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**Chair's Column**

Karen C. Krahulik

**CLGH**

Greetings, friends and colleagues. I'd like to begin by thanking you for responding thoughtfully and promptly to the myriad of requests sent out on behalf of the Committee on Lesbian and Gay History. Thanks to your input, we have elected two new governing board members and we have modified the CLGH by-laws to add the position of Treasurer to our official documentation. Please welcome Mark Meinke (Rainbow History Project) and Kevin Murphy (Univ. of Minnesota) to the CLGH Governing Board! It is also my pleasure to announce that Dr. James M. Rosenheim, Professor of History and Director of the Melburn G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research at Texas A & M University, has agreed graciously to serve as Treasurer for the CLGH. James has begun already to track membership and prize funding and he will play an important role as the CLGH brings its AHA dissertation prize endowment to fruition. In addition to placing key people in key places, our collective efforts have answered any number of email and web-based inquiries from a public that wants to learn more about lgbtq history. And, significantly, we have put together an engaging schedule of papers and presentations for the AHA's annual meeting in Atlanta, 2007. [Now is the time to begin planning sessions for AHA 2008! See the call for submissions on page 4.]

Over the past ten months I've observed the CLGH expanding both in membership and in scope and I've been giving thought to how we can best address this expansion. It seems to me that in order for the CLGH to function efficiently, we need to provide ample avenues for membership participation. Soliciting your feedback and input through newsletter and email messages and producing AHA panels and presentations has worked well thus far. Yet I'd like to suggest here that we consider other methods of involvement. In particular, I'd like members to become more involved in the CLGH newsletter by sending in letters to the editor as well as opinion pieces. You hear from me all the time, let's give others a chance to speak their mind. For this newsletter I asked Mark Meinke, one of our recently elected governing board members, to submit a piece about lgbtq public history. I've also included excerpts from an acceptance speech CLGH member Walter L. Williams made when he received the Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award. Let me know soon if you are interested in "presenting" in the spring 2007 newsletter. Similarly, at this year's AHA I'll be asking governing board members to take a more active role in CLGH affairs. And, as you are aware already, I'll be helping Charles Middleton and Martha Vicinus build an endowment so that, as a collective, we can establish the first AHA dissertation prize in the history of sexuality. Your commitment and enthusiasm will be critical as the CLGH moves forward in the new millennium.

**Membership Information**

For your current membership status, please check the address label on this newsletter. Lifetime members are indicated with an "L"; all others have a two-digit year code that indicates the last year for which your membership was paid. Members who have paid the 2006 membership fee will see "06."

As of October 2006, CLGH had 280 members, including 68 lifetime members; the last newsletter was sent to 81 sibling organizations, libraries, research centers, etc. Members who have not paid since 2003 will be removed from the CLGH mailing list in 2006 (unless they renew their membership or write to Karen\_krahulik@brown.edu requesting that the fee be waived).

If your membership is not current, please use the form enclosed to re-join the CLGH. Membership fees are used primarily to support the four prizes awarded by CLGH, finance the copying and mailing costs associated with the newsletter, and pay expenses related to the annual AHA/CLGH meetings.

If you have the names and addresses of potential new CLGH members or the mailing addresses of organizations that you think might like to receive copies of the CLGH newsletter, please send them to Karen\_krahulik@brown.edu. The CLGH is open to anyone who wishes to participate in our organization. To join the CLGH, one need not self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (lgbtq) nor does one's work need to address lgbtq history.

A special note of appreciation and congratulations to our new Lifetime Members: Jonathan E. Coleman, Howard Chiang, Stephanie Gilmore, Claire B. Potter, Sharon Marcus and Lynn Sacco.

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## **CLGH**

### **Chair:**

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Kevin P. Murphy, kpmurphy@umn.edu

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## **Call for Nominations to the CLGH Governing Board!**

Nominations are now being accepted for candidates to serve two three-year terms (1 May 2007 to 30 April 2010) as members of the CLGH's Governing Board. Self-nominations are encouraged. If you nominate someone other than yourself, please be certain that your nominee is willing to serve. Send nominations via email to karen\_krahulik@brown.edu. Elections will take place via ballot in the spring 2007. The deadline for nominations is 15 March 2007.

The function of the Governing Board is to further the goals of the CLGH and assist and advise the CLGH chair. Governing Board members are expected to take responsibility for at least one CLGH project each year (including, for example, organizing a session for the annual convention, serving on the prize committee, writing a book review for the newsletter, working on maintaining and increasing CLGH's membership, improving the CLGH website, etc.).

Our current board members are: Nan Alamilla Boyd and James Green (2004-2007); Lisa Hazirjian and Horacio Roque Ramírez (2005-2008); and Mark Meinke and Kevin Murphy (2006-2009).

## **LAST CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: CLGH 2007 Prize Competition**

The Committee on Lesbian and Gay History will award two prizes in 2007:

The John Boswell Prize for an outstanding book on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, and/or queer history published in English.

The Joan Nestle Undergraduate Prize for an outstanding paper on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, and/or queer history completed in English by an undergraduate student

Papers and books published in 2005 or 2006 are eligible. Materials may be submitted by students, faculty, authors, readers, or publishers. Self-nominations are encouraged.

Send one copy to each of the three members of the Prize Committee by 30 December 2006.

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## **AHA, 4-7 January, 2007, Atlanta Previews**

### **Panels and Roundtables**

*Session Title: Twentieth-Century Sexualities: A Roundtable on Transnational Identities*

Session #21: Thursday, January 4: 3:00-5:00pm

Marriott, International Ballroom Meeting Room 8

Format: Roundtable

Chair: **Leila Rupp**, University of California, Santa Barbara

Panelists:

**Phil Tiemeyer**, U. Texas at Austin—Illicit Exports: Male Flight Attendants as Globalizers of a Western Gay Identity

**John Howard**, King's College, Univ. of London—A Selective History of East-West Scholarship Funds

**Horacio Roque Ramírez**, Univ. of California Santa Barbara—The Translocal Queer Tropics: Latino Cross-Dressing and Cultural Space in Late 1960s San Francisco

**Ian Lekus**, Univ. Of Georgia-- International Male: Race, Revolution and Homophobia in the U.S. New Left

**Karen Krahulik**, Brown Univ.—Queer Peace and the Middle East

*Session Title: Twentieth-Century Sexualities, a Global Perspective: Brazil, Mexico, Russia*

Session # 51: Friday, January 5: 9:30-11:30am

Westin, Vinings 1

Format: Panel

Chair: **Karen Krahulik**, Brown University

Panelists:

**Jocelyn Olcott**, Duke University—You Only Talk about Lesbians and Prostitutes: The Sexual Politics of Transnational Feminism at the 1975 United Nations International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City

**James N. Green**, Brown University—Homoeroticism and Homophobia in the Brazilian Revolutionary Left in the 1960s and 70s.

**Anna Krylova**, Duke University—Women in Combat: A Stalinist Route to Non-normative Heterosexuality, 1930s-40s

Comment: **Judith R. Walkowitz**, Johns Hopkins University

*Session Title: State of the Field Roundtable: Towards a Global History of Sexuality*

Session # 79 Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2:30-4:30

Grand Salon B

Format: Roundtable

Moderator/Chair: **Margot Canaday**, Princeton University

Panelists:

Europe – **Dagmar Herzog**, City University of New York

Asia – **Tamara Loos**, Cornell University

Middle East – **Afsaneh Najmabadi**, Harvard University

United States – **Joanne Meyerowitz**, Yale University

Africa – **Marc Epprecht**, Queens University

Latin America – **Pete Sigal**, Duke University

*Session Title: Historicizing Lesbian Identities: Post-War U.S. Perspectives*  
Session # 127: Saturday, January 6, 11:30-1:30pm  
Hilton, Grand Salon B.

Chair/Comment: **Leigh-Anne Francis**, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Panel:

**Marcia M. Gallo**, Lehman College, City University of New York  
**Greta Rensenbrink**, Middle Tennessee State University  
**Alex Warner**, Rutgers University-New Brunswick  
**Alex Urquhart**, University of Minnesota

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## AHA 2007 Atlanta: CLGH Events and Receptions

**Interested in assisting with the CLGH Table?** Write to Karen\_krahulik@brown.edu and let her know what time(s) you have available.

Visit the CLGH Table to get more information on the following events:

### **Friday, January 5**

12:00-2:00: CLGH Business Meeting, BYOL--please join us!  
6:30pm: Local LGBTQ History/Cemetery Tour—drinks/dinner to follow

### **Saturday, January 6**

5:30-7:30pm: LGBTQ History Virtual Tour and CLGH Reception to be held at the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American Culture and History, 101 Auburn Avenue. Walking directions at CLGH table or call 404-730-4001, ext. 100 or 404-229-7030

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## **Call for Submissions, AHA Annual Meeting, 3-6 January 2008, Washington, D.C.**

The CLGH will be organizing lgbtq history sessions for the AHA convention in Washington, D.C., 3-6 January 2008. The AHA deadline is 15 February 2007; please contact Karen\_krahulik@brown.edu if you are interested in presenting a paper, submitting a proposal, chairing a session, or commenting on papers.

