

OFF THE SHELF #20: Across the Pond: Exploring the LGBT Heritage of England

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Blog editor

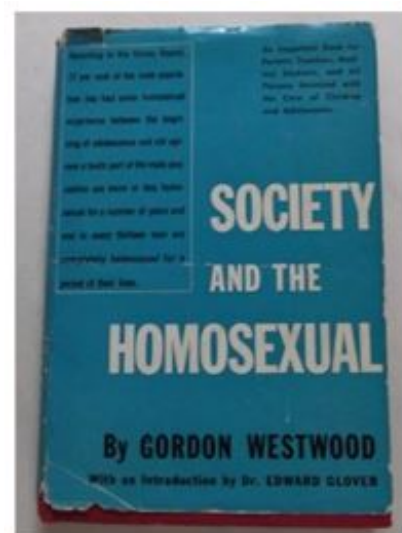
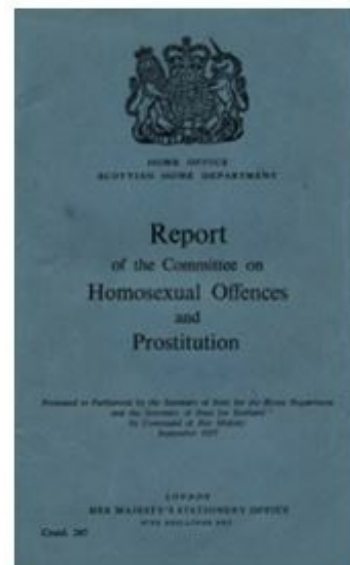
OFF THE SHELF #20: *Across the Pond: Exploring the LGBT Heritage of England*

By Rob Ridinger

As 2017 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the issuing of the Report of the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution (more familiar to many LGBT people worldwide under the popular name The Wolfenden Report after its chair), it is appropriate to survey the literature produced on the history of the LGBT community of Great Britain in the decades since the text of the Report was received by Parliament in 1957.

The story of Britain's contemporary LGBT community begins in the 1950s, when same-sex relations were still subject to various legal penalties. It should be noted that the discussion of homosexuality had been ongoing since the late nineteenth century in the writings of such figures as Edward Carpenter, but the first postwar work to bring homosexuality before the British public was the 1952 work *Society and the Homosexual* by Michael Schofield, who wrote under the pen name Gordon Westwood, as it was then too dangerous to write about a practice regarded as a criminal offense under his own name. His book took neither a medical nor a legal approach, and discussed the social implications of homosexuality in light of works from anthropology, psychiatry, law, criminology, and sexology in language accessible to the general reader. In a contemporary review of the book, the writer notes that "He estimates that there are 650,000 practising male homosexuals in the U.K., and he describes their activities and underground organisation, illustrating his points with case histories." (Dalzell-Ward 1952). Its immediate successor was the 1955 book *Against the Law* by journalist Peter Wildeblood, which told the tale of his experiences in the courts and in prison following his conviction in 1954 at a trial for conspiracy to commit buggery where he admitted his homosexuality. The book was influential in leading to the subsequent investigation of the condition of the homosexual in Britain by the Wolfenden Commission, whose Report appeared in 1957. Its publication marked the beginning of the decriminalization of homosexuality in Britain and laid the foundation for the later gay liberation movement of the 1970s.

In 1958, psychologist Eustace Chesser assessed the *Report* for a general reading audience with *Live and Let Live; the Moral of the Wolfenden Report*. Two years later, Gordon Westwood returned with his study *A Minority: A Report on the Life of the Male Homosexual in Great Britain* (done under the aegis of the British Social Biology Council, with an introduction by Sir John Wolfenden) appeared. Based on the responses of 127 homosexuals whom Westwood interviewed (the first such survey to be done in Britain) its aim was to gather data on their family backgrounds, sexual activities and social behaviors. Factors examined were their childhood and home life experiences, sources used in the process of working to combat their orientation (ranging from religion and self-control through treatment and acceptance) the extent and location of homosexual activity, sexual adjustment, the then-current legal situation for homosexuals in Britain, occupations, and the degree to which they integrated with their local communities. *A Minority* would be reprinted in



the United States by Greenwood in 1976. By 1965, Michael Schofield felt able to publish his third work, *Sociological Aspects of Homosexuality*, under his own name. But prior to the arrival of the gay liberation movement in the early 1970s, the one book that most readers would have been aware of describing the life conditions of an openly gay man in the Britain of the 1960s was Quentin Crisp's *The Naked Civil Servant*, published in 1968. For British lesbians, the first periodical speaking to their interests was the monthly magazine *Arena Three*, whose first issue appeared in January 1964, founded by Esme Langley. It was published by the Minorities Research Group, the first organization to work for lesbian interests in the United Kingdom, established in 1963. A spinoff organization composed of groups emphasizing social activities over research, Kenric, was founded in 1965 and is still in existence.

A notable event in British LGBT history was the passage in July 1967 of the Sexual Offences Act, which decriminalized male same-sex encounters. Subtitled "An Act to amend the law of England and Wales relating to homosexual acts", its sections open with making such acts legal if done in private and by mutual consent, then move to address homosexuality on merchant ships, revised punishments for homosexual acts in certain circumstances, issues relating to male prostitution, and questions of prosecution and mode of trial. This significant change in the legal climate, two years before the beginning of America's gay liberation movement in the Stonewall riot in New York City), served to aid the subsequent emergence of a visible LGBT presence in most major cities in Britain over the next five decades. The full text of the Act is online at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/60/pdfs/ukpga_19670060_en.pdf.

1968 is notable in the history of English LGBT publishing for the appearance of two books which continued the biographical genre initiated by Peter Wildeblood's *Against the Law* in 1955. The first is a short paperback that appeared from the London publisher Tandem, *The Homosexual Kings of England* by James Graham. Personages included in his survey are William Rufus, Richard the Lionhearted, Edward II, Richard II, James I and William III. The title of this work would be reused by Alan Miller in 2003. The second title is an autobiographical work more familiar to both British and American reader, *The Naked Civil Servant* by Quentin Crisp. It was reissued in 1977, 1983, 1985 and 1997 by publishing houses in both Britain and the United States, and served as the basis for a film first broadcast in 1975 and brought out as a VHS tape in 1975 and as a DVD by BBC Video in 2007.

