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Soho Typescripts: Handmade obscene books in post-war London bookshops.

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Soho Typescripts were a distinctive type of handmade pornography associated with London's Soho in the 1950s and 1960s. Thousands were produced, but only a proportion survive today. This article presents the first dedicated study of Soho Typescripts based on examination of fifty typescripts from the British Library, a private collection, and recent acquisitions by the Museum of London. It summarizes their distinguishing characteristics and discusses their circulation within an alternative economy regulated through informal alliances between bookshop owners and police. Retail innovations allowed a widening cross-section of men to purchase illustrated home-produced books from post-war bookshops. Retailers positioned Soho Typescripts within a spatial hierarchy, categorizing them with folk-sexological labels: 'Fladge', 'Straight', 'B/W', 'Les' and 'Fem Dom'. Common themes of typescript fiction included teenage girls, lesbianism, sadomasochism and interracial sex. Soho Typescripts are under-represented in institutional collections. Consequently, the significance and reach of these hand-crafted commercial products may have been underestimated.

Key Terms: Museum, Library, Mimeograph, Soho Bibles, Bookshops, Sexology

Soho Typescripts were handmade obscene books produced in the 1950s and 1960s. They were associated with London's Soho, which became a by-word for domestically produced pornography after the war. They were sold from Soho bookshops, and, under-the-counter, from provincial second-hand bookdealers. Wherever they were made or sold however, "they were always known as Soho Typescripts", indicating the strength of their association with Soho (Urzdown 2012, his emphasis). Soho Typescripts were typewritten manuscripts, mimeographed using stencil duplicating machines and stapled in card covers. They generally comprised two or three pornographic stories or a novella of several short chapters. Many contained drawings or photographs. Today, Soho Typescripts are vintage collectables. Marketed internationally, they have acquired the name Soho Bibles, perhaps from their superficial resemblance to the earlier Tijuana Bibles (Stoops 2018: 110-2). But it was the term 'Soho Typescript', rather than 'Soho Bible', that was generally preferred during the main period of their production, and is thus adopted here.

1950s and 1960s pornography "remains virtually untouched by historians of either Britain or the United States" (Stoops 2018:241). Nonetheless, several recent studies refer to Soho Typescripts by name, or describe collections which contain them. Oliver Carter explores the "alternative economy" shaping production and consumption of British hard-core (Carter 2018, 2019). Carter takes an ethnohistorical approach, using interviews with key players in

film production who also produced Soho Typescripts. As part of a wide-ranging investigation of vernacular material culture, Lisa Sigel has examined the Kinsey Institutes BeM Erotic Manuscripts Collection (Sigel 2016: 457-9). While she does not use the term Soho Typescript, the archives relating to this collection suggest that some of the books she describes as resembling “early zines” are Soho Typescripts (Sigel 2016: 454-5). As Sigel’s description implies, production values of Soho Typescripts were amateurish, using cheap home-office technologies; typewriters, stencils and mimeographs. However, Soho Typescripts did not run “outside and alongside the growth of the porn industry” like the rest of the vernacular pornography Sigel discusses (Sigel 2016: 459). As I will argue, Soho Typescripts were at the centre of the post-war British porn industry. They were commercial products fully embedded in Carter’s ‘alternative economy’. The hand-crafted, homemade, qualities of these objects should not lead scholars to underestimate their commercial significance.

My approach to Soho Typescripts applied established methodologies from material culture studies to establish the physical characteristics that distinguished this category of artefact¹. My study began by identifying a group of objects described as Soho Typescripts by a reliable authority during the 1960s. These objects were in the former Private Case of the British Library, and were all collected at the same time, accompanied by archival and historical documentation that supplied useful insights into their origins and cultural context. The Private Case thus supplied a reference collection of artefacts that could be used to establish the traits of objects called Soho Typescripts during the study period. Having familiarised myself with the traits of the reference collection, I tested my knowledge against another collection of objects described as Soho Typescripts by an expert who worked in the Soho book trade in the 1970s. Working between objects from two independent sources, with the involvement of an expert from the source community, I gradually formed an understanding of the range of typological traits defining Soho Typescripts, including:

- shared technologies and materials;
- bibliographic identifiers (e.g. lists of Soho Typescript titles published by certain presses, common ‘places of publication’, author names etc.);
- similarities in literary style and illustration;
- and, the use of a common vocabulary of code-words written or typed onto covers.

This article will explore these traits in more detail as the product of a distinctive trade associated with Soho bookshops in post-war Britain.

The approaches I have applied to Soho Typescripts were developed in nineteenth century archaeology and anthropology to study the craft products of societies without extensive documentary sources. Such approaches may be particularly useful for dealing with pornography, which, as Sigel (2016) points out, often lacks the supporting data of legitimately published books. Soho Typescripts were illegal to distribute or display for sale². None of the typescripts used in this study displayed a reliable publication date or place of publication (Figure 1 shows a typical example). Authors, photographers, illustrators and printers were all fictitious, and could be used as they normally would be by scholars working on post-industrial printed matter. Furthermore, Soho Typescripts were furtively produced using the simplest technologies of their period. They were, essentially, craft products, and as such are well-suited to approaches derived from disciplines traditionally dealing with the vernacular. Material culture studies encourages specialists to pay attention to the

idiosyncratic detail of individual examples, comparing these tiny clues with their knowledge of a corpus of objects. In the case of Soho Typescripts, for example, what initially appeared to be extraneous inscriptions on individual artefacts (three letters scrawled in biro) proved at least as informative as my catalogue of (false) bibliographic data.

INSERT FIGURE 1 Here – Cover of The Ordeal of Ann Mash

The total number of Soho Typescripts available to my study exceeded 800 examples; too many to read in detail. Although I examined 316 books during my research, I selected fifty Soho Typescripts from these for more intensive study. These fifty Typescripts came from the following locations:

1. The former Private Case of the British Library (21 items).
2. The private collection of David Notaro (25 items)
3. The Museum of London (4 items)

The acquisition of twenty-one Soho Typescripts by the British Library dates, at least, to 28th April 1967 (Cross 1991:222). It was brokered by Eric Dingwall, Honorary Curator of the Private Case. Somewhat underplaying his own role in the affair, J. L. Wood, Assistant Keeper of Printed Books, remembered:

‘The collection came from Dr Dingwall who had acquired them from a police official in Sussex, who had obtained them after a police raid on a local shop selling pornography’ (Cross 1991:222).

I cannot find any mention of this donation in the Trustee’s Minutes and it is possible the books from the raid were never formally presented to the British Museum Trustees, unlike most other acquisitions for the Private Case. Nonetheless, two letters in the Private Case archives do shed further light on this acquisition. The first is a letter from the Justice’s Clerk’s Office in Brighton, East Sussex, a seaside resort around 30 miles from Dingwall’s home: ‘One of my Justices informs me’ wrote the Clerk, that ‘44 magazines and 15 other articles’ just seized under the Obscene Publications Act ‘are required by you for study purposes and should be sent to you ... What is ‘the authority under which I may do so?’. In his reply, J.L. Wood reassured, that, although they had no legal claim on the seized material ‘we should be very glad to add them to our collections’:

‘as the National Library, we have a duty to collect any material which will serve for study and research and we already possess a collection of material of the kind you describe in your letter, kept under conditions of special security.’

