

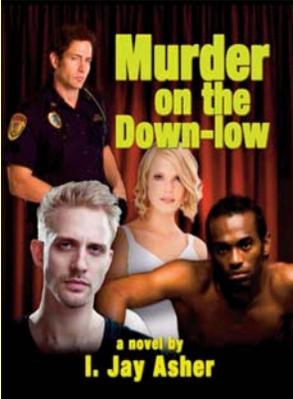
and with several TVs on at once blasting sports. This bar, The Endless Weekend, located at JFK Airport, bathes her with noise at her bartending job. When she gets home, which is in a remote industrial section of Queens, she's bathed with the noise of a place called Automobile Alley. In the first dozen pages of the book, we're bombarded with references to the underworld and other worlds of trucking, smuggling, UFOs, telepathy, television, ghost signals, the Internet, ships, jets, clocks, and satellites. But all these forms of transportation and communication are only another source of alienation for Laurie, preventing her from tuning in to her own thoughts.

However, Laurie likes to listen to her radio. One night she calls in to a late-night talk show and we're introduced to the host, Jean Shepherd, and his guest, a psychic called Ravenette. We'll learn how apt these characters' names are as the pages turn. Shepherd and Ravenette both seem to tune in to Laurie, but she's tough and confrontational; their meetings will end in near-fistfights and *fuck-you's*. Laurie reports that she has had both girlfriends and boyfriends, that she lost touch with her family, and that her mother died young. All this helps explain her alienation and anger. Laurie's tentative "radio" connections build throughout the book into a satisfying network.

As a metaphor, "reception and tuning in a specific frequency" refers to Laurie Perzin's own ability to tune into herself, which is what this story is about. She fights it at first but is slowly receptive. Helpful dogs, whose dark eyes glitter like stars in the night sky, mysteriously appear one at a time and lean against her leg. Her neighbor, an illegal immigrant from Mali, appreciates the kind things Laurie has done for her, and gives her (with difficulty, since Laurie argues about everything) a Dogon dog. Some interesting Dogon culture figures into the story. A cult leader, Raymond Gilmartin, and some of his followers place dangerous obstacles in Laurie's path. Gilmartin is described in a way that makes him sound slightly satanic, like an Antichrist figure: "As Raymond spoke, his voice remained smooth as oil, but I heard something else in it: the visual image that came to me of little fires burning around the edges." In contrast, the otherworldly radio man's pissed-off sissy hiss is not to be missed.

Laurie learns how to calm down enough to listen attentively, to think, and to fight antagonists in a smart way. By the end of the novel, she has tuned in to something truly wonderful, and she feels "energized, awake, alert." Amazingly, that's how *Radiomen* made me feel.

Mary Meriam is the author of *Conjuring My Leafy Muse* and *Girlie Calendar*.



"A clever psychological thriller that keeps you on the edge of your seat with great plot twists and suspense. An exciting story by a wonderful and talented writer."
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LGBT History 101

CHRIS FREEMAN

U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History

Edited by Leila J. Rupp and Susan K. Freeman

University of Wisconsin Press. 383 pages, \$29.95

THE TIMES, they have a-changed. In 2009, the California state legislature passed SB48, the FAIR (Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Responsible) Education Act, mandating the inclusion of LGBT history and culture into high school curricula. But, in this era of testing, testing, and more testing, how do teachers incorporate queer content into their courses—and what exactly should they be teaching to teenagers?

Editors Leila J. Rupp and Susan K. Freeman have facilitated that discussion with their comprehensive anthology, *U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History*. The book features more than 25 essays by teachers and professors about strategies they have used in the classroom and about some of the difficulties that inevitably accompany such subject matter.

Part One, on the challenges of teaching these controversial issues, begins with an essay by John D'Emilio, one of the most distinguished scholars of LGBT history in America. His offering, "Forty Years and Counting," which provides the long view of queer studies as an academic field going back to the gay liberation era, is an effective and informative look back at where we came from and how we got to this point. D'Emilio notes that "in the 1970s, there was not yet a conversation in LGBT history." Decades later, he found that even his more sophisticated students still didn't know anything about their own history: "Their ignorance was not their fault. It was evidence that the queer past does not circulate widely in the everyday lives or the formal education of Americans."

The book is an antidote to that unfortunate reality. The footnotes point readers to useful sources, little known facts, and classic works in the field. Some authors of those classic works—such as D'Emilio, Marc Stein, and Leila J. Rupp, the volume's co-editor—are represented here. Part Two, about some specific topics in LGBT history, features Stein's discussion of how he teaches Supreme Court cases affecting queer lives and issues; both the rulings and the opinions come into play, indicating not only how the court has made decisions but also how its rulings reflect and sometimes change thinking in the broader public. Included in this section are essays about 19th-century lives, about World War II and its impact on queer communities, about 1960s radicalism and the gay civil rights movement, and about AIDS, marriage equality, and the military's changing policies on gay personnel.

Part Three considers "hidden history" and its rediscovery, using oral history, fiction, media, and popular culture for teaching purposes. The work of Vito Russo in particular plays a key role in this section, as does Jonathan Ned Katz' great on-line resource, Outhistory.org. Sharon Ullman, a professor at Bryn Mawr College, ends her essay "Popular Culture: Using Televi-

Supported LGBTQ rights and movements. Was posthumously awarded Rustin the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama. To celebrate LGBTQ+ history month, we brought together ten LGBTQ+ civil rights leaders, spanning generations past and present, for a group portrait shot by the renowned photographer Frederic Aranda at the historic Black Cat Tavern in Silver Lake, Los Angeles. For the full article, click here: [10 Queer Activists Come Together Across Generations To Share Lessons and Love.](#)