bottom of the page.

## Call for Submissions: 2010 Allan Bérubé Prize

The Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History, an affiliate society of the American Historical Association, has established the **Allan Bérubé Prize**, to recognize outstanding work in public or community-based lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer history. While books or essays written for a broad audience are eligible for consideration, we are looking in particular to recognize other types of historical work, including - but not limited to - websites, blogs, podcasts, and other online media; documentary film and video; archival and oral history projects; museum and other curated public exhibitions and installations; walking tours; radio programming; PowerPoint presentations; and other organizational/program development efforts whose primary audiences are not academic specialists. Scholarly publications that politically intervene in the relationship between academic and public/community-based history may also be considered. While institutionally affiliated scholars may apply based on public or community-oriented projects, individuals with a history of independent or community-based work will be given priority and are especially encouraged to apply.

The **2010 Bérubé Prize**, which is underwritten by the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco, will recognize excellence in work completed in the previous two calendar years (2008 and 2009). Projects by individuals, groups, community organizations, or other organizations may be nominated. Individuals or organizational entities responsible for the project should nominate themselves.

Nominations and supporting materials should specifically address three criteria:

- (1) the creativity and/or innovativeness of the approach;
- (2) the quality of historical research and interpretation resulting from the use of material culture, oral history, or any other type of historical evidence; and,
- (3) the social, cultural, civic, and/or intellectual impact of the project.

## Procedures and Submission Requirements

1. Nominations should be submitted in the form of a project abstract (not to exceed 250 words) and a written narrative (not to exceed 1,500 words). The narrative should clearly address the three criteria, and, if applicable, identify the project's primary and secondary audience.
2. Nominations for projects such as DVDs, videos, CDs, etc. should include copies of the production, submitted with the written narrative and other materials. Other types of nominated projects should include documentation appropriate to the form of historical work involved, e.g., exhibition guides/catalogs, walking tour maps, and photographs of installations. For online projects, the submitted materials should clearly identify the URLs for committee members to read/listen to the historical materials.
3. Nominations should include pertinent supporting documents, such as a copy of the nominee's resume or curriculum vitae if available. If the nominee is an organization or institution, information on its governance, mission, and size should also be provided. Formal reviews from newspapers, magazines, professional journals, or other evidence of public feedback is encouraged but not required.
4. A total of three copies of all submission materials are required. Send one set of application materials to each of the three Prize Committee members.

## Prize Committee

Marc Stein (Prize Committee Chair)  
York University  
Founders College 234  
4700 Keele Street  
Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3, CANADA

*[Please note that mail from the United States to Canada requires international postage]*

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Campus Box 116  
University of Northern Colorado  
Greeley, CO 80639

Ellen Zitani  
24-21 29th Street, 1R  
Astoria, NY 11102

## Submissions must be postmarked by 31 December 2009.

*If you have questions about the prizes, please contact the CLGBTH Chair, Ian Lekus, at [lekus@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:lekus@fas.harvard.edu).*

# **CLGBTH**

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