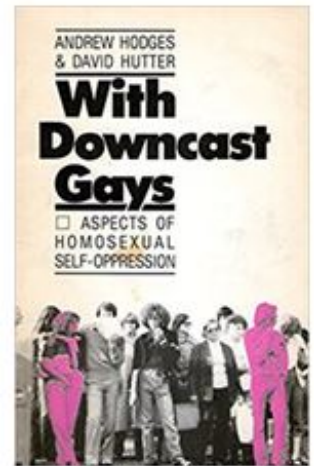


The 1970s were the decade that saw the appearance of a diverse and relatively open gay and lesbian press for Britain, chiefly based in London. The first publication was the *Gay Lib News*, which began in the early 1970s and stayed in existence until 1974. The Gay Liberation Front also put out *Come Together* at irregular intervals between 1971 and 1973, and the *International Gay News* in 1972. Another activist paper, *CHE: The Bulletin of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality*, lasted from 1971 to the end of 1976. The tradition of a distinctly lesbian voice in journalism begun by *Arena Three* was continued with the founding in 1972 of *Sappho* by one of the members of members of the Minorities Research Group, Jackie Forster. *Sappho* would remain in print until 1981. It was joined in June 1972 by the biweekly *Gay News*, which would serve as the newspaper of record for much of the British gay community until its final issues in April 1983. Reflecting the politics of the time, the Gay Left Collective decided in 1975 to produce their own paper, titled simply *Gay Left*, whose pages offered readers a varied take on the issues of the day until its demise in 1980. The activist successors to the gay liberation groups in the later 1970s formed the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, which produced the newspaper *Out* from the autumn of 1976 through the summer of 1977. The next decade saw the founding of the monthly *Capital Gay* in 1981, beginning fourteen years of covering the British gay community. The next paper to appear was the short-lived *New Gay News*, active from August 18 to December 22, 1983. A new monthly, *Gay Times*, began publication in 1984, and was joined in 1987 by another weekly, *The Pink Paper*, whose run would last until 2012.

One feature of British LGBT literature somewhat familiar to North American readers is a substantial number of biographies of prominent people who were known (or believed to be) to be homosexual, often playwrights, poets, musicians, politicians , and novelists . While some individuals have had enough works on their lives and careers printed to establish a sub-genre of their own with audience awareness in the reading public globally (examples being Oscar Wilde, T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) and, more recently, the range of titles on computer expert Alan Turing), many of the people included had careers whose scope was primarily within and framed by British society in successive centuries. A sampling of books in this genre done by the author in the WORLDCAT database in December 2016 revealed a wide range of professions represented , ranging from the expected literary world (poets, playwrights, translators and journalists), art and art history, and political life through stage and television performers, musicians, and gay activists to sexologists and economists.

In 1974, a forty-page pamphlet written by Andrew Hodges and David Hutter, *With Downcast Gays: Aspects of Homosexual Self-Oppression* appeared. Its sections discuss sexual freedom, coming out, humor, liberal tolerance, politics and E.M. Forster. It would be reprinted in 1975, in 1977 (by Pink Triangle Press in Toronto, Ontario) and in 1979. The text is available online at <http://www.outgay.co.uk/intro.html>

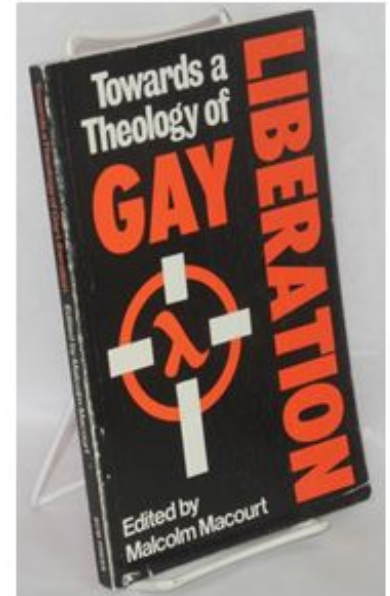
The pool of monographs on British LGBT history was significantly augmented in 1976 with the publication of a memoir by author Christopher Isherwood, *Christopher and His Kind, 1929-1939*, by Farrar Strauss Giroux in New York. In this sharply candid work, Isherwood acknowledged his homosexuality and described his life in Weimar Germany while expressing his identification with other gay people. The thread of writing centered on retrieving British LGBT history continued in 1976 as well, with the publication of *The Cleveland Street Affair* by Colin Simpson, Lewis Chester, and David Leitch. Perhaps more familiar to its British audience than to American readers, the title is a reference to an 1889 case involving the discovery of a male brothel housed at 18 Cleveland Street in London and the subsequent legal and police actions taken against it. At that time, homosexuality was still illegal and persons caught could be arrested under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which made homosexual acts between two men (or actions taken for the procurement of same) punishable by two year's imprisonment, with the additional option of hard labor. Yet the inmates of the house received light sentences and none of the presumed clientele were prosecuted. This was assumed to be because certain prominent members of the aristocracy had been among them, and by January 1890 sixty suspects had been identified, twenty-two of whom had fled the country. The legacy of this incident was the support it lent to the attitude that homosexuality was a practice of the upper classes with lower-class young men as their prey, a belief that still colored public opinion a few years later when the Oscar Wilde case occurred. A third title which appeared in 1976 was journalist Jeremy Seabrook's *A Lasting Relationship: Homosexuals and Society*, useful for its interviews with more than forty homosexuals of different occupations and ages.