(Corporate Archive, DH72/316 (part 1))

The 21 typescripts among the seized books³ were date-stamped 31st May 1967, but this dates the ‘placing’ of the items, which often took place years after collection (Fryer 1966). If the date-stamps are taken as *terminus ante quem* the seized books were produced before 1967, but an earlier *terminus ante quem* of 26th February 1963 is also possible given the archived letters.

A second source of Soho Typescripts was provided by Mr Dave Notaro, a dealer in vintage pornography. Mr Notaro is owner of webuyanyporn.com, and proprietor of Ram Books, Islington, an independent pornographic bookshop. Mr Notaro’s career sprang from his Italian family’s involvement in the Soho book trade. His first job was working for his uncle,

Antony Luigi Sonenscher, who managed bookshops at 5 Walkers Court (next door to the famous Raymond Revue Bar striptease club), 45 Old Compton Street and 'Supermags', 60 Dean Street, Soho. The Notaro collection holds more than 800 Soho Typescripts which Mr Notaro has accumulated from the unsold stock of defunct bookshops, and from his business dealing in secondhand porn. The 25 Soho Typescripts selected for this study were randomly drawn from the shelves at Ram Books. Little specific data was available about when each book was acquired, although Mr Notaro supplied useful additional information in the oral histories he recorded for Museum of London (Museum of London 2019.10/1-4).

My final source comprised four Soho Typescripts donated to the Museum of London by Mr Notaro. Museum of London Curator Beverley Cook and I selected these together from the titles on display at Ram Books. The objects captured the range of traits characteristic of Soho Typescripts (see below). To support the collection of these items I conducted interviews with Mr Notaro including a semi-structured oral history with questions supplied by Beverley Cook (Museum of London 2019.10/1-4). I also conducted interviews with the retired pornographic writer 'Nick Urzdown'. This article began as a Statement of Significance written for the Museum of London's Collections Committee underlining importance of this acquisition for future scholars that is now held in the Museum's archives.

Crafting Soho Typescripts

The production of a Soho Typescript began when a porn-merchant commissioned a writer, or a writer sold his or her manuscript. These exchanges often took place in Soho's bohemian public houses and clubs, which mixed-up London's class strata, bringing porn merchants and sex workers into contact with hard-up writers and artists (Mort 2010). The pseudonymous 'Nick Urzdown' has declared himself 'the last writer still going' who wrote Soho Typescripts. His memoir - *Spanks for the Memory* - begins with his offer of a 5,000 word pornographic short story to a 'local hard man' in a 'drinking den':

What usually happened was that a merchant would buy two or three stories of about 5,000 words each from the writers. An artist was paid to produce, on a stencil, the name that was given to the work and a drawing that was vaguely related to it ... As a source of easy income it really couldn't be beaten ... The only problem was that it was in the merchants' interests to cut out as much of the manuscript as possible, because payment was by the thousand words... There was nothing funnier than the sight of some wheezy, chain-smoking, semi-literate, with pencil in hand, trying to edit down a manuscript. Others were more laid back, such as the one who told me, in all seriousness: "If I haven't got a hard-on by the end of the first page, I am not buying this fucking thing!"

(Urzdown 2012)

Soho Typescripts share the appetites of pulp fiction, relishing the new, the sensational, the erotic, the *avant garde*, and 'taboo' sexualities (Bronski 2003, Mitchell 2015). Imported pulps with titillating covers were openly on sale in the front-spaces of Soho bookshops, and like pulps, Soho Typescripts frequently included horror fantasies and even science fiction. 'Using numerous pseudonyms', Soho Typescript writers worked like pulp authors, 'who could write quickly and to a word length and format [and] would churn out 'novels' to order, exploiting as much of the erotic, violent and fantastic as they could get away with'

(Bloom 2008: 90). Post-war obscene typescripts were, reportedly, of 'very mixed quality ... from the surprisingly inventive to the downright abysmal' (Maclean 1998: 15). Yet those I have read are adequately well written: 'The indigent hacks who crowded the pubs of Soho ... prided themselves on the 'artistic' quality of their tales': One author fondly recalled how he had made 'one fuck last for 42 pages' (Tomkinson 1982: 48). They are, however, often incompetently typed⁴. It may be this that led to their routine dismissal as 'semi-literate' rubbish (Cross 1991: 222). Few critics have been prepared to accept 'duplicated pornographic books' had literary value (Gillian Freeman was a notable exception (Freeman 1967:132-4)).

Where authors' names appeared, they were knowingly fictitious. Puns like Roger and Phyl MacQuim, Nick Urzdown, Kenneth Gervase or Irma Mueller⁵ abound. Some writers assumed celebrity monikers: *Youth Will Have its Fling* was almost certainly not written by John Gordon, editor of the *Sunday Express*, who famously described Nabokov's *Lolita* as 'the filthiest book I have ever read' (Colligan 2014: 263). The author of *Black and White Orgy* adopted 'John Newton', the name of an eighteenth-century slave-trader turned abolitionist whose memoirs included a spell in Sierra Leone as the white slave of a cruel African princess. Others chose exotic fancies - Frau Oppenheimer, Antonia Chevalier, or Ivor Lashley. Pseudonyms were often feminine, and, although this did not mean writers identified as women in their everyday lives, 'women ... frequently worked as writers of pornographic fiction' before the war (Stoops 2018:101). Mid-century female authors (such as Iris Owens and Marilyn Meekse) wrote for the Parisian publishers whom typescript authors routinely pirated, parodied and emulated. It should not be assumed everyone involved in typescript manufacture (apart from photographer's models) was always and only male.

The manuscript was typed out of mimeograph paper producing a stencil. Title pages and illustrations were often hand-scratched (Figures 1 and 5). The stencil was placed on the drum of a duplicating machine and the inked copies were rolled off, dried and sorted. Photographs were sticky-taped or stapled inside. Pages were stapled together and covered in cloth tape to make a spine. The numbers of any one title were restricted by the time spent cranking them out, and because stencils eventually wore out and broke. Fewer than 500 copies were produced before a new stencil had to be made, and any single title was generally produced in low numbers. Nonetheless, thousands of Soho Typescripts were hand-crafted using simple home-office technologies.

Of the fifty typescripts sampled for this study just over half (28) contained some kind of drawing or photograph. Covers and publication lists show that illustrations were an important aspect of marketing. Illustrated books commanded higher prices, and illustrated typescripts were often identified by handwritten notes on the covers. For example, *Variety Tit-Bits* has "ILLUSTRATIONS" written top left (Museum of London 2019.10/2). Likewise, the cover of *Youth Will Have Its Fling* has been marked "6 ILLS" in biro, allowing buyers and sellers to establish a price quickly. Lists of Soho Typescripts advertised by The Collectors Press distinguished between 'Illustrated' and 'Not Illustrated' titles so readers could identify which was which. An important distinction when books were distributed mail-order or via rapid underhand transactions allowing no time for browsing. The distinction appears to have been between illustrated and unillustrated texts, not between visual media: drawings

and stencils were valued as much as photographs, or, at least, it was not in the interests of the seller to distinguish between varieties of 'illustration'.

