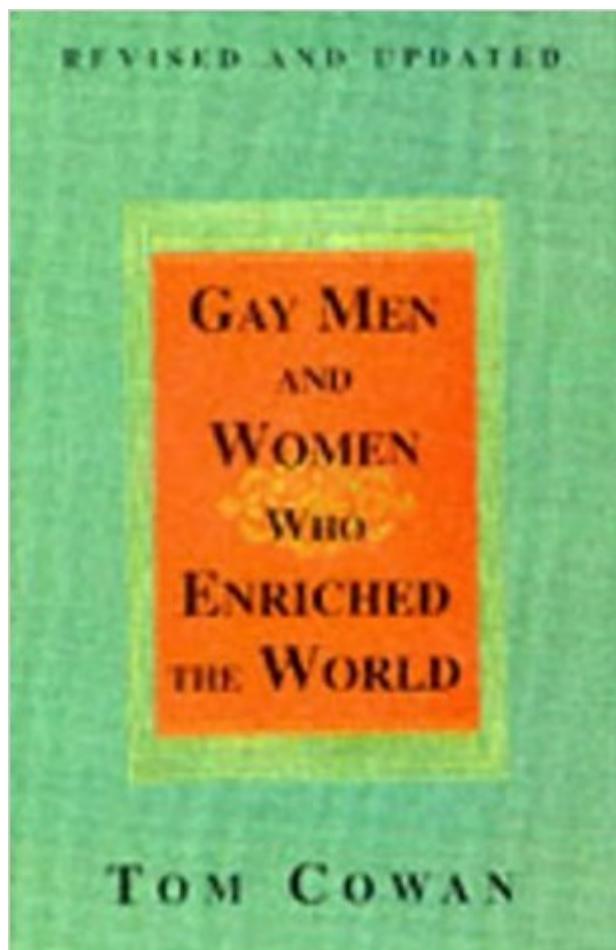


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# Gay Men And Women Who Enriched The World



## **Synopsis**

Book by Cowan, Tom

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Alyson Books; 2 Rev Sub edition (January 1, 2000)

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Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (3 customer reviews)

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## **Customer Reviews**

I have found this book to be very enjoyable, but it should in no way be considered light reading. There are many famous and infamous women and men portrayed, the most notable of whom include Plato, Alexander the Great, Da Vinci, Byron, Tchaikovsky, Gertrude Stein, Bessie Smith, Tennessee Williams, Andy Warhol, Rudolf Nureyev and 36 others. Tom Cowan does a wonderful job of removing these characters from their history books and humanizing them. In many instances these are people my friends and I learned about in school and often the exclamation "S/He was gay? You're kidding me! I never knew that!" is heard from them in reference to this book. It can also be a wonderful tool in the right cases, (i.e. providing a different perspective perfect for a paper or a hero for a child) often shedding new insight into the lives of these truly great people. As Cowan states in the introduction, "Confronting and accepting the value of one's gay identity, in spite of the efforts of society to deny the worth of gay people, can provide the basis for the strength and self-confidence needed to leave one's personal mark on the world." I consider myself to be a person who has great plans to leave a mark of my own before I go and as such I find this book to be a most wonderful collection of role models in whose footsteps I may one day follow.

It's a very interesting book not only for the gay people but also bisexual/heterosexual inclined

people. But, there're at least three weak points.1. The author didn't write each story's sources at all.2. The title is not suitable for the contents or substance. It should be changed to " Gay Men and Women who enriched the Western World ", because except Mishima Yukio all personalities belong to so-called " the westerners ".3. So many absences of important people such as Socrates, Anacreon, Julius Caesar, Vergilius, Hadrianus, etc.

I have mixed feelings about this book. On the one hand, it is well-written, and I certainly enjoyed Cowan's earlier book on shamanism. However, I am a student of the life of Desiderius Erasmus and I bought the book to examine Cowan's evidence on Erasmus' purported homosexuality. I was deeply disappointed to discover that Cowan's research on this matter was skimpy. It appears to be little more than a recitation of some earlier, equally poorly researched works. Cowan does not include some important material from the readily available Collected Works of Erasmus. Either he never bothered to do this small bit of primary research, or he deliberately suppressed some of the information to be found there. I suspect the former, because there is also some supporting information in CWE Volume 1 that he never cited. I suppose I could recommend this book to a gay man with serious self-esteem problems, but for most people, the factual errors in this book deter me from recommending it.

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