The closing years of the 1970s saw the appearance of several publications which illustrate the variety of the expanding pool of British LGBT writing. The most substantial of these, *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in Britain from the Nineteenth Century to the Present* by Jeffrey Weeks, published in 1977, expanded the historical focus introduced with *The Cleveland Street Affair* to a broader consideration of what it had meant to be homosexual in Britain from the perspective of the reform groups and writers who have discussed the subject since the late nineteenth century. Weeks begins by looking at the origin of the dialogue on homosexuality and its successive definitions as a sin, a crime, a medical condition, and a way of existence. He then reviews the pioneer British writers who dealt with it, John Addington Symonds, Havelock Ellis and Edward Carpenter, and considers the place of lesbians in a separate chapter including their relationship to the Women's Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chapter ten, "Creating A Consciousness " traces the influence of the works of Ellis and Carpenter in the years after the Oscar Wilde trials of 1895, followed by the eleventh chapter on " Reform Societies " , beginning with the foundation of the British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology in July 1914. Involvement with the World League for Sexual Reform began with founding of a British chapter in 1928, which lasted until the

beginning of World War II in 1939. Eight years later, Norman Haire revived the chapter as the Sex Education Society, which issued the first volume of the *Journal of Sex Education* in August 1948. For the next four years, the Society provided a forum where information on homosexuality-related developments from outside Britain could be read and where ideas for change could be discussed. With Haire's death in 1952, both the Society and the *Journal* ceased to be. It is against this background that Peter Wildeblood's 1955 book *Against the Law* must be viewed. The final chapters of *Coming Out* deal with the activity of the Gay Liberation Front from 1970 to 1972 and the formation of the then-contemporary gay community.

A second 1977 publication from the Student Christian Movement, *Towards a Theology of Gay Liberation*, is an anthology of ten papers based on supplements to the Movement's magazine and a conference with the book's title held April 30-May 2 1976 near Bristol. Topics addressed begin with two essays providing background on the debate over homosexuality starting with the publication of Derrick Bailey's *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* in 1955, and moving forward through two decades of religious writing on homosexuality, setting out the position of the gay liberation movement regarding religion and theology. Succeeding sections examine Biblical homophobia, Scriptural interpretation, and theological perspectives on gay liberation and being Christian. 1977 is also notable for the court case brought against *Gay News* by conservative moral crusader Mary Whitehouse on charges that the paper was guilty of blasphemy by printing James Kirkup's poem "The Love That Dares To Speak Its Name." The full text of the 1979 judgment against publisher Denis Lemon is available online at <http://www.swarb.co.uk/c/hl/1979Whitehouse-GayNews.html>. In 1978, the London-based Campaign for Reason published *Towards a Charter of Homosexual Rights*, and in 1979 the Gay Group of the Socialist Workers' Party (Great Britain) published Peter Evans' pamphlet *The Word Is Gay* expressing the party's viewpoint on gay rights.



The 1980s opened with the first lengthy work on homosexuality in Britain since Jeffrey Weeks' *Coming Out* in 1977. The anthology *Homosexuality, Power & Politics*, edited by the Gay Left Collective, contains seventeen essays summing up the progress made by the women's and gay movements in the 1970s from a socialist perspective and setting out goals for the new decade's activism. Four of the pieces are reprinted from *Gay Left*. The historical thread of LGBT Britain also returned in 1980 with the publication of Chushichi Tsuzuki's biography of Socialist and early homosexual rights advocate Edward Carpenter, *Edward Carpenter, 1844-1929: Prophet of Human Fellowship*.

1981 was marked by a decision from the European Court of Human Rights in a case challenging the application of provisions of the Offences against the Person Act of 1861 and the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885 of in Northern Ireland brought by gay activist Jeffrey Dudgeon against the United Kingdom. In the *Case of Dudgeon vs The United Kingdom*, the Court held that the plaintiff had had his rights as protected under Article 8 of the European Convention violated. Article 8 reads in part "everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence" and Dudgeon cited the search of his home by police and the seizure of private papers not yet returned. His attempted complaint under Article 14 was not allowed, as there was at that time no age of consent for homosexual behavior defined by the laws of Northern Ireland. The importance of Dudgeon is that it was the first case involving homosexual behavior to be decided by the Court and served as a precedent for the later Court decision that no member state of the European Union could criminalize homosexuality. A summary of the decision is online from the European Court of Human Rights and can be accessed at [http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{"dmdocnumber":\["695350"\],"itemid":\["001-57473"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{).

Much of the literature relating to the British LGBT community published in the 1980s continued to center attention on civil rights issues. A short pamphlet on *The Rights of Gay Men & Women* was issued the same year as the Dudgeon decision by the Labour Party. In 1982, London's Pluto Press brought out *Gays and the Law* by solicitor Paul Crane.

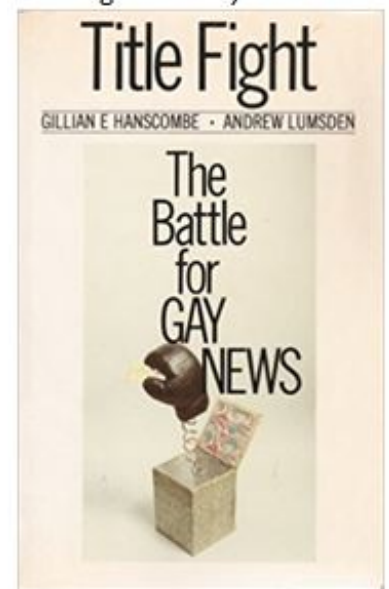
His treatment of the law of England and Wales as applied to gay men in the early 1980s covers criminal law, young gays, employment, lesbian and gay parents and their children, immigration, housing and living together, and ancillary issues such as obscenity. The chapter “The Gay Response” explores the then-current state of the gay movement in Britain, defense and support groups, criminal cases and the media. In 1983, members of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality created a group of essays on homophobic discrimination in various sectors of British society including home, work and school as well as examining treatment of gays and lesbians by the courts, the police, the prison system, the medical profession, the media, and Parliament. Their chosen title for the collection, *Prejudice and Pride*, both supplements the more legal approach taken in *Gays and the Law* and is a takeoff on Jane Austen’s famous novel of manners.