Drawings were scratched into the stencil or photographed and stapled into the books. Typescript drawings were often badly proportioned, with a cartoonish quality (Figure 2). One illustrator known to have produced drawings for Soho Typescripts was Michael Freeman, who began his career selling pornographic drawings to his school friends going onto draw for porn merchants while an art student at St. Martin's School of Art (Carter 2018: 420). Freeman also produced photographs for Soho bookshops, and, by the mid-1960s, 8mm hardcore films⁶. Slade-trained artist Tom Poulton produced illustrations for obscene literature, but it is uncertain if he ever contributed to typescripts sold from bookshops. After Poulton's death, his drawings were kept by his friend and patron, Soho Typescript collector Beecher Moore. These included sketches for illustrations in an obscene typescript (Maclean 2000). Poulton's drawings are more accomplished than most Soho Typescript illustrations and perhaps hint at world of privately commissioned pornographic drawings and books (Stoops 2018:45-52).

'Soho photographs' were stapled into many Soho Typescripts⁷. Interiors, furniture and fashion supply an approximate date for each title's production. Models usually wore stockings, suspenders and heels; and sometimes corsets (e.g. Roger Macquim's *Sonia and Phylis*). Several typescripts feature fetish wear – especially rubber macintoshes (e.g. *Whip-hard* in the British Library), and sometimes rubber strait-jackets. The history of photographic models is poorly documented (Stoops 2018:41-5). Oliver Carter tracked down models active in British hard-core production in the 1960s and 1970s but they were unwilling to talk to him on record (Carter 2018). By the early 1970s, a model would earn between £25 to £50 for a four-hour session, rising to £200 'for exceptional work' (Cox et al 1977: 165). However, in the early 1950s there was also amateur recruitment from nudist clubs. Male models volunteered to work unpaid in the early days and were paid less than women into the 1970s (Tomkinson 1982). Historical precedents suggest it is likely that photographic modelling and Soho's sex industry were well connected (Stoops 2018: 44)⁸.

Ron 'The Dustman' Davey, was an important Soho photographer: 'An engaging, sociable, giant of a man', he acquired his nickname from his previous career as a dustman for Hammersmith Borough Council. The Dustman began taking photographs of Surrey nudist club members in the 1950s (Tomkinson 1982: 19, Linnane 2007: 352, Morton 2008: 208-9). By the 1960s he was responsible for producing hundreds of photographs sold in Soho. Another photographer, known as 'Jack the Binder', specialised in bondage photography, usually leaving his foot in the frame as a souvenir of his handiwork (Notaro pers. comm.). The Notaro collection includes a number of books made entirely from photographic prints stapled together in card covers without any text. *Sexual Debauchery: A Focus on Fucking Vol.8* posed as a sexological compendium of '20 Photo Studies' (von Ekhner c.1960). Photo-books were sold alongside Soho Typescripts from bookshop backrooms. Photographs – known as 'smudges' - were also sold independently, often in packs of five, at bookshops, or in the Soho streets, by men who attached them to coat linings, opening their jackets to reveal their wares (Cox et al 1977: 162, Notaro pers. comm.).

The extent to which illustrations were produced alongside the text differed from book to book and according to illustrative media. Stencilled line drawings (Figure 5) were often closely integrated with text, so that chapters or stories might open with specially stencilled illustrated titlepages. *Activities of the Society of Good Companions* purported to be the proceedings of a scholarly sexological society and was extensively illustrated with stencil drawings surrounding the text. The Vernac Press took pride in its stencilled line drawings; 'Illustrated by Leon Herman (copyright)'. Herman's stencils of dominant females for *Flesh in the Ring* closely followed the action, suggesting stencils and typescript were produced together. Photographs, on the other hand, sometimes had scant relation to the text, (suggesting pre-existing pictures were added to inflate the price). Nonetheless, *Orgy Twins*, for example, had photographs of two women wearing blonde wigs to look like twins; and *Nunnery Versus Fuckery* exhibited five photographs of a woman in a nun's habit. In these cases, photographs were commissioned for text (or vice versa) suggesting scope for division of labour within the chain of production.

INSERT FIGURE 2 Here: Cover of *Black and White Orgy*

The roles of publisher, printer and distributor were combined as the work of an unofficial 'press'. Names included The Collectors Press, Bernadet Press, Pernod Press, Adam and Eve Press, Vernac Press, Ludex Publications, Rendezvous Press and Bonhomme Press. The Dustman's press was at his home, first in Hammersmith, and then in Hampshire, where he was, according to Tomkinson:

'... the biggest single producer of porn in what was then still basically an amateur operation. His material was produced on a printing press consisting of three Gestetner machines, and he would roneo, collate and staple his books together himself' (1982: 35)

Smaller 'freelancers' also supplied bookshop owners (Tomkinson 1982:35). Typescripts were clandestinely conveyed to the shops. "Dennis from the Foreign Office", for instance, always 'delivered the gear dressed in a homburg and carrying an attaché case and rolled up umbrella' just like an FO diplomat (Tomkinson 1982: 19).

Some producers sold only through specific retailers and were thus associated with particular bookshops. The Dustman, for example, exclusively supplied one buyer - Ronald Eric Mason, (aka John 'Carpet' Mason). Carpet owned most of Soho's bookshops from 1953 until the late 1960s, placing the Dustman at the centre of the trade. These arrangements encouraged enduring relationships between presses and bookshops. Purchasers tended to buy from particular shops where they were known to counter staff. There was little advantage in keeping a backlist or renewing worn out stencils. Instead, presses accumulated new titles in runs of a few hundred books each.

Beyond the reach of official copyright enforcement, Soho Typescript producers re-circulated unauthorised translations of foreign literature and books banned in Britain. Much as mid-century Parisian publishers, including Olympia and Grove Press, reproduced nineteenth century pornography in cheap editions (Colligan 2014), Soho Typescript presses ripped off nineteenth century 'classics'. Bonhomme Press reproduced excerpts from the nineteenth century novel of slavery and flagellation, *Dolly Morton* under the title *Adventures at*

Randolph's House. It also claimed to publish George Bataille. *CLIMAX vol.3*, which has a back-and-white hard-core photograph as its cover, contains part of *The Romance of Lust*. Nonetheless the fifty examples examined for this study did not repeat large bodies of text from each other. While writers plagiarised, satirized and stuck to formulaic scripts and scenarios, typescript producers do not appear to have ripped each other off directly. Some form of unofficial copyright may well have been enforced within a trade that was aggressively, if informally, regulated.

