

## Wikipedia

### John P. Lauritsen

John Lauritsen (born 5 March 1939) is a writer, publisher, and retired market research executive.

#### Early life and education

Lauritsen was born in Grand Island, Nebraska to Sarah Marie (Grosshans) and Walter P. Lauritsen. He attended Harvard College, majoring first in English literature and then in Social Relations, an interdisciplinary major comprising psychology, anthropology, and sociology. He received his AB degree in 1963.

#### Career and activism

Beginning in 1966, John Lauritsen established a career as a market

research executive and analyst, but he also has been a gay activist and scholar since the earliest days of the gay liberation movement [Wikipedia article].

In July 1969 he joined the Gay Liberation Front [Wikipedia article], and edited *Come Out!*, the first publication of the post-Stonewall gay movement. He joined the Gay Activists Alliance [Wikipedia article] in 1974, serving as Delegate-At-Large, and in the same year he joined the Gay Academic Union [Wikipedia article], of which he later became a National Director. He was a member of the Columbia University Seminar on Homosexualities.

In 1982 he founded Pagan Press, a small book publisher, with the mandate of publishing “books of interest to the intelligent gay man.” “Pagan” here denotes “the culture of Classical Antiquity”.

With the advent of the gay health crisis in the early 1980s, Lauritsen became an investigative journalist and a leading AIDS critic. His main outlet was then the *New York Native* [Wikipedia article], which from 1985 to 1996 published over 50 of his articles; these have been described as "the most trenchantly informative, irreverent, funny and

tragic writing of the Aids years" (Neville Hodgkinson, *Aids: The Failure of Contemporary Science*, London 1996).

Lauritsen then turned to English Romanticism, especially Percy Bysshe Shelley and the circle of men around him. In 2001 he edited and published Shelley's translation of Plato's dialogue, the *Symposium* (or *Banquet*). He followed this with *The Man Who Wrote Frankenstein (TMWWF)* [Wikipedia article], which has three theses: 1) *TMWWF* is a great work of literature, 2) Percy Bysshe Shelley is the author, and 3) romantic male friendship is a central theme. *TMWWF* was highly praised by Camille Paglia and other reviewers, but condemned by Mary Shelley scholars.

Lauritsen is a recovered alcoholic, who had his last drink in 1968. He is part of a movement to divest Alcoholics Anonymous of religiosity. Since 2011 he's written for two websites: AA Agnostica <[aaagnostica.org](http://aaagnostica.org)> and AA Beyond Belief <[aabeyondbelief.org](http://aabeyondbelief.org)>. His book, *A Freethinker in Alcoholics Anonymous*, was published in 2014. He's spoken at international secular AA conferences in Santa Monica, California; Austin, Texas; and Toronto, Canada.

In addition to the *Native*, Lauritsen's articles have appeared in publications as diverse as *Gay Books Bulletin*, *Gay Times* (London), *Civil Liberties Review*, *The Freethinker* (London), *Journal of Homosexuality*, *Christopher Street*, *Gay & Lesbian Humanist*, *Gay & Lesbian Review*, *Bio/Technology*, and *The Lancet*. His writings have been translated into German, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Asian and Slavic languages.

#### Bibliography

■ (Co-authored with David Thorstad) *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement (1864-1935)* (1974, Second Revised Edition 1995).

■ (Editor) Edward Carpenter, *Ioläus: An Anthology of Friendship* (1982).

■ (Editor) John Addington Symonds, *Male Love: A Problem in Greek Ethics and other writings* (1983).

■ (Co-authored with Hank Wilson) *Death Rush: Poppers [Nitrite*

*Inhalants] and AIDS* (1986).

■ *Poison By Prescription: The AZT Story* (1990).

■ *The AIDS War: Propaganda, Profiteering and Genocide from the Medical-Industrial Complex* (1993).

■ (Co-edited with Ian Young) *The AIDS Cult: Essays on the gay health crisis* (1997).

■ *A Freethinker's Primer of Male Love* (1998).

■ (Editor) Plato: *The Banquet* translated by Percy Bysshe Shelley (2001).

■ *The Man Who Wrote Frankenstein* (2007).

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- (Editor) (Aeschylus) *Prometheus Bound* (tr. Thomas Medwin & Percy Bysshe Shelley) + *Prometheus Unbound* (Shelley) (2011).
  
- The Shelley-Byron Men: Lost Angels of a ruined paradise (2017).
  
- (Editor) Lord Byron (allonym): *Don Leon & Leon to Annabella* (2017).

#### External links

- John Lauritsen's home page <<https://paganpressbooks.com/jpl>>
- Pagan Press <<https://paganpressbooks.com/BOOKLIST.HTM>>