



Dr. Timothy Jones Receives LGBT Religious History Award

The LGBT Religious Archives Network (LGBT-RAN) honors Dr. Timothy Willem Jones with its 2012-13 LGBT Religious History Award. Jones' paper, "The Stained Glass Closet: Celibacy and Homosexuality in the Church of England to 1955," was selected by the review jury to receive this award.

Timothy Willem Jones is lecturer in History and co-director of the Centre for Gender Studies in Wales at the University of Glamorgan, and Australian Research Council DECRA fellow in History and the Australian Research Center in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University. He received his Ph.D. in History from Melbourne University in 2007. The thesis was published as *Sexual Politics in the Church of England, 1857-1957* (Oxford University Press, 2013). The book provides a genealogy to the Church's contemporary gender trouble, exposing a 150-year institutional engagement with sexual politics. For much of this time the Church was at the forefront of social change in the areas of gender and sexuality. The book delineates factors that enabled and limited changes in the sexual politics of the historic Church.

Dr. Jones' award-winning article, "The Stained Glass Closet: Celibacy and Homosexuality in the Church of England to 1955," was published in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality* in January 2011. It derives from one of his major research interests—to elucidate the interconnection between religious and secular paradigms of sexual knowledge in the twentieth century. Jones thoughtfully analyzes the question of how the Church of England came to speak loudly and boldly about homosexuality in the 1950s, after remaining adamantly silent on the issue for so long? He "traces the tensions and ambiguities inherent in the official Anglican sexual identities that described persons as 'chaste' and 'celibate' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the ways that new medical descriptions of homosexuality influenced religious discourse on sexuality, and the Church's mobilization as homosexuality began to be popularly recognised in England." Jones argues that the Church's negotiation of new understandings of sexual identity in the first half of the twentieth century led to a remarkable level of institutional accommodation and acceptance of homosexuality.

Nevertheless the Church's reformulation of attitudes towards same-sex desire is something of a paradox. "As gay men in broader society retreated into the closet, the Church of England created a 'stained glass closet,' a space of tacit acceptance where 'inverts' could find community and status." Despite the Church's great leap in supporting homosexual law reform and accommodating gays in the institution in the 1950s—"the translucent doors of many Anglican closets have remained closed so long after the doors of secular closets have been flung open."

Jones is currently working on a biography of the Rev. Dr. D. Sherwin Bailey, a priest, historian and theologian, who was the first scholar to revise understandings of sodomy as a sexual sin to a sin of hospitality. He is also working on a history of the influence of the New Christian Right on Australian sexual politics and is co-investigator on a project on the history of the treatment of sexually offending priests in Australia since 1880.

Dr. Jones is the seventh recipient of the LGBT Religious History Award that was initiated by the LGBT Religious Archives Network in 2005. It is the only award given for outstanding scholarship in this field. Jones paper was selected by the jury from among fifteen papers submitted this year from scholars in the U.S., U.K. and Australia. Plans for honoring Dr. Jones with this award and its cash prize are still being developed. More details will be available on the www.lgbtran.org web site.

Submissions for next year's LGBT Religious History Award must be postmarked or received electronically by December 1, 2013. Complete information on submission guidelines for the award can be found at: www.lgbtran.org/historyaward.aspx.

The LGBT Religious Archives Network, a project of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry at the Pacific School of Religion, is a ground-breaking venture to preserve the history of LGBT religious movements. It has two primary purposes: a) to assist LGBT religious groups and leaders in preserving their records in appropriate repositories; and b) providing an electronic information clearinghouse on LGBT religious collections and other historical source materials on its web site: www.lgbtran.org.

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