1983 was also a year in which recent censorship of Britain’s gay press was examined at length in book form. The subject of staff reporter Gillian E Hanscombe and former editor Andrew Lumsden’s detailed *Title Fight: The Battle for Gay News* was the ongoing internal and external struggle to produce and maintain an effective LGBT newspaper for Britain between 1981 and its demise in 1983. And continuing the media thread, London’s Hall-Carpenter Archive published the third edition of *Declaring an Interest: A Projected Catalogue of Gay Images on Television in Britain* in 1983, updating the previous edition from 1982. The Archive (named for Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall and Edward Carpenter) began as a project of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality in 1980 and, after funding from the Greater London Council ceased in 1986, found a home at the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1988.

From 1985 until 1990, at least one major work related to the English LGBT population was published every year. Leading the way was another work from London’s Pluto Press, Jamie Gough’s *Gay Liberation in the Eighties* and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Coverage of the gay community by the English press was explored in 1986 in a short publication from the Association of Liberal Councillors, *The Dissemblers of Fleet Street: Press Distortion of Gay Issues in the UK*. The topic of LGBT rights and the field of education touched upon by one of the essays in *Prejudice and Pride* was returned to in a publication by the London-based Gay Teachers’ Group in 1987, *School’s Out: Lesbian and Gay Rights and Education*. In the same year, another evaluation of how gay issues fared in mainstream journalism was issued by the activist Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom under the title *Out of the Gutter: A Survey of the Treatment of Homosexuality by the Press*.

In a similar vein, the results of research done by the Gays and Broadcasting Project between 1985 and 1987 were published in the latter year as *Are We Being Served: Lesbians, Gays and Broadcasting Project Report*, with the title referring to a popular sitcom of the 1980s, *Are You Being Served ?*, set in a department store and featuring a decidedly effeminate male as one of the characters. In the study, 688 hours of British television and radio programming (420 from radio and 248 from television) were monitored for one week in 1985 to look for portrayals of lesbians or gay men. The results were that all identified occurrences were of stereotypes of gays and lesbians as either foolish or criminal, and that all references to gay men were linked to AIDS. An interesting finding was that what few positive portrayals were shown aired during the late night hours, with the negative images shown in prime time slots.

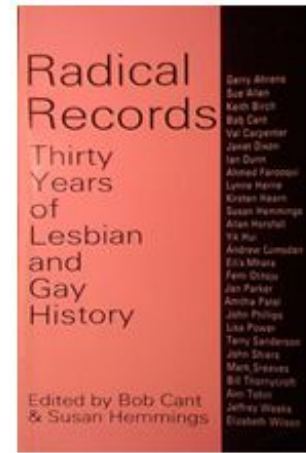
In 1988, an anthology of twenty-one essays titled *Radical Records: Thirty Years of Lesbian and Gay History, 1957-1987* was published by Routledge. The focus of the book, as stated in the Introduction, is on



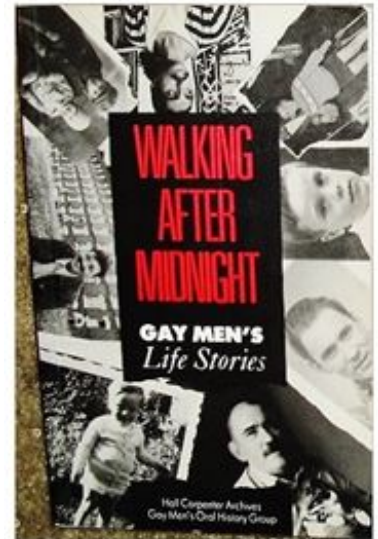
“the lives and struggle of lesbians and gay men...not just as ‘coming out’ stories but in terms of full, politically active struggle...to record, before it is too late, our recent efforts to change our lives and

the wider context in which we live them, before a pall of silence falls on the important events of the post-Wolfenden era. The history of a movement (or, as it is our case more accurately, a complexity of movements is more than the sum of the personal histories of its individual participants. But, until those stories are told, we cannot make sense of it all.” (Radical Records: 1).

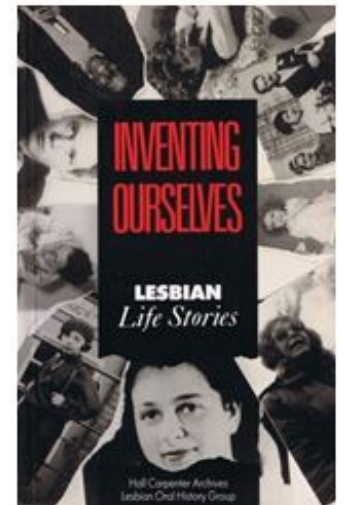
Entries discuss a varied political landscape ranging from the founding of the Scottish Minorities Group and the periodicals *Gay News* and *Gay Left* through analyses of radical social theories as applied to gay men to lesbian activism with the women’s movement and on custody issues. The writers assume a degree of familiarity with British LGBT history that many readers outside the United Kingdom may lack.



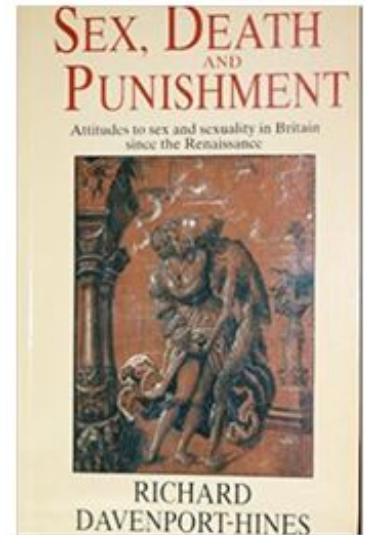
The threads of biography and politics remained intertwined as the 1980s drew to a close. Two 1989 books from the oral history groups at the Hall-Carpenter Archives, *Walking After Midnight: Gay Men’s Life Stories* and *Inventing Ourselves: Lesbian Life Stories* together present twenty-nine interviews covering most of the twentieth century. North American readers’ first impression of the men’s volume might be that its title was derived in some fashion from the 1957 popular song made famous by Patsy Cline, whereas in actuality it is based on one of the participants’ memory of coming out of the House of Commons at two in the morning after the successful passage of the Sexual Offences Act in 1967 and walking down to the Embankment for a smoke. The title of *Inventing Ourselves* is likewise derived from a comment by one of the women, because “this book explores how lesbians have created their lives and contributed to the changes of their times, and what the significant influences in their lives have been.” (*Inventing Ourselves*: vii.) The interwoven nature of gay sexual identity and cultural constructs ranging from psychoanalysis and law to rock music, espionage, journalism and theater is explored in the essays in another 1989 collection, *Coming on Strong: Gay Politics and Culture* edited by Simon Shepherd.



