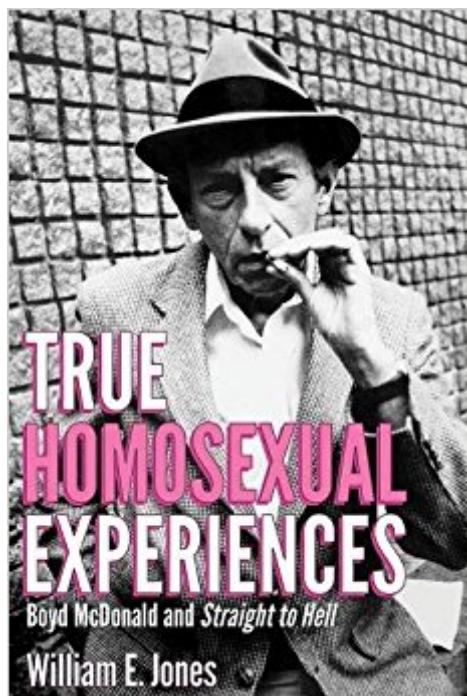


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# True Homosexual Experiences: Boyd McDonald And Straight To Hell



## Synopsis

Boyd McDonald (1925-1993) had the makings of a successful career in the 1950s--an education at Harvard, jobs at Time/Life and IBM--but things didn't turn out as planned. After 20 years of resentful conformity and worsening alcoholism, McDonald dried out, pawned all of his suits, and went on welfare. It was then that his life truly began. From a tiny room in a New York SRO hotel, McDonald published *Straight to Hell*, a series of chapbooks collecting readers' "true homosexual experiences." Following the example of Alfred Kinsey, McDonald obsessively pursued the truth about sex between men just as gay liberation began to tame America's sexual outlaws for the sake of legal recognition. Admired by such figures as Gore Vidal and William S. Burroughs, *Straight to Hell* combined a vigorous contempt for authority with a keen literary style, and was the precursor of queer 'zines decades later. William E. Jones conducted in-depth interviews with many people from McDonald's life, including friends, colleagues, and most unexpectedly, family members who revealed that he was a loving uncle who doted on his nieces and great-nieces. A complex portrait drawn from a wealth of previously unpublished material, *True Homosexual Experiences: Boyd McDonald and Straight to Hell* is the first biography devoted to a key figure of the American underground.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 200 pages

Publisher: We Heard You Like Books; First Edition, First Printing edition (April 1, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0996421815

ISBN-13: 978-0996421812

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #657,562 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #123 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Publishing & Books > Book Industry #789 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Specific Groups > LGBT #1184 in Books > Gay & Lesbian > Nonfiction > LGBT Studies

## Customer Reviews

Move over Maxwell Perkins—here's another literary editor who deserves to be more famous than you. Boyd McDonald may have been an alcoholic, sex-obsessed lunatic who masturbated chronically while encouraging his perverted readers to send in endless descriptions of

their gay sex lives with heterosexual men but he remained pure in spirit. His Straight To Hell chapbooks join Valerie Solanas' SCUM Manifesto as the most radical (and hilarious) filth classics in modern literature. John Waters' "An outrageous offering in its own right, and valuable for its insight and boldness." --Publishers Weekly

William E. Jones was born in Canton, Ohio. He received a B. A. from Yale University and an M. F. A. from California Institute of the Arts. He has made the films *Massillon* (1991) and *Finished* (1997), which won a Los Angeles Film Critics Association award, the documentary *Is It Really So Strange?* (2004), and many videos including *The Fall of Communism as Seen in Gay Pornography* (1998). His work was included in the 1993 and 2008 Whitney Biennials, and he has had retrospectives at Tate Modern (2005), Anthology Film Archives (2010), and the Austrian Film Museum (2011). He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant, two California Community Foundation Fellowships, and most recently, a Creative Capital/Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant. His books include *Killed: Rejected Images of the Farm Security Administration* (2010), *Halsted Plays Himself* (2011), and *Imitation of Christ*, which was named one of the best photo books of 2013 by Time magazine. He lives in Los Angeles.

Happy to have a copy of this book in my collection. Thank you.

This is incredibly good social history. The in your face kinky sex and all sorts of mental health issues are really beside the point.

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