Soho Typescripts are known to have been produced in London and the Home Counties⁹, but when a place of publication was given it was invariably abroad. Most pretended to be published in Paris, reflecting the long-standing significance of Paris as a source of smuggled material for Soho bookshops¹⁰. Parodies of Paris publishers were common; a book by 'Barbara Stark' claimed to be 'The sixth publication of the Companion Press, Paris', mimicking the Olympia Press Traveller's Companion series. *Nurse's Aid* announced it was published by 'Ocean's Press: Paris' – imitating the Oceanic Press. The Collectors Press advertised its titles as 'Paris and Hamburg' – trading on both city's associations with prostitution. The Vernac Press (Fem-Dom specialists) claimed to be published from Mexico City, site of Aztec human sacrifice. Most consumers likely knew Soho Typescripts were not produced in Paris, Hamburg or Mexico. It was a long-standing practice among obscene book publishers to supply readers with fictitious origins, permitting consumers to imagine themselves partakers of exotic thrills.

It is difficult to be certain when Soho Typescripts were first produced. The technologies for production were available from the late nineteenth century. Typed manuscripts reproduced on carbon paper circulated throughout the twentieth century. Kearney (1981) refers to 'the typewritten pornographic poems exchanged between school children' as if to suggest the habit was endemic. Privately circulated typescripts are occasionally preserved in personal archives, like the typescript novellas composed by Philip Larkin under the pseudonym Brunette Colman, in the early 1940s (Booth 2014: chapter 3)¹¹. The market for 'whipping stories' was well developed before the war, when they were already available from Soho bookshops, as with, for example, the 'flagellation themed stories' sold by the female manager of a bookshop in Greek Street in 1938 (Stoops 2018:28). It is impossible to be certain how much these artefacts resembled Soho Typescripts without examining them directly, but I have not found evidence for books being called 'Soho Typescripts' before the war.

In the 1940s, Islington-based cane manufacturer Eric Arthur Wildman ran a mailing list for the *National Society for the Retention of Corporal Punishment*¹². Wildman sold non-fiction mimeographed typescripts on topics like "The Teen-aged Girl" (five shillings)¹³ which were collected by Eric Dingwall for the British Library. These do not share the traits of Soho Typescripts. They are type-written newsletters, not octavo sized books with card covers and illustrations. They do not contain novellas and short stories, but articles purporting to be instructional alongside extensive 'reader's letters'¹⁴.

Evidence that objects resembling Soho Typescripts were available mail order before 1950 has been gathered by Harry Cocks from his study of the case of Park Trading, a shop and mail-order distributor based in Notting Hill and Hammersmith (perhaps coincidentally home

to the Dustman). Without examining these it is impossible to verify that they are Soho Typescripts, but they certainly share some Typescript traits. Cocks relates police statements in which customers described ordering from the 'Private Books' section of Park Trading's catalogue (Cocks 2016). They 'typically received two typescripts... roneo'd publications in plain, grey covers which do not indicate the name of the printer or publisher' (Cocks 2016: 190). Cocks believes one of these 'private books' may have been extracted from Pierre L ouys *Trois Filles de leur Mere* (1926) and retitled *Claire*, while the other - *Intimate Diary* - 'was translated from an Italian source and may have been modelled on the unrevealing and not remotely pornographic Freudian case history with a similar title published in 1921 by the early enthusiasts for psychoanalysis Eden and Cedar Paul'. Customers of Park Trading were particularly keen to distance themselves from their purchases of these 'private books' which, they told police, were more 'disgusting', 'filthy' and 'obscene' than the rest of the catalogue. Furthermore, one reader complained, the typescript he received was 'not illustrated'.

My study has been limited to collections containing items explicitly referred to as Soho Typescripts. These artefacts thus possess *both* a set of overlapping characteristic traits and some evidence of having been called Soho Typescripts by knowledgeable collectors. It is certainly possible that the advent of Soho Typescripts reflects a change in the language used to describe obscene typescript fiction rather than the inception of a new form of material culture (although whether words and things they describe can, or should be, separated is a moot point). The earliest date I have found for a book explicitly called a Soho Typescript is in the somewhat dubious testimony of the Dustman, who claimed to first start producing Soho Typescripts in 1953, around the time rationing on paper and stationary products was ending¹⁵. Nonetheless, it is likely that future research will discover items with the characteristics belonging to this category of material culture perhaps combined with some evidence for such items being referred to as Soho Typescripts. For example, among the Soho Typescripts collected by Beecher Moore before 1963 were typescripts 'not done in London but in some provincial area during the '40s'¹⁶. These, or other items held in Beecher Moore's collection at the Kinsey Institute, might prove earlier than the examples available to my research in Britain.

Soho and the Typescript Trade

Post-war British pornography was an industry of transnational import-export and international networks. However, it was also, at the same time, a local industry. International smuggling and trading had long been enmeshed in local geographies, notably among the multicultural craft-producers and tradespeople of Soho (Walkowitz 2012). Individuals and families acted as intermediaries, translating and reconfiguring foreign imports to suit indigenous markets. Soho bookshops like the *Librarie Parisienne* in Coventry Street were reputedly dealing in pornography in the 1890s. Ten years later, The Walpole Press of Soho Square was prosecuted for publishing obscene books distributed through the mail (Morton 2008:207, Hiliard 2013). By the 1930s, Soho 'had established itself as the successor to Holywell Street as the centre for pornography' in Britain (Manchester 1986:30). During the Second World War, despite loss of trade with the continent, British merchants

'increased the supply of some forms of pornography such as photographs and cheap books' (Stoops 2018:36). Since policing and policies had concentrated on the 'foreignness' of pornography, the state found it difficult to adapt to expanding domestic production, which may have protected home-producers (Stoops 2018: 233-4). Instead of obtaining stock from continental suppliers, wartime distributors broadened their audiences, especially among enlisted military, and turned to indigenous suppliers.

The emergence of the Soho Typescript was not attributable to any single technology or individual. The category emerged from a connection between Soho and obscenity in the post-war cultural imaginary. By the 1950s the word 'Soho' had supplanted 'French' as a metonym for obscenity. Putting 'Soho' in front of anything – Soho photographs, Soho typescripts, Soho forgeries – transformed that thing into an obscene object. Soho became the mythical homeland of domestic pornography, wherever in Britain it was made. Soho Typescripts redoubled the eroticisation of Soho by setting numerous stories in Soho and the West End (Figure 3). *Happiness is Sex-Shaped* took place in The Blue Grotto nightclub where a husband hires his wife out to a Chinese man from Chinatown. The accompanying story – *Sex is Where You Find It* – was set in the Tivoli cinema on the Strand (demolished 1957). In *Way-Out* a biker introduces a teenage girl he intends to prostitute to 'London's West End, the pubs and coffee-bars he knew, and the crown (sic) that used them'. In *Between Her Thighs* a couple go on the run from 'Slamsy', one of 'the vicious boys of the village known as Soho'.

INSERT FIGURE 3 Here – (cover of *Girls on the Loose*)

This alternative economy was founded on a local regulatory system based on exchanges of bribes and favours between police and pornographers in the area (Cox, Shirley and Short 1977, Tomkinson 1982). Bookshop owner John 'Carpet' Mason started bribing policemen in 1953 - around the same time the Dustman went into Soho Typescript production for his shops – and claimed to have bribed 148 police officers by the early 1970s (Linnane 2007: 352). The Soho pornography trade was violently regulated by gangsters in partnership with police (Morton 2010). It was a risky industry to break into. It was also one in which, provided the right deals had been made with policemen, a lot of profit could be made from small print runs of handmade typescript fiction.

