



Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society)

By Matt Houlbrook

Download now

Read Online →

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook

In August 1934, young Cyril L. wrote to his friend Billy about all the exciting men he had met, the swinging nightclubs he had visited, and the vibrant new life he had forged for himself in the big city. He wrote, "I have only been queer since I came to London about two years ago, before then I knew nothing about it." London, for Cyril, meant boundless opportunities to explore his newfound sexuality. But his freedom was limited: he was soon arrested, simply for being in a club frequented by queer men.

Cyril's story is Matt Houlbrook's point of entry into the queer worlds of early twentieth-century London. Drawing on previously unknown sources, from police reports and newspaper exposés to personal letters, diaries, and the first queer guidebook ever written, Houlbrook here explores the relationship between queer sexualities and modern urban culture that we take for granted today. He revisits the diverse queer lives that took hold in London's parks and streets; its restaurants, pubs, and dancehalls; and its Turkish bathhouses and hotels—as well as attempts by municipal authorities to control and crack down on those worlds. He also describes how London shaped the culture and politics of queer life—and how London was in turn shaped by the lives of queer men. Ultimately, Houlbrook unveils the complex ways in which men made sense of their desires and who they were. In so doing, he mounts a sustained challenge to conventional understandings of the city as a place of sexual liberation and a unified queer culture.

A history remarkable in its complexity yet intimate in its portraiture, *Queer London* is a landmark work that redefines queer urban life in England and beyond.

 [Download Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual M ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual ...pdf](#)

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society)

By Matt Houlbrook

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook

In August 1934, young Cyril L. wrote to his friend Billy about all the exciting men he had met, the swinging nightclubs he had visited, and the vibrant new life he had forged for himself in the big city. He wrote, "I have only been queer since I came to London about two years ago, before then I knew nothing about it." London, for Cyril, meant boundless opportunities to explore his newfound sexuality. But his freedom was limited: he was soon arrested, simply for being in a club frequented by queer men.

Cyril's story is Matt Houlbrook's point of entry into the queer worlds of early twentieth-century London. Drawing on previously unknown sources, from police reports and newspaper exposés to personal letters, diaries, and the first queer guidebook ever written, Houlbrook here explores the relationship between queer sexualities and modern urban culture that we take for granted today. He revisits the diverse queer lives that took hold in London's parks and streets; its restaurants, pubs, and dancehalls; and its Turkish bathhouses and hotels—as well as attempts by municipal authorities to control and crack down on those worlds. He also describes how London shaped the culture and politics of queer life—and how London was in turn shaped by the lives of queer men. Ultimately, Houlbrook unveils the complex ways in which men made sense of their desires and who they were. In so doing, he mounts a sustained challenge to conventional understandings of the city as a place of sexual liberation and a unified queer culture.

A history remarkable in its complexity yet intimate in its portraiture, *Queer London* is a landmark work that redefines queer urban life in England and beyond.

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook Bibliography

- Rank: #778346 in Books
- Brand: Matt Houlbrook
- Published on: 2006-10-15
- Released on: 2005-09-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.30" w x 6.00" l, 1.47 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 398 pages

[↓ Download Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual M ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook

Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

What begins as the story of Cyril L., who, at 20, was married and had a daughter, but discovered he was gay shortly after moving to London's West End in 1932, quickly turns into an overwhelming sprawl of meticulous research that, despite its commendable intentions, is too dense to appeal to anyone other than very devoted scholars. Houlbrook, a lecturer in history at the University of Liverpool, examines London's roles in self-discovery and its inextricable links to gay culture, but often loses the reader within the vast tracts of information he presents in his historic tour of "London's queer geography," which has frequent stops at public urinals ("identified as the locus of sexual offences"), clubs, bathhouses, police patrols (one officer concludes in a surveillance report the two men he'd been observing were "undoubtedly of the Nancy type," while his colleague determined the men were, actually, "West End Poofs.") and courtrooms. Surely, there is no dearth of material presented, but some tidbits, such as public urinal geography and the detailed order of police units detached to apprehend "sodomites," come off as frivolous and detract from what could be an engaging read.

Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Review

"Through an extensive trawl of police records, Matt Houlbrook provides an insight into the dangers and excitements of the underground homosexual scene during the first half of the 20th century. Homosexual behaviour was still an imprisonable offence, yet Houlbrook shows how men defined their own spaces in the metropolis, establishing covert places where they could meet like-minded men. . . . This is a well-researched book which adds to recent scholarship in the history of sexuality. The author challenges the rigid views found in current observations of homosexuality extending our understanding by, quite rightly, placing into the broader overall pattern of changing masculinity."