From the AHA's *Perspectives* online: "The theme for the 2008 Annual Meeting is 'Uneven Developments.' We will particularly welcome sessions that break out of our customary circles of scholarly specialization, by crossing traditional chronological, geographic, and topical boundaries in their depiction of "uneven developments." We would like to reiterate, however, that proposals need not be related to the theme to receive serious consideration.

We welcome proposals that exploit the new flexibility in presentation formats to design sessions that reflect the meeting theme, particularly the call to rethink narrativity, disciplinarity, and global historical processes. At the same time, the program committee would like to encourage session organizers to be genuinely creative in their use of the new formats. In particular, we urge those organizing roundtables to make sure that the panels are interactive. The roundtable should provide short presentations that are perspectives on the same topic or issue, followed by extensive conversation with the audience. Proposals must be submitted by midnight, Pacific Standard Time, on February 15, 2007." Please consult the Annual Meeting Guidelines at: <http://www.historians.org/annual/2006/guidelines.htm>

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## MEMBER'S ESSAY

Queer History: ... toxic substance or legitimate civil rights struggle?

By Mark Meinke, Rainbow History Project

Four years ago, Richard Goldstein's *New York Times* article, "Gay History Is Still in the Closet" (October 30, 2002), addressed the invisibility of queer history in the public eye and in the classroom. Goldstein noted, "The silence about gay history persists because teaching this subject raises anxieties about promoting homosexuality."

Little has changed. Our history still attracts resistance and opprobrium. At the federal level there continues to be unrelenting hostility to acknowledging and representing the queer civil rights struggle. Our history is a political issue publicly and in the classroom.

Attempts to include queer history as an elective in the Californian and British Columbian curricula this summer met concerted resistance from the governor in California and from parents and the Catholic hierarchy in British Columbia. In September, Philadelphia's school system experienced a firestorm of hostility over the designation of October as gay history month in the school system's calendar.

The repression of queer history affects all who work in the field, whether historians, archivists, librarians, or museum staff. The consequences are enormous for us politically and professionally. In 2001, the National Park Service's (NPS) National Historic Landmarks Division prepared a study, in collaboration with the Organization of American Historians, to lay out a framework for preserving sites of the nation's civil rights struggles. The study identified categories of sites for historic preservation: women's, Native American, Latino, gay and lesbian, and Asian American. The final report recommended all of these struggles, except gay and lesbian, for elaboration and thematic narratives. The "50 year rule" at NPS and in other organizations also handicaps the promotion and dissemination of the queer civil rights struggle.

Redressing the suppression of queer history requires joint efforts from those with historical insight and expertise, marketing skill, and political savvy. Across the US, community-based archival and historical groups increasingly use web-based exhibits, documentary collections, and public exhibits to make queer history accessible to our community and to the wider national community. The current revival of gay history month, sponsored in part by marketing and political organizations, provides new opportunities for exposing the public to our stories and struggles.

Historians should be at the center of these processes. When those without the depth of knowledge present our history, inaccuracies and distortions are inevitable. A case in point is Equality Forum's 2005 celebration of gay activism in Philadelphia which commemorated the 1965 July Fourth Reminder protest in Philadelphia as the first picketing event (which it wasn't) and as emblematic of forty years of gay activism (ignoring the preceding years of homophile activism).

Historians, and CLGH, can and should play an important role in getting the details, nuances, and personalities of our history into the public eye and on the Internet. As Fordham University's queer history site (dating from 1997) declares in its title, we are a "people with a history." ([www.fordham.edu/halsall/pwh/](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/pwh/)).

School systems, the custodians of America's history, and the wider public must acknowledge our struggle. Knowledge of queer history and our struggles makes us real, and makes it harder to ignore us.

### CLGH WEBMASTER NEEDED--ASAP!

Are you website savvy? Looking for an important new project? Due to complications with its current host domain, the CLGH website is looking for a new home and a new master (or mistress). Write to [Karen\\_krahulik@brown.edu](mailto:Karen_krahulik@brown.edu) if you are interested.



## MEMBER'S RECOGNITION

Morehouse College and the Gandhi Institute of Reconciliation sponsored a reception on Friday March 24, 2006 at the University of Southern California to mark the end of the exhibition "Gandhi, King, Ikeda: A Legacy of Building Peace." Before a crowd of nearly 150 people, Dr. Lawrence Carter, Dean and Professor of Religion at Morehouse College, presented, on behalf of the Gandhi Institute of Reconciliation, the "Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award" to University of Southern California Professor, Walter L. Williams. This award was conferred for: "distinguished commitment and leadership promoting diversity and human rights, especially in pioneering scholarship and for extraordinary efforts to ensure that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, notably on the American college campus, enjoy equality and rights guaranteed to all in our nation. You have wonderfully embodied the noble virtues of the individuals for which this award was named. This award emphasizes the positive difference that one person can make in promoting peace and human rights through non-violent action."

The following are excerpts of Walter L. Williams' acceptance paper and speech:

Tonight, I feel deep humility and gratitude to be recognized by this award. In particular, because Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Daisaku Ikeda have each been such important influences in my life, receiving this award may prompt you to wonder why I, a product of the segregated South, would have gotten involved in the struggles for civil rights and human rights. After all, my ancestors were slaveowners, Confederate soldiers, and prejudiced devotees of the Ku Klux Klan...

Most people know of me as a teacher and a writer. Over the last three decades teaching at five universities, I am proud that I pioneered in teaching courses that focused on the history of race relations, on American Indian history and culture, on overcoming prejudice, on social issues in gender and sexuality, on gay and lesbian studies, and most recently on transgender studies...

What most people do not know is that my motivation to go into academia was my determination to expand human rights. Not the reverse. It has consistently been my human rights activism that laid the basis for the research that I have done, the courses that I have taught, and the subjects that I have chosen to write about.

...When people tell me today that what I am doing is brave, that my speaking and writing is brave, I just shake my head and say, no, this is not bravery. What I did in Cincinnati years ago, maybe that was a little brave. What I did in the civil rights protests of the 1960s, maybe that was a little brave. But it is important to put into perspective that what I have been through was nothing compared to what Gandhi did in standing up to the British Empire, and later to religious fanaticism. It was nothing compared to what King did in standing up to the segregation system, and later the war machine. And both of them paid for their convictions with their lives.

I first read one of [Daisaku Ikeda's] books exactly twenty years ago, and he has had a profound impact on my life. His commitment to human rights is longstanding, and unwavering. I remember so well how he stressed equality for homosexuals back in the 1970s, before it became popular. He is always quoting the great gay poet Walt Whitman as one of his major influences on his life. Let me give you just a few short quotes, taken from his book "Faith into Action", that may show you why he has been such an inspiration particularly to racial minorities, to sexual minorities, and to women. He stresses equality for everyone. Daisaku Ikeda writes:

"Everyone has a right to flower, to reveal his or her full potential as a human being, to fulfill his or her mission in this world. You have this right, and so does everyone else. To scorn and violate people's human rights destroys the natural order of things. We must become people who prize human rights and respect others, above all."

Dr. Ikeda's Buddhist philosophy keeps me inspired, not to be a critic, but to do what I can to help make the world a better place...under Ikeda's influence my focus now is on the positive. I try to minimize the lower life conditions in my life, like greed, anger and stupidity, and try to maximize the higher life conditions by promoting learning, creativity, and compassion. It is only by this process, Ikeda says, that a person can achieve fulfillment in life.

So, in accepting this award, I want you to know why the Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award is so particularly meaningful to me. While Gandhi was killed a few months before I was born, I consider myself fortunate to have met both King and Ikeda. All three of these thinkers have been so influential to my life. Whatever accomplishments I have been able to make in my life, I don't want to ever forget that I am standing on the shoulders of giants. Three of these giants are the people for whom this award is named. I hope I can live up to their ideals.

**Walter L. Williams**

## Reviews

**Nicole G. Albert, *Saphisme et Décadence dans Paris fin de siècle*. Paris: Editions de la Martinieère, 2005.**

*Reviewed by Nancy Erber, LaGuardia College, City University of New York*

Readers and scholars on this side of the Atlantic have long been fascinated by the lives of women artists and writers in fin de siècle Paris. Many books and articles written in English have focused on “women of the Left Bank,” as Shari Benstock’s 1986 study did, or on those who lived and worked primarily on the Right Bank, such as Natalie Clifford Barney, Renee Vivien, and Colette. It’s easy to understand the attraction. Collectively, the women produced reams of material—memoirs, portraits, *romans à clef*, poems, photographs, letters—that chronicled their artistic experiments and also, for many, their lives in a lesbian subculture. Thanks to a peculiarity of the French legal code, homosexual acts were not penalized, as they were in most Western European countries at the turn of the last century, while the Paris police prefect’s prohibition of cross-dressing lent itself to many spicy anecdotes about trouser-wearing women. But lesbianism (or “sapphism”) in French arts and letters went beyond the well-documented lives and work of expatriate women and their French-born friends and lovers. Nicole Albert’s comprehensive study of French popular literature and visual art from 1880 to 1930 is the first to examine the representation of women’s same-sex attraction in this period in detail. Written in graceful prose enlivened by dry humor, the book is scrupulously annotated, vividly illustrated and packed with quotations from the work of self-identified lesbian writers as well as the words of men and women who wrote about lesbians. The sources range from contemporary sexologists (e.g., Ellis, Krafft-Ebing) to the often-pseudonymous authors of sensational novels and treatises (e.g., Dr. Jaf).

