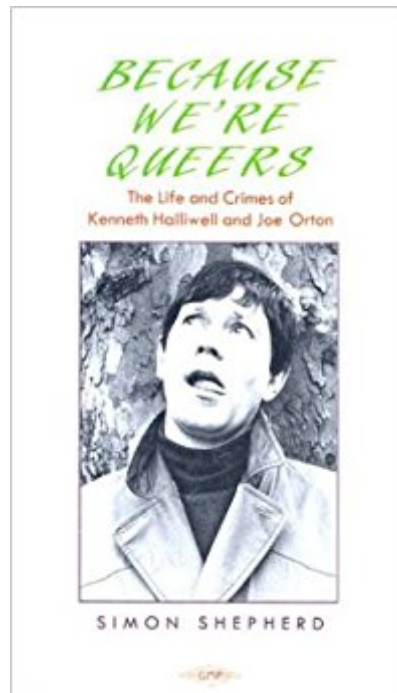




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Because We're Queers Life And Times Of Kenneth Halliwell And Joe Orton



Synopsis

Book by Shepherd, Simon

Book Information

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The book is rather an academic approach to Orton's work. It is not a biography in the way Lahr's book is but rather a critique of the social and political situation at the time Orton was both maturing and writing. It analyses many of the situations Orton had to navigate to become a successful playwright i.e. having to defer to and socialise with classes of closeted homosexuals in the theatre world responsible for staging his works. He hated them as a group and could never identify with them. Nor could he identify with the middle classes to which they belonged and which formed them. He created his works as a solitary homosexual writer (with an unquantifiable contribution from Halliwell). He was not establishment but needed it to get his work on stage. The book is slightly dated now and would probably be written in a different style were it published today as the writer betrays his 70's sociological education. His views on marriage however are still pertinent and he shows Orton and Halliwell in a rather modern light in rejecting any 'marriage' as merely trying to copy a social institution used to keep a Capitalist economy in power. In saying that it is still an excellent academic read and should be read after Lahr's biography and not before. Both works are needed to get some balanced picture of Orton and his legacy.

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