Soho Typescript trade revolved around personal connections and face-to-face contacts. The low level of capital required to produce Soho Typescripts, combined with the high profits to be made, would, in other circumstances, have encouraged competition, driven up quality and driven down prices. This did not happen because of the illegality of the trade, which fostered profitable alliances between police and retailers. Within this economy, arrangements between producers and vendors resembled pre-modern relationships of patronage rather than a free-market. The Dustman, for instance, exclusively supplied only one patron - Carpet. Such was the easy-going nature of their arrangement that The Dustman 'was able to work exactly when he wanted' and 'when he came back from holiday he would find customers clamouring for his books' (Tomkinson 1982:37). This was hardly

the behaviour of a publisher struggling for buyers in a competitive marketplace ruled by supply and demand.

Expanding production of domestic typescript fiction was one retail innovation among many allowing less affluent (but still largely middle-class) customers to access the formerly elite marketplace in pornographic books (Sigel 2002). Printed books were expensive. Even in 1955, pornographic books generally commanded prices of £30 to £40 or more, when the average weekly industrial wage was less than £10 (Manchester 1986:31-2). Pornographic photographs retailed around 10 to 25 shillings, when a normal picture postcard could be bought for a few pennies. By 1967 Soho Typescripts were reported to sell for '£3 to £5, and for illustrated material between £6 and £9', while photographs should cost 'not more than £1 a set' (Clark 1967: 166, Freeman 1967:25,88). 'Certainly' wrote Gillian Freeman 'it is only now, in England anyway, that pornographic books have been within the reach of the working class' (Freeman 1967:32). Yet Freeman may have exaggerated the availability of Soho pornography. Soho Typescripts were less expensive than pornographic books, but they were still barely affordable for most of the population. The price of a Soho Typescript was equivalent to between two and six days' work for a skilled tradesman in 1965¹⁷.

Further lowering the expense, porn buyers recycled pre-loved Soho Typescripts, using an established 'lending library system in which customers could donate and exchange books and other materials' (Stoops 2018:40):

'Books, but not photographs, will be sold on a half-price-back on return basis; the pencil-note on the cover is to show the manager the shop at which the book was originally bought' (Clark 1967:166)¹⁸.

In extremity, Freeman reported exchanges taking place between punters on Soho streets. During the 1966 World Cup 'there was a big clean-up in Soho and desperate men approached others in the street hoping for a worthwhile swop... But when the last goal was safely in the net the books returned' (1967:88). As well as reducing consumer expenditure, exchanges increased the variety of limited stock and spread the geographical distribution of Soho Typescripts to second-hand bookshops across the country, since books might be 'returned' in locations other than those they were purchased from.

Freeman's belief that Soho Typescripts were just within the reach of working-class customers does not appear to have translated into an identifiably working class presence around Soho bookshops. When press photographs and newreels pictured men browsing in Soho (a popular theme) they were not dressed in the clothes of identifiably working class occupations, but in business suits. The majority of punters were:

'businessmen, middle-aged and respectable-looking: the kind of men you can see on a commuter train any morning... 'A business run by businessmen for businessmen', one manager enthused, 'that's how I like to see it'. (Clark 1967: 166).

Typical regulars included suburban commuters and provincial business travellers; men seeking moderately priced thrills in London's prime destination for masculine self-invention. Soho bookshops were even recommended in guidebooks as 'the best disreputable enterprise to examine in disreputable Soho' (Clark 1967:165). From bookshops at least, Soho Typescripts were largely a middle-brow, middle-class, peccadillo.

Women were important consumers of pornography throughout the twentieth century (Stoops 2018: 149-153). However, the exceptional circumstances in which women entered Soho bookshops were memorable incidents. One new shop manager working in the Long Shop, Old Compton Street, got into trouble when he over-zealously enforced the No Women rule on two Sisters of Mercy collecting for charity in the 1950s. 'Unused to such unlikely customers [he] told the ladies to leave in no uncertain terms' (Tomkinson 1982:26). The nuns, who solicited donations from bookshops regularly, called the police, and the inexperienced manager had to make himself scarce for six months. This does not mean women were absent. At least one female customer – Gillian Freeman – visited Soho bookshops after being commissioned by the London Magazine in 1965, but did so with some trepidation and with her husband¹⁹. The increasingly high profile of Soho bookshops may, in fact, have narrowed rather than expanded opportunities for women consumers after the war. Bookshops were male-dominated environments until the 1980s, when newly licensed sex shops began to seek out female customers within a very different commercial landscape, and partly as a calculated reaction against feminist protests (Manchester 1988, Coulmont and Hubbard 2010)²⁰.

The commercial success of post-war pornography retail can be gauged by dramatic increases in numbers of Soho bookshops and the quantities of Soho Typescripts manufactured. Only five pornographic bookshops were known to the Metropolitan Police in 1955 (Manchester 1986: 31). By the late 1960's over a dozen of them specialized in 'catering for tastes which W.H. Smith's do not satisfy' and the number was 'growing fast' (Clark 1967:163). Demand for Soho Typescripts kept growing into the early 1970s. As The Dustman recollected:

I could not produce enough of the bloody things. I'd take maybe 300 in on Friday and by Monday [the shop owner] would be on the phone hollering for more (Tomkinson 1982:35).

If we take the Dustman at his word, lowering his estimate to 300 weekly, rather than per weekend, the Dustman alone produced 15,600 Soho Typescripts each year. Not very much by the standards of a mainstream publisher, but certainly enough to imply a thriving market. In 1954, around 167,000 books and magazines were seized by the police (Cocks 2016:178). In 1965, the number of obscene books impounded was around 190,000 alongside more than a million magazines (Freeman 1967:27). The total number of obscene books in circulation (of which Soho Typescripts must have been a sizable proportion) would have been considerably more. By 1972, John "Carpet" Mason ran 10 shops in Soho, all supplied with typescripts by The Dustman and others. Shops were opened by new operators, 'notably Jimmie Humphreys who entered the trade in 1969 and expanded so rapidly that within three years he had at least 11 retail outlets' (Manchester 1986: 40). Although they were homemade and handcrafted, Soho Typescripts were not simple expressions of 'the pleasure of making DIY pornography' (Sigel 2016:457). They were commercial products supplying a significant post-war market.