Scholars confronting the extraordinary number of images of lesbians produced in this period have to address a central conundrum—is lesbian art or literature that produced by lesbians? Work produced for lesbians? Or is it work about lesbians? Albert’s strategy is to include all of the above: writing by women whose allegiance to lesbian Paris was lifelong, like Vivien and Barney or temporary, like Liane de Pougy, the author of a “sapphic” *romans à clef*, and Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, a poet and novelist. In addition, Albert discusses the work of well-known male artists and writers

(Proust, Baudelaire, Klimt), as well as those whose names are likely to be recognized only by specialists nowadays, such as Catulle Mendès or Jean Lorrain.

Since this book is primarily a work of literary history, it examines in separate chapters the association of lesbians with stock literary characters like Don Juan and Harlequin and with themes of narcissism, sterility, and death. The first third of the book focuses on the literary and artistic “resurrection” of the Greek poet Sappho in contemporary French art and literature; this makes Albert’s detailed study a valuable complement to Joan DeJean’s book *Fictions of Sappho, 1546-1937*. Albert charts the evolution of each theme chronologically, using a wealth of evidence from a variety of sources—popular fiction, caricatures, poetry, and medical literature. She concludes that the popularity of the lesbian as a symbol was an esthetic choice for the Decadents, who adopted it as a way to express the inexpressible and, in a proto-modernist gesture, reject “nature” by celebrating unnatural women. While keeping the focus on the aesthetic choices of the Decadent movement, the study also provides a historical context for the period’s obsession with women-loving women, who were censoriously and often fallaciously connected by male social critics with the feminist and pro-natalism movements of the time (for female emancipation, against procreation).

Albert’s command of the material is impressive, and the extent of her research into primary sources is daunting. Having spent time in some of the same archives, I can only agree that despite the sizzling titles and tantalizing cover illustrations, many of the sapphic-themed pulp novels themselves are “unoriginal but instructive” with predictable plot points and more than a few doses of stomach-turning misogyny.

This book is an important resource for literary and social historians of the period, and unlike many French-language books that are published with a frustratingly minimal scholarly apparatus, *Saphisme et Décadence dans Paris fin de siècle* has an extensive bibliography, detailed endnotes, and several appendices. It provides close readings and textual analyses of representative work and pays consistent attention to the language and provenance of its hundreds of examples. And, for those who’ve been searching for that image of lesbian brides in full wedding- in- white regalia, first published in 1884 to accompany a futuristic short story, you’ll find it on page 175.



**Gavin Butt, *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948-1963*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005.**

*Reviewed by Stefanie Snider, University of Southern California*

Gossip is often dismissed as unimportant hearsay, providing a few moments of boring and/or pleasurable nothingness on the way to other, presumably more serious topics of conversation. Certainly in the fields of history and art history, we maintain gossip as irrelevant unless it leads to something more solid, provable, and historically factual. In art historian Gavin Butt's *Between You and Me: Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948-1963*, gossip – both verbal and visual – is taken as a significant and constitutive factor in the formation of queer relationships and discourses amongst the high (and homosexual) artists of mid-twentieth-century New York.

Commenting on the questionable legitimacy of both queerness and gossip as the terrain of serious scholarship, Butt illustrates the viability of using an experimental method of substantiation to archive and analyze the unreliable subject of sexuality. The “queer disclosures” of his title, then, refers simultaneously to the style and subject matter of the anecdotes he considers. Butt asks: “how might the circulation of gossipy fictions perpetuate a *queer* knowledge of (homo)sexuality [that] ‘perverts’ the very act of disclosing itself” (6)? This question forms the crux of Butt’s argument as he works to show how informal discourses can produce knowledge that both reflects and informs “the historical real” despite (and in the case of queer sexuality, often because of) their lack of dependability.

Contrasting queer male artists of the Pop generation against the hyper-heterosexualized Abstract Expressionists, Butt places his book within a cultural milieu of an increasingly sex-focused America, selecting as his starting date 1948: the year Alfred Kinsey published his unexpected bestseller, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Setting a complex scene amidst the greater circulation of sexual discourse based in part on Kinsey’s study, the homophobic rantings and practices of a Cold War McCarthyite U.S. government, and the burgeoning assimilationist homophile movement, Butt examines a kind of knowledge that was not headlining national news

reports: the ephemeral, easily mutable, and rarely provable gossip between and about art world queers. Provocatively claiming that art gossip at mid-century finds its precedence in Giorgio Vasari’s sixteenth-century *Lives of the Artists*, Butt explores “the consequences of approaching gossip – both as object of study and as form of knowledge – for producing queer understandings” of certain art and artists of the 50s and 60s (4). He takes three major figures in Pop art – Larry Rivers, Andy Warhol, and Jasper Johns – as his case studies. As queers on the cusp of stardom during these two decades, these artists became the subject of formal and informal discussions that connected their public lives, art works, and sexual preferences, providing abundant material for Butt to dissect.

Butt proposes that Rivers’s camp reformulations of history paintings (e.g., Rivers’s take on Emmanuel Leutze’s 1897 *Washington Crossing the Delaware* in his 1953 painting of the same subject) initiate their own kind of visual gossip about their creator, insinuating a fixation on queer male bodies and poetic word/eye-play that was banished by his abstract expressionist contemporaries in a search for an “authentic” postwar masculinity. Rivers made such paintings, Butt asserts, with an eye toward the eroticized fracturing of the male subjects, emphasizing the unfinished figures and all-over painting technique. The restless application of paint, in relation to the paintings’ “patriotic” subjects, produces a camp effect of mixed meanings: humorous, ironic, serious, and pleasurable understandings are enacted simultaneously.

In his chapter on Andy Warhol, Butt argues for an “inning,” or subtle closeting, that occurred just at the moment in which Warhol became successful as a personality and gallery artist. Previous to this point in the early 1960s, Warhol was taken as obviously and effeminately queer – or “swish” – in his body, language, and choice of commercial design career. The gossip that surrounded him was homophobic, even as it was generated by other gay men in the New York art scene. Butt suggests that, starting in 1962 with his first major one-man show, Warhol took hold of the gossip, reforming it as a means of self-publicity. In so doing, Warhol moves from swish fairy to androgynous dandy, modeled on the likes of (pre-trial) Oscar Wilde. Being “closeted” allowed for Warhol to construct his own persona through self-initiated rumor: he no longer relied upon others to define him in relation to his homosexuality, instead preferring to cast himself in a queerly asexual light.

Butt's last chapter, focusing on Jasper Johns and his 1955 *Target with Plaster Casts*, while intriguing, is perhaps the least successful in terms of a queer methodology. Interspersed with cultural and formal analysis of Johns's use of small plaster casts of body parts at the top edge of his target painting are three of Butt's own fictional texts "re-constructing" Alfred Barr's (then director of the Museum of Modern Art), Warhol's, and Johns's reactions to *Target*. All are centered on the green plaster cast featuring a flaccid penis – conjectured to be Johns's, but unprovable as such. This cast provokes uncertain pleasure in each of the men, and here I would be remiss not to cite Butt's obvious enjoyment in examining the work through this key object: he emphasizes the queer symbolism of the penis, taking an edgy, illicit delight in its uncontainable meanings. While admirably situating himself as a subject within his own research and writing, Butt's use of a combination of fictionalized texts, advanced self-consciousness, and flirtatious musings in the end cause this book not so much to conclude as to dissipate. While the methodological point is taken, it is not entirely satisfying.

Easily accessible to art historians and non-scholars alike, *Between You and Me*'s performative interpretations of artistic and sexual identities through biographic remembrances and iconographic interrogations of art objects and gallery installations trouble the stability of verbal and visual evidence, critically examining the nature of what we consider to be useful evidence while expanding the term to include innuendo, rumor, and imprecise visual cues. Butt flirts with impropriety here, taking obvious personal and scholarly pleasure in writing an account of mid-twentieth-century gossip that aggressively queers traditional art historical practice, forcing us to reconsider the ways in which we narrate history.

**Hector Carrillo, *The Night is Young: Sexuality in Mexico in the Time of AIDS*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.**

*Reviewed by Isabel Millán, San Francisco State University*

With a unique perspective of both insider and outsider, Hector Carrillo embarks on an ethnographic journey to México—his place of birth—in search of answers concerning the cultural significance of modern Mexican sexuality. As highlighted by its title, *The Night is Young: Sexuality in Mexico in the Time of AIDS* is

Carrillo's examination of the repercussions of the AIDS epidemic on modern Mexican sexuality after the 1980s. More specifically, this text investigates modern sexuality in Guadalajara, México's second largest city. Based on two years of ethnographic research, Carrillo, critical of the influence HIV prevention has had in México, concludes that modern HIV prevention methods, which emphasize "scientific" and "rational" scripts, do not coincide with current culturally specific notions of sexual identities and behaviors. Carrillo's provocative allegations of HIV prevention in México, and his suggestions for future directions in HIV prevention must not go unnoticed; however, an examination of Carrillo's priorities, as well as the text's limitations, would prove worthwhile in further strengthening his conclusions.

