



LSE Spectrum Literary Festival lecture

A Little Gay History

Professor Richard Parkinson

Professor of Egyptology, University of Oxford

Sue Donnelly

Chair, LSE



Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: **#LSElitfest**





UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

The British
Museum

A LITTLE GAY HISTORY





Sex and Society in Ancient Greece and Rome

How did the Romans view sexuality?

In ancient Rome, as in ancient Greece, what depicted that were deemed in society, both socially and sexually.

Images of Roman deities depicted their aspects from ancient Rome. As the time the Warren Cup was made, there was a growing liberalization of Greek culture. This may be reflected in its scenes of Greek deities making love.



Why is it called the Warren Cup?

The silver cup is named after Lord Warren, its first owner.

Warren was born in the USA in 1862. He lived most of his life in England. As the son of a wealthy family he inherited the family fortune and was able to indulge his passion for collecting objects from ancient Greece and Rome.

Warren bought the cup in 1898. It is his only Greek object in his collection. He called it 'The Warren Cup'.

Although it is a small object, it is one of the most important in the collection. It is the only Greek object in the collection. It is the only Greek object in the collection. It is the only Greek object in the collection.

The Warren Cup

Two and a half inches in diameter, the Warren Cup is a small object, but it is one of the most important in the collection.

The Warren Cup is a small object, but it is one of the most important in the collection. It is the only Greek object in the collection. It is the only Greek object in the collection. It is the only Greek object in the collection.



Antinous as Osiris

Antinous was the lover of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (reigned AD 117–138). In AD 130 Hadrian and his imperial entourage were touring Egypt when Antinous drowned in mysterious circumstances. This tragic event happened on the same day the locals were commemorating the death, by drowning in the Nile, of the Egyptian god Osiris.

Antinous is shown here as Osiris, suggesting that he too was reborn as a god from the waters of the Nile. The stance, headdress and loincloth resemble Egyptian statues, but have been slightly altered in a classical, naturalistic and subtly eroticised style. The statue was discovered in 1738–39 near what we now know as a spectacular memorial to Antinous at Hadrian's Villa.

Vatican Museums, Vatican City, Museo Gregoriano Egizio, 22795

Hadrian: Empire and Conflict

Other statues of Antinous and fragments from his memorial are on display in the current special exhibition in the Reading Room.

INTRODUCTION

This guide is concerned with gender roles, norms, and values within Western art from the Renaissance to the present day, and the tour it presents is strongly inspired by contemporary critical gender studies. Since the 1970s, one of the hot topics of discussion among those interested in art has been the question of why there were no great female artists in art history when female artists did in fact exist? Art history tries to make amends for past marginalisation by supplementing art collections with more works by women and works that do not take heterosexual norms as a given. The issue of the significance of gender in relation to art and its spectators is not solely the province of modern art; it can be traced as far back in history as one wishes.



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ENGLISH

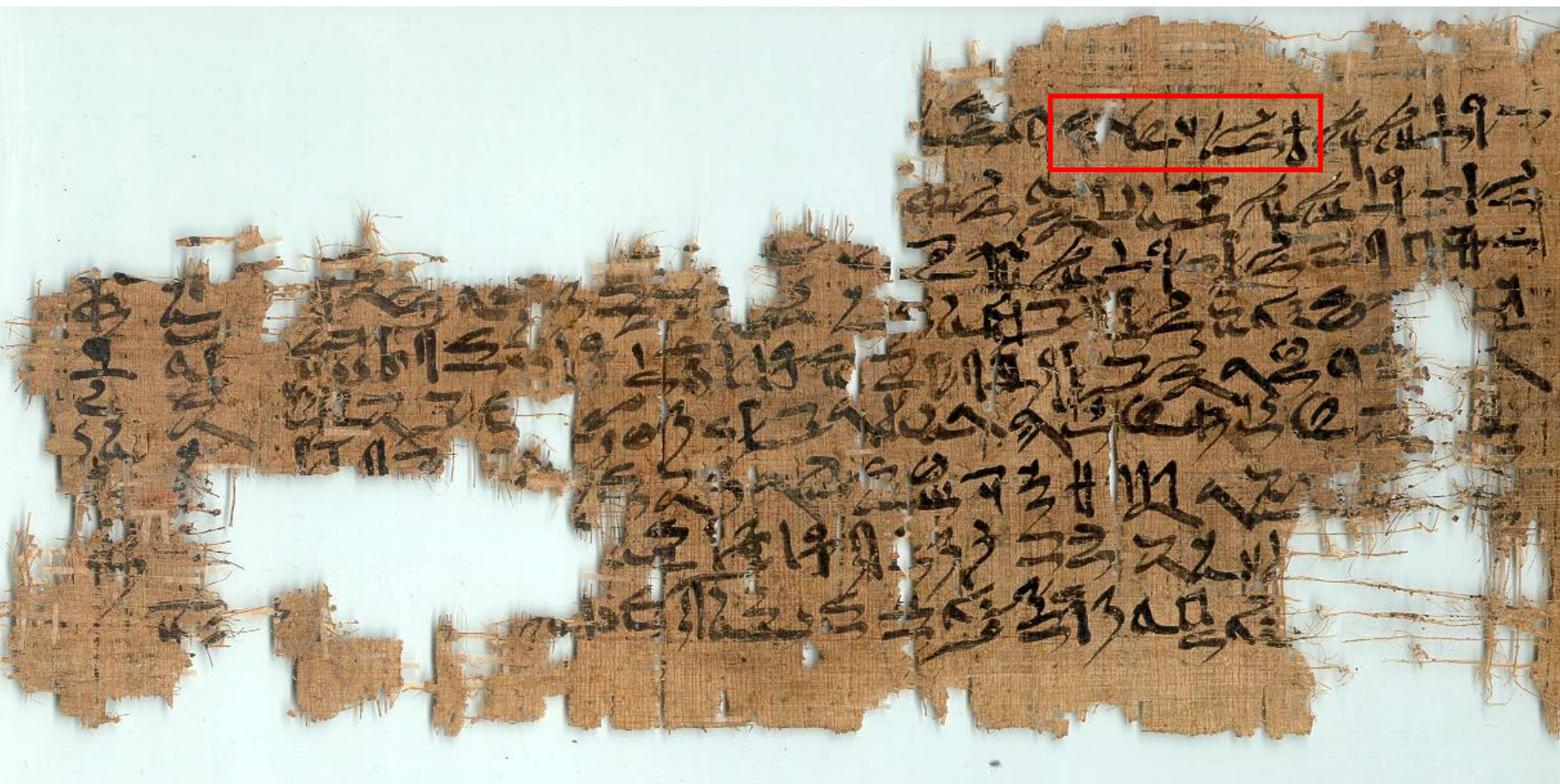
WORKS ABOUT

GENDER IDENTITIES

SMK 



Statens Museum for Kunst
National Gallery of Denmark







Mwah... is this the first recorded gay kiss?

Greg Reeder



One of the images of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep that have excited speculation



Egyptian manicurists become homosexual icons

A WALL painting in an ancient Egyptian tomb, showing an intimate embrace between two male manicurists, could be the first recorded depiction of an openly homosexual couple.

The theory has emerged from an international conference at a University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

William Holland

The site already attracts many gay tourists.

Archeologists have been baffled by the two men's relationship since the tomb was uncovered in 1964 in the necropolis of Theban area.

most intimate embrace permitted in Egyptian art of the time — seen as a form of kissing.

Their wives and children are relegated to the background. In one scene, in which the two men share a final banquet before their journey into the afterlife, the children are shown in the background.

Egyptologist based in San Francisco, believes the wall paintings suggest homosexuality could be the answer.

Reeder said Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep adopted poses usually restricted to husbands and wives in other Egyptian art.

Khnumhotep were twins. John Baines, a professor of Egyptology at Oxford University, has previously suggested that this was the most likely explanation for the "exaggerated affection" displayed between the men.

At the conference, however,

Richard Parkinson, assistant keeper in the department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan at the British Museum, said that the similarities between the names of the two men suggested they were brothers, although some Egyptians did adopt new names later in life. "The danger is that

He said that homosexual relationships, commonplace in ancient Greece and Rome, were hinted at in Egyptian papyri.

"When gay marriage is being

our society today, though that doesn't mean we play fast and loose with the data."

The tomb was restored by German archeologists in the late 1970s and opened to the public in the 1990s. While gay



Ancient Egypt To Japan - An LGBT Trail Round The British Museum

By Kate Smith | 23 February 2007

Tags: Objects | woodcarving | stone carving | government | All tags

Trail



A graphic funerary papyrus from ancient Egypt - just one of the intriguing items in the British Museum collection that features in this LGBT History Month trail. Courtesy the British Museum

In celebration of LGBT History Month, we've walked through the galleries of the British Museum looking for objects and stories that trace the history of the gay experience.

Taking the long view reminds us that although there's been same-sex desire in every culture, it's been 'packaged' in very different ways - as has heterosexual sex. As we'll see, the attitudes of some ancient cultures are almost a mirror image of received truths today.

The end effect is to leave us pleasantly at sea - to realise that the markers for 'lesbian' and 'gay' that have served the community very well in achieving

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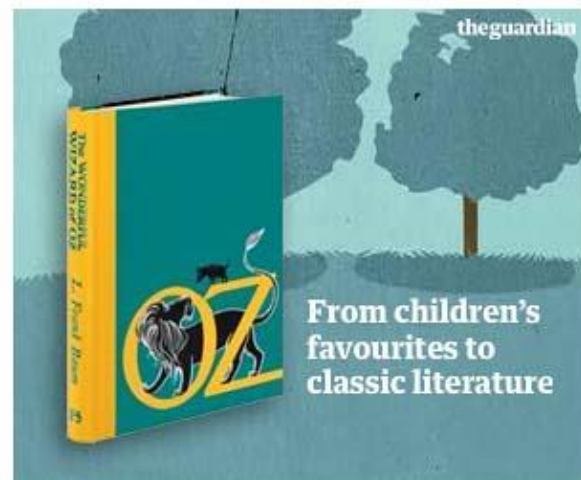


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Same-sex desire and gender identity

The evidence for same-sex desire has often been overlooked in the past, but museums and their collections can allow us to look back and see the diversity of human desire and gender throughout history.



