

Introduction

HOMOPHOBIA: TOWARDS AN AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

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Early one December morning in 2007, after spending an evening at a local nightclub, Craig Gee and his partner Shane Brennan walked along Sydney's Crown Street. They held hands, feeling secure in doing so. Both men were local residents familiar with the area. Crown Street is located only blocks away from Oxford Street, an area known to many as Sydney's 'golden gay mile'. This walk home though, turned out very differently to any other. Four men set upon them suddenly, yelling 'Give us your money you fucking faggots'. In the vicious physical attack that followed, both Craig and Shane were seriously wounded. Craig was particularly severely injured. One of the assailants stamped on his face, breaking his eye socket in three places and reducing part of his skull to powder. One of his legs was also broken. He has since had to undergo reconstructive facial surgery and cannot remember the assault. Shane was left with a feeling of helplessness, both as a result of the violence, and the ensuing trauma of witnessing his partner's difficult recovery. The physical impact of the attack was compounded four days later, when one of the assailants used Craig's stolen phone to call his mother, telling her 'We killed your faggot son'.¹

In the aftermath of the attack, Craig and Shane attempted to report the violence at the Surry Hills police station, but found that the police discouraged them from making a formal statement. Craig believed that the police were reluctant to investigate any leads or to use any security camera footage that may have taped the attack.² Since the bashing, Craig has suffered nightmares,

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and reinforce control and mastery over others. It diverts energy away from more constructive endeavours.⁴²

The Australian GLTBIQ community has made significant strides towards equality over the past 30 years. Recent polls have shown that increasing numbers of Australians view homophobia as a destructive blight on our social fabric. If this prejudice is to be eradicated, a full awareness of its historic development and expression is necessary. It is hoped that the current collection can aid in developing such an awareness, and by demonstrating the historical extent of homophobia and the impact of anti-homosexual beliefs, perhaps contribute to a more tolerant and open attitude towards sexual difference. Moreover, as homophobia often tends to be linked to sexism, it is hoped that this collection may also be useful in providing some new insight into the historical development and expression of this prejudice.⁴³

Notes

- 1 John Kidman, 'March Confronts Hate Crime', *Sun-Herald* [Sydney], 2 March 2008, p 14.
- 2 Dylan Welch and Joel Gibson, 'Gays To Go On March After Spate of Attacks', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 January 2008, p 1.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Lucy Carne, 'Gay bash agony of Big Bro star', *Sunday-Mail*, 30 April 2006, p 7. See also Rebecca Beisler, 'Gay-bash fear rife', *MX*, 30 January 2008, p 2; John Kidman, 'When ignorance turns to violence', *Sun-Herald*, 19 August 2007, p.52; John Kidman, 'Thugs targeting gay clubs and bars', *Sun-Herald*, 12 August 2007, p 11; Gary Burns, 'Homophobic violence fuelled by fear, hate', *Newcastle Herald*, 15 May 2006, p 9.
- 5 Miawling Lam, 'Crowds out for biggest Mardi Gras', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 March 2008, p 22.
- 6 Daniel Wickberg, 'Homophobia: On the Cultural History of an Idea', *Critical Inquiries*, Vol 27, No 1 (Autumn 2000), p 43. See also JH Neisen, 'Heterosexism: Redefining Homophobia for the 1990s', *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy*, Vol 1, No 3 (1990), pp 21-35.
- 7 Adrian Cherny, 'Understanding and Documenting Anti-Homosexual Sentiment', *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, Vol 10, No 2 (1998), pp 125-137.
- 8 See for example, Gail Mason, *The Spectacle of Violence: homophobia, gender and knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002), p 7. See also Byrne Fone, *Homophobia: A History* (New York: Picador, 2000); Byrne Fone, *A Road to Stonewall: Male homosexuality and homophobia in English and American literature, 1750-1969* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995);

Elizabeth B Keiser, *Courtly Desire and Medieval Homophobia: The legitimation of sexual pleasure in cleanliness and its contexts* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1997); Louis Crompton, *Byron and Greek Love: Homophobia in nineteenth century England* (London: Faber, 1985).

- 9 Barry D Adam, 'Theorizing Homophobia', *Sexualities*, Vol 1, No 4 (1998), p 394.
- 10 Jonathan N Katz, "'Homosexual' and 'Heterosexual': Questioning the Terms' in Martin Duberman (ed), *A Queer World: The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p 179.
- 11 Gregory M Herek, 'Beyond 'Homophobia': Thinking About Sexual Prejudice and Stigma in the Twenty-First Century', *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, Vol 1, No 2 (April 2004), pp 2-24.
- 12 Cherny, 'Understanding and Documenting Anti-Homosexual Sentiment', pp 125-126.
- 13 A cursory glance at any of the queer publications released in Australia will show this to be the case. See for example, 'Call for Church to Recognise Homophobia', *Queensland Pride*, No 248 (June 2008), p 3; Katrina Fox, 'Groups Gear Up For Anti-Homophobia Day', *SX News*, 8 May 2008, p 4. See also GLBTIQ organizations such as Sydney's Community Action Against Homophobia (CAAH) and International Anti-Homophobia Day, held 17 May annually.
- 14 Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (London: Longman, 1986). For more on the evolution of Australian gender roles, see particularly Kay Saunders and Raymond Evans (eds), *Gender Relations in Australia: Domination and Negotiation* (Sydney: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1992).
- 15 Queer theory owes much to the works of Michel Foucault. See particularly M Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans Robert Hurley (Harmondsworth, Great Britain: Penguin, 1981). Judith Butler has written the most influential works in this area in recent years. See particularly, Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990). See also Steven Seidman, *Queer Theory/Sociology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996).
- 16 See particularly Robert Reynolds, *From Camp to Queer: Remaking the Australian Homosexual* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2002); Clive Moore, *Sunshine and Rainbows: The development of gay and lesbian culture in Queensland* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2001); Graham Willett, *Living Out Loud: A history of gay and lesbian activism in Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000); Raymond Donovan and Leong K Chan (eds), *Gay, Lesbian and Queer Studies in Australia* (Sydney: Australian Centre for Gay and Lesbian Research, University of Sydney, 1999); Craig Johnston, *A Sydney Gaze: The Making of Gay Liberation* (Sydney: Schiltron Press, 1999); Denis Altman, *Defying Gravity: A Political Life* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1997); Robert