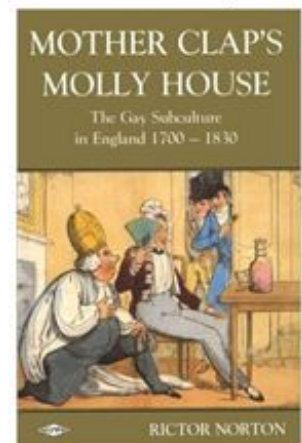
The new decade of writing on LGBT Britain began with two works continuing a decidedly historical approach. *Between the Acts: Lives of Homosexual Men, 1885-1967* edited by Kevin Porter and Jeffrey Weeks presented, “a unique collection of interviews of homosexual older men, which throws new light on a period when male homosexuality was totally illegal in Britain. This is the period ‘between the acts’, the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which finally made all sexual activities between men illegal, and the Sexual Offences Act of 1967, which partially decriminalized such activities under a number of severe restrictions.” (*Between the Acts*: vii). The book would be reissued in 1998. A second massive 1990 work, R.P.T Davenport-Hines’ *Sex, Death, and Punishment: Attitudes to Sex and Sexuality in Britain Since the Renaissance*, significantly expands the historical dimension introduced by Jeffrey Weeks in *Coming Out*, although much of the material covered is from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the discussion is framed as a response to AIDS by tracing the combined threads of attitudes to venereal diseases and male homosexual behaviors. Readers will find the third chapter, “The Phoenix of Sodom” valuable for its tracing of attitudes towards male same-sex behavior from medieval times to the later nineteenth century, and for its inclusion of two broadsheets from 1762 and the 1830s reporting on the pillorying and execution of two men for sodomy. The historical discussion continues in chapter four, “Dance as They Desire: The Construction and Criminalization of Homosexuality” and chapter eight, “Nights of Insult: Male Homosexuality since the 1940s.” The legal thread was



continued in 1991 with Stephen Jeffery-Poulter's *Peers, Queers, and Commons: The Struggle for Gay Law Reform from 1950 to the Present*. The author makes extensive use of the written records of the debates in the House of Lords, newspapers ranging from *The Guardian* and *Gay News* to the *New Statesman* and the *Times*, and deftly breaks four decades of diverse activism into comprehensible sections. North American readers will find the chronology of legislative and activist history valuable in following the discussion. The passage of Section 28 of the Local Government Act, which became law on March 9, 1988 and the impact of its provisions that focus on the "prohibition on promoting homosexuality or publishing material" and also forbid any local authority to allow the teaching of the idea of homosexuality as a "pretended family relationship" (Kaufman 1994: 4) over a two-year period are assessed in the 1991 anthology *High Risk Lives: Lesbian and Gay Politics After the Clause* edited by Tara Kauffman and Paul Lincoln. Topics presented include AIDS, parenting, the arts, being black and gay in Britain, and political opposition to Clause 28 within and outside England. North American readers will find the opening chapter "Clause 28 in Practice" useful for providing an overview of some of the complex reactions to the passage of this piece of legislation.



1992 saw the publication of one of the most detailed historical studies on the past of the British homosexual community, Rictor Norton's *Mother Clap's Molly House: The Gay Subculture in England 1700-1830*. Taking its title from an actual public house operating in London in the 1720s (which was raided by the police in 1725) the book begins by presenting historical background to the coalescing of an urban gay subculture about 1700, then moves to look at the social attitudes of the time towards homosexuality (and the punitive legal responses to it, illustrated by broadsheets of the day) and the role played by class and politics in addressing the issue. And veteran gay activist Antony Grey penned a valuable autobiographical account of the intricacies of his work for homosexual rights in the 1950s and 1960s before and after the Wolfenden Report and the growth of the LGBT rights movement in England up to the first decade of the AIDS pandemic, published in 1992 as *Quest For Justice: Towards Homosexual Emancipation*.



The complex heritage of the 1895 trials of playwright Oscar Wilde are revisited in Ed Cohen's 1993 volume *Talk on the Wilde Side: Toward A Genealogy of A Discourse On Male Sexualities*. Originating as the author's dissertation, it examines "the ways in which Wilde became a crucial figure both for what it meant to be an "English homosexual" at the end of the nineteenth century and for how "English homosexuality" has come to be figured." (Cohen 1993: 3.) The roles played by the British media establishment in portraying LGBT people over seven decades can be evaluated from the data contained in *Broadcasting It: An Encyclopaedia of Homosexuality in Film, Radio, and TV in the UK, 1923-1993*, although as American and Australian data is also included the title of this 1993 volume is a bit inaccurate. And the relatively scant coverage of the past of the lesbian community in the UK was substantially augmented by Emma Donoghue in *Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture, 1668-1801*.

The landscape of published works on LGBT Britain in 1994 saw the continuation of coverage of some of the established subjects such as Oscar Wilde, with an emphasis on recording and evaluating the history of political activism. A legacy of the 1895 Wilde trials not usually considered is taken up by Alan Sinfield in *The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde, and the Queer Moment*. His focus is on the impact of the trials on the public perception of homosexuals, exploring how "in the mid twentieth century, effeminacy and queerness became virtually synonymous...But how was effeminacy regarded before the trials?" (Sinfield 1994: vii.). Readers will find Sinfield's work a useful context for early modern works such as Quentin Crisp's *The Naked Civil Servant*. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the clash of bar patrons and police at New York City's Stonewall Inn in 1969 which sparked the contemporary gay liberation movement was marked in England by the publication of the anthology *Stonewall 25*:

the Making of the Lesbian and Gay Community in Britain. Its twenty-eight essays were authored by women and men from a diverse range of occupations including a Member of Parliament, actors, police and social workers. Topics explored are biographies, LGBT culture (theatre and literature, fashion, cinema and television) and lifestyle, parenting, race, AIDS, and the histories of the homosexual movement in England and Scotland. Initiatives supportive of lesbians and gays generated at the local municipal level of government and their impacts and consequences for both governments and the idea of sexual identity in a public sphere are explored by Davina Cooper in *Sexing the City: Lesbian and Gay Politics Within the Activist State*. This work originated as her doctoral dissertation at the University of Warwick. The political realm continued to be examined by Anna Marie Smith in *New Right Discourse on Race and Sexuality : Britain, 1968-1990*, of particular value for its closing chapter on “ Thatcherism’s Promotion of Homosexuality “ which includes the full text of Clause 28.