Inside the Back Room

The space inside Soho bookshops was divided into two parts: a front-space which customers accessed from the street, and a back-space, often with a sign marked Private, in which illegal pornography was kept. For the customer to even see a Soho Typescript he needed to

cultivate a relationship with the seller. The bookshop manager carefully inspected each customer to make sure he was not a plain clothes policeman²¹. This vetting process might take some time, and only then would the customer obtain knowledge of the space where Soho Typescripts were kept. In 1958, a description of this spatial hierarchy was proffered to the authorities by an anonymous informant:

The Lisle Book Shop of Lisle Street, W.C., has an outer and an inner part. The outer part displays more or less legal stuff. At the end of the shop away from the street there is a counter, a door and a partition (left to right as you face it). The Olympia Press obscenities are kept in a wooden box on the floor under the counter. Just above them are kept the French nude books. Behind the partition on the right of the door are boxes of roneoed obscene books [Soho Typescripts] and a box of obscene photos done up in cellophane”

(Anon. cited in Colligan 2014:62)

While the outer room contained mildly titillating material ‘limited editions, nudism, sporting books and the like’ (Legman 1981: 46), Soho Typescripts were confined to the back room, hidden away or ‘stored in suitcases in order to facilitate their speedy removal in the event of a raid’ (Manchester 1986:30). The seized books from the Brighton raid in the Private Case are a time capsule illustrating the varieties of book available under-the counter before 1967. Alongside the Soho Typescripts were a number of ‘Soho forgeries’ purporting to be from the Olympia Press and Parisian publishers²² (Cross, 1956, 1957, Peters 1958, Kearney 2008:326-7). James Pikes’ *Madwomenn* (sic) was ‘Translate from French (sic)’ by Columbia Books, 21 Old Compton Street, Soho. The same title was prosecuted at the *Tribunal Correctionnel de la Seine* in 1966. ‘All the books seized should have been destroyed, but these few copies survived’ (Cross 1991:222).

Only those familiar with the system would know how to gain access to the back room. Even then, the customer needed to make a coded request, asking whether the shopkeeper had ‘anything new’ or ‘anything more curious’ (Manchester 1986:31). Once admitted to the inner room browsing was not encouraged. The interested purchaser would briefly inspect what was on offer, pay his money and ‘leave the shop within a matter of minutes’ thereby lessening the risk of detection. The spatial hierarchy of outer and inner parts, soft-core and hard-core, was also a hierarchy of customers, separating the novice, the timid and the impecunious from the regular ‘businessman’ buyer.

The experience of obscene book-buying might be compared to buying a suit. Retailing in both tailoring and pornography underwent significant changes in the post-war decades. Menswear retailers like Burton’s made suits that were within reach of customers from the lower middle classes by changing how customers were fitted. Instead of measuring each man for a bespoke creation, post-war menswear retailers offered ‘bespoke-wholesale’ products by fitting customers to a range of pre-set categories of suit. The pornographic bookseller, like the men’s tailor, sized up the intimate needs of his customers:

‘Like a barber or a tailor the dirt-bookshop manager has his regular customers and he knows them, (watch them walk straight through the door marked ‘Private’).’ (Clark 1967:166)

The Soho bookshop keeper understood his market as ‘a socially constituted group of men, with identifiable taste patterns and personae’ (Mort and Thompson 1994: 108). As with bespoke-wholesale tailoring ‘Sir’s’ taste was fitted to a defined range of product categories. These categories were identified and classified using folk-sexological slang. At the root of this classification was the distinction between ‘straight’ and ‘fladge’: ‘The stories in the typescripts always followed a theme’, recalled Nick Urzdown;

'be it straight sex - always called shaggers in the trade, or fladge - flagellation - which is the trade name for spanking, fem-dom, BDSM and the like... Thus, a certain psychotic Maltese lunatic who ran a large outfit in Liverpool once introduced me to one of his henchmen with the immortal words: 'This is Nick, he does my fladge.' (2012)

Straight was not opposed to gay. Instead 'Str.' signified heterosexual sex without sadomasochism (today termed 'vanilla'). Thus, sex between women ('Les') often came under the category straight. The primacy of the distinction between straight and fladge was reflected in the disposition of stock within the inner room: 'The room will certainly be tiny, with books grouped along two or three of the walls, divided into two main sections, straight 'porn' and sadism' (Clark 1967:166). Gerson Legman recalled two 'good humoured erotica dealers' of 1950's North London who kept their straight material in a White Cupboard and 'the stronger stuff ... in a Black Cupboard facing' (1981:46).

Many Soho Typescripts were indexed in code: FLA (aka FLG) (Fladge), F.D.(aka FEM-DOM) (Dominant females), or STR (Straight), for example. These classificatory signifiers were written on the books in biro, or typed and stencilled into cover designs. The carefully stencilled cover of *Discipline in the Home Text Book* displayed 'fla.' under the title on the cover. In the British Library's copy these letters were picked out in a blue biro also used to mark other books. *The Slaves of Helga Borg* had FEM-DOM typed into the cover design as well as 'F.D.' in blue biro, top left. Among the twenty-five books from the Notaro collection nearly a third exhibit these codes; five are 'Str.', *Female Pleasures (illustrated)* has 'LES' in biro top left, and *Lust and Agony in Double Domination* has 'F.D.' stencilled into the cover illustration. Such classificatory schemes were not new; Stoops describes a ledger from 1912 categorising clients (rather than stock) using similar abbreviations: 'Flag = Flagellation, Vamp = Vampire, Org = Orgy, Les = Lesbian P=Piss and Hom=Homosexual' (2018:40). However, in the 1950s and 1960s this classification operated across the trade. Producers and retailers made general use of a common language, reflecting consolidation across the market at this time.

Some categories were noticeably rare among the collections I studied. Although 'gay smudges' (photographs) were reportedly sold in the 1970s (Cox et al 1977: 162), I have yet to find a Soho Typescript labelled gay or HOM, as in the 1912 abbreviations. But gay typescripts did exist; Freeman reviewed *The Biggest Ever* 'a duplicated novel costing £5' in which a prodigiously well-endowed man entertained others (1967:70). Sexual contact between adult men was relatively uncommon in the fiction I read (although it certainly featured in group scenes and as part of coming of age stories). Sex between females (LES), on the other hand, was very popular. Bestiality sometimes featured, although I have found no photographs, and no term used to distinguish these typescripts. The classificatory impulse went into overdrive on the cover of *Variety Tit-bits* (Figure 4). The barrage of misspelt sexology and psychoanalysis is perhaps as notable for what is omitted (adult male homosexuality) as what is included²³.

INSERT FIGURE 4 Here – cover of *Variety Tit-Bits*

Race was a predominant theme of Soho Typescript fiction with many stories featuring interracial sex and colonial encounters. Some book covers bear the code B/W for 'Black/White' sex. Titles like *Black and White Orgy* (Museum of London 2019.10/4) can be linked to the racially charged atmosphere of late twentieth-century London, (manifested in the Notting Hill race riots of 1958), as well as the inter-racial atmosphere of Soho clubland, where black and white mixed (Mort 2010, Walkowitz 2012). *Girls on the Loose* (Museum of London 2019.10/1, Figure 3) tells a story featuring white women and Chinese men in Chinatown. Much fladge imagined the primitive rituals and savage cruelties of colonial encounters in jungles, tropical islands or on other planets (e.g. the Bernadet Press' science fiction *Journey of Lust* and *World of Horror*). Images of slavery were common, and were both implicitly and explicitly racialized (Colligan 2005, see Figure 5).

