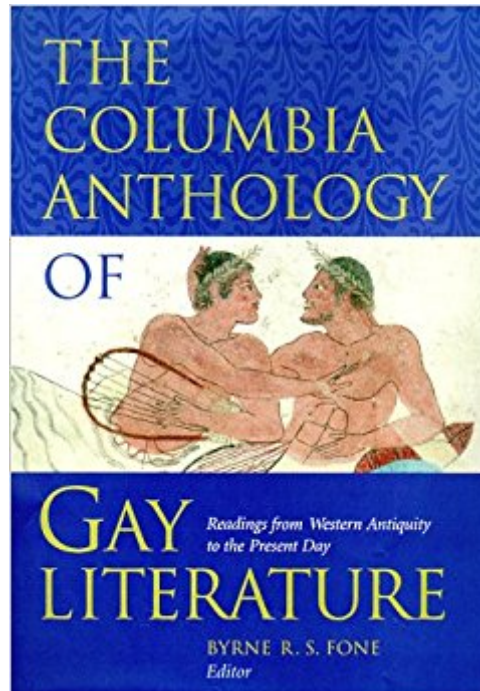




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The Columbia Anthology Of Gay Literature



Synopsis

In the three decades since New York City's Stonewall rebellion, gay literature has exploded as a distinctive form of cultural expression. In a variety of styles and genres, gay men have increasingly begun to articulate their sexual identities. At the same time, gay writers and scholars have begun in earnest the search for a literary history long denied by the refusal to recognize homosexual love as an integral part of Western literature. Yet to date, no single volume has brought together the full range of poetry, fiction, essays, and autobiography that portray love between men. From the Epic of Gilgamesh to the poems of Allen Ginsberg and gay literature of the 1980s and '90s, *The Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature* draws together hundreds of texts from Western literary history that describe experiences of love, friendship, intimacy, desire, and sex among men. While other anthologies have focused primarily on poetry, drama, or fiction, this volume is the first to include a full range of genres. Spanning more than two millennia, from ancient Mesopotamia to the late twentieth century, this anthology brings together the best-known texts of gay male writing such as the poetry of Martial and Walt Whitman, and excerpts from E. M. Forster's *Maurice*, as well as from lesser known works such as nineteenth-century English homoerotic poetry and selections from two early American novels of homosexual love -- *Joseph and His Friend* and *Imre*. In *The Columbia Anthology* readers become acquainted with the early bonds of male companionship found in Homer's writings on Zeus and Ganymede, and with the homoerotic poetry of Catullus and Juvenal. From Shakespeare's *Sonnets* to the philosophy of de Sade, to the political writings of Edmund White, this masterful anthology traces a multifaceted tradition. Arranged chronologically, sections are supplemented by illuminating introductory essays; many individual pieces include background commentary on the writer and the work. As a landmark to the enduring spirit of gay writers, this collection is an essential addition to the library of anyone searching for the historical foundations of gay identities. With its excellent annotations and suggestions for further reading, *The Columbia Anthology of Gay Literature* will also serve as an invaluable resource to students and scholars in need of a guide to a massive body of literature that has long been hidden, ignored, or misrepresented.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It would be impossible to compile a complete survey of gay male literature; the very looseness of the definition of "gay" (not to mention the wealth of possible material) would overwhelm the project. Despite that, Byrne R.S. Fone has fashioned a useful, intelligent, and amazingly functional volume that traces gay male themes from classical antiquity to the present day. Drawing on a variety of traditions and cultures--from ancient Greece to modern Egypt, from the Hebrew Bible to the Russian revolutionary Sergei Esenin--Fone has reprinted not only significant texts, but has also supplied readable, intelligent introductions that illuminate the subject. Most of the material here, apart from a short section on Latin American and Cuban writing, is steeped in a Western European tradition; the book nevertheless conjures a good case for a gay sensibility--or rather a series of sensibilities--that amazes, alarms, and endures. --Michael Bronski

Superbly conceived and edited, this anthology functions as a source companion to Gregory Woods's brilliant *History of Gay Literature* (LJ 4/1/98). Though its obvious use might be as a textbook, Fone's (CCNY) selections are thoughtfully interesting, and many are outside the gay canon. As such, even experienced readers of gay literature will discover hidden treasures here. Fone provides material from all Western literary traditions across 2000 years, and what makes his anthology even more wonderful is his including all genres of literature, not just the usual poetry and fiction, from ancient epic to modern personal political essays. Fone also provides introductory essays for each section and biographical notes for each author. This book will contribute mightily to discussions of the gay canon. Highly recommended. A David S. Azzolina, Univ. of Pennsylvania Libs., Philadelphia Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This book is almost operatic in scale; from the most ancient to the most modern literary sources, it sweeps through the opus of gay and lesbian literary creation. In a field, and at a time, where the historical sexuality of writers is still so often censored (through omission or commission) by the whole chain of the academic and publishing and book sales industry, this work tells us what should REALLY be on the shelf in your local bookstore under "Gay and Lesbian" other than the current line-up of soft-core trash. Knowing a place in a tradition or a larger story of a community of ideas, is fundamental to every individual and community identity, and as a gay man, this volume made me even prouder of the intellectual and creative contribution men and women of my community have made....forever..! You don't need to read it from cover to cover (after all it contains an immense volume of material), but I am promising myself time to do just that as soon as possible. The pure pride of holding it in your hands and leafing through it, is worth every cent of the substantial cost.

No matter what your lifestyle or who in the past had one that was the same, all the authors in this book are easily some of the most brilliant minds on the planet. I can easily say that with every word one can become drunk with literature and it is a delight to do so here with this anthology~! I'll have another cup of knowledge please~!

Needed it for a gay lit class and it came right on time

This is a readable and interesting book not only for westerner but also for us Japanese. However I would like to read much more on Greek and Latin literatures. And next time more comprehensive volume including Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Persian and Arabic anthologies I hope to read. In addition, the editor didn't understand the Greek language well, since he erroneously thought that "Amores" of Lucianos(p.23-24) is different work from "Affairs of the Heart" of (Pseudo)Lucianos(p.49-).

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