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French, *Camping by a Billabong: gay and lesbian stories from Australian history* (Sydney: Blackwattle Press, 1993) and Garry Wotherspoon, *City of the Plain: History of a Gay Sub-Culture* (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1991). Some of the works highlighted focus more on male-to-male relationships. For work dealing specifically with the situation of same-sex attracted women, see Lucy Chessser's bibliography of sources attached to the end of Chapter 2.

- 17 Mason, *The Spectacle of Violence*, p 63.
- 18 Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, *After the Ball: How America will conquer its fear and hatred of gays in the 90s* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), p.1.
- 19 Saunders and Evans (eds), *Gender Relations in Australia*.
- 20 For an introduction to this debate, see Martin Duberman, 'Reclaiming the Gay Past' *Reviews in American History*, Vol 16, No 4 (December 1988), pp 515-525.
- 21 See Clive Moore and Kay Saunders (eds), *Masculinities: Men and Their Histories*, Special Issue, *Journal of Australian Studies*, No 56 (1998).
- 22 Wickberg, 'Homophobia: On the Cultural History of an Idea', p 43.
- 23 Byrne Fone, *Homophobia: A History* (New York: Picador, 2000)
- 24 See Edward Jay Mills III, 'Review of Byrne Fone, *Homophobia: A History*', *International Social Sciences Review*, Vol 78 (Fall-Winter 2003), pp 470.
- 25 Jay Hatheway, *The Gilded Age Construction of Modern American Homophobia* (New York: Palmgrave Macmillan, 2003), p 910.
- 26 See also Jonathan Ned Katz, 'The Invention of Heterosexuality', *Socialist Review*, Vol 20 (1990), pp 7-24.
- 27 Hatheway, *The Gilded Age Construction of Modern American Homophobia*, p 200.
- 28 See Ivan Crozier, 'Review of Jay Hatheway, *The Gilded Age Construction of Modern American Homophobia*', *Journal of the History of Medical and Allied Sciences*, Vol 60, No 1 (2005), pp 125-127.
- 29 John Marshall, 'Pansies, perverts and macho men: changing conceptions of male homosexuality' in Kenneth Plummer (ed), *The Making of the Modern Homosexual* (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1981), p 137.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Graham Robb, *Strangers: Homosexual love in the nineteenth century* (London: Picador, 2003), p 17.
- 32 For more on the connection between homophobia and sexism, see particularly Suzanne Pharr, *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism* (Little Rock: Chardon Press, 1988).
- 33 Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
- 34 'Ban on same-sex marriages doesn't target gays: PM', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 April 2004, p 6.

- 35 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Same-sex: Same entitlements. National inquiry into discrimination against people in same-sex relationships: financial and work-related entitlements and benefits: final report* (Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997).
- 36 'Government's Move on Same Sex Discrimination Welcomed by HREOC', HREOC media release, 30 April 2008, <www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2008/48_08.html>.
- 37 Laura Macintyre, 'Marriage Act Final Frontier for Same Sex Law Reform', *Lawyers Weekly Online*, 12 May 2008, <www.lawyersweekly.com.au/articles/Marriage-Act-final-frontier-for-same-sex-law-reform_z172223.htm>.
- 38 See Gail Mason, 'Sexuality and Violence: Questions of Difference' in C Cunneen, D Fraser and S Tomsen (eds), *Faces of Hate: Hate Crime in Australia* (Sydney: Hawkins Press, 1997), pp 115-136.
- 39 Mason, *The Spectacle of Violence*, p 39.
- 40 MD Otis and WF Skinner, 'The Prevalence of Victimisation and its Effects on Mental Well-Being Among Lesbians and Gay People', *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol 30, No 3 (1996), pp 93-117.
- 41 S Dyson, A Mitchell, A Smith, G Dowsett, M Pitts and L Hillier, *Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Hidden in the Crowd: The Need for Documenting Links Between Sexuality and Suicidal Behaviours Among Young People*, Monograph Series No 5 (Melbourne: The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, 2003), p 11.
- 42 Warren J Blumenfield, 'Introduction' in Warren J Blumenfield (ed), *Homophobia: How we all pay the price* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), pp 12-13.
- 43 AF Madureira, 'Homophobia as a Boundary Phenomenon: The Dynamic Dance Between Different Tensions', *Integrative Psychological and Behavioural Science*, Vol 41, No 3-4 (2007), pp 326-342.