Carrillo divides *The Night is Young* into three sections. Before reaching the core of his analysis on HIV prevention, the first two sections serve to contextualize a general understanding of modern Mexican sexuality before and after the initial AIDS epidemic of the 1980s. Part 1, "Sexual Identities," details the nonlinear categorizations of sexuality within a cultural hybridity of traditional and modern Guadalajara. Carrillo differentiates between (a) "action-based" terminology (e.g., the roles of *activo* and *pasivo*, that is, "active" and "passive," or "the penetrator" and "the penetrated," respectively), (b) sexual identity labels that mark people as either "normal" or "deviant" depending on the correlation between one's gender demeanor (feminine or masculine) and one's biological sex (female or male), and (c) those categories based on "object choice" so that the emphasis is then placed on whom one finds him/herself attracted to. These labels inform identity formations within the modern labels of "homosexual," "bisexual," and "heterosexual." Part 2, "Sexual Socialization," details the ways Guadalajarans are informally taught about sex by their peers and through self-exploration. This complements what individuals learn—or do not learn—from institutions such as religion, the media, and the state. Carrillo also addresses how silence is manipulated within family units to maintain socially accepted sexual scripts, and concludes that individuals maneuver their way between what is inculcated on them, what they expect of sex, and what actually takes place during sex.

AIDS and HIV prevention comprise the latter third of this text. The author begins with a brief history of the spread of AIDS in México, how organizations mobilized to educate the public on AIDS, and how their efforts were

countered by the conservative right, who advocated for abstinence on the basis of Catholicism and its religious rhetoric. On a theoretical level, Carrillo attempts to escape a U.S.-centric HIV prevention model by giving primacy to an evenly balanced hybrid perspective of culture which does not prioritize the “modern” over the “traditional.” In doing so, he hopes his conclusions of modern México will have a direct impact on HIV prevention in the United States. His next step might be translating his text from English to Spanish so that the author’s suggestions could also have an immediate impact on HIV prevention in Spanish-speaking communities, such as those in Guadalajara, México, as well as Spanish-speaking communities in the United States.

Carrillo notes several pre-1980s historical ruptures that inform modern Mexican sexualities prior to the AIDS epidemic. These are the Pre-Columbian/Spanish colonial era, the Porfirian regime (beginning in 1876), the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917), and the Post-Revolution era after the 1920s. Carrillo’s historical premise for this text relies on a limited number of sources—mainly, he engages with Carlos Monsiváis’ work on Mexican sexuality. However, as Carrillo himself says, he was less concerned with outlining a detailed history of Mexican sexuality and more so with providing a historical background that “focuses on the historical processes that explain the logics that individuals use today in making interpretations about sex and sexuality” (15). That said he spends greater effort on the historical details following the AIDS epidemic in México. This includes an engagement with scholarship on the subject matter as well as an analysis of HIV prevention literature, organizational histories, educational programs, and media sources.

*The Night is Young*’s greatest contribution is in paving a new direction for future HIV prevention measures. Current educational efforts in México—which overemphasize linear models of learning where “information leads to awareness and motivation, which in turn lead automatically to safe behavior”—are not enough in the battle against AIDS (282). Carrillo challenges the very premise of modern HIV prevention models by demanding a more holistic approach with cultural specificity at its core. In Guadalajara, this would materialize as a combination of educational information and general awareness of AIDS that prioritizes the local communities’ notions of love and desire, trust, nonverbal communication, and risk assessments. In Carrillo’s notable discussion of condoms, for example, modern HIV prevention models in Guadalajara, as adopted

from the United States, overemphasized the need for condoms without taking into account cultural notions of circumcision—and how this might influence an individual’s willingness to use a condom. A condom would fit differently (e.g., less comfortably because of the excess foreskin) and would have to be applied more attentively on an uncircumcised penis. Because circumcision is less common in México, in order for condom brochures to be effective, they would have to specify their use on an uncircumcised penis as well as those that are circumcised—which seemed to be the norm in the current literature on HIV prevention. Through such examples, Carrillo outlines how individuals grapple with wanting to prevent HIV while also maintaining their desire for sexual pleasure.

Overall, the identity terminology used in this text is reminiscent of earlier works in Lesbian and Gay Studies, and even Human Sexuality. Although used repeatedly throughout *The Night is Young*, the term “homosexual” no longer seems the term of choice for most academics and community members. Despite my opposition to Carrillo’s choice in terminology, a more urgent critique centers on his omission of specific sexual identities. By examining both homosexual and heterosexual identities, he explicitly reaffirms that AIDS affects everyone—regardless of one’s sexuality. Early in the text, however, the author acknowledges his own limitations in adequately addressing lesbianism. Additionally, while he only discusses bisexual men, Carrillo fails to analyze bisexual women. The transgender and intersex communities are also excluded. This is especially crucial given the higher street visibility of working class MTFs in major cities throughout México, especially México City and Guadalajara. Issues of representation can be major challenges in ethnographic research; although not excusable, Carrillo’s omissions reflect his own access, or lack thereof, to specific informants, research participants, and community spaces. At best, Carrillo’s text should serve as inspiration towards future research on HIV prevention and its relationship to working-class transgender, intersex, bisexual, and lesbian communities.

My final critique lies in Carrillo’s gender analysis. While crucial in setting up the context of *machismo* and patriarchy in México, the gender analysis as a whole would have been further enriched had Carrillo utilized the works of feminists who have already theorized on the virgin-whore dichotomy, or what Carrillo labels, the “good” woman/“bad” woman dichotomy, or within the context of gay men, the “normal/deviant” dichotomy.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, while not alluded to in any of its chapter headings,

*The Night is Young* also provides its readership with a noteworthy discussion of abortion which is deserving of additional attention. Carrillo makes an interesting case as to why it has been easier for Mexican society to tolerate homosexuality as opposed to abortion rights for women.

Aside from its drawbacks, *The Night is Young* is a critical contribution to literature in HIV prevention, as it challenges the very premise of what is currently being achieved by practitioners, policymakers, and activists. Following Carrillo's suggestions, HIV prevention must go far beyond general educational campaigns if it is to be successful in areas such as Guadalajara, México. Anyone sincerely invested in HIV prevention, especially amongst marginalized communities in and outside of the United States, could benefit from this text.

<sup>1</sup> See works by Chicana feminists Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Emma Perez, Aida Hurtado, Carla Trujillo, and Catriona Rueda Esquibel for additional critiques of the virgin-whore dichotomy.

**Khaled el-Rouayheb, *Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.**

*Reviewed by Stephen O. Murray, Independent Scholar*

Khaled el-Rouayheb's book reads like the revised Ph.D. thesis (Cambridge University) that it is, with the *de rigueur* opening in which everything that has previously been written on the subject is dismissed, a straw-man is put forward to be torn apart, and a great deal of pedantic detail follows in the main body.

The straw man is a culture-wide category of "homosexuality" that includes exactly what the "modern western scientific" one does. A widespread understanding of "homosexual" in the 21st-century Anglophone world is frequently an unmasculine person born with (unused/ornamental) male genitalia and eager to be sexually penetrated. Many people here and now do not conceive masculine-appearing penetrators as "homosexual," while many masculine-identified gay men reject inclusion in a category that includes pederasts and transgendered, MTF transgendered often reject the label "homosexual," and elite discourse increasingly distinguishes "transgendered" from "homosexual." Perhaps the conceptions of many (most?) people in contemporary Anglophone societies are still "before homosexuality"?

Moreover, in looking at the Middle Eastern "other," at least since the Richard Burton's (1885) "Terminal Essay" to the *Arabian Nights*, a distinction between what is now labeled gender-differentiated "homosexual relations and age-differentiated ones is clear, and—for more than a quarter of a century—comparativists have distinguished homosexual relations not structured by status differences from the two classical types that were already distinguished in ancient Greece (the source of Arab medical conceptions).

In the discourse in Arabic (from within the Ottoman Empire that was not run by Arabs) that el-Rouayheb examines, there was a well-developed notion of a type (*ma'bûn* or *mukhannath*) afflicted by the desire to be penetrated. This pathology—which closely resembled the "modern" (late-19th, early-20th century) medical type "the invert"—was generally believed to be in-born and to usually (but not always) be accompanied by external signs, such as flabbiness, particularly of the posterior (as in *urning* photos in the medical literature of a century ago).

The Ottoman Empire was notorious in European discourse for pederasty. The "homosexual" of the late-19th century European psychiatric discourse, however, did not include pederasts within the same category, and German ephrophiles (of the *Der Eigene* circle) sharply differentiated themselves from the "intermediate sex" advocated for and by Magnus Hirschfeld. By el-Rouayheb's criteria, it would seem that late-19th-century Europe medico-forensic discourse also lacked the unified conception of "homosexuality" that el-Rouayheb argues was lacking in the Arabic discourse of the Ottoman Empire. (Akin to "before homosexuality" discourses, el-Rouayheb does not mention the **most** distinctive of "modern" conceptions of homosexuality: the pairing of male-male with female-female sexual relations).

An elaborate discourse by adult males on the beauty and desirability of young males before their beards grew-in existed. El-Rouayheb does not argue that this discourse was completely severed from desire on the part of the poets, though it deployed a standard set of tropes about a standard set of attributes of males on the verge of adulthood. There is a long tradition of explaining away the blatant eroticism in these writings as aesthetic or as celebrating the beauty of the creations of Allah (thus, being metaphors for divinity), and el-Rouayheb takes a sensibly cautious stance about inferring conduct from poetic exultations without rejecting there having been any connection.

