

late-nineteenth-century notion of homosexuality as disease has given the ambiguous notion of contagion a new lease on life and contributed to the persistence of homophobic attitudes which the gay movement has had to work patiently to dispel—thus far not with entire success. The recent association of homosexual activity with the spread of a pathological and usually fatal condition such as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) has the side-effect of reviving the paranoid aspect of this belief system in the unconscious depths of the mass mind.

Warren Johansson

### CONTEST LITERATURE

In Greek literature a subgenre—sometimes known under the rhetorical term *syncretis*—developed in which two characters debate opposing points of view. Thus in *Aristophanes' Frogs* the characters Aeschylus and Euripides argue the merits of their poetry, while his *Clouds* verbally pits Just Reasoning against Unjust Reasoning. In later Greek writing several pieces of contest literature appeared debating the relative merits of boys and women as love objects. Such a debate is featured in the novel *Leucippe and Clitophon* by Achilles Tatius (perhaps second century A.D.). An anonymous specimen is the so-called *Affairs of the Heart* by pseudo-Lucian.

Together with much else in the Greek heritage, this tradition of arguing the merits of pederasty vs. the love of women passed to Islam, where the first known example seems to be by al-Jāhiz of the ninth century. A more accessible instance occurs in the *Arabian Nights* (419th night and following in the Burton translation). In the mid-seventeenth century a specimen appeared in Japan, the *Dembu monogatari* (Story of a Boor), perhaps derived ultimately from an Islamic source.

In the medieval literature of Western Europe the boy-woman contest flourished, the most salient instance being

the twelfth-century "Ganymede and Helen." In this medieval Latin poem, Helen offers herself to Ganymede only to find that he would rather assume the passive role with another man. A violent quarrel breaks out, to settle which they appoint Nature and Reason as arbiters. Traveling to "the world's eastern edge, the house of Nature," they argue their respective positions before their judges, who are not exactly impartial. Ganymede praises love between man and boy, Helen champions the passion of man and woman. Although Ganymede makes several telling points, in the end he is vanquished by the argument that intercourse between males is sterile, that it wastes potential human lives. "The old heresy is abandoned by the gods," and the teaching of the church is vindicated. Parallels to this literary genre of debate were the public controversies between Jewish and Christian theologians that typically ended in a decision in favor of the church, and often in woe for the Jewish communities in the cities where the debates were staged.

After the church had imposed obligatory heterosexuality upon the population of Western Europe, all debate on the issue ceased, and it became impossible to defend male love publicly. But in cultures where a significant part of the male population is actively bisexual and intercourse with a boy is a viable social option, the choice is posed in life quite as much as in literature—and not always to Ganymede's disadvantage. With the gradual rehabilitation of the homosexual option in today's pluralistic world, the notion of victory in such a contest has become moot.

Wayne R. Dynes

### CONTRARY SEXUAL FEELING

This expression is the English rendering of the overarching term adopted by the German physician Karl Friedrich Otto Westphal (1833–1890) for the condition that he had abstracted from two case

histories under his observation, one of a lesbian, the other of a male transvestite. A colleague in classical philology suggested to him the expression *die contraire Sexualempfindung*, which he then used in the title of an article published in *Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten* in 1869 that is regarded as the first medical paper in modern times on what came to be designated as homosexuality. Westphal himself judged the condition inborn, a symptom of a neuropathic or psychopathic state, as an alienation from the feeling proper to the anatomical sex of the subject. He drew the forensic distinction between exclusive and occasional homosexuality, but his failure to separate the two psychological entities that he had encountered was not corrected until fifty years later, when Havelock Ellis formulated the differential concept of *eonism* and Magnus Hirschfeld that of *transvestism*, the latter on the basis of 17 cases of heterosexual transvestism that he had isolated from the 7,000 homosexual case histories he had taken until that time.

The English abstractors and translators of psychiatric literature from the Continent were never able to decide upon a uniform equivalent for the awkward German expression (in which the adjective is, strictly speaking, a French word), but "contrary sexual feeling" or "contrary sexual instinct" does figure in the writing of some British and American alienists at the close of the nineteenth century. To the English-speaking lay public, of course, the word "contrary," like "perverse" conveyed a notion of the rebellious, refractory, and antithetical, though such connotations were not overtly recognized by specialists. In any event the expression was not destined to survive. As early as 1870 an American psychiatrist preparing an abstract of Westphal's article had used "inverted sexual feeling," and eight years later the Italian Arrigo Tamassia invented the far more satisfactory *inversione dell'istintosessuale* in an article published in *Rivista sperimentale di freniatria e*

*medicina legale*. With appropriate modifications this term, simplified to **sexual inversion**, was adopted in all the Romance languages and in English as the *medical* designation for what journalistic style was later to dub **homosexuality**, a term invented by the apologist Károly Mária Kertbeny in 1869 and taken up by Gustav Jaeger in the book *Entdeckung der Seele* in 1880. Since the last of these fitted perfectly into the international nomenclature of Greek-Latin expressions and allowed for a triptych with **bisexual** and **heterosexual**, it drove the clumsy and eccentric coinages that had been proposed in earlier decades out of use. So "contrary sexual feeling" is the linguistic remnant of the first, uncertain psychiatric attempt to grapple with the problem of homosexuality.

Warren Johansson

## COUNSELING

The concept of counseling, as it was introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century, referred to the way students were helped to deal with problems in the areas of study and choice of a professional career. The counselor gave information and advice, expecting the student to act accordingly.

Since then the meaning of the word "counseling" has changed considerably. It is now widely used in the sense of a more or less professional way of helping people with relatively uncomplicated emotional or social problems, by way of conversation (listening and talking). More complicated psycho-social problems, necessitating an intrapsychic personality change or complex and difficult behavioral changes, are the realm of **psychotherapy**.

Over the years counseling techniques have changed considerably as well, especially as a result of the work of Carl R. Rogers. In his view, people can, under the right circumstances, find the answers to their problems themselves. Instead of