(Julie Peakman *BBC History*)

"From the dockside pubs and river steps of the East End to the glittering Long Bar of the Trocadero; from the Savoy Turkish Baths in Jermyn Street to the stinking cast-iron urinals on Fair Street in Bermondsey, Houlbrook's narrative meanders across a capital city as protean as the middle-class men and working-class boys who lived and lusted, loved and (more often than not) loitered and lost within it."

(Peter J. M. Wayne *Spectator*)

"*Queer London* explores the relationship between gay sexualities and modern urban culture, revisiting the restaurants, pubs, dance halls, Turkish baths and hotels of London, and shows how municipal authorities tried to crack down on these worlds."

(*History Today*)

"As *Queer London* makes remarkably clear, just a few decades ago, significant numbers of (working-class) young men were not only moving freely between male and female partners but were happy to brag about it. So long as they were 'butch' and active—or claimed they were—it would merely enhance their reputation with the lads."

(*Sunday Independent*)

Peter Furtado calls it "not a story of persecution, but a lucid, sane and fascinating account of how gay people negotiated space for themselves within a hostile cultural environment, dealing with policing, housing, geography, identity and politics. . . . It will also make readers think about London and its public spaces

differently.”

(*Longman-History Today Book Awards 2006-01-10*)

"A ground-breaking work. While middle-class lives and writing have tended to compel the attention of most historians of homosexuality, Matt Houlbrook has looked more widely and found a rich seam of new evidence. It has allowed him to construct a complex, compelling account of interwar sexualities and to map a new, intimate geography of London. . . . Houlbrook vividly illustrates the significance of actual places and things in London, and so indicates the importance of material culture to the way men were experiencing themselves and each other. He takes chiffon, suede, lipstick, powder and puffs, urinals, parks, pavements, shops, bars and lodging houses as seriously as sexological tomes and earnest fiction. All of these were, after all, the stuff of everyday life. . . . All this vivid detail is delivered with analytic acumen and theoretical sophistication. We rarely lose sight of the point of stories and anecdotes as they build to illustrate arguments about the city and the plural and shifting understandings of queer sex and affections. Houlbrook reminds us that there was no singular queer type or unified queer scene, and neither is there a seamless queer history telling the story of progressive liberation."

(Matt Cook *The Times Higher Education Supplement 2005-02-17*)

"Houlbrook, in this well-researched and fascinating study, seeks to rescue the lives of men who loved other men . . . from the 'condescension of posterity.' Drawing upon personal memoirs, novels and criminal records he depicts a population which lived in a very different framework from that of gay men today."

(Bob Cant *The Lecturer*)

"This theoretically informed, innovative, cleverly researched, subtle, graceful, brilliant book demonstrates just how good history can be. . . . Although Houlbrook has published some of the material before in well-crafted articles, none of them prepares the reader for the sheer power and delight of this book."

(Barry Reay *American Historical Review*)

"Houlbrook weaves together a rich diversity of material—oral and published memoirs, biographies, newspaper reports and opinion pieces. and a vast range of archival materials—into a compelling and thought-provoking narrative."

(Lesley A. Hall *Urban History*)

"In this ambitious study, Matt Houlbrook shows why for many men coming to London and becoming homosexual were part of the same process. . . . Engaging and well written."

(Angus McLaren *Journal of Modern History*)

About the Author

Matt Houlbrook is a lecturer in history at the University of Liverpool.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rodney Richardson:

What do you think of book? It is just for students because they're still students or the idea for all people in the world, exactly what the best subject for that? Just you can be answered for that issue above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for every other. Don't to be pushed someone or something that they don't wish do that. You must know how great along with important the book *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957* (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society). All type of book is it possible to see on many solutions. You can look for the internet sources or other social media.

Clifford Walsh:

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also work as a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. Associate programs you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The knowledge you get based on what kind of reserve you read, if you want drive more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want feel happy read one along with theme for entertaining such as comic or novel. The Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) is kind of publication which is giving the reader capricious experience.

Carolyn Cook:

Are you kind of active person, only have 10 or even 15 minute in your moment to upgrading your mind proficiency or thinking skill perhaps analytical thinking? Then you are receiving problem with the book than can satisfy your short space of time to read it because this all time you only find book that need more time to be read. Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) can be your answer as it can be read by anyone who have those short time problems.

Tom Salgado:

E-book is one of source of expertise. We can add our understanding from it. Not only for students but additionally native or citizen have to have book to know the update information of year for you to year. As we know those publications have many advantages. Beside many of us add our knowledge, can also bring us to around the world. By book Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) we can get more advantage. Don't you to be creative people? To get creative person must want to read a book. Merely choose the best book that suitable with your aim. Don't become doubt to change your life at this time book Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society). You can more appealing than now.

Download and Read Online Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook #Q0GC9BO7SJE

Read Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook for online ebook

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook books to read online.

Online Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook ebook PDF download

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook Doc

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook Mobipocket

Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957 (The Chicago Series on Sexuality, History, and Society) By Matt Houlbrook EPub