



Beyond Shame: Reclaiming the Abandoned History of Radical Gay Sexuality

Patrick Moore

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With bathhouses, "cruising" in urban areas, and private clubs built specifically for anonymous erotic encounters, the radical sexuality of gay American men in the 1970s is often seen as a shameful period of excess that led to the AIDS crisis.

In *Beyond Shame*, activist Patrick Moore claims that when the gay community divorced itself from this allegedly tainted legacy, the result was an intergenerational disconnect between younger and older gay men. The original participants in the 1970s' sexual culture were unable to impart a sense of pride and identity to younger generations. Indeed, one reason for the current rise in HIV, Moore argues, is precisely due to this destructive disconnect.

Moore encourages gay men to reclaim the entirety of their heritage-including AIDS-so that the gay community's prevailing sense of shame and isolation will change. Lifting the veil of AIDS, Moore recasts the gay male sexual culture of the 1970s as both groundbreaking and creative, provocatively comparing extreme sex to art. In the process, he presents a powerful yet nuanced snapshot of a maligned, forgotten era, with its heady mix of sexual liberation, artistic celebrations of homosexuality, and political anger fueled by the prevalent homophobia.

Moore's critical work attempts to rescue gay America's past, present, and future from a disturbing spiral of destruction and AIDS-related shame.

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