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Disturbing Attachments: Genet, Modern Pederasty, And Queer History (Theory Q)



Synopsis

Jean Genet (1910–1986) resonates, perhaps more than any other canonical queer figure from the pre-Stonewall past, with contemporary queer sensibilities attuned to a defiant non-normativity. Not only sexually queer, Genet was also a criminal and a social pariah, a bitter opponent of the police state, and an ally of revolutionary anticolonial movements. In *Disturbing Attachments*, Kadji Amin challenges the idealization of Genet as a paradigmatic figure within queer studies to illuminate the methodological dilemmas at the heart of queer theory. Pederasty, which was central to Genet's sexuality and to his passionate cross-racial and transnational political activism late in life, is among a series of problematic and outmoded queer attachments that Amin uses to deidealize and historicize queer theory. He brings the genealogy of Genet's imaginaries of attachment to bear on pressing issues within contemporary queer politics and scholarship, including prison abolition, homonationalism, and pinkwashing. *Disturbing Attachments* productively and provocatively unsettles queer studies by excavating the history of its affective tendencies to reveal and ultimately expand the contexts that inform the use and connotations of the term queer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Kadji Amin has written a crucial book, one that no one invested in queer thought or queer history can ignore. Elaborated through a reading of Jean Genet's pederastic and cross-racial desires, *Disturbing Attachments* reflects on the permanent dissonance between politics and erotic and psychic life. Amin explores the contradictions of queer studies, which pairs its commitment to radical anti-normativity with a commitment to world-building, and argues that the field must

deidealize without abandoning its attachments to queer coalition.â • (Heather Love, author of *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*)â œKadji Amin upends foundational presumptions in queer theory by grappling with the passionate attachments that tether queer studies to the radical French writer Jean Genet. The resulting discomfort allows us to think differently about theory, politics, and queer relationships.â • (Todd Shepard, author of *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*)"Queer studies desperately needs this book. Cogent, timely, and pathbreaking, Kadji Amin's work disrupts the genealogies of queer attachmentsÂ while simultaneously interrogating, and at times relentlessly, the shape of the political in queer theory and the idealization of the queer erotic." (Sharon Patricia Holland, author of *The Erotic Life of Racism*)

Kadji Amin is Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Emory University.

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