The discussion of aesthetes appreciating boys' bodies is followed by an exhaustive (and exhausting)



working through juridical texts from four schools on *liwat* (anal intercourse) that was regarded by all as a sin (They differed in suspiciousness about gazing (*nazar*) at attractive male youths).

El-Rouayheb explores 16th-to-18th-century Arabic discourses on understandings of what in my view are the two most historically prevalent homosexualities—heterogender (with a masculine and an effeminate partner) and age-structured (with the older seeking “favors” from the beautiful younger one). These discourses were separate (the juridical discourse mostly focused on age-differentiated relationships) but co-occurred in Arabic texts from the period. What is “before homosexuality” for el-Rouayheb is that they were not assembled into a concept embracing both. (As already noted, he does not address the “modern” lumping together of male and female “homosexuality.”) He makes no attempt to look for any development or other kinds of change within the two centuries of his time frame. That is he treats all the texts as if they were simultaneous and from one place (the multiple Arab societies within the far-flung and heterogeneous Ottoman Empire).

El-Rouayheb synthesizes (quoting liberally from) many sources in Arabic (but none that I recall in Turkish, the language of administration of the Ottoman Empire). For a dissertation, the first two chapters read well, and that I got bogged down in the third is probably less the fault of el-Rouayheb’s writing than of my lack of interest in minutia of differences between the four main legal schools.

What is missing from the book is evidence about what people **did** in what El-Rouayheb considers a time “before homosexuality.” I sometimes think that historical research on early modern Europe relies so heavily on forensic archives that it seems to retry accused sodomites (and the occasional *tribade*). El-Rouayheb has not looked at (or for?) archival materials on what courts did in the Arab societies under Turkish rule. He occasionally mentions something aliens observed. I know that the novel was not developed in Arabic during the Ottoman era, yet there were some stories about what people did. The overwhelming reliance on prescriptive (juridical) texts and rarefied (perfumed) ephebophilic verse could have been supplemented.

Michel Foucault was interested in practices, though he also examined prescriptive texts. El-Rouayheb seems to have no interest in what Arabs (or Turks) did with each other or with slaves and infidels. As a survey of several Arabic discourses, his book has much of interest, but it provides practically no discussion of what people did in

the time and place in which the discourses that he analyzes about males seeking to be penetrated and about men “appreciating” the beauty of ephebes were produced.

**E.J. Graff, What is Marriage For? The Strange Social History of Our Most Intimate Institution. Boston: Beacon Press, 2004.**

*Reviewed by David A. Reichard, California State University Monterey Bay*

This re-issue of E.J. Graff’s original 1999 book, with a new forward by Richard Goldstein, is a sort of travel narrative through the history of marriage as a social institution. While not a queer history of marriage per se, the book is informed by the author’s own questioning of the concept of marriage upon the choice she and her partner made to have a ceremony recognizing their relationship. Given recent state high court rulings in New York and Georgia determining that a state legislature can have a “rational basis” to define marriage under state law as limited to one man and one woman, and California’s pending decision on the same issue, a closer look at the very concept of marriage, let alone same-sex marriage, is needed. This book is still timely.

While Graff turns a critical eye to the concept of marriage itself, and does so in some important ways, she nevertheless ends up reclaiming marriage as a potentially progressive institution, citing vast changes in the meaning of marriage throughout Western history as evidence of its possibilities. By the end of the book, Graff concludes that “Western marriage today is a home for the heart; entering, furnishing, and exiting that home is your business alone. Today’s marriage—from whatever angle you look—is justified by the happiness of the pair” (251). Certainly she also concludes that marriage serves a lot of other purposes, but the gist of the conclusion is about belonging. Moreover, the inclusion of a new forward by Richard Goldstein lends more support for this claim. In an attempt to woo critics of marriage within feminist and queer communities to the cause, Goldstein suggests that Graff gives us a chance to re-envision marriage itself into an institution such progressives should defend, “if only for its potential as a radical act” (xv).

Graff turns a journalist’s eye to the topic, producing a complicated roadmap designed to help readers make their way through a vast and shifting historical record—perhaps more satisfying to general readers and students than to

scholars. In sometimes breezy language, Graff provides a generally engaging account that reveals the complexity of the issues at stake and the need for historical perspective to frame them. Punctuated with examples drawn almost exclusively from Western history, Graff organizes her discussion into six main sections as a way to examine marriage's changing meaning, function and symbolic importance, drawing primarily on published secondary sources (many scholarly), not cited in the text but available in a bibliography. These sections—money, sex, babies, kin, order, and heart—in a way answer Graff's main inquiry as to purposes of marriage and hint at how looking at these various purposes historically can help inform contemporary debates.

Take the chapter on kin for example. In one section, Graff elaborates on Christianity's influence on the meaning of marriage. While today many people consider a monogamous relationship as the fundamental grounds for "traditional" marriage, Graff reminds readers that such an idea was a direct challenge to polygamy, which she describes as "one of the most traditional marriage forms: one man, many wives" (169). For Christianity to challenge this concept was, in Graff's estimation, "such an outrageous and radical leveling of society—taking away such key political (let alone personal) power from men in power—that imposing this concept took more strength than the Church had for hundreds upon hundreds of years" (171). In the same chapter, she describes how history is "littered" with critics of marriage, seeking other ways of defining kinship. Loosely describing these as the celibates, the pluralists and the socialists, Graff then ends this chapter drawing parallels with today's critics of same sex marriage within GLBTQ communities, suggesting they have not really considered the "practical purposes" of marriage. As she asserts, in a rather don't-throw-the-baby-out manner, "marriage rules are necessary to bring justice to human commitments," and while in need of improvement, "the fact of marriage and its ever shifting rules seems to be an eternal social necessity." This somewhat ahistorical conclusion aside, Graff finishes the chapter with the claim that such modern day utopians are "arrogant in their desire to impose new social forms on everyone," and she comes down on the side of having choice. For marriage, as she argues, is to "recognize that a given pair has chosen each other as kin. Coupled lesbians and coupled gay men—if they so choose—belong" (190), begging the question whether sex radicals, polyamorous folks, or singles then don't.

While Graff draws widely through time and place for her examples, which may frustrate those looking for a more scholarly treatment of the subject, this book stimulates the kinds of conversations so needed in today's political climate. Perhaps interrogating her premise of "belonging" may be one way to start. Is marriage nothing more than a "burning house" or is it rife with progressive possibilities? I can't help but wonder what James Baldwin would say.

**Jarrod Hayes, Queer Nations: Marginal Sexualities in the Maghreb. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.**

*Reviewed by Stephen J. Stillwell, Jr., Independent Scholar*

First, the Maghreb, for those not familiar with the term, is Arabic for "the land of the setting sun" – i.e., the west. It can mean anything to the west of the Nile, but is more routinely applied to the former French territories of North Africa: Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. It is about these three states that Hayes writes. He examines the French-language literature of the region. The scope of the work includes not only work by natives of the three countries, but of authors from France and other areas when their works are physically set in the Maghreb or among the peoples of the Maghreb. His understanding of and familiarity with the large body of work is impressive. Much of the translation of the novels is his own.

His theme is two-fold: first, the development of the literature itself, and then, his literary analysis of this literature. This analysis interweaves the concepts of conflict literature with that of nation-building literature. It points to the use of gay themes and plots as analogies for the colonizer versus the colonized in the early works and the new post-independence regime versus the still-disenfranchised majority in those works that followed supposed political freedom. His broad sweep also brings in feminist material as well, striking a comparison among the feminist, the anti-colonial, and queer authors and their aims within their literature.

The book consists of thirteen chapters grouped into four parts of varying lengths and intensities. After a fairly lengthy introduction, Hayes turns his attentions in his first section to "Allegories of Reading the Maghreb." Here he discusses literature from France itself on the "oriental sexual vices" and on early ventures into what is today called sexual tourism. The author then moves on to a



detailed discussion of the novel, *Moha le fou*, by Tahar Ben Jelloun. The main character is depicted as a babbling fool and a madman, in other words – one who speaks truth.

The second part, “Sex and Revolution,” begins with the symbolic and literal unveiling of homosexuality. Closet references and explicit depictions of homosexuality, homosexuals, and homosexual acts are reviewed. Hayes draws parallels between the developments of queer identities in this area with the development of national identities there. National identity in the Middle East has been problematic as many of the nations were created by European power politics without concern to ethno-linguistic, cultural, and other boundaries. He spends complete chapters on the works of Mohammed Dib and on Yacine’s work, *Nedjma*, and the Algerian Revolution and the development of that nation’s identity.

His comparisons of dangerous queers to dangerous women lead into the third part, “The Feminist Menace.” Here Hayes focuses on issues of gender, on the feminist re-draft of history, and on cultural institutions such as marriage. Here Leïla Sebbar’s *Shérazade* trilogy brings the section into focus. The root word in Arabic for nationality and for gender is the same. As women are “the second sex,” the liberation of women is dangerous as it not only disturbs the concepts of gender and gender role, but potentially disrupts those of nationhood and nationality as well.

“Allegories of the Queer Nation” completes the book. This section starts with a disturbing chapter on childhood visions of castration. The demise of the masculine identity is reviewed as a lead in to the final argument. Here Hayes writes that “understanding the subversive role of sexual dissidence, marginal sexualities, and gender insubordination in postindependence novels has allowed us to understand how the struggle represented in combat literature was sexual all along” (262).

