

**McLeod, Donald W. *A Brief History of Gay: Canada's First Gay Tabloid, 1964-1966* Toronto: Homewood Books, 2003. Pp 96, index, illustrations**

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[See table of contents](#)

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ally became. In the grander scheme of things, the choice of a closed corporation model, rather than a system of community-based clubs that allowed for possible promotion and demotion within a hierarchical divisional structure—like that of soccer in Britain—reflected “the promotion of a sport brand based on skill level” and a hockey system in which the league struggled to maintain internal order and subordinate rival organizations.

While the basic elements of hockey’s development prior to World War One are well known: the initial pre-eminence of Montreal and Ottawa in commercial hockey activities; the splitting of hockey into separate professional and amateur camps as a result of the Athletic War; and the gradual expansion of hockey into new markets in Western Canada and the United States; Wong’s analysis is clearly the most comprehensive treatment of that history to date. Unlike commentators such as Bruce Kidd who focus on management and player relations, Wong’s analysis is more broadly fashioned and less critical of the NHL’s ascent to dominance in the hockey world. Kidd distinguished between strictly amateur, not-for-profit, and full-scale professional hockey, painting the NHL as a threat to community and national interests and even to the game itself. Wong argues instead that hockey was enmeshed in the processes of commercialization from its earliest origins. In a straight-forward narrative approach, he outlines the attempts of professional organizations to bring order to a highly competitive marketplace. In the creation of this corporate culture during the early years of the century, he argues, contending groups fought to assert their control over the player market, the buying, selling and access to franchises, the rules, regulations and officiating of the game, the wording of league constitutions, the authority of the league president, negotiations with rival associations, and the expansion of the game into the United States.

Wong’s access to the league archives and the correspondence of owners and league officials sets this book off from earlier histories of North American professional hockey. Although the influence of these records is most evident in the last half dozen chapters, they allow for a clearer description and more textured understanding of the important personalities involved over the years in the fashioning of the NHL’s hegemonic authority. Beginning with chapter six, “An Inglorious End and Auspicious Beginning,” Wong employs the minutes of league meetings and confidential correspondence to demonstrate both the growing authority exercised by Frank Calder as NHL president and the central importance of maverick NHA owner Eddie Livingstone whose litigious personality helped a fractious group of owners come together to keep him out of their exclusive club. Calder’s ability to manage internal conflict helped place the NHL on a secure footing during the 1920s. From that stable base it could confront challenges from rival organizations such as the American Hockey Association, and develop an integrated and affiliated minor league system whose constituents respected the NHL’s territorial rights.

Calder was often at odds with wealthy and strong-willed ‘lords of the rinks’ who were critical of his use of presidential power.

Charles Adams of the Boston Bruins considered him to be unduly influenced by Canadian owners. Chicago Blackhawks owner Major Fred McLaughlin was suspicious of the eastern establishment and clashed with Calder over the issue of territorial rights and his handling of the American Hockey Association’s short-lived defection from the NHL minor league system. Frank Ahearne of the Ottawa club was frustrated by Calder’s and the league’s refusal to increase its share of revenues from road games in order to salvage a franchise with a venerable past. Nevertheless, Wong argues, Calder’s approach was on the whole positive and restrained, bringing stability and order to the league. “Under his guidance the NHL emerged from being a small regional organization to become an international cartel. Although he did not hesitate to use the power of his office at times, he preferred diplomacy and alliance making, with great attention to details.” (p. 154).

Wong’s book is a valuable read for historians interested in sport, business organization, urban history and capitalist development before World War Two. Of course, the story of the NHL’s rise to ascendancy does not really end with the 1936 agreement between the NHL and the CAHA. The years to follow are equally important. Hopefully, Professor Wong will seriously contemplate a sequel to this useful volume that will bring this fascinating story of the consolidation of the NHL’s hegemony into the contemporary era.

Colin Howell  
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**McLeod, Donald W. *A Brief History of Gay: Canada’s First Gay Tabloid, 1964–1966* Toronto: Homewood Books, 2003. Pp 96, index, illustrations.**

Donald McLeod, a Toronto research librarian, is one of the pioneering activists working in the area of the history of sexuality in Canada. Scholars, students, and members of the gay and lesbian public are indebted to McLeod for his chronology *Lesbian and Gay Liberation: A selected annotated chronology. 1964–1975* and his later work, co-authored with activist Jim Egan, entitled *Challenging the Conspiracy of Silence*. Now McLeod is back with a fascinating little appetizer of a book about the first Canadian gay periodical — *GAY International*. Although *GAY* published a mere 15 issues between 1964–1966 McLeod is convincing about the importance of this magazine for the history of gay and lesbian publishing, and the periodical press in particular.