INSERT FIGURE 5 here – stencil

A large number of surviving Soho Typescripts catered to the taste for 'JUV'; an abbreviation of juvenile. Teenage girls, often under sixteen, (the legal age of consent in most of Britain²⁴) were so common as to be the norm. Paedophile material was also available in Soho photographs or smudges: 'The trade had its own private language... Still pictures were 'smudges', generally catering for the heterosexual or 'straight' client, though there were varieties too: 'gay smudges' depicting homosexuality, 'juv smudges' showing children. Bondage and flagellatory material was 'bond' and 'flag'" (Cox et al 1977: 162). None of the typescripts in the samples I studied included identifiably pre-pubescent children in photographs. However, stories were often related from the point of view of teenage girls. Sexual awakenings, 'sex education' and school discipline were popular themes. The long-standing pornographic genre of incest fiction was continued in stories told from the point of view of step-fathers and other relatives. In *Father is a Slave*, for example, fourteen-year-old June learns to dominate her father sexually (interestingly book was classified as 'F.D.' rather than JUV, possibly because teens were so common as to be almost unremarkable. Among the books examined for this study, I found one scene of sex between a man and a pre-pubescent boy in an unillustrated typescript. The scene formed the earliest part of a sexual biography (akin to the nineteenth century 'My Secret Life') spread across three volumes in which men and younger girls were put aside for the 'supreme sexual enjoyment' of dominant females.

The Dustman maintained that he would not touch material involving sex with children and animals (Tomkinson 1982). Even if this were true, it is unlikely all producers were as fastidious in these matters. Technically, the law did not discriminate between subjects explored in obscene fiction; they were all illegal under the Obscene Publications Acts in any case. Furthermore, there was a financial incentive to make this literature increasingly bizarre or 'extreme' since higher prices could be charged for niche or 'harder' tastes²⁵. On the other hand, before the Obscene Publications Squad was disbanded, officers of the Metropolitan Police were closely involved in Soho porn production, even correcting proofs²⁶. It is possible that the police informally regulated the content of Soho pornography

to some extent. If so, they may have policed adult male homosexuality more stringently than sex with underage girls: In the 1950s, 'British officials displayed a complete lack of interest in the possibility of underage persons participating in the production' of pornography (Stoops 2018:227). A 1952 inquiry concluded that the Home Office 'had never studied the issue and had no information regarding underage nude models in its files'.

Soho Typescripts conjured scenarios where women, girls and men were mutilated, dismembered and/or tortured to death. But this sensational aspect of home-produced fladge may have been overplayed by intellectuals and the press. (After all, insisting porn was becoming ever more extreme and ever more accessible inflated the relevance and urgency of writing about it.) Flagellation had been a feature of English print obscenity since the eighteenth century (Colligan 2005). The books I selected at random from the Notaro collection turned up more straight (in Soho terms) than fladge. Yet 'sadism' was particularly fascinating to literary observers of the Soho scene in the 1960s (e.g. Deighton 1967, Freeman 1967). It was frequently observed (without much concrete evidence) that fladge was more common, and more blatantly displayed than it had been in earlier times. "There has never been so much emphasis on sadomasochism as there is now" Freeman observed: "In the Soho bookshop ... there was nothing but fladge. Arranged on the walls were illustrated books and photographs depicting every variation and perversion of the sexual act, and each one included flagellation and torture. It came as something of a shock to find that most of the pornography available in England must be centred around sadism. Ninety percent of pornographic books imported into England are sadomasochistic. Obviously, the market is geared for the demand, and the demand is for sadistic sex' (1967:56-7). Freeman claimed that it was almost impossible to buy anything 'straight' in Soho in 1965:

Customer to Proprietor: "Got any straight sex then?"

Proprietor, apologetically, "Sorry mate, it's all got a bit of fladge in it"

(Freeman 1967:56)

Like Freeman, Gershon Legman was keen to emphasise the prevalence of 'disgusting' fladge. When he inquired of a Soho bookseller whether he had any books and pictures other than flagellation he was told: 'You can't sell these rotten buggers any of that normal perv!' (1981:19)²⁷.

Throughout the twentieth century there was a tendency to divide the field of the sexual into 'categories that separated the harmless from the perverse' (Cocks 2016). This habit was found both in the wider culture and among pornography consumers – who themselves made a distinction between 'normal' wholesome sex and the 'obscene'. While the content of the separated categories might vary, there were invariably two, one of which was the more positively valued than the other. The strategy of bifurcation was also at work in the architecture of Soho bookshops which separated front and back rooms, and in the language used to classify Soho Typescripts (as straight and fladge). The organisation of stock in Soho bookshop interiors enacted in microcosm those binaries – between normal and deviant, soft-core and hard-core, straight and fladge - which structured discussions of sex and obscenity in wider society.

Conclusion

Soho Typescripts were an important artefact in postwar cultures of the book. Yet they have been relatively little studied by historians. Pornographic magazines, by contrast, have had several useful studies (e.g. Collins 1999, Attwood 2002, Smith 2005). One reason for this disparity might be that soft-core magazines are collected in copyright libraries and easily searchable in catalogues. Soho Typescripts were neither collected nor catalogued in this way. The problem was anticipated during the 1960s. The Private Case archives document Eric Dingwall's effort to get 'hard-core duplicated stuff' into the British Library, because, as he put it:

'We have no specimens of this material at all so far and a few representative examples might be desirable' (DH72/316 Undated Memo to Mr Wilson).

Dingwall was responsible for brokering a three-way exchange between the collector Beecher Moore, the Private Case, and the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research which led to a large quantity of British typescript pornography making its way across the Atlantic between 1963 and 1965. The Keeper of Printed Books at the British Library refused Beecher Moore's 'duplicated material' because 'we are, after all, a library, not an institute of sexual research'. If there were something other than typescripts, he continued, 'it might be a different matter' (DH72/316 Letter from Robert Wilson to 'Ding', 1st July 1965). These 'mixed feelings' towards the 'Soho Typescripts' in Beecher Moore's bequest resulted in its dispatch to the Kinsey Institute Library (Fryer 1966:12). The Kinsey's BeM Erotic Manuscripts Collection thus holds numerous Soho Typescript authors and presses; even a duplicate of one of the seized typescripts eventually inveigled into the Private Case by Dingwall and Wood.

Like many museum objects separated from the people and places that produced them, much could be learnt about the Soho Typescripts now held by the Kinsey Institute if they were recognised using the language of their source community and re-contextualised within local craft traditions and economies:

'It is probable that in another two hundred years [Soho Typescripts] will be seen as useful historical, sociological or psychological documents...The typescripts are no masterpieces of literature nor are they, strictly speaking, printed books. But they are a product peculiar to a particular era of the English erotica market and it would surely have been preferable to have preserved them for posterity at some place closer to their place of origin than Indiana where they are now.' (Kearney 1981: 66-67).

Seen as homemade craft artefacts, rather than printed books, Soho Typescripts fell between the proper domain of museums (objects) and libraries (books). Thousands were produced, but since each stencil produced limited numbers of book, some of the surviving titles are very rare, if not unique. Without the foresight of Elizabeth Egan, Librarian of the Kinsey Institute, who agreed to accept Beecher Moore's collection when the British Library did not, it is likely many more titles would have been lost.

