

# Queer History Month

## Oxford College Library LGBTQIA+ Resource Guide

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Queer History is not a monolith. Featured in this display are texts in the collection of the Emory library system that speak to the diversity of experiences within the LGBTQIA+ community in the United States and beyond. As a selection of texts, this display aims to be inclusive but cannot aim to represent either a comprehensive or complete collection of queer and trans lives or texts. We hope the story told in this display and guide inspires you to share your story as you seek out further texts and contexts for the study of queer history.

This guide groups texts using periodization taken from Dr. Eric Solomon's American Studies 385 cultural history course "Queer Intersections." Dr. Solomon's organizing method is one way among many to structure the story we tell about queer history. Each period below features a brief description, a list of texts featured in the Oxford College library Queer History display, and a sampling of other suggested literary, historical, and visual texts for your consideration. Please also check out the Library's [collection highlights](https://guides.libraries.emory.edu/c.php?g=570875&p=3941902) page for further suggestions (<https://guides.libraries.emory.edu/c.php?g=570875&p=3941902>)

### "The Wilderness Years": Emergent Communities (–1950)



*The Wilderness Years Collage. Collage by Eric Solomon, 2020.*

**Description:**

The historian Hugh Ryan writes, “It is often assumed that the history of American sexuality is one of linear progress, moving from a time of benighted homophobia to our present-day enlightenment. However, the further back one looks, the more it seems to be a story of incoherence before intolerance, of 'not knowing' before 'not accepting.’” In what Dr. Solomon terms “the wilderness years,” one neither observes “backwards” subjects nor a dearth of what we would call today queer subject matter but rather one witnesses texts that explore a proliferation of desires and pleasures against a backdrop in which early sexologists and researchers would create the modern categories of “homosexual” and “heterosexual.”

**Texts Featured in Library Display:**

- *Before Stonewall: the making of a gay and lesbian community* (documentary) (1984)
- Rodger Streitmatter, *Outlaw Marriages: the hidden histories of fifteen extraordinary same-sex couples* (2012)

**Further Suggested Texts in Chronological Order:**

- Plato, *The Symposium*, featuring a famous speech by Aristophanes (c. 385–370 B.C.)
- Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II* (1592/93)
- Marquis de Sade, *120 Days of Sodom* (1782)
- Jeremy Bentham, *Offences Against One’s Self* (c. 1784)
- Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1860)
- Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, *Research on the Riddle of Male-Male Love* (1864-65)
- Henry James, *The Bostonians* (1886)
- John Addington Symonds, “A Problem in Modern Ethics” (1891)
- Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891)
  - *De Profundis* (1897)
- Edward Carpenter, “Homogenic Love” (1894)
- Willa Cather, “Tommy the Unsentimental” (1896)
- Xavier Mayne [Edward Prime-Stevenson], *The Intersexes* (1908)
- Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice* (1912)
- E.M. Forster, *Maurice* (1913, unpublished until 1971)
- Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time* (1913–1927)
- Gertrude Stein, *Lifting Belly* (1915)
- Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness* (1928)
- Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (1928)
- Nella Larsen, *Passing* (1929)
- Kay Boyle, *Gentlemen, I Address You Privately* (1933)
- Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (1936)
- Christopher Isherwood, *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939)
- Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940)
  - *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1941)
- Jane Bowles, *Two Serious Ladies* (1943)

- Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie* (1944); *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947); *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955)
- Robert Duncan, “The Homosexual in Society” (1944)
- Lillian Smith, *Strange Fruit* (1944)
  - *Killers of the Dream* (1949)
- Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (1945)
- Anonymous/ Jean Genet, *Querelle of Brest* (1947)
- John Horne Burns, *The Gallery* (1947)
- Gore Vidal, *The City and the Pillar* (1948)
- Truman Capote, *Other Voices, Other Rooms* (1948)
- Hubert Creekmore, *The Welcome* (1948)
- Donald Windham, *The Dog Star* (1950)
- Thomas Hal Phillips, *The Bitterweed Path* (1950)
- Angus Wilson, *Hemlock and After* (1952)
- Mary Renault, *The Last of the Wine* (1956)
- James Baldwin,
  - *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953)
  - *Giovanni’s Room* (1956)
  - *Another Country* (1962)
- Johnathan Ned Katz, *Love Stories: Sex Between Men Before Homosexuality* (2001)
- Merin Holland, *The Real Trial of Oscar Wilde* (2003)
- Ayana Mathis, *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* (2012), featuring the story “Floyd” set in 1948 Georgia.

