



# Cruising Culture: Promiscuity, Desire and American Gay Literature (Tendencies Identities Texts Cultures EUP)

By Ben SantaMaria

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Promiscuous sexuality remains a central source of cultural fear and fascination, as seen in the resurgence of heated debates within American gay culture on its place in the era of AIDS. *Cruising Culture* provides the first extensive critical examination of competing understandings and experiences of promiscuity, both in post-war American gay culture and in American culture more broadly. In this original and provocative book, Ben Gove unpicks the root assumptions and contradictions which contribute to dominant punitive notions of promiscuous sex and desire. He challenges normative dichotomies between 'good' monogamous sexualities and 'bad' promiscuous sexualities by illustrating the inherent promiscuousness of all sexual desire, regardless of consciously expressed attitudes to sexual practice. The reader is guided through the maze of conflicting attitudes towards promiscuity in American gay culture with innovative readings of texts by influential, but hitherto critically neglected, authors such as Andr

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"Gove's book really packs a punch. Rather than perceiving gay popular fiction as a reflection of society's behavioural patterns, he highlights its importance as a catalyst for change. In doing so, he brings the subject to life and makes it more accessible to everyone." -- "Time Out (London)"

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#### **About the Author**

Ben Gove has taught at the University of Sussex and at Lehigh University.

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