

DAILY DISH

Keynes's "Jew Boy" Quickie

By The Daily Dish

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By looking at his journals, Evan Zimroth tries to decode the private life of John Maynard Keynes:

Keynes obsessively counted and tabulated almost everything; it was a life-long habit. As a child, he counted the number of front steps of every house on his street. Later he kept a running record (not surprisingly) of his expenses and his golf scores. He also counted and tabulated his sex life.

The first diary is easy: Keynes lists his sexual partners, either by their initials (GLS for Lytton Strachey, DG for Duncan Grant) or their nicknames ("Tressider," for J. T. Sheppard, the King's College Provost). When he apparently had a quick, anonymous hook-up, he listed that sex partner generically: "16-year-old under Etna" and "Lift boy of Vauxhall" in 1911, for instance, and "Jew boy," in 1912.

This list, where he names names but gives no details, Keynes organized year-by-year. He was scrupulously honest, too, even in times of sexual famine. For three years running 1903 to 1905 he records no sexual partners; nil, he admitted. As

he became older, though, the number of his partners increased dramatically, so that for 1911 he lists eight partners (although half of these are probably one-time pick-ups), for 1915 he lists seven, and for 1913 (his highest score) he lists nine different partners. One or two men are repeaters: DG (Duncan Grant), for example, runs throughout.

The other sex diary is more puzzling and, in a way, more informative. An economist to the core, Keynes organized the second sex diary also year-by-year, but this time in quarterly increments.

Unfortunately for us, however, this second sex diary is in code. And as far as I know, no one yet has been prurient enough to crack it.

(hat tip: Kottke)
