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The American Historical Review, Volume 118, Issue 3, 1 June 2013, Pages 653–678,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/118.3.653>

Published: 24 May 2013

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WHEN A LONDON JURY ACQUITTED Penguin Books of obscenity charges in November of 1960, they made a decision that quickly became part of a larger narrative of liberalization. But in the folklore of the 1960s in Britain, the prosecution's disastrous question on the first day has become almost as significant as the verdict.¹ The complete text of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, D. H. Lawrence's sexually explicit novel about an affair between an aristocrat and her husband's gamekeeper, had never been legally available in Britain. Emboldened by the 1959 Obscene Publications Act, which made literary merit a defense, Penguin published an unexpurgated edition the following year. To the surprise of the new law's backers, the company was charged with publishing an obscene book.² The trial attracted intense interest. The judge, Mr. Justice Byrne, and the prosecuting counsel, Mervyn Griffith-Jones, were...

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Online ISSN 1937-5239

Print ISSN 0002-8762

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