Debate over the social place of LGBT people was also taken up by the National Council for Civil Liberties with the publication of *Sexuality and the State: Human Rights Violations against Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgendered People*. The background to this report was Parliament’s rejection in February 1994 of a proposed equalization of the ages of consent for sexual activity for both homosexual and heterosexual men. Instead, the House of Commons passed an amendment to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill, reducing the age of legal consensual homosexuality from 21 to 18, while retaining the age of 16 for heterosexuals. The first section of *Sexuality and the State* discusses the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the ways in which the European Court of Human Rights has defended LGBT people in a number of cases from member nations of the European Community. Discussion then shifts in the second section to the record of the British government in specific areas of LGBT civil rights-employment, housing, health care (including HIV/AIDS), freedom of expression, education, marriage, families and adoption, the prisons and the criminal justice system and the legal status of transgendered people. A list of desired reforms to address the problems is provided in the appendix and offers a useful overview of the legal situation for LGBT people in Britain in the mid-1990s.

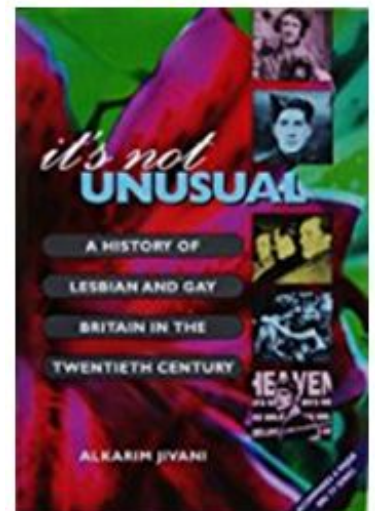
Despite its title, the collection *The Margins of the City: Gay Men’s Urban Lives* is not an extension of the earlier biographical collection *Walking After Midnight*- rather, it examines the marginalized geographic spaces which gay men have made their own (ranging from the physical to sexuality and journalism) with research presented on the cities of Manchester and Newcastle upon Tyne as well as Toronto. And a second 1994 work, a biography of Prince Albert Victor (who died in 1892 at the age of twenty-eight), *Prince Eddy and the Homosexual Underworld*, revisits the Cleveland Street case and places it within the contexts both of the prince’s life and the ways in which the rumored involvement of a prominent aristocrat was handled by the courts and the press.

The longest and most detailed critical work done to date on the coverage given to British LGBT people by the nation’s newspapers and television appeared in 1995. *Mediawatch : the Treatment of Male and Female Homosexuality in the British Media* was written by Terry Sanderson, who for twelve years had produced a column with the same title for *Gay Times* on homosexuality’s discussion and depiction in the popular, quality, right-wing, liberal and non-Tory presses . To aid his readers in sorting out which newspaper belongs in what category, Sanderson thoughtfully includes a list of publication names as a “Note on Terminology.” Topics surveyed include the political uses made of homosexuality, the issue of “outing”, language used in stories, and the evolution of LGBT-related coverage. *Mediawatch* was joined in 1995 by three other works approaching the British LGBT experience from a legal perspective. The first was *State of the Queer Nation: A Critique of Gay and Lesbian Politics in 1990s Britain*, a pamphlet authored by BBC journalist and producer Chris Woods discussing topics as varied as the politics of liberation, commercialization of the gay community, the gay media and AIDS. A more lengthy work is the anthology *Legal Inversions: Lesbians, Gay Men, and the Politics of Law* edited by Didi Herman. Of the ten papers, two contribute to the pool of British LGBT scholarship- Leslie Moran’s “The Homosexualization of English law” and “Getting “the Family Right”: Legislating Heterosexuality in Britain, 1986-91“ by Davina Cooper and Didi Herman. The Moran essay examines the concept of “ homosexual offences “ in some detail while the Cooper and Herman article reviews the political framework of sexuality-related legislation during the Thatcher years , similar to Anna Marie Smith’s discussion in *New Right Discourse on Race and Sexuality : Britain, 1968-1990*.

One of the more unique works chronicling homosexuality in British society and culture also appeared in 1995, approaching the topic from a context familiar to many people from such beloved novels as *Goodbye Mr. Chips*, the English public school system. In *The Poisoned Bowl : Sex, Repression and the Public School System*, author Alisdare Hickson first assembles examples from the historical record of how same-gender attractions were defined and policed by many facets of public schools from regulations to architecture, then offers reminiscences from “old boys “ of their school experiences arranged alphabetically by the name of the school.

Building on the foundations laid by *Inventing Ourselves: Lesbian Life Stories* in 1989 and Emma Donoghue’s *Passions Between Women : British Lesbian Culture, 1668-1801*, in 1993, Emily Hamer’s *Britannia’s Glory: A History of Twentieth-Century Lesbians* used as its source material documents already part of the public record and in public archives. The introduction is especially useful for its discussion of the social factors affecting the presence of evidence for lesbians during different eras, ranging from the lack of women sexologists to considerations of how sex was viewed. Individual chapters cover the suffragist era of the late nineteenth century, World War I and its aftermath, the life and writings of Marguerite Radclyffe Hall, the lesbian world of the 1930s, the impact of World War II on the British lesbian population, the more familiar homosexual landscape of Britain in the 1950s, the founding of Arena Three, and lesbian politics of the 1970s and 1980s. The other works done on the British LGBT community in 1996 were somewhat more specialized. Patrick Higgins’ *Heterosexual Dictatorship: Male Homosexuality in Postwar Britain* provides a detailed view of the inner workings of the Wolfenden Commission and its political contexts, while in *Brief Encounters: Lesbians and Gays in British Cinema 1930-1971*, Stephen Bourne provides a valuable year-by-year examination of films (some of which may not be familiar to North American audiences) which contained characters who were openly intended to be gay or lesbian. In *Gay Skins: Class, Masculinity and Queer Appropriation* , Murray Healy challenges and explores the assumption “that ‘gay’ was a middle- class identity and that , until about 1970, most working-class men could not identify with it,” using the adoption and use of the codes of dress and behavior which defined the “skinhead” as a focus (Healy 1996: 1).