- [Same-sex desire](#)

Evidence for sexual love between members of the same sex through time

- [Gender identity](#)

Fluid ideas of gender from the ancient to the modern world

- [Changing attitudes](#)

From persecution to the struggle for equality

'Homosexuality' as a way to describe a single category of behaviour is a modern European term, but same-sex desire is not a modern western invention (as has sometimes been claimed).

The British Museum has a large number of objects that provide evidence that desire between members of the same sex and fluid ideas of gender have always been aspects of human existence and experience, although they are culturally constructed in a variety of ways.

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Room 61

The Michael Cullen Gallery

The tomb-chapel of Nebamun

Ancient Egyptian life and death

Nebamun was an official in the service of the pharaoh Amenhotep III. His tomb-chapel is a masterpiece of ancient Egyptian art, showing the deceased in a variety of scenes of daily life, including hunting, fishing, and feasting. The tomb is decorated with a large number of reliefs and paintings, and is one of the best-preserved examples of its kind.



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stela



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Full: Back



Side: left



Side: right

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Object types

stela ([all objects](#))

Materials

granodiorite ([all objects](#))

Techniques

relief ([all objects](#))

incised ([scope note](#) | [all objects](#))

Place (findspot)

Found/Acquired Egypt ([scope note](#) | [all objects](#))

Period/Culture

18th Dynasty ([scope note](#) | [all objects](#))

Authority

Ruler Amenhotep III ([biographical details](#) | [all objects](#))

Description

Granodiorite stela of Hor and Suty: a round-topped stela, carved within the rectangular framework of the door. The inscriptions throughout are incised and the figures carved in sunk relief. On the lintel of the door are three horizontal lines of text reading from the centre outwards. On the right side, there are three vertical lines of text. At the base of the right panel above a figure of Hor, seated at a table of offerings (almost entirely obliterated), are four (?) vertical lines of text. On the left side are three vertical lines of text. At the base of the left panel above a figure of Suty, seated at a table of offerings (almost entirely obliterated), are four vertical lines of text. On the right and left of the top of the arch of the stela itself, in the angle formed by the frame of the door is a 'wedjat'-eye. In the arch of the stela is a winged disc. The stela comprises two registers. The first register is divided into two symmetrical scenes: On the right Anubis, shown with jackal's head, wearing a short skirt and holding a sceptre in the left hand and 'ankh' in the right, is adored by Hor and a woman (both almost entirely obliterated). Above Anubis, there are two vertical columns of text. Above Hor and the woman, are four vertical columns of text. On the left Osiris, shown in mummy form, wearing a crown, beard, necklace and counterpoise, and holding a sceptre in his hands, is adored by Suty and a woman (both obliterated). Above Osiris are two vertical columns of text. Above Suty and the woman, are four vertical columns of text. The second register carries an inscription in twenty-one horizontal lines. The stela is well preserved, but there are minor abrasions. The name of Suty in the left hand panel of the door and all the figures with their accompanying inscriptions, apart from those of the gods, were erased in antiquity.









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Writing ▶

The British Museum collection includes thousands of objects with writing on them: a library of humanity's memories

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Money ▶

Money has been used in different forms all over the world for over 5,000 years. The British Museum has one of the largest collections of money in the world.



Animals ▶

Explore the complex relationship between humans and animals as it is reflected in the British Museum collection



Same-sex desire and gender identity ▶

The collection allows us to look at the diversity of human desire and gender throughout history



Time ▶

What is time? How do we measure it? What does it mean to us? Explore the different ways we perceive time through objects in the British Museum collection

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Sara Delma Babs Shaun

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It's easy for us too, to ignore our own bias, and completely misread the past. In ancient Egyptian temple sculptures and reliefs it is not unusual to see images of a pharaoh embracing a god who has a huge erection. What looks to us like an unambiguous homoerotic image is nothing of the kind – the pharaoh is merely claiming in the power of the god.

The past teaches us not to regard the contemporary way of cutting the sexual cake as fixed. Many traditional cultures have posited the idea of 'two-spirited people' or a 'third sex' (typically male). But Plains Indian culture supposed a whole gender continuum between male and female with many variations in between.

Whether a particular kind of love is considered problematically 'deviant' often depends on geography, time, social norms and class. Emperors have often been free to pursue a wider range of sexual tastes, and in the Classical galleries of the British Museum there are plenty, from Julius Caesar to Tiberius who were known to have tried pretty much everything.

This broad experience has not just been for the elite. In many of the AD cultures in this trail – from Maoris to Native Americans – we see a pragmatic acceptance of ordinary people who did not belong to the sexual mainstream. This latitude was frequently suppressed by Western missionaries – and some of the evidence of that forgotten acceptance has been brought to the British Museum. The long-term effects are still playing out: despite courageous gay rights movements, homosexuality remains illegal in most of Africa. By contrast, some younger Native Americans are reclaiming their older ideas about gender and sex as a way of reviving a pre-colonial heritage.

The conversation about what sexuality is, and how it can be expressed, is ongoing. It's not just same-sex activities that are redefined over time. The approved behaviours of heterosexual women in the West changed enormously in the

20th century; with a corresponding relaxation of the idea of the straight man as a stern, providing paterfamilias. It also became possible for the first time, legally and medically, for someone to change their sex. In 2010 academic research explored the kissing games practised by straight male students in Bath; performers from La Roux to Alan Cumming rejected the current proliferating tray of options offered by LGBTIQI and described themselves as 'pansexual'. Although the now traditional announcement of 'mum, dad, I'm gay' still stands, it's clear that we're still nowhere near a completely nuanced picture of all the different sexual ways of being.

Only about half of what we've uncovered at the British Museum is currently on display – but that's to do with lack of display space and the conservation needs of fragile objects, rather than an impulse for censorship.

You can find a version of this trail – and see all the undisplayed objects in detail – under Themes in the Explore section at www.britishmuseum.org. Visit 'untold queer London' on Facebook or email untold.london@gmail.com to discuss viewing undisplayed objects and to tell us what you thought.

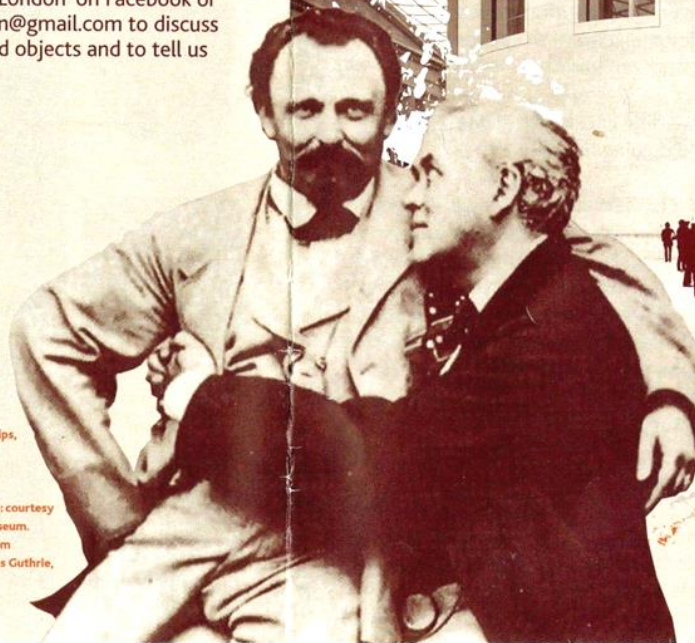
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LONDON

LGBT Objects at the British Museum

Explore 4,000 years of history





This week's magazine

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« NO ORDINARY ALIEN

LOVE & SEX »