Hayes does a masterful job throughout. This is not an easy book unless you are well-versed in literary criticism and in the various literary genres the book explores – independence, feminist, queer, and liberation. Occasionally, I recalled a line from Anna Russell on the Ring Cycle about discussions by great experts for the edification of other great experts. But stick to it, and I think that you will receive some insights into this very important region of the world through its emerging literature.

**Mathew Kuefler, ed. The Boswell Thesis: Essays on Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.**

*Reviewed by Michael A. Ryan, Purdue University*

Over twenty-five years ago, the University of Chicago Press published a revolutionary work, John Boswell’s *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century*. Boswell investigated various sources pored over before by other scholars, including scripture, patristic writings, penitentials, literary texts, and conciliar legislation, and he read those documents in a new way to offer a controversial four-point argument. First, the historical development of early Christianity emerged within a Classical tradition of same-sex tolerance. Christian scripture neither reflected hostility to homosexuality, nor were early medieval Christians themselves hostile to homosexuals. Finally, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a period of increasing repression and marginalization of outsiders in medieval Christian society, such as lepers, prostitutes, heretics, and Jews, Christian authors became more antagonistic to homosexuality, a position that they ultimately applied against the earlier, more tolerant Christian tradition. Additionally, Boswell argued that the history of gay people, whom he defined as being “conscious of erotic inclination toward their own gender as a distinguishing characteristic,” was an integral part of the history of the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup> Boswell’s work ignited a debate that still rages and provided a foundational text for the study of the history of sexuality.

A quarter of a century later, the University of Chicago Press revisits Boswell’s contention that early Christianity was not necessarily anti-gay with the publication of this collection of articles, *The Boswell Thesis: Essays on Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*. Edited by Mathew Kuefler, this book reappraises Boswell’s argument and its impact on both scholarship and society. In the first essay, Kuefler defines the “Boswell Thesis” as comprising those four aforementioned major points, in addition to four ancillary positions: the legitimacy of studying the history of homosexuality, the careful consideration of sexual terminology within scholarship, the evolving definition of the terms “nature” and “natural” over the course of the Middle Ages, and the imperfect linking of tolerance of

homoeroticism with urbanism (2-3). Kuefler offers an invaluable resource at the end of his essay, a bibliography of the reviews of *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* that have appeared in the years since the publication of Boswell's work. Soliciting works from scholars in the disciplines of religious studies, history, and classics, Kuefler organizes the remainder of the book into three sections.

Part One, "Impact," regards how Boswell's work has influenced different segments of society, both within and outside of academia. Ralph Hexter, the literary executor of Boswell's estate, offers a personal recollection of both Boswell the scholar and Boswell the person, and the historical climate in which Boswell wrote his magisterial work. Carolyn Dinshaw, in reviewing personal correspondence and news accounts of Boswell's work, focuses on the profound effect the book had for people outside of academia. Bernard Schlager studies the receptivity to Boswell's argument within various Christian communities. Finally, Mark Jordan reflects on Boswell's use of the dual rhetoric as devout Christian and objective scholar in his written works and in his engagement with Christian groups.

The essays in "Debates," Part Two, demonstrate the emergence of various historiographic currents since the emergence of the Boswell Thesis. Amy Richlin studies the changing homoerotic imagery and language evident in the personal correspondence between the second-century rhetorician, Fronto, and his former pupil, the emperor Marcus Aurelius. Dale Martin investigates the interpretations of some Biblical exegetes, notably those of Richard Hays, on Romans 1: 18-32, and shows how modern assumptions concerning sexuality filter into supposedly objective investigations. Ann Matter consults literary, penitential, and juridical sources to evidence sexual and emotional relationships between women during the High Middle Ages. Bruce O'Brien shows how Boswell's argument concerning the alleged homosexuality of the eleventh-century theologian, St. Anselm, piqued the attention of the foremost scholar of Anselm, Richard Southern. Finally, Kuefler rounds out this section with his analysis of the changing discourse of various twelfth-century French sources, including literature, hagiography, and chronicles, to demonstrate how elite representatives from secular and ecclesiastical society used the suspicion of sodomy to breakdown earlier connections of friendship and masculinity among members of the aristocracy.

The final, longest section of the book, "Innovations," shows what new ground scholars have broken since the publication of *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*. Mark Masterson uses the filter of queer theory to compare two early medieval accounts, one a Greek original and one a Latin translation, of the flight to the desert of Paul the Simple and his interaction with the ascetic St Antony, and shows the marked difference in implied homoeroticism between the two texts. Jeffrey Bowman contextualizes a hagiographical account of the life of the tenth-century martyr, Pelagius, in which the youth rejects the sexual advances of the Muslim caliph, within Andalusian culture. Jacqueline Murray deals with the sensitive subject of castration in her analysis of the apprehension and cultural meaning of castration in medieval society. Ruth Karras also uses questions posed by gender studies to compare the histories of accusations of sodomy against the Knights Templar with the absence of those accusations against their contemporary military order, the Teutonic Knights. Christianity, gender identity, corporality, and homoeroticism mingle in Penelope Johnson's study of the life of the thirteenth-century female mystic, Gerardesca of Pisa. The final article, by Catherine Mooney, uses the nexus of masculinity, femininity, and androgyny to chart the changing discourse in various thirteenth sources that depict St Francis of Assisi.

Tragically, Boswell died in his prime and there is a poignant tone to many of the articles. A number of the contributing authors offer personal reflections on their interactions with Boswell and attest to being indebted to him both professionally and personally. As with any collection of essays, some articles are considerably stronger than others are. Nevertheless, as *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* should be essential reading in seminars focusing on the history of sexuality, so should this volume. This collection of articles stands as a testament to the significance of John Boswell's scholarship and activism and the legacy of the Boswell Thesis.

<sup>1</sup> John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 44.

**James McCourt, Queer Street: The Rise and Fall of an American Culture, 1947-1985: Excursions in the Mind of the Life. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004.**

*Reviewed by Matt Johnson, Independent Scholar*

“A sensibility ... is one of the hardest things to talk about.” So Susan Sontag prefaces her 1964 essay “Notes on Camp.”<sup>1</sup> One has to give James McCourt credit forchutzpah if nothing else in attempting a book-length elaboration of more or less the same sensibility to which Sontag devotes a scant twenty pages. Indeed, “the gay sensibility,” an undercurrent which runs through so much literature on gay history and culture, is typically taken as a given by authors and scholars who, even as they painstakingly analyze gay social and political movements, tend to assume that their audience will understand, perhaps identify with, and certainly not dispute the iconicity of Hollywood, Broadway, and operatic divas to multiple generations of (presumptively white and middle-class) American gay men.

Part of the reason sensibilities are not well-suited for scholarly discourse is that generally inadmissible forms of evidence – speculation, hearsay, rumor, dishing, bitching – are intrinsic to their discussion. The notion of a gay sensibility has been taken up by literary scholars such as David M. Halperin, Wayne Koestenbaum, D.A. Miller, Michael Moon and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, but has not often been a preoccupation of historians, most likely because it smacks of essentialism and anachronism. It is unsurprising, then, that such a project would be taken up by a novelist rather than a professional historian. Unfettered by the requirement to ground an argument in verifiable evidence (or even to make an argument at all), McCourt ambitiously sets forth the landscape of a sensibility in Manhattan in the mid-twentieth century, a quasi-fantasy of how gay men lived and spoke and interacted, the cotton wool of quotidian life which police files, organization records, and sensationalistic press accounts are poorly disposed to capture, and which historians must forsake text for testimony if they hope to apprehend.

Unfortunately, the very qualities which make the investigation of a sensibility possible are precisely those which make *Queer Street* an unsatisfying read. McCourt’s ambition to illuminate all of gay Manhattan is laudable, but ultimately not achievable. Though he does frequently reference historical and sociological sources, notably George Chauncey’s *Gay New York*, as authorities,

his knowledge is largely derived from personal experience, relying amply on the kinds of evidence enumerated above. His route, much like the habits of New York’s inhabitants both yesterday and today (as well as those of James Joyce’s Dublin, an important source of stylistic inspiration), leads us again and again down the same blocks and around the same corners, in and out of the same subway stations, department stores and movie theaters (*All About Eve* is screened many times over), with only occasional digressions from these well-worn neighborhood paths. While these traits would be ingratiating in an autobiography or memoir, they are insufficient in a work which aims to be an elegy for an entire urban subculture. New Yorkers native, resident, and amateur will likely catch gratifying glimpses of their homes and haunts in the past. But then, we New Yorkers (gay and otherwise) already have so many mirrors held up to our city and to ourselves that such a treatment does more to flatter than it does to elucidate.

One should not, however, damn the idea of McCourt’s project simply because the results are wanting. The historical dissection of a gay sensibility is not new ground, and some of its earlier exempla are decidedly more successful. Neil Bartlett’s *Who Was That Man? A Present for Mr. Oscar Wilde* (1988) attempts much the same for late nineteenth-century London, and Edmund White’s *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America* (1980) assesses the condition of gay culture in cities across the United States ten years after Stonewall. Bartlett’s account succeeds because his conjectural understandings of the psychology of Wilde and his circle are founded on an eclectic and impassioned collection of textual evidence, while White’s is written in a journalistic (as well as partly confessional) mode and has survived to become a historical document in its own right. Additionally, both Bartlett’s and White’s works are graced with a purposive, thematic organization which eludes McCourt’s stream-of-consciousness approach. On the side of fiction, Michael Cunningham’s *The Hours* (1998) and *Specimen Days* (2005) most closely evoke the idea of a shared sensibility through radically different individuals’ encounters with putatively queer texts (by Virginia Woolf and Walt Whitman, respectively).

