# Being Gay in Post-War London: 'Some Men in London: Queer Life, 1945-1959' by Peter Parker Reviewed



"Some Men in London: Queer Life, 1945-1959," edited by Peter Parker, delves into the experiences of gay men in mid-20th century London. The anthology offers a compilation of diary entries, letters, newspaper reports, and novel extracts, providing a nuanced portrayal of gay life during this period.

The book’s title is derived from the *News of the World*’s 1950s declaration about the prominence of homosexuality in London's core. It features diverse sources, including a candid 1945 account by photographer John S Barrington and the 1953 arrest of actor John Gielgud for "importuning men."

The anthology showcases perspectives ranging from public figures to anonymous individuals. It highlights both the societal challenges and personal struggles faced by gay men, juxtaposing legal and social hostilities with moments of affection and humor.

Editor Peter Parker, known for his biographies of Christopher Isherwood and JR Ackerley, offers insightful annotations. The narrative captures the evolving public profile of homosexuality and the incremental steps towards decriminalization, which would eventually be addressed in the sequel covering 1959-1967.

"Some Men in London: Queer Life, 1945-1959" is published by Penguin Classics.