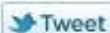


A HISTORY OF THE GAY WORLD IN 10 OBJECTS

Posted on February 3, 2011



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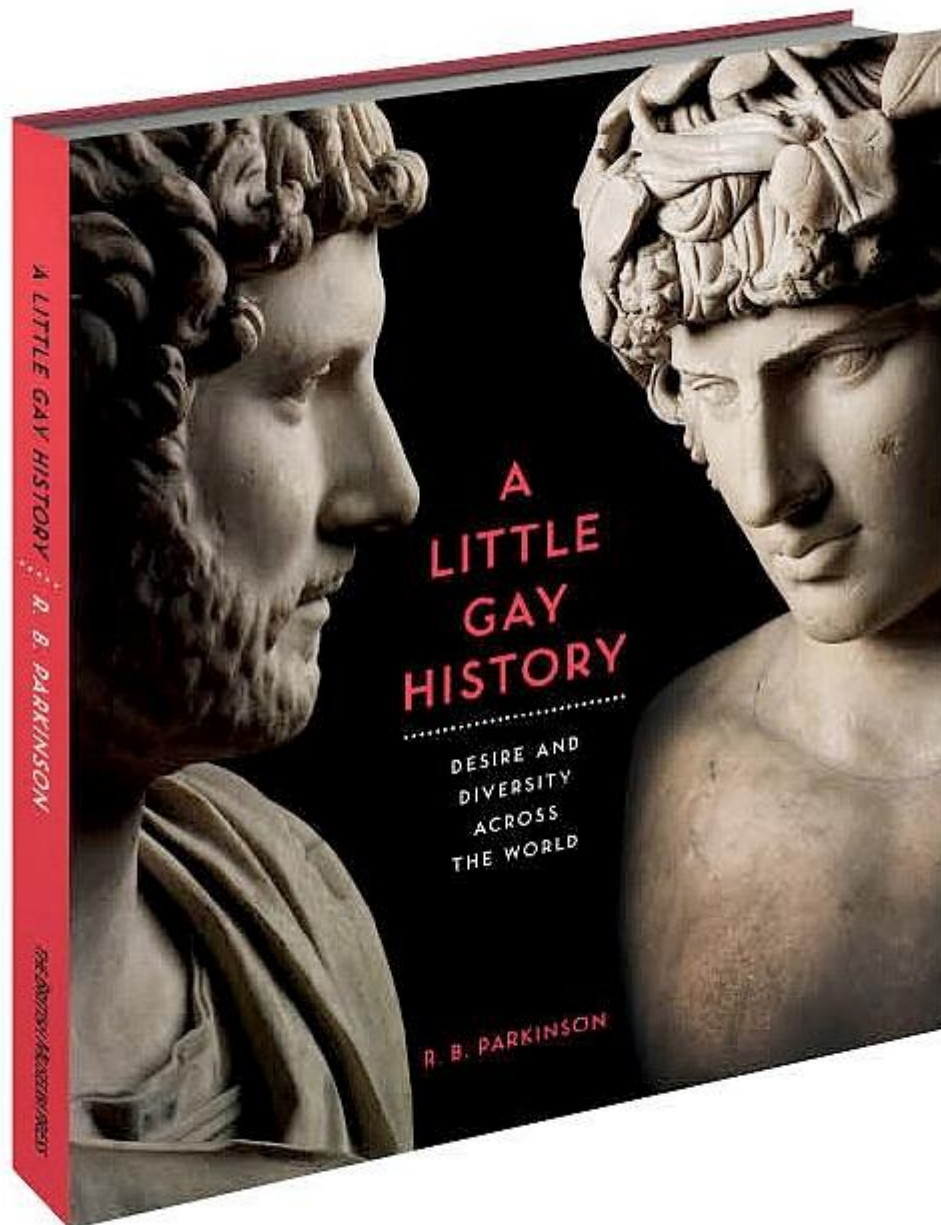
Last year A History of the World in 100 Objects was BBC Radio's second most popular programme. Nearly two million people downloaded it every month. Only a couple of the objects were LGBT related. But that doesn't mean that the British Museum, which co-produced the radio series, is short of gay relics. To tie in with this year's LGBT History Month, David McGillivray presents his selection of just 10 of the most fascinating...

Go to the British Museum's website (full details at the end of the opposite page) and you can follow a trail of some of the objects in the Museum's collection that have important gay significance. "We were anxious to show the range of desires and genders across all cultures," says Egyptologist Richard Parkinson, who helped curate the LGBT trail. "Same-sex desire is not just a European or a modern phenomenon." Consequently the gay trail encircles the globe and covers nearly 4,000 years. It's one of only six themed trails on the British Museum site. (The others are Leaders and Rulers, Money, Writing, Animals and Time). "It's a sign of how fully the Museum is committed to LGBT issues," adds Parkinson.

- *Indicates objects on permanent display at the British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1, open daily from 10am-5.30pm (later on Fridays). Anyone can make a free application to see objects not on display.
- To see and read about all the objects on the LGBT trail, go to www.britishmuseum.org. Click "Explore" then "Themes" then "Same Sex Desire and Gender Identity."
- If you'd like to be sent a free map of the LGBT trail, go to Facebook, search for Write Queer London,



britishmuseum.org/channel/events/2012/audio_unrecorded_history.aspx



A LITTLE GAY HISTORY R. B. PARKINSON

THE ANTHONY TRISTAN PRESS

A LITTLE GAY HISTORY

DESIRE AND
DIVERSITY
ACROSS
THE WORLD

R. B. PARKINSON



When I am with him, smoking or talking quietly ahead, or whatever it may be, I see, beyond my own happiness and intimacy, occasional glimpses of the happiness of 1000s of others whose names I shall never hear, and know that there is a great unrecorded history.

E. M. Forster (ed. M. Lago and P. N. Furbank), *Selected Letters of E. M. Forster I: 1879–1920* (London 1983), 269



considered to be 'unspeakable' started to request the right not to be persecuted. After generations of protests and campaigns, attitudes have now changed in many places. In 2011 the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, stated simply that 'gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights'. This change has, however, not always been smooth or easy. Periods of economic hardship or of disease have often made people look

A wedding in the romantic setting of the Canadian Rockies in 2009. This Australian couple, Andrew J. Lees and Sandi K. Lapornik, travelled to Canada for their wedding because same-sex marriage was not legal in Australia.





Introduction: A 'great unrecorded history'

Glimpses of a History

Early desires?	9000 BC	Erotic voyeurism	1770
A gender-changing goddess southern	1800 BC	A celebrity soldier	1787
Ancient Egyptian twins or lovers?	1375 BC	Pacific embraces	1800
Heroic love in Mesopotamia	1200 BC	English abroad	1818
Iconography not pornography	950 BC	Spring in Japan	1840
The Lesbian poet	600 BC	From secret to science	1865
Greek men together	540 BC	One year in North America	1891
Italian seductions	50 BC	Desire in the museum	1900
The 'Warren cup'	AD 10	Out in Africa	1900
Glimpses of women together	50	Aesthetic and other movements	1905
An imperial romance	130	Expressionist ceramics	1925
The lord of the dance	1100	A historical facade	1928
Rape or rapture	1200	Loves ancient and modern	1966
A medieval sinner	1320	Towards equality	1967
'New' worlds	1513	Protests and rights	1970
The 'divine' prisoner	1533	A quilt	1980
Love among warriors	1550	Remembering the dead	1981-
Divine androgyny	1600	Indian loves	1993
Shakespearean love	1609	The rainbow world	1994
Pages at the Persian court	1625	Playing with tradition	1997
Executing sodomites	1730	Towards a modern view	Now

Epilogue: (Re-)writing histories

EROTIC VOYEURISM

Traditional Japanese theatre has a convention of transforming sexual identities in performance, as with Shakespeare's theatre. In the seventeenth century, women were banned from appearing on the Kabuki stage, and men performed

female roles. Near a city's Kabuki theatres, there were teahouses where actors could meet their patrons, and young actors of female roles would sometimes provide sexual services to paying clients. These male-male relationships



OPPOSITE Suzuki Harunobu, *Mane'emon no. 5*, depicting Mane'emon as voyeur. Edo, 1770.

Woodblock print on paper, 20 x 28 cm.

RIGHT Chokosai Eisho, *Fumi no kiyogaki*. Two women with a sex toy, which they are anointing with lubricant, Japan, 1793–1800.

Woodblock print on paper, 25 x 35.9 cm.



were often structured by age, as with the samurai, who made up a significant part of the clientele for this not entirely legal demimonde.

This colour woodblock print from 1770 is one of a series of prints, *Elegant Amorous Mane'emon*, by the artist Suzuki Harunobu (died 1770). They illustrate the adventures of Ukiyonosuke, who is transformed into the tiny Mane'emon ('Bean-man') and who then uses his size to spy on various people making love: his role as a voyeur mirrors that of the viewer of the erotic work of art. Here Mane'emon flies on a kite up to the window of a teahouse to observe a young trainee Kabuki actor in bed with a client. The attractive young actor

strokes himself as his client makes love to him. Mane'emon comments,

Good heavens, the method of having male sex involves some elaborate handiwork.

Such commercial erotic prints were produced from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, and could include women making love together: in one album by Chōkōshi Eishō from around 1793–1800 most of the twelve prints show men with women, but one shows two women together, preparing to use a sex toy.



Il nome scemato scizzo non mi piace di che audivo
che se abbiate tempo da volere forte unire non mi dardava
in pararsi e se mi piace cagliare che non sapete

SHAKE-SPEARES.

Seemes seeing, but effectually is out:
 For it no forme deliuers to the heart
 Of bird, of flowre, or shape which it doth lack,
 Of his quick obiects hath the minde no part,
 Nor his owne vision houlds what it doth catch:
 For if it see the rud'st or gentlest sight,
 The most sweet-fauor or deformedst creature,
 The mountaine, or the sea, the day, or night:
 The Croe, or Doue, it shapes them to your feature.
 Incapable of more repleat, with you,
 My most true minde thus maketh mine vntrue.

114

OR whether doth my minde being crown'd with you
 Drinke vp the monarks plague this flattery?
 Or whether shall I say mine eie saith true,
 And that your loue taught it this *Alcumie*?
 To make of monsters, and things indigest,
 Such cherubines as your sweet selfe resemble,
 Creating euery bad a perfect best
 As fast as obiects to his beames assemble:
 Oh tis the first, tis flattery in my seeing,
 And my great minde most kingly drinkes it vp,
 Mine eie well knowes what with his gust is grecing,
 And to his pallat doth prepare the cup.
 If it be poison'd, tis the lesser sinne,
 That mine eye loues it and doth first beginne.

115

THose lines that I before haue writ doe lie,
 Euen those that said I could not loue you deerer,
 Yet then my iudgement knew no reason why,
 My most full flame should afterwards burne cleerer.
 But reckening time, whose milliond accidents
 Creepe in twixt vowes, and change decrees of Kings,
 Tan sacred beaurie, blunt the sharpest intents,
 Diuert strong mindes to th' course of altring things:
 Alas why fearing of times tiranie,

Might

SONNETS.

Might I not then say now I loue you best,
 When I was certaine ore in-certainty,
 Crowning the present, doubting of the rest:
 Loue is a Babe, then might I not say so
 To giue full growth to that which still doth grow.

119

LET me not to the marriage of true mindes
 Admit impediments, loue is not loue
 Which alters when it alteration findes,
 Or bends with the remouer to remoue.
 O no, it is an euer fixed marke
 That lookes on tempests and is neuer shaken;
 It is the star to euery wandering barke,
 Whose worths vnknowne, although his high be taken.
 Lou's not Times foole, though rose lips and cheeks
 Within his bending sickles compasse come,
 Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes,
 But beares it out euen to the edge of doome:
 If this be error and vpon me proued,
 I neuer writ, nor no man euer loued.