A postulate shared by all of these works (Cunningham excepted) share is the notion that such sensibilities are intensely localized in both time and place. It is probably fair to suppose that different, even dissonant, gay sensibilities and corresponding cultures exist in different locales, as well as within the same locale. (Anyone who has been to Christopher Street on the last

Sunday in June can attest to that.) Yet that supposition begs the question of why one would endeavor to explicate a gay sensibility in the first place if not to demonstrate a set of universal principles of gayness that upset chronological, geographic, and stylistic demarcations. How is it that, when we journey from city to city, nation to nation, neighborhood to neighborhood, we are still somehow able to identify one another, to find where we belong? How is it that men who have never met can watch *Mildred Pierce* or *Project Runway* and each believe independently of the other that these exponents of a global media juggernaut were meant to speak particularly to them as gay men? How is it that Rufus Wainwright's 2006 interpretation of Judy at Carnegie Hall can elicit as much enthusiasm from a gay audience as did Garland's original 1961 performance? What factors drive continued cohesion around a shared gay identity at a time when ways of being gay are arguably more pluralistic than they have ever been?

None of the works identified here offer more than partial answers to these questions. Yet a partial answer is at least a beginning. Even if McCourt's *Queer Street* is not able to offer us conclusions, it can point the way towards different modes of inquiry which allow different kinds of questions to be asked, towards explicating sensibilities instead of treating them as social norms which, in the words of Pierre Bourdieu, "go without saying because they come without saying", and towards wedding popular and scholarly understandings of what being gay might mean, then and now.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp," in *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1966), 277.

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 167.

**Neil McKenna, *The Secret Life of Oscar Wilde: An Intimate Biography*. New York: Basic Books, 2005.**

*Reviewed by Niko Endres, Western Kentucky University*

When Richard Ellmann's biography of Oscar Wilde was published in 1987, critics both hailed it as definitive and pointed out several shortcomings, one of which being Ellmann's failure (or lack of interest) to explore Wilde's sex life in greater detail.<sup>1</sup> Neil McKenna sets out to investigate

this fascinating aspect of a voluminously analyzed life. He deeply probes Wilde's relationships with his wife Constance, his faithful friend Robbie Ross, his lover Bosie, all the boys he picked up for sex, and many other minor characters. One question McKenna asks is when Wilde first realized he was attracted to men. Wilde apparently experimented with gay sex long before he met Ross. In that case, why did Wilde still get married? How much did his wife know or suspect? Why did Wilde bring about his own downfall by filing a libel suit against the Marquess of Queensberry? Finally, why did Wilde stay in England and face two years of imprisonment with hard labor? For answers, McKenna relies on unexamined, unpublished, or unused materials, coupled with new editions of Wilde's letters and trials, and close readings of Wilde's works. The volume ends with an up-to-date bibliography (mostly books) and also reproduces several illustrations.

The literary aspects are often negligible, but that may be expected in a biography. For *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, McKenna successfully links many of the characters to Wilde friends, relatives, and acquaintances, such as Sibyl Vane being modeled on Constance, her brother James on Constance's brother Otho, and Dorian on the poet John Gray. McKenna does a good job of decoding a homoerotically hermetic novel. The same applies to several biographical keys he offers for *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Here he is at his wittiest: "Phallic cucumbers are swallowed with 'reckless extravagance' and dripping muffins consumed with decorous care to avoid spillage on the cuffs." His eloquent conclusion says it all: "Uncontrolled appetites, double lives, unpopular fathers, impure truths, shameful debts, scrapes, scandals, Scotland Yard, Holloway Prison, and indiscreetly inscribed cigarette cases given to young men all ominously prefigured Oscar's own future" (321). However, McKenna contends that, "Unlike Oscar's three previous society comedies, *The Importance of Being Earnest* does not explore moral themes like adultery, illegitimacy and corruption" (308). Not quite, for it explores the greatest of Victorian moral issues: hypocrisy. Indeed, two pages later, McKenna refers to the play's "immoral universe" (310). Do I see a contradiction? Too, McKenna's praise of *Teleny* as "poetic, passionate and quite beautiful" (235) hardly passes as serious literary criticism these days. Finally, in his revisionist account of Wilde's trials, McKenna refutes the general notion that Wilde triumphantly won the "literary" part of his first trial, namely allegations by Queensberry's lawyer that *Dorian Gray* condoned "perverted moral views" or "unnatural tendencies."



Most controversially, McKenna argues that Wilde proudly used his identity to destigmatize homosexuality and that he actually promoted gay rights. McKenna is on shaky ground here. Whatever political causes Wilde espoused, they must be placed in a context of aestheticism, decadence, dandyism, “insincerity,” or camp (a proto-gay sensibility that Wilde indeed bequeathed to posterity). For Oscar and Bosie “to proclaim their sexual orientation to the world” (233) sounds more like post-Stonewall Gay Pride than Wilde’s timid Victorian steps. (Besides, were Oscar and Bosie not a bit too self-centered to be appropriated as political activists?) What does McKenna mean by Wilde and Bosie’s attempt at “a form of Uranian marriage” (258)? Unconvincing as his assertions may be, he often does not even bother to adduce proof. He stunningly posits that prosecuting Queensberry was “an article of [Oscar’s] Uranian faith” (355). No substantiation follows. In a similar vein, he conjectures that Oscar and friends were “warriors and lovers willing and prepared to embrace death rather than surrender” (395-96). Is McKenna saying that Oscar was willing to face death for his sexual orientation? Last but not least, masturbation in prison for Oscar “might have been the only tangible way to affirm his love for Bosie and his identity as a Uranian” (407), but no tangible evidence comes up.

Equally controversial is McKenna’s discussion of a supposed political conspiracy. According to Bosie and others, Wilde was convicted in order to protect the reputation of the Liberal Prime Minister, Lord Rosebery, himself a lover of boys and men, including Francis, Viscount Drumlanrig, none other than Bosie’s brother. McKenna quotes from the (unpublished) gossipy memoirs of Trelawny Backhouse (who, it seems, would know, since he claims to have had sex with Rosebery, Drumlanrig, Oscar, Bosie, et al.), but can we trust him? “Like the Arabs and the Ottomans (today called Turks) Lord Rosebery was fortunate in his ability to perform a lingering and protracted copulation equally agreeable to both parties; it was his custom to prolong the action of sex for some twenty minutes if not more, retaining his large, thickset organ stationary and fixed in the patient’s rectum” (249). Such scabrous ejaculations do not help much here. Factual evidence offers more clues. The day after the Marquess left the infamous “sodomite” card at Wilde’s club, Rosebery offered to resign and his health deteriorated considerably; after Wilde’s conviction, Rosebery made a sensational recovery. Or, immediately after Queensberry’s acquittal, the most senior Liberal politicians convened to discuss urgent judicial considerations; the Marquess was apparently

blackmailing the government and threatening imminent exposure. And much to the chagrin and anxiety of the then ex-Prime Minister, his and Wilde’s paths crossed again in Naples, where Wilde moved after his release and where Rosebery had just purchased a villa “where he would indulge his passion for sodomising young men for many years to come” (445). Most Wilde scholars remain skeptical about the conspiracy theory; *The Secret Life of Oscar Wilde* will do little to change their opinions.

In this context, I do commend McKenna for giving due credit to Queensberry’s complex motivation for persecuting Wilde. (Too often, Bosie’s father is depicted as simply monstrous and despicable.) Whatever personal insecurities and hang-ups he had, Queensberry was driven by paternal obligation, by the widely-held belief that sodomy was a fate worse than death, by shameful rumors that two of his sons were being “sodomized” by older men (one son was found dead shortly afterward, probably a suicide), by humiliating allegations by his new wife that he was sexually inadequate, by virulent animosity toward his ex-wife (Bosie’s mother) and Jewish father-in-law, and by the political disappointment of Rosebery’s appointment to the highest office in England.

All in all, some things in this book just sit uneasily, and it may be McKenna’s very premise (Also, his justification for yet another Wilde biography – “Despite many excellent biographies and critical studies, comparatively little has been written about Oscar’s sexuality and sexual behavior” [xi] – is disingenuous at best, especially in light of proliferating Wilde studies and queer theory). Certainly the least interesting passages deal with what exactly Wilde (and others) did in bed. Labial, oral, anal.... Does it really matter? Do we need to know that André Gide had five-plus orgasms one night? And we academics are just too squeamish for vulgarities such as “suck off,” “cock-sucking,” or “buggery.” Also, because of all this salacious detail, McKenna draws some perfectly ridiculous conclusions. For example, since the sheets in Wilde’s hotel were soiled with fecal matter and since Wilde’s pajamas also showed those stains, we are supposed to gather that Wilde was the recipient (rather than active) partner in anal intercourse.

