

CLIFT, MONTGOMERY (1920–1966)

American actor. Born into an ambitious nouveau-riche family, Clift responded to guidance by becoming a successful child and adolescent actor. By the age of 20 he was starring with Lunt and Fontanne in Robert Sherwood's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *There Shall Be No Night*. At the same time he had his first serious affair—with a fellow actor. Making a national splash in the film *The Search* (1948), he was for a time one of Hollywood's top romantic male leads. His brooding good looks appealed to both women and men, but some of his associates such as Frank Sinatra and the director John Huston taunted him for his homosexuality. Nonetheless, Clift's career continued meteoric until his 1956 car crash, after which his face had to be reconstructed, but without complete success.

Clift suffered from a strong sense of internalized self-contempt, referring to himself as "the fag." At times he pursued desultory affairs with women, but more frequently sought out the company of hustlers and other companions in casual male sex. His abuse of alcohol and drugs increased as the years passed. In New York City Clift found a psychiatrist who tried to help him to accept his homosexuality, but at the cost of a crippling personal dependence. The actor's tortured life reflected not only the difficulty of being a homosexual in America in the middle decades of the twentieth century, but also the stresses caused by the hypocrisy of an entertainment industry seeking to protect its investment in a talented, but "unstable" property.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Patricia Bosworth, *Montgomery Clift: A Biography*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.

CLIQUEs

See *Circles and Affinity Groups*.

CLONE

In current general usage, the word clone has come to mean "a living organism created as a duplicate of another through genetic engineering." In addition, the word acquired a vogue use in gay circles in the late 1970s to designate an emergent male homosexual style.

First attracting attention as a definite type, it seems, in such enclaves of gaydom as San Francisco's Castro and New York's Greenwich Village, the gay clone wore short hair and a clipped moustache, while sporting (if possible) a sculpted chest with prominent pectorals. Clothing, typically flannel shirts and leather, was chosen to accentuate these features. The intent was to create a masculine, even **macho** image, while at the same time signaling one's orientation. Such signaling might be accentuated through gay **semiotics**—keys worn externally on a ring and a handkerchief, color-coded to indicate specific sexual wishes, placed in the back pocket. In public gathering places, especially bars, gay clones were said to be frequently observed "giving attitude," that is, assuming a scornful and haughty demeanor, and offering only laconic and surly replies when addressed.

The popularity of this style reflected several converging tendencies. On the one hand, there was a rejection by a substantial portion of the gay male community of both the **effeminate** mode (as prescribed by the traditional stereotype) and the **androgynous** mode (championed by early gay liberation), in favor of a markedly masculine style. Hostile observers were wont to say, of course, that the clone look was just another form of gay costuming, and therefore just as much "drag" as the looks it displaced, but this was surely not the motivation of those who adopted the trend. American culture itself had tended to promote rough-hewn, proletarian styles for men, television's adaptation of the Hollywood Western being the most notable source. Then there was the national interest in physical fitness, which