



Queer Lives: Men's Autobiographies from Nineteenth-Century France

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Eight gay men wrote their autobiographies in French between 1845 and 1905; some of them reflected on their childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, others provided brief impressions of their loves and desires. A few of them dramatized their lives following contemporary theatrical and fictional models, while others wrote for medical doctors, who used the men's writings as case studies to illustrate their theories on sexual deviance. In some instances the doctors' extensive interpretations cannot be separated from the men's own stories, but in others the authors speak for themselves.

The remarkable autobiographies in *Queer Lives*, translated into English for the first time here, give present-day readers a rare glimpse into otherwise shrouded existences. They relate the experiences of a man about town, a cross-dressing entertainer, a troubled adolescent, and two fetishists, among others. The autobiographies will interest a wide audience today at a time when readers are seeking new views on the lives of ordinary men and women from the past, when gay people are looking for the roots of their communities, and when scholars are trying to understand the formation of sexual identities at a crucial moment in the history of modern Europe.

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