My research has applied methods from archaeological and ethnographic material culture studies to characterise and contextualise Soho Typescripts. It would have been impossible to do this without the preservation of Dingwall's 'few representative items' in the British Library, which formed the reference collection against which the Notaro collection could be compared. Hopefully, by identifying the traits of Soho Typescripts and distinguishing Soho Typescripts from other typescripts in the British Library general catalogue my research will promote future studies of these handmade books, notably, of the BeM Erotic Manuscripts Collection, which contains Soho Typescripts yet to be studied. The Museum of London's

acquisition of four Soho Typescripts is a small step along the way towards providing an adequate archive for future studies of this 'crucial period in the history of pornography' (Stoops 2018:241).

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Biographical Information:

My research explores the history of how we come to know and visualise the past and I have worked as an archaeologist in the field and in museums for over twenty years. Previous publications include studies of aerial archaeology, archaeological maps, Edwardian archaeological cults, concrete restorations of prehistoric megaliths and responses to archaeology by contemporary artists. For the last few years I have been pursuing cultures of phallus-collecting as part of an investigation into the history of archaeologies of sexuality and obscene museum collections. This has led me to write about obscene scrapbooks and hand-crafted books, resulting in the first publication of nineteenth century photographs once kept in the British Museum Secretum. I am Senior Lecturer in Museum and Gallery Studies at Kingston University, London.

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¹ Further details of my approach can be found in a Statement of Significance I wrote for the Museum of London supporting the museum's acquisition of four Soho Typescripts (Museum of London 2019.10/1-4).

² A good overview of how legislation was enforced in practice on individual booksellers can be found in Manchester (1986).

³ The 21 British Library Typescripts can be found at P.C.13.h.21, P.C.13.h.28 and P.C.14.i.6-24.

⁴ Urzdown reports typists were paid as much as writers (2012).

⁵ For readers unfamiliar with British English, these are equivalent to: Roger and Fill Your Quim, Knickers Down, Ken (meaning to be familiar with) Your Arse, and (for the author of a title about slavery) I'm a Mullah. Nick Urzdown revealed his name to me in one of our interviews but has asked for it to remain secret here.

⁶ Freeman has published his drawings and prison art; his hand is similar to that in drawings within some Soho Typescripts owned by Mr Notaro.

⁷ A letter from Maurice Crump, Director of Public Prosecutions, to Robert Wilson, Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum Library, states he "can't think you would be interested in what we call "Soho photographs" or vulgar picture postcards!" (3rd March 1961, British Library Corporate Archive DH72/316 (part 1)

⁸ The marketing of women and books sometimes seem to go hand-in-hand. A number of titles tell the stories of a woman and are illustrated with photographs featuring the same model as if to tell the story of a single protagonist. The publisher of *Irma* included a list of "previous books in the series" seventeen of which were titled with female first names.

⁹ In *Spanks for the Memories*, Nick Urzdown stated that he wrote for Soho Typescript producers in Manchester. However in interviews Urzdown stated that he believed Soho Typescripts were "more of a London thing". He recalled Manchester booksellers regularly dispatching staff to London to replenish supplies.

¹⁰ “One Soho veteran well remembers being dispatched weekly to purchase any “French books” from auctions at Sotherby’s and Christie’s” (Tomkinson 1982: 17).

¹¹ Larkin’s typescripts were shared among friends including Kingsley Amis, Bruce Montgomery and Diane Gollancz. Into the 1960s Larkin was a customer of Soho bookshops, sometimes accompanied by his friend the Kremlinologist Robert Conquest (Booth 2014:305). Brunette Coleman’s schoolgirl lesbianism and flagellation echoed popular themes in many Soho Typescripts.

¹² According to Nick Urzdown, this organisation contuse to exist under the title “Corpun”, and now distributes articles online.

¹³ Wildman’s ‘informational’ pamphlets were shorter than Soho Typescripts and sold for between 3s and 10s contributing to the massive increase in Wildman’s business turnover from £600 to around £2,000 in the space of a few years before his prosecution for obscene libel in 1953. His advertising techniques included wearing a sandwich board on Oxford Street declaring “Ban the Birch and Crime Increases”. Six brown paper packages of Wildman’s leaflets along with a card index were donated to the Private Case of the British Library by Honorary Curator Eric Dingwall.

¹⁴ Nick Urzdown reports that much of his work in the early 1970s involved creating and selling ‘reader’s letters’ describing corporal punishment.

¹⁵ Tomkinson believed The Dustman to be “one of the first Englishmen to produce and supply his own pornography” (1982:19), which he certainly was not.

¹⁶ See the BeM Erotic Manuscripts Collection “Hornimags” series, Kinsey Institute Library catalogue. The description is from a note supplied by the donor, Beecher Moore.

¹⁷ Taking the upper and lower levels of Clark and Freeman’s estimates Soho Typescripts cost between £50 to £150 at today’s prices, using the National Archives converter for 1965.

¹⁸ David Notaro reported recognising his own handwriting on a vintage magazine recently acquired for Ram Books.

¹⁹ Interview with Edward Thorpe, Last Word, BBC Radio 4, 24th March 2019

²⁰ The first ever “sex shop” – Ann Summers – which opened in Marylebone, 1970, offered female fashion and sex aids, but refused to stock pornography, distinguishing this business from bookshops (Manchester 1986).

²¹ In 1972 the elaborate negotiations required to enter the backroom (as well as the police corruption surrounding porn) were satirized by Monty Python’s Flying Circus in their “Tudor Porn Shop Sketch” in which the outer room was an employment agency offering only Elizabethan jobs.

²² Soho forgeries included “copies” of books for which no original existed; “Fanewell Cross’s” *Living for Love* pretended to be a copy of a work issued by the Olympia Press but was, in fact, never published by them (Kearney 1981:154).

²³ *The Society of Good Companions* presented itself as the proceedings of a sexological study-group complete with a list of lecture titles each of which was classified with a label including: ‘Incest’, ‘Flag’, ‘Juvenile’, ‘Lesbian’, ‘Bizarre’, ‘Oriental’, ‘Fem Dom’, ‘F. Wrestling’, ‘Transvestitism’, ‘Fetishism’.

²⁴ The age of consent was 17 in Northern Ireland.

²⁵ “Fetish books” Freeman reports, “are usually £4 to £5 each, full of printing errors...” (1967:164)

²⁶ Detective Inspector George Fenwick corrected proofs, sub-edited the spanking magazine *Janus*, and even offered to write for *Janus* on the subject of the Obscene Publications Act

(Tomkinson 1982: 38). Fenwick's handwritten comments advising "contact mags" producers were used as evidence at his trial (ibid:99).

²⁷ Gershon Legman appropriated the language of Soho booksellers to champion "normal perv" against "all sadistic books and films" which "should be burned" along with their "perverted enthusiasts" (1981:39). He also considered Gillian Freeman's tolerant attitude towards "S. & M. propaganda" to be "repellent".