



# A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World

By R. B. Parkinson

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When was the first chat line between men established? Who was the first "lesbian"? Were ancient Greek men who had sex with each other necessarily "gay," and what did Shakespeare think about crossdressing?

*A Little Gay History* answers these questions and more through close readings of art objects from the British Museum's far-ranging collection. Consulting ancient Egyptian papyri, the Roman Warren Cup's erotic figures, David Hockney's vivid prints, and dozens of other artifacts, R. B. Parkinson draws attention to a diverse range of same-sex experiences and situates them within specific historical and cultural contexts. The first of its kind, *A Little Gay History* builds a complex and creative portrait of love's many guises.

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## **A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World** By R. B. Parkinson Bibliography

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**Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Through meticulous research and compassionate narration, British Museum curator Parkinson (Voices from Ancient Egypt) brings to light a collection of art objects from the British Museum's collection that illustrate same-sex desire, many of which had previously been censored or concealed from historians. These 40 objects come from various civilizations and eras, some being clear-cut examples of same-sex love, such as Grecian urns decorated with homoerotic scenes, the poetry of Sappho, and the Roman Emperor Hadrian's well-documented affair with the young Antinous. Other pieces are more ambiguous: artistic renderings that suggest love between Samurai warriors; an Ancient Egyptian tomb that may have been made for a same-sex couple; and Shakespearean sonnets that allude to bisexual relationships. The book also includes brief, captivating profiles of gay and lesbian artists, including the sculptors Hedwig Marquardt and Augusta Kaiser, and novelist Virginia Woolf. The long history of intolerance is interwoven through the artwork as well, and while facts surrounding the persecution and execution of sodomites are unsettling, the book is not overtly political. Parkinson successfully shows that same-sex love and desire are an integral part of human history: On a long view, no one occupies the centre. It belongs to all of us. 80 color photos. (Sept.)

Review

Moving and fascinating.

(Simon Russell Beale *The Sunday Times*)

Illuminating... Parkinson's book reminds us there is nothing new about homosexuality.

(*The Times (London)*)

[The book] draws on 40 objects, ranging from ancient Egyptian papyri to images by modern artists, including David Hockney.

(*The Bookseller*)

Parkinson successfully shows that same-sex love and desire are an integral part of human history.

(*Publishers Weekly*)

[*A Little Gay History*] scans the Museum's collections for objects that show the complexity of desire in world cultures. From Indian gods to Emperor Hadrian, it proves that, if you swear by ancient tradition in matters of love and sex, you'll end up in the queerest spots.

(*The Independent*)

[The book] explores artistic portrayals of what it means to be gay and the difficulties in finding records of same-sex desire.

*(BBC News)*

This little gay history is a little terrific book...highly recommended.

*(Library Journal)*

Review

This is a very attractive book – felicitously written with an impeccable and subtle understanding of the history and a clear eye for the artworks. There is much that is new and original here, and even the well-known 'suspects' are discussed with insight, thoughtfulness and wit.

(Robert Aldrich, University of Sydney, and author of *Gay Life Stories*)

*A Little Gay History* succeeds in a whirlwind tour of the history of representation of same-sex desire through a wide-ranging series of snap-shots of art and literature from ancient Persia to the Roman Empire to Medieval Europe to modern day Britain. It is both entertaining and enlightening.

(Michael Bronski, Harvard University, and author of *A Queer History of the United States*)

## **Users Review**

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#### **Lorenzo Davis:**

Now a day people that Living in the era everywhere everything reachable by match the internet and the resources in it can be true or not involve people to be aware of each data they get. How many people to be smart in obtaining any information nowadays? Of course the answer then is reading a book. Reading a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty Information specifically this *A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World* book as this book offers you rich facts and knowledge. Of course the information in this book hundred pct guarantees there is no doubt in it you may already know.

#### **Esther Belote:**

*A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World* can be one of your basic books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort to get every word into joy arrangement in writing *A Little Gay History: Desire and Diversity Across the World* yet doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource details that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information can certainly drawn you into brand new stage of crucial imagining.

**Carlos Mendoza:**

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