*GAY* was launched in Toronto in March 1964. Directed at a gay male readership, *GAY* offered entertainment, re-publications from other sources, gossip and some local material, clip art, photography, and personal ads. McLeod notes that *GAY* was one of the first homosexual periodicals to use the word gay on the cover—and to be so explicit about its subject matter. Adding to the rich detail that McLeod provides about the magazine’s content, and cover-art, he also provides circulation figures and

some context about GAY's rather limited Canadian competition—the *ASK newsletter* (a homophile publication based in Vancouver) and *TWO* (a magazine for the Toronto gay club crowd). In part because much of McLeod's tale is relatively unknown, he provides significant detail about the changing editorial composition of the periodical, its struggle to define a 'voice' for the magazine, and some of the personal trials of its second and last editor, Robert Marsden of Middletown, PA.

The section on Marsden's fortunes is quite fascinating, and a testament to the doggedness of McLeod's research skills (combining as it does archival material with oral histories with one of Marsden's former associates Richard Schlegel). Marsden was the son of a prominent Presbyterian clergyman and educator, and after university he embarked on a business career in electronics. Yet, that left him unfulfilled, and as a young gay businessman with a comfortable trust fund income, he longed to indulge his passion for photography and physique studies of young males. Hearing that the small Canadian periodical *GAY* was for sale, Marsden leapt at the chance to realize his dreams of creating his own gay magazine. Under Marsden's ownership *GAY* was rechristened *Gay International* and the editorial balance shifted in favour of photographic portraits (many taken in the basement of the family home in Middletown, PA); more risqué fare, including anonymous articles about inter-generational sexual attraction; more eye-catching cover art, and re-prints of American material. Despite these changes, it continued to be printed and distributed from Queen Street in Toronto. Struggling to find the right editorial mix, with debts piling up, and annoyed distributors clamouring for copy, *GAY International* teetered on the verge of insolvency in June 1965. Erroneous criminal charges laid against Marsden for consorting with underage youth at a Pennsylvania cabin pushed the magazine over the brink. By 1966, *GAY International* had ceased publications.

Despite this short-lived and tumultuous tenure, McLeod argues that *Gay* deserves a place in the history of gay and lesbian publications. The substantial circulation across news-stands in Toronto, Hamilton and Montréal, as well throughout the United States, marks *GAY* as unique in this time period. On circulation alone, McLeod claims that Canadian gay publications would not surpass the print run of *GAY* until the publication of *Xtra!* Similarly, he notes that *GAY International* unlike most of its peers was not a homophile magazine, but rather a general interest periodical. Cultural historians and historians of sexuality will critique McLeod's assertion that *GAY* was "non political" as his definition of political is too narrow. Yes, it was not political in the sense of advancing either an "assimilationist" or "liberationist" view (32) but to print gay material in 1964 was to offer material that was political. Much as feminist historian Veronica Strong-Boag has argued for the politicization of 'everyday acts' in the 1930s, a time when formal feminist activity was in decline, so should historians of sexuality and gay activism regard as political, cultural and associational activity in the pre-Stonewall era. *GAY* presumes a self-identified gay audience. Furthermore, it does not argue, as many middle-class

homophile organizations would for acceptance and equity, indeed it does not concern itself at all with such 'respectable' notions. Instead, it argues for a 'gay' world view and is unrepentant about that stand. Given what we know about how people 'find' other gays and lesbians, we know the cultural materials are extremely important, as they frequently serve as the entre-points to the homosexual community. What message did it send gay youth and gay men, when they discovered a copy of *GAY* on their local news-stand? That, I suggest, was a politicized and important message for this magazine to make.

Despite my criticisms of the issue of *GAY*'s 'political' nature, McLeod is to be commended for an excellent book. As he himself notes, he hopes that this book will stimulate other scholars to further advance our knowledge of the importance of gay and lesbian periodicals. I would concur most strongly, and hope that this "brief history" sparks many investigations of the gay and lesbian periodical press.

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**Beauregard, Robert. *Voices of Decline: The Postwar Fate of U.S. Cities* (New York: Routledge, 2003), revised edition.**

Bob Beauregard's *Voices of Decline* joins a long list of books that deal with the American postwar urban crisis. While covering many of the concerns raised by other writers, the distinctive aspects of Beauregard's work are the breadth of issues covered, the types of sources employed (mainly popular magazines and government reports), and the concern with how cities are represented by authors writing in these publications. His main purpose is to trace out discursively how public intellectuals, journalists and policy makers understood postwar urban decline. In the process he argues that this discourse has been instrumental in the rise and fall of the American city and has underpinned the marked inequalities of capitalist America.

After an introduction to the debates on urban change and American reactions to the city (chapter 1), he outlines the optimistic discourse of urban boosters and policy makers before the Second World War (chapters 2 and 3). The prewar city was one of growth, prosperity and hope. In contrast, postwar urban America experienced decline, deterioration and despair. Decline because the city lost out to the suburbs and the town; deterioration because capital flight undermined the city's physical and social conditions; and despair because racial and class conflict became the central mode of inter-group interaction. Beauregard establishes these issues by following a chronological narrative of postwar urban growth in which discourse is organized around a unique central theme (chapters 4 to 10). During the 1940s and 1950s the discourse revolved around physical decline and regional change. Over the last 40 years issues of race and class, fiscal crisis and urban decay, capital and population flight, and racial and class segregation have taken over central stage at different times and in different