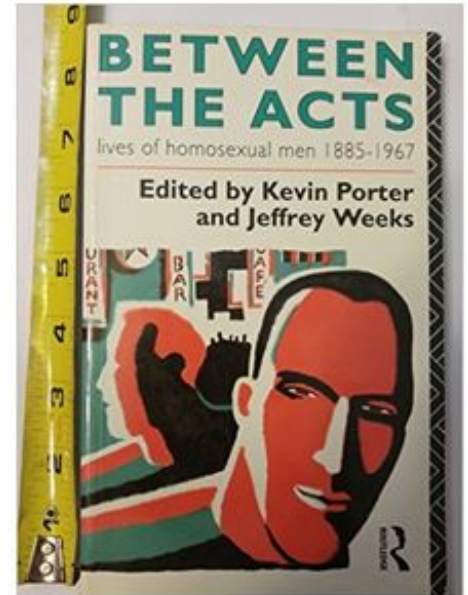
The closing years of the twentieth century opened in 1997 with the publication of Alkarim Jivani’s *It’s Not Unusual: A History of Lesbian and Gay Britain in the Twentieth Century*. While arranged chronologically from 1918 to 1996, it draws upon new interviews with thirty-six men and women whose lives and loves with their own gender are interwoven with accounts of the gay and lesbian scenes of pre-and post-World War II England, the war itself, the years of liberation activism after 1967 , and the coming of AIDS. The extensive use of photographs of the contributors and notable places and people of the eras gives this volume a very personal touch. A second more lengthy addition to the chronicle of LGBT Britain was also published in 1997, Hugh David’s *On Queer Street: A Social History of British Homosexuality, 1895-1995*, featuring numerous accounts from the men who shared their memories with the author. And in *Feasting With Panthers: Social and Cultural Dimensions of the Wilde Trials*, author Michael Foldy traced the varied impacts the exceptionally public case of Oscar Wilde exerted across English society and its structures.



In the legal literature, 1997 is notable for the July 1 publication of the report of the findings of the European Commission of Human Rights in the case of *Sutherland v. United Kingdom*, filed in 1994, in which the plaintiff contended that existing English law setting different minimum ages for heterosexual and homosexual activity (age sixteen and age eighteen respectively) was discriminatory. The Commission found in favor of Sutherland, which eventually led to the equalizing of the ages of consent in 2001. The full text of the report is available online file:///C:/Users/c60rbr1/Downloads/001-45912.pdf.

In 1998, a different approach to identifying gay men from the recent British past was brought forth in Oliver Buckton’s *Secret Selves : Confession and Same-sex Desire in Victorian Autobiography*, and the 1990 anthology *Between the Acts : Lives of Homosexual Men, 1885-1967* was reissued, with a thoughtful preface bearing the life

stories it contained into a future unimagined when they were first recorded, and noting the common threads of the 1978 narratives with the contemporary coming out voices. Among those voices were the men and women who created, maintained and carried out direct action events under the banner of OutRage, and Ian Lucas, a member from its beginnings in 1990 to 1994, interviewed several dozen former members to produce *OutRage!: An Oral History*, whose coverage ended in 1996. The text is chronological, with statements from different contributors providing depth to individual actions and debates. A timeline of the major actions undertaken by OutRage between 1990 and 1995 is appended.



The first decade of the new century witnessed the further enrichment of British LGBT literature through the publication of several significant works in the genres of biography and social history. In her 2001 work *Fashioning Sapphism: The Origins of a Modern English Lesbian Culture*, Laura Doan takes up English lesbian history through the lens of what it meant to be so as represented in the fields of sexology, visual representation, literature, fashion and law by the lives of prominent individual women. Readers will find her introductory discussion of the transformation of how long-term relationships between women were regarded before and after the publication of *The Well of Loneliness* in 1929 very valuable. The complex figure and history of art historian Anthony Blunt (who was exposed as a Soviet spy by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1979) are explored at length in another 2001 title, Miranda Carter's *Anthony Blunt: His Lives*. 2003 saw the appearance of a work written by Alan Miller bearing the same title as the 1968 paperback by James Graham. *The Homosexual Kings of England* and discussing the same six monarchs profiled in the earlier work. This was balanced that year by the publication of *Nameless Offences: Homosexual Desire in the Nineteenth Century* by Alan Cocks which examined sodomy trials held between 1830 and 1889 and was originally the author's 1998 doctoral dissertation from Manchester.



In 2004, a massive two-volume set appeared, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe: Berlin, London, Paris, 1919-1939*, the English translation of a doctoral thesis presented to the Institute of Political Studies by Florence Tamagne. While much of the text deals with Germany and France and their homosexual cultures under a variety of social and political regimes and limits, there is a substantial amount of information on England included. The opening chapter, "Magical Cities, Mythical Cities: The Geography of Where to Meet" contains a brief section on "London, or the Glamour of Uniforms" looking at the city's gay scene in the 1920s. Chapter three, "An Inversion of Values: The Cult of Homosexuality" observes that

"Although closely tied to the development of the German homosexual scene, the "cult of homosexuality" was specific to England, and particularly to the years 1919-1933. The traditional aversion to homosexuality gave way, in certain sectors of the society, to a tolerance that soon shifted into approval, and then to adulation. Homosexuality was spread in the public schools, the universities, and the intellectual circles. It became a fashion, a life style, a sign of recognition in certain classes and certain circles. The cult of homosexuality was the basis by which homosexuals gained entry into certain British institutions and began to permeate the literature, thereby imperceptibly molding the society. (Tamagne 2004 : 105)

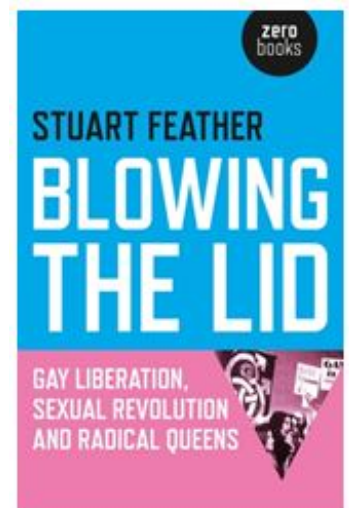
For the period after 1933, the first section of the seventh chapter “Criminals before the Law: Reactionary England, 1919-1939” provides a legal context for same-sex activities between the two World Wars.