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## “The Agony of the Mask”: The Homophile Movement and the Lavender Scare (1948–1969)



*The Homophile Movement Collage. Collage by Eric Solomon, 2020.*

**Description:**

In 1948, Dr. Alfred Kinsey, a sexologist at the University of Indiana Bloomington, published his study *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, which stated that roughly 37% of adult U.S. men had engaged in some type of homosexual behavior in their lifetime. Kinsey's study shocked many in the midcentury United States, and over the course of the 1950s, numerous studies were conducted to try to understand what Betty Friedan described in 1963's *The Feminine Mystique* as "the murky smog" of "homosexuality" that was "spreading" "over the American scene." The texts mentioned below were produced by writers who came of age during the period of both "the lavender scare," the period of moral panic about homosexuality at midcentury, and the attendant homophile movement, comprised of groups like The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, which were some of the first gay and lesbian rights organizations in the United States. Some of the texts featured offer uniquely U.S. perspectives while others broaden our understanding of queer life at midcentury.

**Texts Featured in Library Display:**

- Dorothy Allison, *Bastard Out of Carolina* (1992)
- Leslie Feinberg, *Stone Butch Blues* (1993)
- *The Lavender Scare* (documentary) (2019)

**Further Suggested Texts in Chronological Order:**

- Yukio Mishima, *Confessions of a Mask* (1949)
  - James W. Fugaté/ James Barr, *Quatrefoil* (1950)
  - Patricia Highsmith, *Strangers on a Train* (1949)
    - Claire Morgan/ Patricia Highsmith, *The Price of Salt (Carol)* (1952)
  - Allen Ginsberg, *Howl and Other Poems* (1956)
  - *The Rejected* (1961) (Documentary: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DG\\_MIM4Cb8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DG_MIM4Cb8))
  - John Rechy, *City of Night* (1963)
  - Jane Rule, *Desert of the Heart* (1964)
  - Christopher Isherwood, *A Single Man* (1964)
  - James Leo Herlihy, *Midnight Cowboy* (1965)
  - José Lezama Lima, *Paradiso* (1966)
  - *The Homosexuals* (1967) (Documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tu1r6igCODw>)
  - Frank O'Hara, *Collected Poems* (1972)
  - John Ashbery, *Collected Poems* (2008)
  - Emily K. Hobson, *Lavender and Red: Liberation and Solidarity in the Gay and Lesbian Left* (2016)
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- Adrienne Rich, *The Dream of a Common Language* (1978)
  - Andrew Holleran, *Dancer from the Dance* (1978)
  - Larry Kramer, *Faggots* (1978)
  - Armistead Maupin, *Tales of the City* (1978)
  - Edmund White, *States of Desire: Travels in Gay America* (1980)
    - *A Boy's Own Story* (1982)
  - Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982)
    - *Sister Outsider* (1984)
  - Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (1982)
  - *The Mayor of Castro Street* (film) (1982)
  - Elizabeth Bishop, *Complete Poems* (1983)
  - Jeanette Winterson, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* (1985)
  - Vikram Seth, *The Golden Gate* (1986)
  - Martin Duberman, *Stonewall* (1993)
    - *Has the Gay Movement Failed?* (2018)
  - Howard Cruse, *Stuck Rubber Baby* (1995)
  - David Carter, *Stonewall* (2004)
  - Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (2006)
  - Amin Ghaziani, "The Stonewall Spark: Lesbian and Gay Life in the 1970s," from *The Dividends of Dissent* (2008)
  - Tom Bianchi, *Fire Island Pines* (2014)
  - Roderick Ferguson, *One Dimensional Queer* (2018)
  - *The Stonewall Reader*, edited by the New York Public Library (2019)
  - Matthew Riemer and Leighton Brown, *We Are Everywhere: Protest, Power, and Pride in the History of Queer Liberation* (2019)
  - Jack Parlett, *Fire Island: A Century in the Life of an American Paradise* (2022)
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## “Under Pressure”: ACTing UP and the Politics of HIV/AIDS (1981–Present)



HIV/AIDS Collage. Collage by Eric Solomon, 2020.

### Description:

When the *New York Times* reported of a strange new disease largely affecting gay men in 1981, what would become known as HIV/AIDS was already widely circulating around the world. Texts featured below both document and remember the HIV/AIDS crisis that continues to disproportionately impact marginalized communities. According to a 2016 CDC report, 1 in 2 African American men who have sex with men will be diagnosed as HIV positive in their lifetimes.