117

ACCUSE me thus, that I haue scanted all,
 Wherein I should your great deserts repay,
 Forgot vpon your dearest loue to call,
 Where o al bonds do tie me day by day,
 That I haue frequent binne with vnknown mindes,
 And giuen to time your owne deare purchas'd right,
 That I haue hoysted saile to al the windes
 Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
 Booke both my wilfulnesse and errors downe,
 And on iust prooffe surmise, accumulate,
 Bring me within the leuel of your frowne,
 But shoote not at me in your wakened hate:
 Since my appeale saies I did strue to prooue
 The constancy and virtue of your loue

H

118



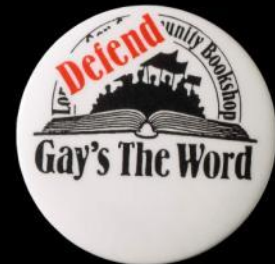
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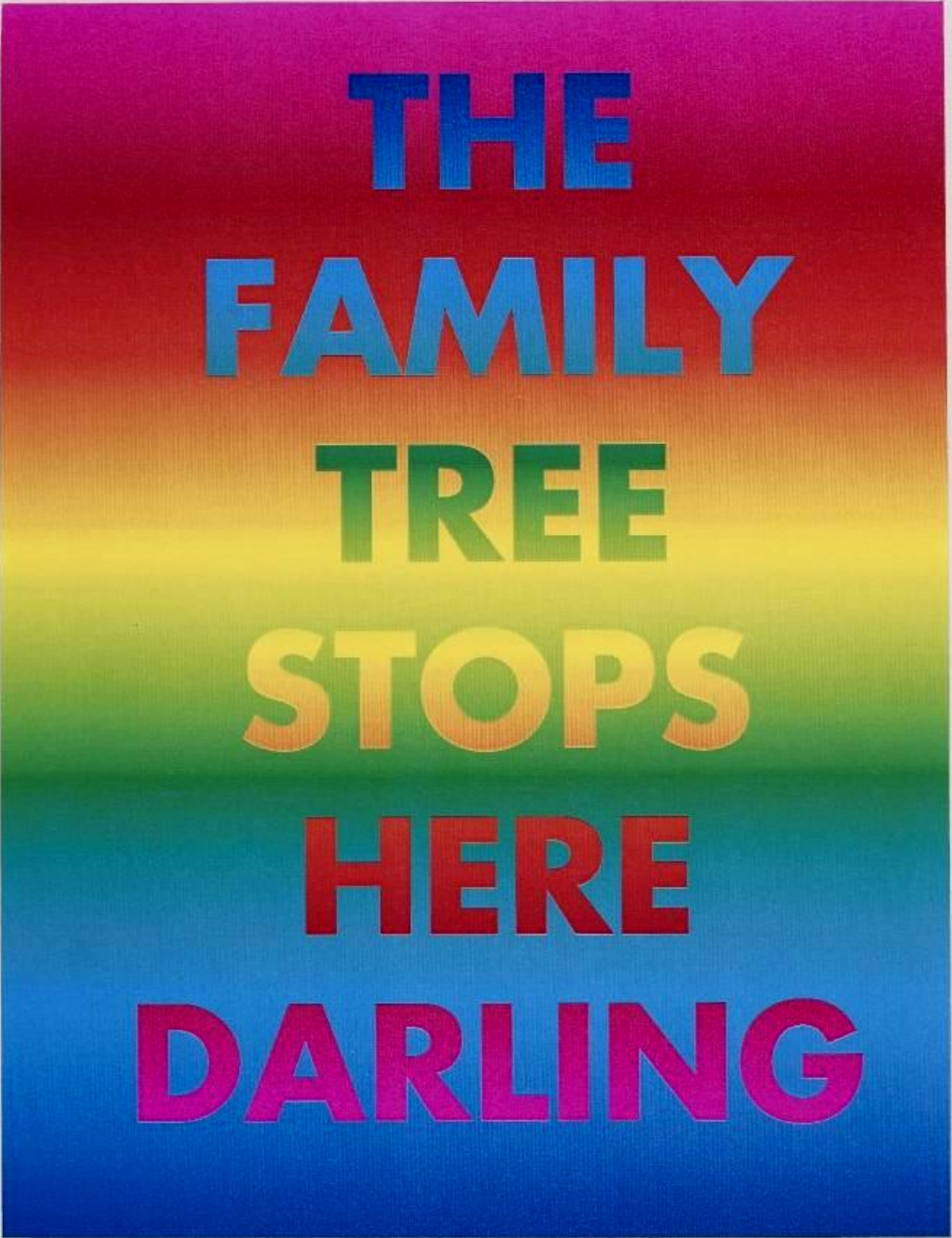
Mad. de la Fayette







