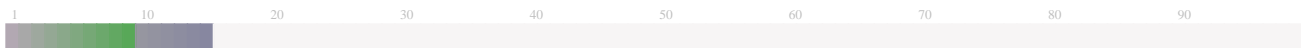


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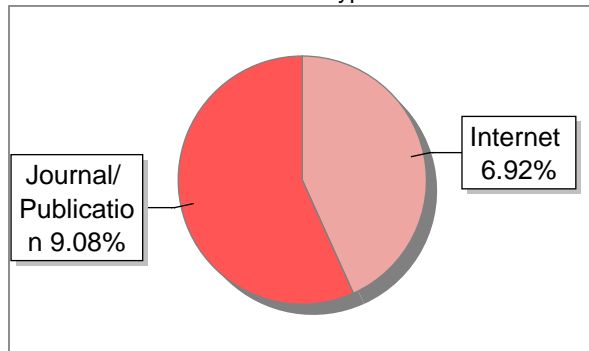
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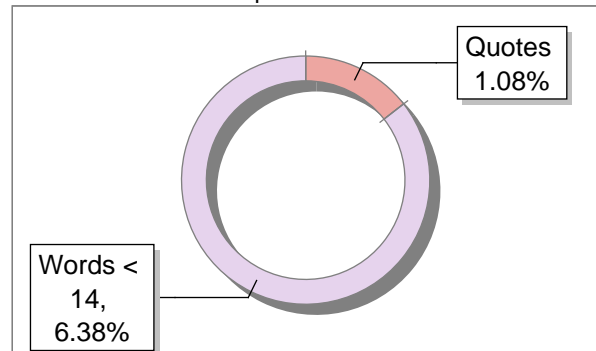
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Male Homosexuality in Children's Literature, 1867–1918: Young Uranians 1st edition



By Eric L. Tribunella, New York, Routledge, 2023, 214 pp, £35.09 (eBook), ISBN 9781003370529


Lodiana Ayu, Siswanto Masruri, Khoiruddin Bashori & Fitriah M. Suud



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BOOK REVIEW

Male Homosexuality in Children's Literature, 1867–1918: Young Uranians 1st edition, by Eric L. Tribunella, New York, Routledge, 2023, 214 pp, £35.09 (eBook), ISBN 9781003370529

The book "Men's Homosexuality in Children's Literature, 1867–1918: Young Uranus" by Eric L. Tribunella is a critical review of the works of gay writers who wrote for children from the middle of the nineteenth century to the end of the First World War. This book explores the construction and dissemination of the discourse of sexuality and the figure of Uranus' youth as the core of modern gay identity. This book takes a starting point from Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson's 1908 study on homosexuality entitled *The Intersexes: A History of Similesexism as a Problem in Social Life*, which includes a section on teenage homosexual fiction, the first attempt to identify a collection of children's literature about male homosexuality in English. The book examines works by Eduard Bertz, Howard Sturgis, Horace Vachell, and Stevenson himself, including Horatio Alger, John Gambril Nicholson, and E.F. It also discusses major developments in English and German-language sexology and how boys' books can be understood as people who participate in the construction and dissemination of sexuality discourses and as young Uranus figures important to modern gay identity.

Edward Irenaeus Prime-Stevenson, famous for writing the first clearly gay American novel, *Imre*, published a 650-page cultural and historical study on homosexuality, *The Intersexes: A History of Similisexuality as a Problem in Social Life*, between 1896 and 1906. He focused on same-sex aspirations in history, art, literature, and law, contrary to most of the other long-book studies of homosexuality of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Stevenson was one of the first writers to acknowledge the possibility and value of homosexual children, whom he called "Young Uranus." His catalog of homosexual writings for young people around the turn of the century included writers such as Eduard Bertz, Howard Sturgis, Horace Vachell, and Stevenson himself. The early body of Uranus's children's literature was written during the period when modern definitions of homosexuality and heterosexuality were first developed and interpreted. These books by most homosexual authors participated in the construction and dissemination of the discourse of male homosexuality, especially childhood homosexualism, in unlearned ways. The project suggests that scholars should consider a much longer chronology of gay children's literature, given the influence of Stevenson's work and the emergence of the "Young Uranus" genre. The project also highlights the importance of considering the broader context of homosexual children's literature as well as the role of "young Urano" in shaping modern gay discourse and gay identity.

D'Emilio highlighted the city's role in the emergence of homosexual and gay identities between the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries. Cities like New York City and Proto-Uranian Street Boys play an important role in this development, as their economies allow workers to earn wages independently of the family units, and their density of population makes it more likely to find and connect with individuals who tend to be equal. Alger's novels, like *Ragged Dick*, emphasize the importance of revealing one's true identity and expressing pride in oneself. The last part of the Alger Street Kids series, featuring Dick as a character, describes this desire. Mark,

The Match Boy, is accused of stealing by a jealous colleague and discovering his true identity as the grandson of the wealthy Mr. Bates. This revelation connects Mark to an unlawful love and ensures a lasting friendship with Ben. However, Mr. Bates insists on appreciating the characters who help care for Mark, including Ben, who remains with him.


The uniqueness of this book is good to read because of the study of interesting works in the years 1867–1918. There are writings that emphasize pictures of street children who have the possibility of hidden homosexuality that are being studied using sexological discourse to describe boys who may have homosexual orientation. The theme of suicide and self-sacrifice associated with the character of Uranus's schoolchild is also unique and can be traced back to today's so many suicide incidents due to sexual issues. Besides, a study of the character encoding of the sons of Uranus in their relationship with other children uncovered the secret that there was a special code between them. This means that the novels studied in this book actually influenced the modern construction of gay identity and that some of the worried behaviors that emerged in modern times turned out to have been much done and worried by the son of Uranus a few years ago.


The key findings in this book explain the importance of children's literature on homosexuality in explaining possible gay identities as well as highlighting the potential for further development in gay child literature. The book also puts the works in the context of current developments in English and German sexology. These books about homosexual boys can be understood as part of the construction and dissemination of the discourse of sexuality as well as an important element in modern gay identity. This book connects his works to major topics in English sexology and German-speaking at the time. This book became important to study in the study of sexual and relationship therapy, considering re-reading the stories of homosexual boys with various backgrounds as a contribution to enriching the therapy model on sexual conditions that are seen as unusual and abnormal by many observers.

This conclusion also considers how children's literature on male homosexuals contributed to this larger body of work by briefly reviewing the history of adult homosexual and gay literature in Britain and the United States during the same time period as the author's project. The author argues that gay children's literature can achieve certain goals that are more difficult for gay adult literature during this period. Specifically, the author finds that the children's books studied here tend to portray the Uranus youth as a figure of hope and resilience, while the adult homosexual character appears tragic or corrupt. In addition, gay children's literature during this period managed to live an open double life, circulating as Sunday school gifts and bestselling books among audiences who may not be aware of their homosexual content while proving relatively openly about the nature of desire and affection among boys. In this way, early gay children's literature can avoid censorship or scandals that follow the publication of works for adults. With the exception of Algiers, most of the works examined here have received little attention from scholars and have become unknown among readers. The author hopes the project will generate more interest in these important books that continue to resonate in the twenty first century.



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