### Texts Featured in Library Display:

- *Paris is Burning* (documentary) (1990)
- *Queercore: How to Punk a Revolution* (documentary) (2017)

### Further Suggested Texts in Chronological Order:

- Larry Kramer, *The Normal Heart* (1985)
  - *Reports from the Holocaust* (1989)
- Joseph Beam, editor, *In the Life: A Black Gay Anthology* (1986)
- Douglas Crimp, *AIDS Demo Graphics* (1990)
- Tony Kushner, *Angels in America* (1991/92)
- David Wojnarowicz, *Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration* (1991)
  - *David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night* (2018)
- *Poets for Life: 76 Poets Respond to AIDS*, edited by Michael Klein (1992)
- Reinaldo Arenas, *Before Night Falls* (1993)
- Mark Doty, *My Alexandria* (1993)

- *Heaven's Coast* (1996)
- *Things Shaped in Passing: More Poets for Life Writing from the AIDS Epidemic*, edited by Michael Klein and Richard McCann (1995)
- Allan Gurganus, *Plays Well with Others* (1997)
- Michael Cunningham, *The Hours* (1998)
- Tory Dent, *HIV, Mon Amour* (1999)
- Cathy J. Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics* (1999)
- Debora B. Gould, *Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP's Fight Against AIDS* (2009)
- *We Were Here* (documentary) (2010)
- *United in Anger: A History of ACT UP* (documentary) (2012)
- *How to Survive a Plague* (documentary) (2012)
- Tim Murphy, *Christadora* (2016)
- *BPM* (film) (2017)
- Avram Finkelstein, *After Silence: A History of AIDS through Its Images* (2018)
- Rebecca Makkai, *The Great Believers* (2018)
- Matthew Lopez, *The Inheritance* (2018)
- Robb Hernandez, *Archiving an Epidemic* (2019)
- Sarah Schulman, *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP* (2021)
- Rasheed Newson, *My Government Means to Kill Me* (2022)

## The Trouble with the Normalcy Wars: LGBTQIA+ Movement and Queerer Futures (1990s–Present—Beyond)



*Normalcy Wars and Queerer Frontiers Collage. Collage by Eric Solomon, 2020.*



**Description:**

As HIV/AIDS transitioned to a largely chronic infection for those countries and individuals who could afford the costly treatments, what many consider to be simplistic debates over marriage and military service took center stage for the LGBTQIA+ movement across the 1990s. Though some consider the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* to be a decisive victory in queer history, others understand that the work is far from over. Writers and activists featured below continue to push the queer community to be more inclusive and multidimensional in challenging norms and normativity of all kinds.

**Texts Featured in Library Display:**

- Rainbow Rowell, *Carry On* (2015)
- Solomon Rivers, *An Unkindness of Ghosts* (2017)
- Joshua Gamson, *Modern Families: Stories of Extraordinary Journeys to Kinship* (2017)
- Carmen Maria Machado, *Her Body and Other Parties* (2017)
  - *In the Dream House* (2019)
- C. Riley Snorton, *Black on both sides: a racial history of trans identity* (2017)
- Becky Albertalli, *Leah on the Offbeat* (2018)
- Ocean Vuong, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019)
- Angela Chen, *Ace: what asexuality reveals about desire, society, and the meaning of sex* (2020)
- Alice Oseman, *Heartstopper, vol. 1* (2020)
- Johnathan Bell, editor, *Beyond the politics of the closet: gay rights and the American state since the 1970s* (2020)
- Kristen Arnett, *With Teeth* (2021)
- Benjamin Alire Sáenz, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* (2021)
- Jeremy Atherton Lin, *Gay Bar: Why We Went Out* (2021)

**Further Suggested Texts in Chronological Order:**

- Randal Kenan, *A Visitation of Spirits* (1989)
- Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet* (1993)
  - *The Trouble with Normal* (1999)
- Andrew Sullivan, *Virtually Normal* (1995)
- Urvashi Vaid, *Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay and Lesbian Liberation* (1995)
- Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw* (1995)
- Rafael Campo, *What the Body Told* (1996)
  - *Diva* (1999)
- Sarah Waters, *Tipping the Velvet* (1998)
- D.A. Powell, *Tea* (1998)
- Reginald Shepherd, *Wrong* (1999)
- Moisés Kaufman and Tectonic Theater Project, *The Laramie Project* (2000)