To come back to diction, it ranges from the clinical (“the bacteriological sanctity and safety of marriage” [52]), to the chatty (“shudderingly compelling insights into the dynamics of male homoeroticism” [58]), to the gratuitous (“[Constance] became a woman, a creature of flesh and blood, with womanly attributes like breasts and a vagina. She had pubic hair, and every month she menstruated”

[65]), to the obvious (“Many men who had sexual desires for other men had strong feelings of repugnance for the female body, especially the vagina” [66]), to the condescending (“Poor Fred Althaus. It was a sad and sordid affair” [99]), to the judgmental (“Oscar often confused lust with love” [100]), to the outright philosophical (“There is a strange penumbral landscape where truths can exist and not exist, where they can be at once buried in the shadowlands of the mind, and yet illumined by the light of rationality” [162]), and to the gullible: (“When Oscar pleaded ‘Not guilty’ to the charges levelled against him, he was speaking the truth; not the literal, lawbound truth of the courtroom, but the higher truth, the truth that told him that something so pure, something so perfect as love and sex between men could not be unnatural, could not be a crime”) (392). Higher truth, pure sex, perfect love?

No doubt, the most maddening aspect of this book is its documentation. It seems that McKenna provides endnotes only when directly quoting a source (and even then, references are often imprecise and notes scarce). The reader is thus left in a state of utter puzzlement. With one of his first lovers, James Rennell Rodd, “Sex may well have entered the romantic equation, almost certainly at Oscar’s instigation. But it probably consisted of little more than fervid hand-holding, snatched kisses and bed-sharing in French lodgings with some attendant, fumbling mutual masturbation” (20). How does McKenna know about their attendant, fumbling mutual masturbation? Later, McKenna refers to the juicy sex-lives of various Roman emperors (129), but only a (bold) classicist would know how to trace them in Suetonius’ *Lives of the Caesars*. Or, “There can be no doubt that when Oscar proposed to Constance he was deeply in love” (44). If only we had evidence for that, and just two pages later, “The love of Oscar for Constance, and of Constance for Oscar, was a strangely arbitrary, ill-considered, precipitate sort of love” (46). Is there a contradiction here? Since when is “to worship” a “euphemism for fellatio” (185)? “Oral sex was, then as now, perhaps the most common sexual activity between men” (186). Would some statistics be helpful here? Last, two controversial issues in Wilde studies – Wilde’s authorship of *Teleny* (which McKenna affirms) and Wilde’s syphilis (which McKenna negates) – lamentably lack footnotes.

I may have dwelt unduly on the shortcomings of the book, but they do detract from a mostly fascinating reading experience. Despite its flaws, McKenna’s biography vividly presents the “other” side of Oscar. One indeed wonders if only half of what McKenna speculates is

true, how Oscar had time to write at all.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (New York: Knopf, 1987, 1988, distributed by Random House).

**Graham Robb, Strangers: Homosexual Love in the Nineteenth Century (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004).**

*Reviewed by Scott Gunther, Wellesley College*

Graham Robb’s *Strangers: Homosexual Love in the Nineteenth Century* offers detailed portraits of male and female homosexuality in Europe and America during the nineteenth century. The book is divided into three parts. The first examines the legal, medical and social treatment of homosexuality in nineteenth-century Europe, especially in England and France. In the second part, Robb turns to the day-to-day experience of homosexuals, told primarily in their own words. The last part of the book examines the significant role that homosexuals have played in the domains of literature and religion.

The appendices include detailed data on arrests of homosexuals in England, Wales and America, as well as a wonderfully entertaining questionnaire from 1908 that helped (presumably male) readers determine whether they were homosexual. Questions include “Can you easily separate your big toe from the other toes by its own force?,” “Are you a good whistler and do you like to whistle?,” “Do you give off an odor, especially when warm?,” and “Are you talkative?”

The book’s goal is ambitious, namely to provide “credible reasons to take a more cheerful view of the past” (14). To do this, Robb makes two interrelated claims: first, that something resembling a contemporary homosexual identity can be detected as early as the end of the eighteenth century; and second, that in the nineteenth century, individuals found ways to live their homosexuality much more freely and happily than is commonly thought.

*Strangers* begins with an examination of the legal treatment of homosexuals from the early 1800s until the present. Robb argues, correctly in my opinion, that the mere existence of harsh laws against homosexual behavior in the nineteenth century is not on its own evidence of an oppressive environment, and that at times harsh laws may have even fostered greater leniency by courts and police. However, his conclusion that “nineteenth-century homosexuals lived under a cloud, but it seldom rained” (30) goes too far. Robb dismisses a bit too easily the forty-six



people who were executed for sodomy in England between 1810 and 1835, for example (23). Also, in nineteenth-century France, it is wrong to assume that the abolition of sodomy in 1791 is necessarily a sign of a more cheerful past for homosexuals, since French judges and police continued to use other laws, such as public indecency, in harsh and discriminatory ways.<sup>1</sup>

In his discussion of Oscar Wilde, Robb is right to point out that the Wilde trials “cannot be treated as straightforward evidence of homophobia” (38), since many of Wilde’s enemies were less concerned with his sexual practices than with his utter disregard for class distinctions. Unfortunately at this point, in his effort to convince the reader of a tolerant nineteenth century, Robb fails to apply this same line of reasoning to those who openly supported Wilde. Wilde’s defenders may have been tolerant of his sexual activities, but their support also stemmed from an appreciation of his subversive social ideas, his sharp wit and his decadent aestheticism.

A recurring problem is that Robb jumps a bit too easily between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries and at times falls victim to anachronism. For example, in his analysis of the loosely defined gay and lesbian “community” of the late 1800s, he adds that “many gays and lesbians still feel marginalized by the notion of a ‘gay and lesbian community,’ the coherence of which exists primarily in the minds of market researchers”(169), suggesting that nineteenth-century sodomites had a similar conflict with the notion of a homosexual community as contemporary queers.

A more important criticism has to do with the book’s central objective, which Robb frames as an attack on “the social constructionist approach [which] suggests that ‘homosexuality’ did not exist until the word was invented” (11). Robb is correct that social constructionists focus on the evolution of a homosexual identity over time, and in particular, the shift in the conceptualizing of homosexuality from a behavior to an identity beginning in the late nineteenth century; or in the words of Foucault: “...the sodomite had been a temporary aberration, the homosexual was now a species.”<sup>2</sup>

The problem is that *Strangers* does not seem to take issue so much with Foucault, as with a caricature of the social constructionist position, which Robb characterizes at one point as the idea that “before 1870, the exclusively homosexual person did not exist” (42). *Strangers* does provide an astonishing amount of evidence of homosexual practices in the nineteenth century. Yet at times, Robb tends to gloss over the fact that social

constructionists are not so much concerned with the issue of whether individuals engaged in homosexual acts, as with the social and discursive meaning of the terms describing such behavior at various historical moments. Historian Robert A. Padgug, explains it this way:

What we call “homosexuality” (in the sense of the distinguishing traits of “homosexuals”), for example, was not considered a unified set of acts, much less a set of qualities defining particular persons, in pre-capitalist societies.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, while Robb claims that he is undermining the Foucauldian position, quotes from the book like the following indicate that he might be unintentionally supporting it:

The problem is not that homosexuality did not exist but that sexual behaviour changes as rapidly as fashions in dress... when two different periods are compared, the cumulative changes are spectacular. A 21<sup>st</sup>-century person transported to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century would be in a permanent state of shock (114).

[In the nineteenth century,] unlike gender, sexuality was not considered a determining feature of social identity... For most [nineteenth-century homosexuals], revealing their true selves would have been a waste of time. They would be describing something – like small pox or colour-blindness – that was not thought to be constituent of a “true self” (127-128).

Despite the problems associated with an argument that at times goes too far, *Strangers* presents valuable and original analysis of individuals whose stories have remained largely hidden until now. Indeed, one of the book’s strongest contributions is its decryption of verbal and non-verbal codes from the time, which allow Robb to find evidence of “sodomites” in a variety of literary sources, and which will certainly aid future researchers in their decoding efforts. While most other works on the subject have tended to focus on a single country or region, *Strangers* offers unique insight by examining homosexuality across Europe and in the United States. In addition, unlike many researchers

examining homosexuality of the period, Robb should be commended for including stories of both men and women, especially given the relative silence with regard to women in many archival sources.

In the end, *Strangers* does make a significant contribution to our understanding of the nineteenth century, though the book would be more compelling if its argument were presented with more nuance. While readers may not be not convinced that the equivalent of a contemporary gay identity is reflected in the lives of nineteenth-century sodomites, Robb does present rich portraits of how individuals experienced their sexual and romantic activities with others of the same sex. Most of the people described in Robb's book do not yet exhibit a fully constituted sexual identity, yet contemporary gays and lesbians will find at least the seeds of something familiar. *Strangers* is bound to be an important work in the field of gay and lesbian history, stirring a much needed polemic that will encourage others to devote more attention and research to the lives of the many strangers from this rich historical period.

<sup>1</sup> See for example, William Peniston's *Pederasts and Others: Urban Culture and Sexual Identity in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Harrington Park Press, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978, trans. Robert Hurley) 43.

<sup>3</sup> Robert A. Padgug, "Sexual Matters: On Conceptualizing Sexuality in History," *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, Martin Duberman et al. eds., (1989) 54.

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