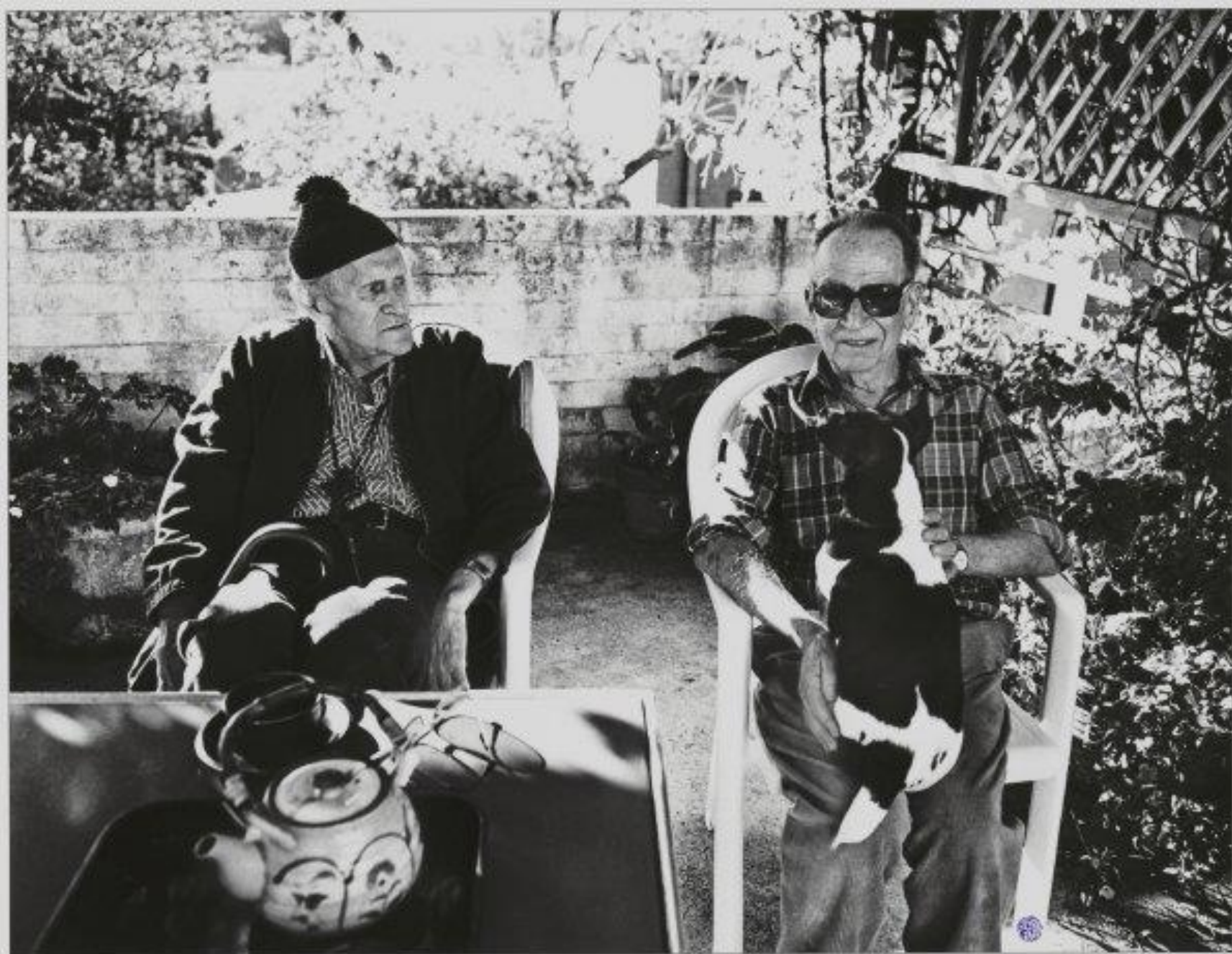




**THE
FAMILY
TREE
STOPS
HERE
DARLING**







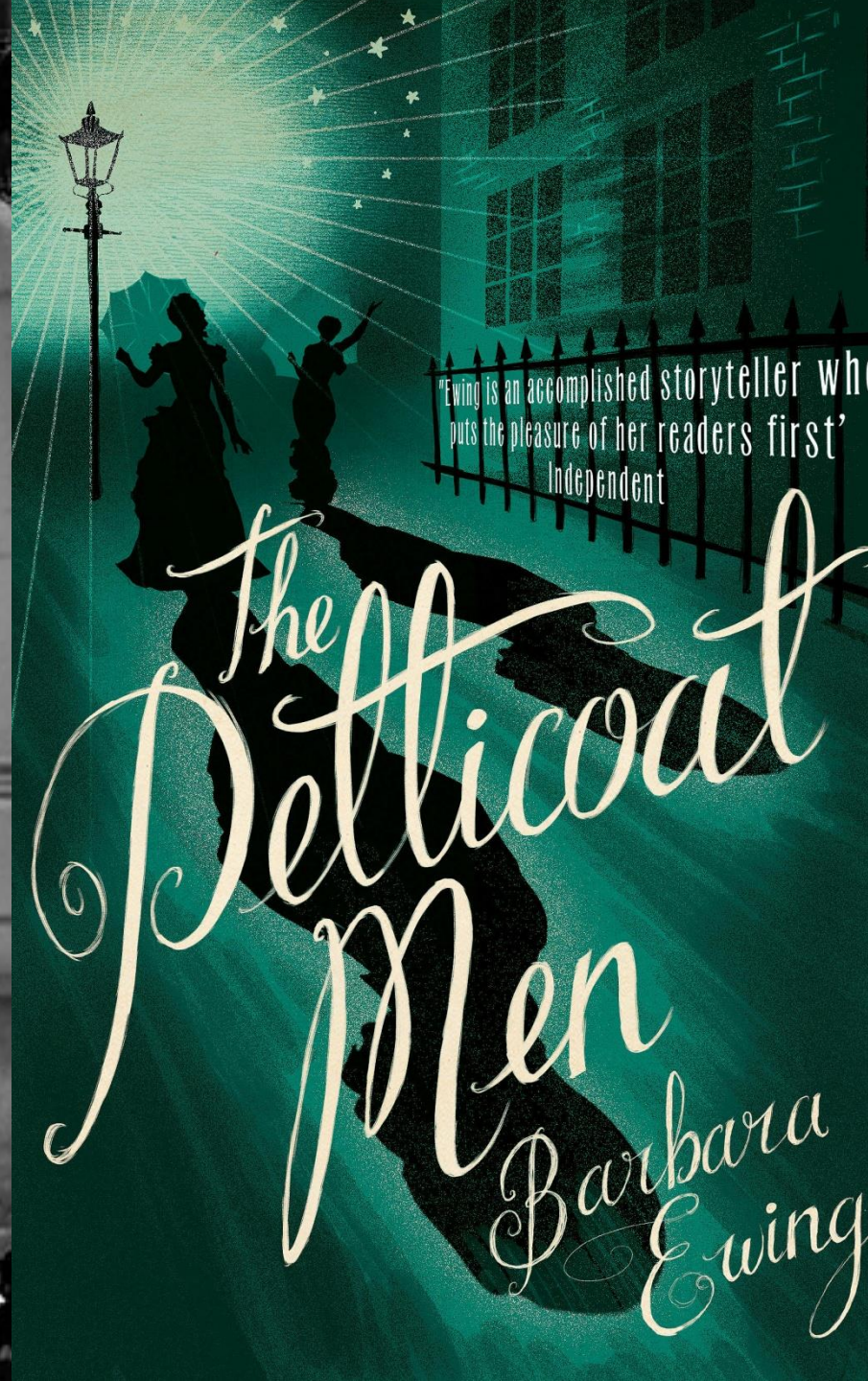
"Patrick White and Mandy Lascaris." Martin Road.

William Yang, 1989. 3/6.















HOME OFFICE
SCOTTISH HOME DEPARTMENT

Report

of the Committee on
Homosexual Offences
and
Prostitution

*Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
and the Secretary of State for Scotland
by Command of Her Majesty
September 1957*

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DESIRE IN THE MUSEUM

For many university-educated people in nineteenth-century Europe, ancient Greece offered images of a world where same-sex desire ('Greek love') was not incompatible with cultural ideals, and where same-sex desire was not 'abnormal'. Classical statuary let people view the naked human form in a respectable way, allowing men to gaze at men, which was otherwise unacceptable. As in ancient Athens, these statues had an erotic charge: one male visitor to a museum at this period recorded that 'I revelled in the sight of pictures and statues of male form and could not keep from kissing [them]'. This photograph shows a statue of an athlete in the galleries of the British Museum; it was taken in 1857 by Roger Fenton (1819–69).

Mediterranean and Indian cultures offered a sense of freedom from English respectability for the English novelist E. M. Forster (1879–1970). His own sexuality informed all his works, but was embodied most openly in his novel *Maurice*, which was finished in 1914 but not published until after his death. The novel tells of the growing self-awareness of a Cambridge graduate who eventually finds love with a gamekeeper, and the turning point takes place in the galleries of the British Museum, on an evening when 'the great building suggested a tomb, miraculously

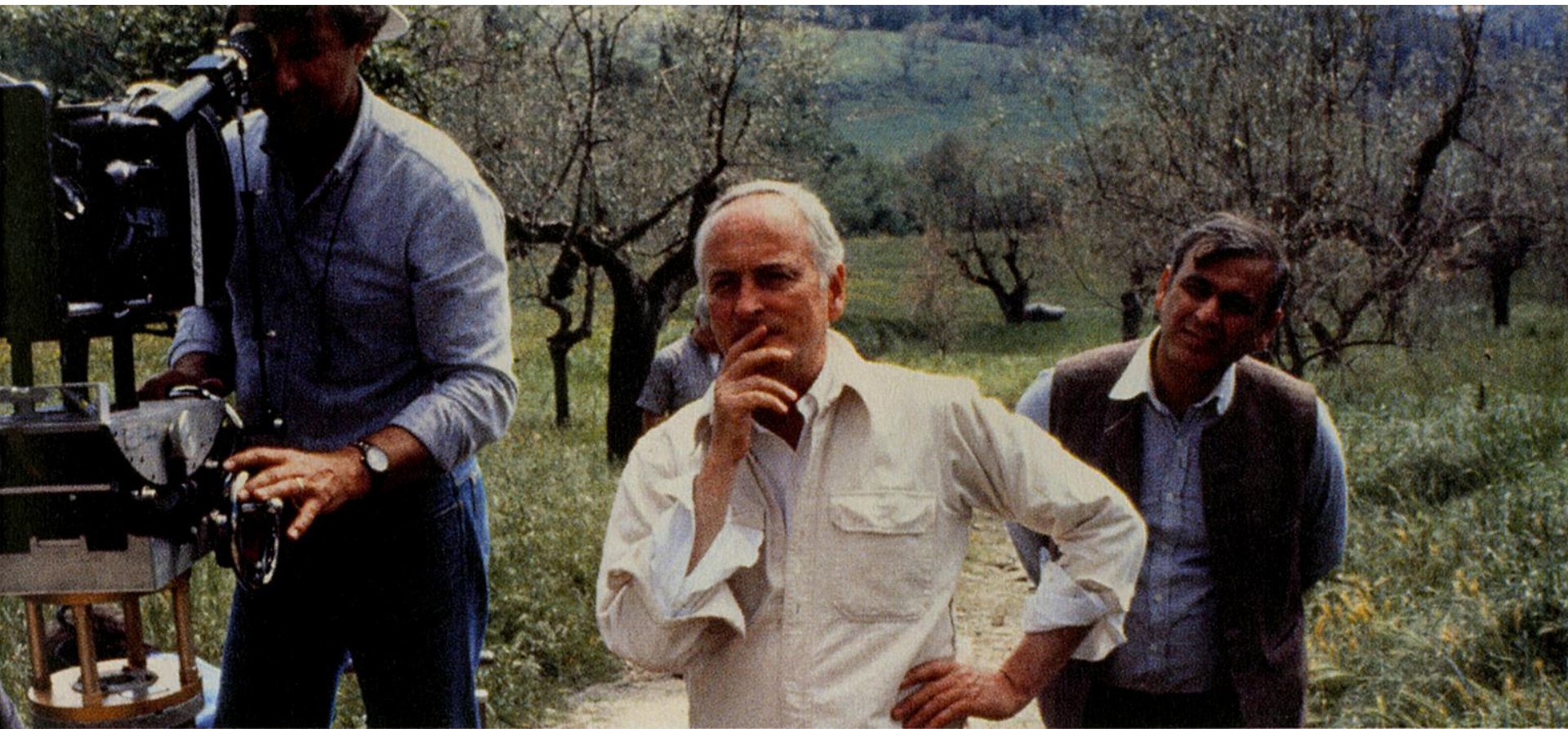
illuminated by the spirits of the dead'. Here the two men quarrel and reach an understanding of love, as rough trade turns into romance and an enduring relationship. Forster himself found happiness with a married policeman.

The Forsterian triumph of love: Maurice Hall and the gamekeeper Alec Scudder embrace at the end of the film *Maurice* by Merchant Ivory Productions, starring James Wilby and Rupert Graves, 1987.



The 'discobolus' statue in the Egyptian sculpture gallery of the British Museum in 1857. The statue is a Roman copy of a lost Greek original and was found in Hadrian's villa at Tivoli.

H. (photograph) 7.6 cm; W. 7.1 cm.













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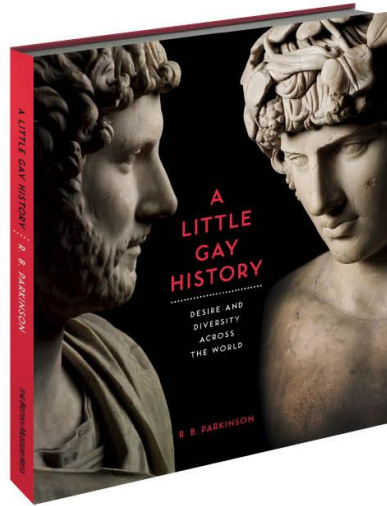
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DIAPOPOPIA
ANIMVLA VAGVLA BLANDVLA
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MOYΣIKOTATOΣ
BAΣILEVΣ
PAX ROMANA
ΣΩΤΗΡ
RESTITVTOR
ITALIAE
ITALIA FELIX
OΛYMPIOY
PATER PATRIAE
ROMA AETERNA
OABIS
ROMA AETERNA
ET IN OMNIBVS VARIVS.
AUDIVI VOCES DIVINAS...
SABINA MEA
MOYΣA. PΩMH. ΔIKH.
VERE SIMVS
EYEPTETHΣ
AELIVS CAESAR
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DIS PATER
MARS GRADIVS
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FORTVNA MUTATVRA
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Antinovm suum.



Avanzi del Tempio del Dio Canopo nella Villa Adriana in Tivoli.
A. Muro e pilastre che erano rivestite di lastre di marmo. B. Volta di ora ricoperta di marmo bianco
e di altri colori. Le pareti C. erano rivestite di lastre di marmo. D. Colonna di questo tempio
e ornata di capitelli e di statue. Da tutti i cantoni si vedeva il lago di Stabia
che fu uno dei più belli che nel tempo di Augusto.