- Jamie O’Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys* (2001)
  - Alan Hollinghurst, *The Line of Beauty* (2004)
  - Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality?* (2003)
  - Carol Ann Duffy, *Rapture* (2005)
  - Patrick Ryan, *Send Me* (2006)
  - Kevin Sessums, *Mississippi Sissy* (2007)
  - Thomas Glave, editor, *Our Caribbean: A Gathering of Lesbian and Gay Writing from the Antilles* (2008)
  - Jericho Brown, *Please* (2008)
    - *The New Testament* (2014)
    - *The Tradition* (2019)
  - Hilton Als, *White Girls* (2013)
  - Saeed Jones, *Prelude to Bruise* (2014)
    - *How We Fight for Our Lives* (2019)
  - Timothy Liu, *Burnt Offerings* (1995)
  - Danez Smith, *Insert Boy* (2014)
    - *Don’t Call Us Dead* (2017)
    - *Homie* (2020)
  - Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts* (2015)
  - Garrard Conley, *Boy Erased* (2016)
  - Meg-John Barker, *Queer: A Graphic History* (2016)
  - Andrew Sean Greer, *Less* (2017)
  - Silas House, *Southernmost* (2018)
  - Jeremy O. Harris, *Slave Play* (2018)
  - Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals* (2019)
  - Jenn Shapland, *My Autobiography of Carson McCullers* (2020)
  - Brandon Taylor, *Real Life* (2020)
  - Bryan Washington, *Lot* (2019)
    - *Memorial* (2020)
  - Taylor Johnson, *Inheritance* (2020)
  - George M. Johnson, *All Boys Aren’t Blue* (2020)
  - Kacen Callender, *Felix Ever After* (2020)
  - Robert Jones Jr., *The Prophets* (2021)
  - John Paul Brammer, *Hola Papi: How to Come Out in a Walmart Parking Lot and Other Life Lessons* (2021)
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## Queer and Trans Studies Scholarship Resource List:

This list features a sample of some scholarship in the interdisciplines of queer and trans studies. Far from complete, it is meant to provide exposure to the variety of work from scholars and historians in the field. Please also check out the Oxford College Library's [Trans Literature resource list](https://guides.libraries.emory.edu/c.php?g=570875&p=3935188#s-lg-box-12199599) (<https://guides.libraries.emory.edu/c.php?g=570875&p=3935188#s-lg-box-12199599>).

- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* (1976)
- Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (1990)
  - *Bodies that Matter* (1993)
- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990)
  - *Tendencies* (1993)
- Jonathan Goldberg, *Sodometries: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (1992)
- Esther Newton, *Cherry Grove, Fire Island* (1993)
- George Chauncey, *Gay New York* (1994)
- Mark Blasius and Shane Phelan, editors, *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics* (1997)
- John Howard, *Carryin' On in the Lesbian and Gay South* (1997)
  - *Men Like That* (1999)
- Jack Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (1998)
  - *Trans\** (2018)
- John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (1998)
  - *Lost Prophet* (2003)
- Michael Moon, *A Small Boy and Others* (1998)
- José Quiroga, *Tropics of Desire* (2000)
- Rudolph P. Byrd and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, editors. *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sexuality* (2001)
- Robert Reid-Pharr, *Black Gay Man* (2001)
- Douglas Crimp, *Melancholia and Moralism* (2002)
- Juana María Rodríguez, *Queer Latinidad* (2003)
- Lee Edelman, *No Future* (2004)
- Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L. A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, And Lipstick Lesbians* (2006)
- E. Patrick Johnson, *Sweet Tea* (2008)
  - *Black. Queer. Southern. Woman* (2019)
- Susan Stryker, *Transgender History: The Roots of Today's Revolution* (2008)
- Gayle Rubin, *Deviations* (2011)
- Christopher Bram, *Eminent Outlaws: The Gay Writers who Changed America* (2012)
- Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers* (2012)
  - *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* (2015)
- Lynne Huffer, *Are the Lips a Grave?* (2013)
- Julio Capó Jr., *Welcome to Fairyland* (2017)

- Jaime Harker, *The Lesbian South* (2018)
- Heather Love, *Underdogs* (2021)
- José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia* (2009)
  - *The Sense of Brown* (2020)
- Martin Padgett, *A Night at the Sweet Gum Head* (2021)