

The public image of the group was already forming before World War I, and the mutual support that adherents could rely on helped to advance their individual careers. The group was generally hostile to the war, and a number of members became conscientious objectors. In 1918 a homosexual Bloomsberry, Lytton Strachey, published his *Eminent Victorians*, which poured scorn on the icons of official Britain. Bloomsbury discounted religion as something that educated people could not take seriously, while politics was generally dismissed as coarse and life-diminishing. The values of the group were frankly hedonistic: they appreciated modernist painting largely for its "retinal" qualities, cultivated French cuisine, and engaged in the kinds of sex that appealed to individual taste. Although members were individualistic, their headquarters in London gave them a cohesion that no group of academics, scattered among provincial universities, could hope to attain. They used their access to the media to project what they sincerely believed were the ideals of civilization and tolerance.

To its enemies Bloomsbury stood for superficiality and self-indulgence, a prolongation in a new guise of the aestheticism and decadence of the 1890s. In art and literature, the Bloomsberries sacrificed content to form, and indeed their aesthetic ideas belonged to the international context of Formalism. For their highbrow tastes "proletarian culture" was as repulsive as "capitalist culture": both were hopelessly vulgar. For all their dislike of the degradation brought by the industrial system, their revolt against Victorianism seemed to depend, all too crucially, on the maintenance of the stability secured by the sacrifices of earlier generations—not to mention their social position and income. At Bloomsbury gatherings, servants always hovered in the background and class privilege was taken for granted. The coming of the international depression in 1929 and World War II seemed to lend substance to this critique,

and Bloomsbury faded in public awareness, though individual members continued to produce.

The revival of interest in Bloomsbury coincided with the new prosperity of the 1950s, which made its lifestyle preferences available to a larger segment of society. A further stimulus was the fascination with the early phases of modernism. Then there was the sexual revolution of the 1960s, which Bloomsbury was rightly seen as having anticipated. For the first time Michael Holroyd's massive study, *Lytton Strachey: A Critical Biography* (London, 1967–68) revealed to a larger public the centrality of homosexuality to the group. All these factors turned writing about Bloomsbury into an academic growth industry, and there was much uncritical acclaim. Books poured from the presses, and on the art market prices of even the shabbiest Omega workshop items increased enormously. Inevitably, a reaction followed, but not so sharp as to exclude the consolidation of a more balanced picture of the group's accomplishments.

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BLÜHER, HANS (1888–1955)

German homophile leader and scholar. His early, controversial studies on the German youth movement (Wandervogelbewegung) emphasized the positive function of male eroticism in the initiation of the young to collective life. Blüher was strongly influenced by the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, and radically opposed to the "third sex" theory of Magnus Hirschfeld, the leader of the Ger-

man homophile movement. In a two-volume work of 1917–19, *Die Rolle der Erotik in der männlichen Gesellschaft* [The Role of the Erotic in Male Society], he divided homosexuals into three types: the “heroic male,” the effeminate invert, and the suppressed homosexual. Society was in his view organized around two institutions, the family and the state. The first was by its very nature heterosexual, the second had its basis in male bonding—with homoerotic overtones. He was also an anti-Semitic thinker who played a part in the right-wing politics of homosexual paramilitary cliques under the Weimar Republic. In later years, increasingly departing from his earlier concerns, Blüher evolved a somewhat murky metaphysics of Christianity and nature. He was twice married and had two children. Despite his fame as the author of two major books on homosexuality the Nazis left him alone. At the close of his life he composed his memoirs under the title *Works and Days*.

BODY LANGUAGE

See Gesture and Body Language.

BOHEMIANISM

The expression *La Bohème* first emerged in Paris in the 1840s, where it denoted a segment of urban life characterized by a mixture of semiunderground figures—mountebanks, fixers, petty criminals, and prostitutes along with struggling, impoverished writers and artists—and the free use of alcohol and other stimulants. The term derives not from the Bohemia (Bohême) that is now a part of Czechoslovakia, but from the gypsies, to whom that geographic origin was erroneously ascribed. The fame of the Parisian Bohème led to the detection of others (which had probably been in existence for some time) in the major cities of Europe and North America. A typical feature of bohemia was emancipation from the family with its values and constraints. Contrary to outsiders’ impres-

sion of its being disorganized, bohemia had its fixed meeting places—the café being of central importance—and its press.

This urban phenomenon is obviously older than the name itself. A text by Richard of Devizes pertaining to London in the twelfth century shows homosexuals living in the company of other denizens of the urban demimonde. At the end of the Middle Ages a Cologne text of 1484 points to the existence of a homosexual subculture with regular meeting places, known habitues, and the like. A group of difficult jargon poems of François Villon (b. 1431) has been given an interpretation which would reveal their author as a homosexual situated in just such a milieu in mid-fifteenth-century Paris. Most Italian cities, including Venice and Florence, had such groups.

The gay side of Paris under the early Third Republic is illuminated by the classic relationship of the poets Rimbaud and Verlaine. Francis Carco’s novel *Jésus-la-Caille* (1910) paints a convincing picture of the life of a bisexual hustler in the French capital during the Belle Époque. In the United States the archetypal bohemias were in New York City: the Greenwich Village and Harlem of the 1920s. The Greenwich Village poet Maxwell Bodenheim (1893–1954) openly admitted his bisexuality in his autobiography, and popular journalism affords occasional glimpses of cafes and bars frequented by homosexuals in the interwar period. Outside New York City, the most fertile ground for imitation of the “bohemian” lifestyle was the elite college campus, where students (and ex-students) emancipated from the surveillance of their families could revel in the freedom of late adolescence without adult responsibilities. Bohemian cafés, though their patrons may have been “mixed,” were clearly the ancestors of today’s gay and lesbian establishments. The nationwide Prohibition of alcohol as a result of the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919 caused speakeasies to spring up in every city, but with a