A Little Gay History Desire and Diversity across the World

by R.B. Parkinson

How old is the oldest chat-up line between men? Who was the first 'lesbian'?

This beautifully illustrated book provides a whirlwind tour of same-sex experiences throughout history, and builds a complex creative portrait of love's many guises.

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Events:

- Book launch at Gay's the Word Bookshop, 66 Marchmont Street WC1N 1AB, 27 June, 7pm.
£2 payable on the door.
- Richard Parkinson will be discussing *A Little Gay History* at the British Museum, 28 June, 6.30pm.
£5, members/concessions £3
- Richard Parkinson will introduce a screening of the film *Maurice*, at the BFI Southbank, 2 July, 6pm.
£11, concessions £8.50

For free webtrails about same-sex desire in the British Museum's collection, visit britishmuseum.org/samesexdesireandgenderidentity

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Same-sex desire and gender identity

The evidence for same-sex desire and fluid ideas of gender has often been overlooked in the past, but museums and their collections can allow us to look back and see diversity throughout history.

Much of the historical evidence is centred around men and their concerns and often what survives is partial, fragmentary or ambiguous. Such things have often been hidden in history, and obscured by censorship, but now we realise the past is much 'queerer' than we have often thought.

This theme is based on an original web trail published on the Untold London website. Some images contain explicit scenes, though these are shown small (click to see larger versions).

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Marble bust of the emperor Hadrian, Italy, AD 117-118, and Antinous, Italy, AD 130-140

Same-sex desire



Evidence of desire between members of the same sex throughout human history >

Gender identity



Gender roles vary between different cultures and are not a universal 'given' >

Changing attitudes



From persecution, through reform, awareness and towards equal rights >





The Monday book review



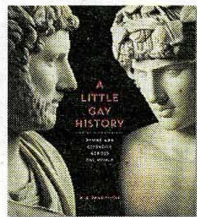
An insightful and illuminating study of the depiction of homosexual love across millennia, and around the world, could hardly have come at a more opportune time, **Tim Teeman** writes

A proud tradition of gay art

The earliest known depiction of a couple making love, dating from around 9000BC, is made from a calcite pebble. Why are the "couple" presumed to be heterosexual, asks R. B. Parkinson, a curator of ancient Egyptian culture at the British Museum, in this slim, engrossing volume of objects and vignettes.

The calcite figures resemble smushed-up milk-bottle sweets. "The sculpture's ambiguity is a reminder that we should not project our assumptions on to the past," writes Parkinson, embarking on an illuminating trawl of objects showing how representations of homosexuality have evolved across the millennia.

The British Museum is adept at bespoke historical exercises — most famously in its *History of the World in 100 Objects* — while this book is published in an emotionally and politically charged Pride month. In the UK, marriage equality edges nearer to law, with shameful homophobia frothing from MPs and Lords. In the US, the Supreme Court is set to rule on the futures of the Defence of Marriage Act and Proposition 8, forbidding gay marriage in California. New York has been shaken by a series of alleged



A Little Gay History
R.B. Parkinson

BRITISH MUSEUM PRESS
128PP
£9.99 OFFER PRICE £8.99*



Why assume the Ain Sakhri lovers, left, are straight, Parkinson asks



Activists gathered outside Parliament last week in support of the gay marriage Bill

homophobic attacks and one murder. The spirit at Pride marches this year should be one of watchfulness as well as celebration.

The prejudice so freely expressed in the Lords last week was as significant as the positive end result, showing the corrosive persistence of homophobia. Parkinson's book, correspondingly, reminds us there is nothing new about homosexuality.

The author roves freely, from a

16th-century engraving of the Greek god Apollo and his beloved Hyacinthus to a 60-year-old "molly" (gay man) in the stocks in 1762. A coin shows the head of Sappho, the assumed-to-be-lesbian poet, horny young athletes decorate an ancient Greek pot and graphic lesbian sex is engraved on a 1st-century terracotta lamp. Here is a Mesopotamian panel of Ishtar, a goddess of sexual attraction and war who had the power to assign gender

identity and, on a tomb's walls, supposedly the first recorded gay kiss between Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, two male courtiers from around 2450BC.

The silver drinking Warren Cup, from AD10, shows a bearded man having sex with a beardless youth (this is "bear" culture, Roman style) and a beardless youth having sex with a younger male. Marble statues and sketches animate Dante's *Inferno*, Ganymede and Michelangelo's muscular young men; elsewhere are an androgynous Hindu deity, a 1627 painting of the Iranian ruler Shah Abbas I embracing a young page, illustrations revealing persecution of gays from the 18th century and kabuki actors sleeping with paying clients.

Modern times are represented by a David Hockney drawing of a male couple inspired by a C.P. Cavafy poem, gay activism badges, Aids memorials, the rainbow as Pride symbol and drag queen playing cards. "No heterosexuals were harmed in taking this picture," Parkinson writes beside a photograph of museum visitors — a droll nudge that gay equality damages no one. You can learn a lot from a calcite pebble.

***To order for £8.99 including postage visit thetimes.co.uk/bookshop or call The Times Bookshop on 0845 2712134**

In his book on gay history **Richard B. Parkinson** explores representations of same-sex attraction

Every year, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) History Month reminds us that sexual minorities are integral parts of world history. In 2009, that year's launch event took place at the British Museum and a thematic web trail was produced jointly with Untold London, exploring the diversity of gender and human desire across world cultures. A paper version of the Museum's trail proved so popular that a book, *A Little Gay History*, has just been published, with new expanded web trails.

Minorities have all too often been excluded from the official histories

produced by cultural heritage institutions. As presentations of the British Museum's project at international conferences on LGBT history have shown, there is clearly a widely felt need for inclusive histories by national museums. The Museum's project is aimed at all audiences, regardless of gender or sexuality, and the fully illustrated gift-book examines forty or so objects from the collection. These range from Ancient Egyptian papyri to modern badges and illustrate how varied the cultural constructions of same-sex desire have been. They also

show how such desire has existed in many different cultures – it is apparently a universal human phenomenon. Some of the objects concern iconic LGBT figures, such as Hadrian or Michelangelo, but others are less well known, such as the German ceramicist Augusta Kaiser, or are even anonymous, such as one Native American in a depiction of 1902.

Ancient Greek statues of naked men, of course, have often made museums important to many gay individuals' sense of identity, but as the book's main author I thought that it should explore the British Museum's own specific role in this history. E.M. Forster's novel *Maurice* tells of the growing self-awareness of a Cambridge graduate who eventually finds love with a gamekeeper. The turning point takes place in the Museum's Greek galleries, on a late afternoon when 'the great building suggested a tomb, miraculously illuminated by the spirits of the dead'.

Here the two men quarrel and reach an understanding of love, as rough trade turns into romance and an enduring relationship.

The setting of this love scene in the Museum underlines Maurice's realisation that 'there always have been people like me and there always will be', and this lies at the heart of any LGBT history project. The book is a visual survey and, citing the novel, we wanted to represent it with a still from the 1987 Merchant Ivory film, widely regarded as a masterpiece and to my mind the greatest of all gay films. Thanks to the generosity and support of director James Ivory the book includes several images, and this remains for me a personal highlight of the whole project.

Unlike in classical Greece, same-sex romance has often been silent in modern European works of art: how many tell love stories between members of the same sex, and when they do, how many of these have a happy ending?

Ismail Merchant and James Ivory shot the film at the height of the Aids crisis and the Thatcher era, but they filmed it in exactly the same way as their earlier *A Room with a View*, moving from a period boy-meets-girl story to this period boy-meets-boy story. There is nothing stereotypical about the film, just pure Forsterian romance on a grand scale, which quietly and heroically insists on the right to equality in love. And, unlike Ang Lee's moving and touching *Brokeback Mountain*, it has a happy ending, the result of an early evening visit to the British Museum.

Drawing on works of art such as these, the book tries to show that no one need feel alone or marginal in history because of their sexuality. It is not an attempt to make the collection 'gay', because there is no need to do this: as E.M. Forster realised, the British Museum's collection always has been, and always will be, as diverse as the people who created it.

Diversity of human desire

Two lovers in the British Museum's galleries, from the film *Maurice* (1987), starring James Wilby and Rupert Graves. (Photograph by Jon Gardney; courtesy of Merchant Ivory Productions)



Three Michelangelo-esque ceramic figures by the artist Augusta Kaiser, Germany, c.1924

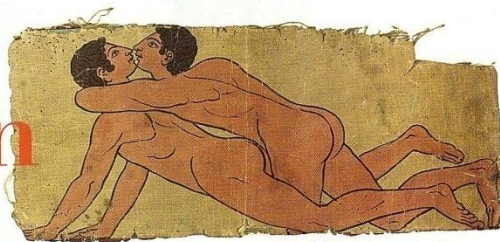


A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World, by R.B. Parkinson (with contributions by Kate Smith and Max Carocci), is published by BM Press and Columbia University Press (£9.99); for the web trails see britishmuseum.org/samesexdesireandgenderidentity

Visitors on an Untold London LGBT history tour looking at a bust of the Emperor Hadrian at the British Museum



Going Down in History



Etruscan painting of two men, as copied in a nineteenth-century drawing of a fifth-century BC 'Tomb of the Chariots', in a cemetery at Tarquinia, Italy.

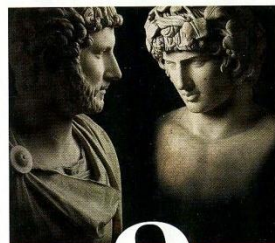
The British Museum has just published **A Little Gay History** by curator R. B. Parkinson. The book draws on around forty objects in the museum's collection ranging from ancient Egyptian papyrus (thick paper made from reeds... useful in the days before Grindr) to works by modern artists like David Hockney to look at same-sex desire across 11,000 years and throughout world cultures. Gay's The Word's **Uli Lenart** reports...

