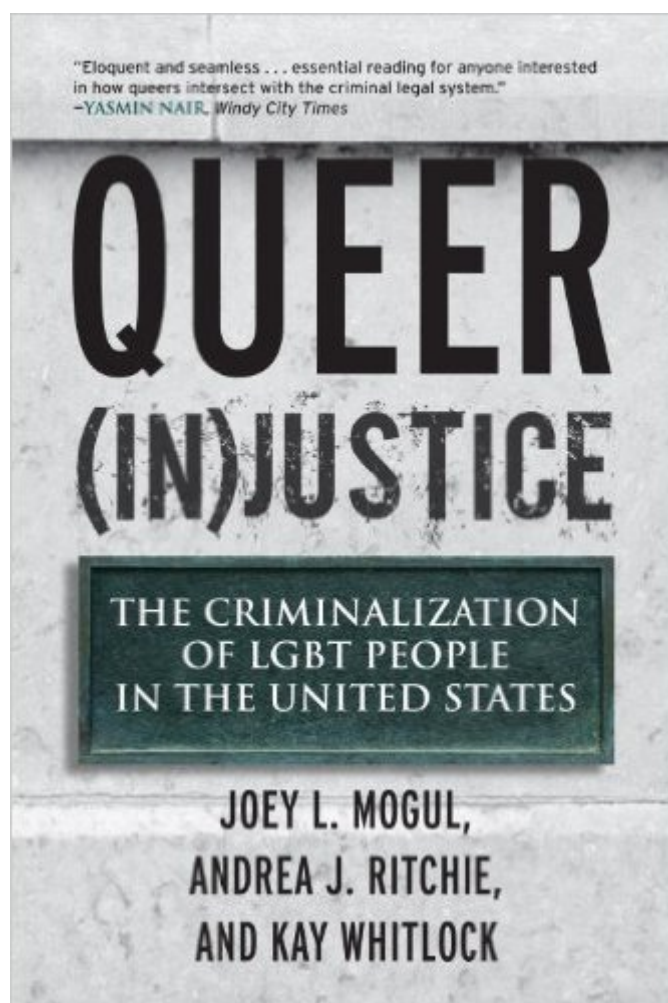


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# Queer (In)Justice: The Criminalization Of LGBT People In The United States (Queer Ideas/Queer Action)



## Synopsis

Winner of the 2011 PASS (Prevention for a Safer Society) Award from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency A groundbreaking work that turns a queer eye on the criminal legal system, *Queer (In)Justice* is a searing examination of queer experiences as suspects, defendants, prisoners, and survivors of crime. The authors unpack queer criminal archetypes like gleeful gay killers, lethal lesbians, disease spreaders, and deceptive gender benders to illustrate the punishment of queer expression, regardless of whether a crime was ever committed. Tracing stories from the streets to the bench to behind prison bars, they prove that the policing of sex and gender both bolsters and reinforces racial and gender inequalities.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (11 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This non-fiction book deals with core issues in the discourse of gender policing and the criminalization of LGBTQ human beings. While the geographic scope of the essays in *Queer (In)Justice* is limited to the United States, the implications of each well-articulated piece transcend America's borders and provoke an essential questioning of how queer people across the globe have been perceived, taken for granted, and abused as criminals. Of equal value, *Queer (In)Justice* destabilizes the idea of what some see as the most logical liberating path, i.e. same-sex marriage rights, and is one of the rare works that elicits a re-mapping of the route towards equality for all. Describing real-life experiences and case studies, the authors - Chicago-based civil rights attorney Joey L. Mogul, New York-based police misconduct attorney Andrea J. Ritchie, and activist

Katherine Whitlock - provide a harmonious balance of data, research, and uncovered facts about the American legal system, reminding me a bit, in tone at least, of Randy Shilts's 1987 pioneering magnum opus, *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*, which chronicles the discovery and spread of HIV/AIDS as well as the indifference of government and political infighting, also in the United States. But more so than Mr. Shilts's historical exposé, *Queer (In)justice* possesses a constant bass line of activist soundings, which for me, as a person who believes the world can change, is exciting. As the writers state: "The challenge is not only to tackle the punishment of sexual and gender deviance through the criminal legal system, but also to call into question and challenge the multiple and interlocking systems of inequality that remain, even as formal forms of discrimination begin to fall."

Joey Mogul, Andrea Ritchie, and Kay Whitlock with *Queer (In)Justice* stand in solidarity, in the struggle against transphobia and homophobia in the criminal legal system. In *Queer (In)Justice* the three authors bring the reader through the past and present of abuses faced by the queer community in the name of the criminal justice system. The 2003 Police raid of a Detroit club patronized by primarily African American LGBT people is highlighted in the book along with police misconduct from the Stonewall riots in New York City, to the 2003 rape of a trans-woman by two LAPD officers. The queer community's injustice does not end with the blatant abuse by officers of the law, the book highlights the prevalence of anti-queer rhetoric in open court, and the statistical over-representation of LGBT people in prisons. Before *Lawrence v. Texas* struck down sodomy laws nationwide in 2003, courts unabashedly referred to suspected queers as "perverted persons," or guilty of "crimes against nature." In 1968, the authors point out, a trans-woman was convicted of vagrancy while wearing a disguise calculated to conceal "his" identity: she had been waiting in a subway station in a white evening gown and makeup--her clever disguise. But even after *Lawrence*, in 2009, the abuses and homophobic remarks did not end. *Queer (In)Justice* tells the story behind a prison population and death row chalk full of LGBT people whose convictions are overly severe at best, and frequently dubious. Each author draws on a wealth of experience in legal activism, resulting in a nationwide survey of this pervasive problem. Kay Whitlock brings her experience as a Montana-based activist in LGBT rights specifically, as well as economic and environmental issues.

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