2005 added the biography of popular comedian and writer Julian Clary, *A Young Man's Passage*, to the pool of British LGBT life stories, and a re-examination of three incidents from the late nineteenth century and their influence in creating the atmosphere where the Oscar Wilde trials would take place was done in Morris Kaplan's *Sodom on the Thames: Sex, Love, and Scandal in Wilde Times*. In 2006, the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights published a short historical analysis and overview of the party's involvement with LGBT rights, *Sodom, Gomorrah and the New Jerusalem: Labour and Lesbian and Gay Rights, From Edward Carpenter to Today*. A biography of mathematician and computer genius Alan Turing interwoven with his theoretical contributions appeared in 2006 from David Leavitt (who aptly reused the title of a classic 1934 espionage film directed by Alfred Hitchcock as a descriptor for Turing's complex life) , *The Man Who Knew Too Much : Alan Turing and the Invention of the Computer*. And in an unusual work combining social history and homosexuality , *The Forger's Tale: The Search for Odeziaku*, Stephanie Newell explores the constantly invented life and career of Dr. John Moray Stuart-Young in colonial Nigeria.

The 2006 anthology *Queer Masculinities, 1550-1800: Citing Same-sex Desire in the Early Modern World* edited by Katherine O'Donnell and Michael O'Rourke contains the essay “ Between Men in Early Modern England “ by Goran Stanukovic with the observation that “ what has been central to the critical writing about early modern sexualities in England, between 1550 and 1800 are arguments about whether , in the complex pre-enlightenment history of (homo) sexuality , we should be talking about sexual acts or erotic identities, history or heritage. “ (Stanukovic 2006: 233.) Matt Houlbrook's *Queer London :Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957* , also published in 2006, begins with the 1918 “ Black Book “ libel trial and examines the creation of queer spaces in the capital and their regulation by police and civil authorities up to the formation of the Wolfenden Commission.

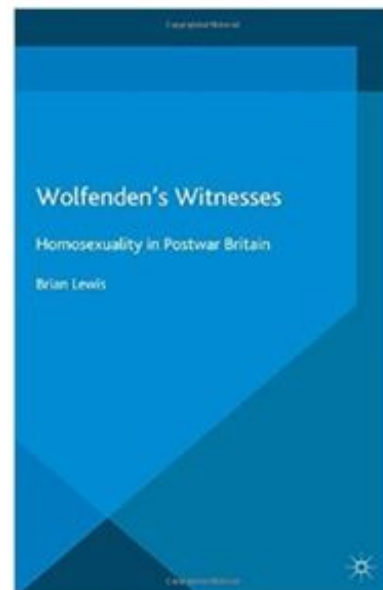
In 2007, the depth of historical analysis of the past of queer Britons was extended to include medieval times with Matt Cook and Robert Mills' *A Gay History of Britain: Love and Sex Between Men since the Middle Ages*. The opening essay, “Male-Male Love and Sex in the Middle Ages, 1000-1500” by Robert Mills provides useful background to the post-1500 world where same-gender relationships have been more extensively studied and written back into accessible histories. The evolution of London's male homosexual community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century up to the beginning of World War I is detailed in in Matt Cook's 2008 work *London and the Culture of Homosexuality, 1885-1914* neatly complementing the coverage given in *Queer London* two years earlier. Rebuilding London and the ways queer folk participated in the changing urban landscape defined by the planners and architects shaping a new city from the ruins of the Blitz are explored by Richard Hornsey in *The Spiv and the Architect: Unruly Life in Postwar London from 2010*.

The last few years have seen established genres in British LGBT writing continue, with columnist and playwright Damian Barr sharing his life history in 2013 as *Maggie & Me: Coming Out and Coming of Age in 1980s Scotland*. That same year the anthology *British Queer History: New Approaches and Perspectives* edited by Brian Lewis appeared from Manchester University Press. Among its eleven essays is “Mr. Grey Goes to Washington: The Homophile Internationalism of Britain's Homosexual Law Reform Society” by David Minto. In 2014, ,a dark chapter from the LGBT history of wartime Wales was retrieved and set forth in William Cross' well-researched work *The Abergavenny Witch Hunt: An Account of the Prosecution of Over Twenty Homosexuals in a Small Welsh Town in 1942*. More general examinations of the evolution of the LGBT community of England were provided in 2015 by Sebastian Buckle in *The Way Out : A History of Homosexuality in Modern Britain* and Stuart Feather's *Blowing the Lid : Gay Liberation, Sexual Revolution and Radical Queens* . Echoing the Imperial context of *The Forger's Tale*, Jean Findlay explored the complicated life of her great-great-uncle in *Chasing Lost Time : the Life of C.K. Scott Moncrieff* :



Soldier, Spy, and Translator, best known for his English translation of Proust published as *Remembrance of Things Past*.

In 2016, available information on process of gathering the data for the Wolfenden Report was significantly augmented by the publication for the first time of the full texts of the testimonies offered to the Wolfenden Commission as *Wolfenden's Witnesses: Homosexuality in Postwar Britain*. The groups of witnesses represented law enforcement personnel, the scientific and medical communities, and advocates of religious and moral reforms as well as homosexuals. Their voices restored to the historical record make it possible to evaluate how long and diverse the roads of change have been for the LGBT populations of Britain, and the directions in which they may yet travel.



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