THE EVIDENCE FOR SAME-SEX DESIRE has often been overlooked in the past, but Parkinson's book, *A Little Gay History*, seeks to redress that bias, showing us that gay love and gay sex have been around since time immemorial. While 'homosexual' is a modern European term that historians avoid using to label behaviors and practices that predate it, the artifacts curated in this book, and in the museum itself, clearly show that same-sex desire is not a modern Western invention (as has sometimes been claimed). So what were our gay forebears like? What did they get up to? What where they in to? And was it really that different to now? Here are six teaser facts from the book:



1

The oldest chat up line in human history is between men. Same-sex desire seems to have been part of human experience from the earliest recorded times. In a poem from ancient Egypt, around 1800 BC, one male god tries to seduce another by saying "What a lovely backside you have!" (*neferwi-pehwi-ki*). Outside poetry, no male-male couples are known from Ancient Egypt: when two men are buried together, it seems that they are twins not lovers, as in this funerary inscription from 1325 BC.



2

Visitor surveys for a massively popular exhibition on the Roman emperor Hadrian in 2009 suggested that surprisingly few people (we're assuming they were straight) knew that Hadrian was into guys. His grief for his young lover Antinous (who drowned in the Nile in 130 AD) was extreme, and he commemorated his love in huge numbers of statues, making Antinous into a god. They were one of the hottest gay couples in history and Hadrian's life inspired Marguerite Yourcenar's novel *Memoirs of Hadrian* (1951) which is well worth a read.



3

The 'Warren Cup' is surprisingly small but shows scenes of men making love. Made in the Roman Empire around 1BC-10 AD, it is now known after its modern owner, the American art collector Edward Perry Warren (1860-1928). He lived with his friend (and probably lover) John Marshall in Lewes in Sussex, and he referred to the cup as the 'Holy Grail'. In 1999 it was finally acquired by the British Museum, who had not purchased it earlier in the 1950s when 'homosexuality' was still illegal in Britain. It has been on public display ever since for everyone to see for free, so if you've got half an hour to kill go and check it out (room 70).



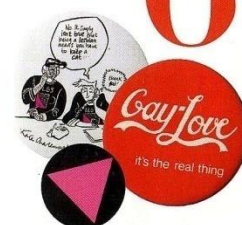
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4 Many societies in the eastern Pacific or Polynesia accepted same-sex acts, much to the consternation of 18th century European explorers. In Hawaii, young masculine men called *oikane* would have sex with the king. A surgeon on Captain Cook's ship *The Discovery*, noted in 1779 with some surprise that 'it is an office that is esteemed honourable among them & they have frequently asked us on seeing a handsome young fellow if he was not an [*oikane*] to some of us'. This highly stylised treasure box from New Zealand includes a scene of oral sex.

5



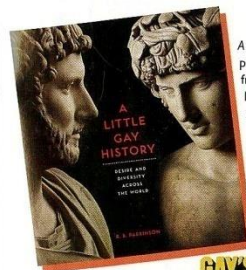
The British Museum has itself been a stage for gay love. Its displays of Greek and Roman statues have helped shaped modern gay identity. In E. M. Forster's novel *Maurice*, a Cambridge graduate finds love with a gamekeeper, and the turning point takes place in the galleries of the British Museum. Here the two men finally realise they love each other, as rough trade turns into romance. The book was made into a film in 1987 starring Hugh Grant using the original locations in the galleries: gay romance on a grand scale, and with a happy ending too.



'It gets better'
(Campaign slogan, 2010)

6

The British Museum has objects about modern sexuality as well as ancient. Its collections of badges include ones for LGBT rights, representing over four decades and a wide range of issues. Some are serious, and some wittily caricature stereotypes about gay identity. And the Museum has other historic links with the struggle for equal rights: Lord Wolfenden, whose 1957 recommended the decriminalization of homosexuality, was also a director of the British Museum in the 1970s.



A Little Gay History has just been published at £9.99 and is available from Gay's the Word, the British Museum bookshop and other retailers. Gay's the Word will be hosting an event for the book on Thursday 27th June at 7pm (£2) and there will be a lecture at the British Museum on the 28th June at 6.30pm (£5) to celebrate the launch.

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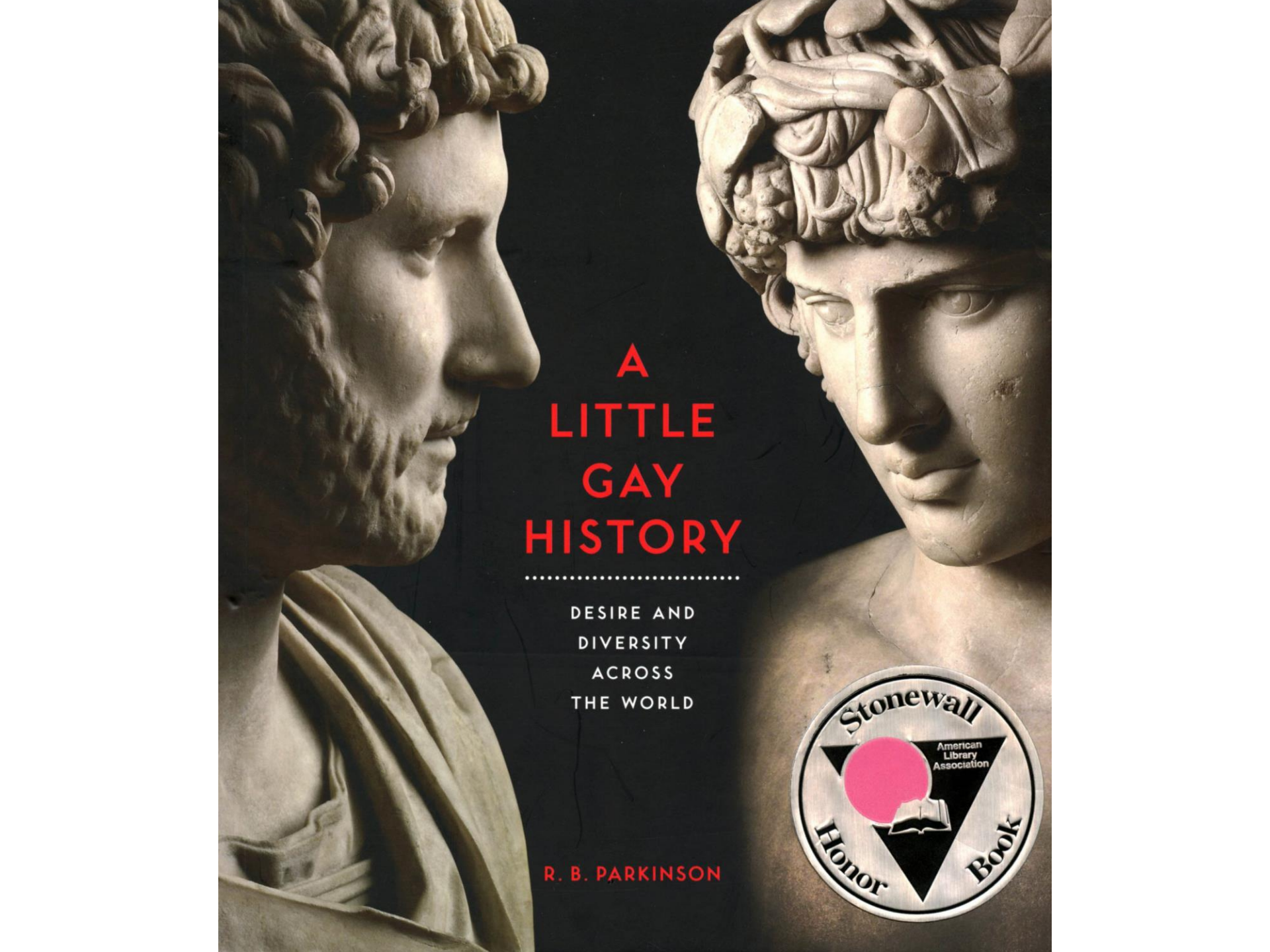
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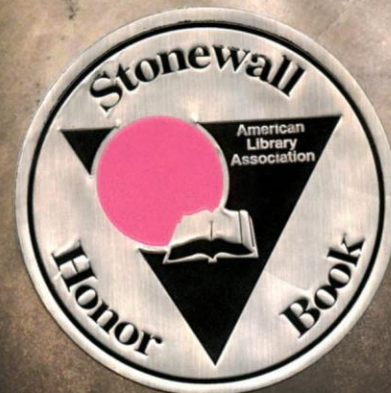


A LITTLE GAY HISTORY

.....

DESIRE AND
DIVERSITY
ACROSS
THE WORLD

R. B. PARKINSON



MUSEUMSREIF

Während sich die großen deutschen Museen schwertun, Homosexualität zu thematisieren, prescht das ehrwürdige British Museum in London mit dem brillanten Buch „A Little Gay History“ vor – dank eines beherzten Ägyptologen

Zuerst war ich mir nicht sicher, was das sein könnte. „A Little Gay History“ stand auf dem Cover. Und ich dachte: Vermutlich noch so ein Sammelsurium, wo die softpornografischen Standardbilder zur schwulen Geschichte mehr oder weniger gut kommentiert zusammengewürfelt sind ... Gibt's das nicht schon hundertfach? Ja, gibt es. Aber die Überraschung ist, dass diese „Little Gay History“ mit dem Untertitel „Desire and Diversity Across the World“ ganz anders ist und auf revolutionäre Weise die Konkurrenz weit hinter sich lässt.

Dazu muss man wissen, dass das 128-Seiten-Buch vom renommierten British Museum in London herausgegeben wurde. Nicht unbedingt die erste Adresse, wenn's um LGBTI-Themen geht. Im Museumsshop werden neben Katalogen und Souvenirs gern Geschenkbücher mit Katzen- und Blumenbildern im Pocket-Format verkauft – ein Renner seit Jahren. Das brachte den schwulen Kurator der Ägyptischen Abteilung, Richard B. Parkinson, auf die Idee, in dieser scheinbar harmlosen Verpackung mal was anderes unter die Leute zu bringen: eine ausgewählte Übersicht jener Objekte des Hauses, die im weitesten Sinn schwul-lesbische Weltgeschichte spiegeln. Angefangen mit den 12.000 Jahre alten „Liebenden von Ain Sakhr“, der ältesten erhaltenen figürlichen Darstellung des menschlichen Koitus, bei denen Parkinson fragt, wieso die Forschung seit Jahrhunderten davon ausgeht, es handle sich um einen Mann und eine Frau, obwohl man das Geschlecht nicht erkennen könne und also auch annehmen könnte, dass es zwei Frauen oder zwei Männer seien.

Weiter geht's mit Geschlechter wechselnden mesopotamischen Götinnen, dem ersten überlieferten schwulen Kuss der Geschichte im alten Ägypten, Kaiser Hadrian, Schwulenverfolgung im Mittelalter und in der Neuen Welt (durch die katholischen Spanier), Shakespeares homoerotischen Sonetten und der Neuzeit, in deren Rahmen u.a. auf E.M. Forsters Roman „Maurice“ eingegangen wird, der teils im British Museum spielt. Am Schluss wird ein queeres Kartenspiel von 1997 mit Drag-Queens aus Japan vorgestellt.

Besonders die historischen Objekte werden vorsichtig auf ihre LGBTI-Relevanz abgeklöpft. Die Vorsicht ist Konzept: Niemand soll vor den Kopf gestoßen werden mit radikalen Interpretationen,

sondern selbst die größten Homo-Gegner sollen sich vor den akademisch einwandfrei recherchierten und sachlich präsentierten Fakten beugen müssen.

Dem Katalogteil ist eine sehr persönliche und sehr sympathische Einleitung vorangestellt, die man als LGBT-Manifest lesen kann. Darin schildert Parkinson, wie schwer man wissen kann, was Szenen ehemals bedeuteten, die für heutige Augen eindeutig homoerotisch wirken. Woher sollen wir wissen, wie die alten Ägypter zwei küssende Männer auf einer Papyrusrolle beurteilt haben oder einen Gott, der sich selbst in den Mund spritzt? Wir können es nur vermuten. Es bleiben fremde Kulturen, mit anderen Wertvorstellungen, auch was Sexualität betrifft. Aber gerade weil oft viele Interpretationen möglich sind, plädiert Parkinson dafür, nicht immerfort die heteronormative Sichtweise anzuwenden.

Ein Buch mit höchsten Weihen

Da das Buch vom British Museum herausgegeben wurde, trägt es den offiziellen Stempel der weltweit angesehenen Institution. Was dem Buch eine besondere Stellung innerhalb der internationalen Museumslandschaft verleiht. Selbstverständlich gibt es auch in anderen Sammlungen Objekte, die die Geschichte der Homosexualität spiegeln. Aber andere Museen haben es bislang nicht gewagt, diese Objekte gebündelt vorzustellen. Auf Anfrage von DU&ICH sagte beispielsweise das Deutsche Historische Museum (DHM) in Berlin, noch nicht einmal über solch ein Buchprojekt nachgedacht zu haben, obwohl es natürlich auch in Deutschland die Verfolgung von „Sodomiten“ gab, die in der ein oder anderen Form dokumentiert ist und entsprechend gezeigt werden könnte – wie zum Beispiel in „A Little Gay History“ ein Plakat aus Amsterdam von 1730. Dort sieht man, wie im gar nicht so liberalen Holland des 18. Jahrhunderts vor „gottlosen“ und „verdammungswürdigen“ Menschen gewarnt wird, die wegen ihres „Lasters“ auf dem Scheiterhaufen endeten. Die anderen Berliner Museen, die zur Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz gehören, winkten auf Anfrage ebenfalls ab. Das Thema sei momentan nicht aktuell.

Dass das ausgerechnet in England anders ist, wo bekanntlich die konservative Tory-Partei regiert (die



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Büsten von Hadrian und Antinous aus dem alten Rom



Der berühmte „Warren Cup“ mit eindeutiger Botschaft



Zeichnung von Suzuki Harunobu, Japan, 1770

2013 die Ehe für Homos öffnete), liegt auch daran, dass das British Museum in der jüngeren Vergangenheit mit LGBTI-Themen positive Publikumsresonanz erzielen konnte. Es geht aber auch auf den persönlichen Einsatz von Richard Parkinson zurück, der sich dieses Buch als Abschiedsgeschenk gemacht hat: Nach 20 Jahren als Kurator ist er seit Januar 2014 Professor für Ägyptologie in Oxford und hat das Museum verlassen. Aber seine „Little Gay History“ liegt dort in allen Shops neben den Katzen- und Blumenbüchern und lädt alle Besucher des Museums ein, über die angeblich heteronormative Weltgeschichte nochmals neu nachzudenken. Viele dieser Besucher sind übrigens Schulklassen, die täglich durchs Museum getrieben werden und denen diese Objekte nun ganz selbstverständlich auch vorgestellt werden.

Zum Beispiel der berühmte „Warren Cup“: Der Silberbecher aus dem ersten Jahrzehnt unserer Zeitrechnung zeigt zwei männliche Paare beim Sex. Der Becher wurde dem Museum in den 1950er-Jahren zum Kauf angeboten und damals abgelehnt, weil Homosexualität zu der Zeit in England eine Straftat war und man ein solches Objekt nicht in der Sammlung haben wollte. Erst 1999 kaufte das Museum den Becher und zeigte ihn, als echten Publikums-magnet.

Genauso wie das British Museum mit seiner Kaiser-Hadrian-Ausstellung, in der auf die „Imperial

Romance“ zwischen Hadrian und Antinous eingegangen wurde, einen Renner landete. Derart positive Reaktionen auf LGBTI-Themen dürften den Ausschlag gegeben haben, dem Buchprojekt grünes Licht zu geben. Denn man hatte im Museum durchaus Angst, wichtige Sponsoren zu verprellen, wenn sie von dem Vorhaben erfahren sollten, in dem es auch um Nationalheilige wie William Shakespeare geht. Aber wie Parkinson lachend im Interview erzählt: „Shakespeare und seine Sonette sind drin.“ Nur auf Objekte aus China hat man aus museums-politischen Gründen verzichtet.

Einen kleinen Lichtblick gibt's aber nun auch bei uns: Das DHM und das Schwule Museum* arbeiten gemeinsam an einer Ausstellung, die im Frühjahr 2015 eröffnet werden soll. Titel: „Zur Geschichte der Homosexualität en“. Die Ausstellung soll für fünf Monate in beiden Häusern zu sehen sein und wird von der Kulturstiftung des Bundes und der Kulturstiftung der Länder gefördert. Ob „Zur Geschichte der Homosexualität en“ so bahnbrechend, bunt und beeindruckend wird wie „A Little Gay History“, muss sich zeigen. Ich für meinen Teil finde, die kleine englischsprachige Publikation ist eines der großartigsten Bücher zum Thema, das ich seit langem in der Hand hatte. *Kevin Clarke*

R. B. Parkinson / A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World / Thames & Hudson, London



Das Buch liegt im Museumsshop aus



Ohne Richard Parkinson würde es „A Little Gay History“ nicht geben

A bold and progressive move by one of the world's most global (and oldest)
#museums: <http://t.co/RI2qpiAvkt> @LondonLGBTPride @britishmuseum

Will/would/could @metmuseum develop something like this?

RT @globalmuseum: British Museum launches gay guide dlvr.it/3Y8Qnh

Well done @britishmuseum! RT @dinoboy89: British Museum launches gay
guide <http://t.co/IAUjgbVY5U>

booking my train ticket as I type: British Museum launches gay guide
<http://t.co/jALnzqm8jw>

British Museum launches gay guide. I really want to go. <http://t.co/5jVUfpZRcE>

Fucking awesome: British Museum launches gay audio guide
<http://t.co/lvHxsFniDo>

The image shows the interior of the British Museum, featuring a large, modern glass and steel dome structure. The architecture is a blend of classical and modern styles, with white stone walls and columns. In the foreground, there is a large, open space with a polished floor. To the left, a large stone lion sculpture sits on a pedestal. In the center, there are several display cases and informational panels. To the right, a wide staircase leads up to a higher level. The overall atmosphere is bright and spacious, with natural light streaming in through the dome.

The British Museum



Antinous as Osiris

Antinous was the lover of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (reigned AD 117–138). In AD 130 Hadrian and his imperial entourage were touring Egypt when Antinous drowned in mysterious circumstances. This tragic event happened on the same day the locals were commemorating the death, by drowning in the Nile, of the Egyptian god Osiris.

Antinous is shown here as Osiris, suggesting that he too was reborn as a god from the waters of the Nile. The stance, headdress and loincloth resemble Egyptian statues, but have been slightly altered in a classical, naturalistic and subtly eroticised style. The statue was discovered in 1738–39 near what we now know as a spectacular memorial to Antinous at Hadrian's Villa.

Vatican Museums, Vatican City, Museo Gregoriano Egizio, 22795

Hadrian: Empire and Conflict

Other statues of Antinous and fragments from his memorial are on display in the current special exhibition in the Reading Room.







On sent que vous rejetez le centre. Vous ne pouvez pas y vivre.

Le centre est partout. Le centre est où nous sommes. Pour le moment, le centre, c'est cette table.

Marguerite Yourcenar in conversation with Bernard Pivot, 1979





LSE Spectrum Literary Festival lecture

A Little Gay History

Professor Richard Parkinson

Professor of Egyptology, University of Oxford

Sue Donnelly

Chair, LSE



Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: **#LSElitfest**

