

and went to Italy to live. Though he was married at the time, Douglas' stay in Italy brought forth his pederastic bent. It is said that during his later years he would take a different boy "muse" as inspiration during the writing of each of his books. *Siren Land* (1911) and *Old Calabria* (1915) are evocative records of his travels in southern Italy that mingle chronicle, observation, historical notes, and philosophical musings. During one of these trips he recalls spending months with Amitrano, an illiterate peasant boy of the Sorrento countryside, renewing contact with "elemental and permanent things . . . casting off outworn weeds of thought with the painless ease of a serpent." Evidently the casting off was incomplete, for he could still recognize the outlines of classical statuary in the laboring bodies of Italian fieldhands.

Douglas wrote his popular novel *South Wind* (1917) to capture the expatriate atmosphere of the Capri colony. Set against the semitropical flora and fauna of "Nepenthe" (as he calls the island), the novel evokes a gentle hedonism that softens the sharp edges of the northern visitors. The plot, such as it is, pivots on the gradual conversion of the straightlaced Anglican colonial bishop, Mr. Heard, to a kind of aesthetic paganism. Although nothing in *South Wind* is overtly homosexual, the alert reader can detect allusions to the fancies and foibles of the island's foreign gay residents. Continuously in print since its first publication, the novel owes its success to its depiction of a Mediterranean outpost of bohemia, whose denizens have learned to "go with the flow."

In the nineteen-twenties Norman Douglas settled down in Florence, where he lived in straightened circumstances, sometimes with the bookseller Pino [G. M.] Orioli. He spent the war years 1941-46 in England. Most of Douglas' later fiction was not successful, owing to his lack of convincing characterization and plotting. As a result he sometimes required subventions from more fortunate authors such as

W. Somerset Maugham. His efforts to earn money not infrequently had entertaining results, as in his spoof of literary scholarship, *Some Limericks, Collected for the Use of Students, and Ensplendour'd with Introduction, Geographical Index, and with Notes Explanatory and Critical* (1928). In this little book, the point is not so much the bawdy limericks themselves, but the ingenious and improbable glosses supplied by the editor.

A renowned consumer of haute cuisine and wines, Douglas had little fondness for avant-garde literature, which he described as "rats' feet over broken glass in a dry cellar." As he grew older his interest in people became increasingly selective, and he acquired a reputation as a misanthrope. But his enthusiasm for young people never waned. "A child," he remarked, "is ready to embrace the universe. And, unlike adults, he is never afraid to face his own limitations."

In retrospect Douglas represented the milieu of the select foreign colony in Italy before the age of mass tourism. His Florentine circle included other homosexual and lesbian residents, notably Harold Acton, Vernon Lee, and Reggie Turner. They were seduced to their venerable surroundings by a largely illusory Mediterranean paradise of the senses. But since many of them flourished and were creative there, the illusion was a beneficial one.

Wayne R. Dynes

## DRAG

See Transvestism; Transvestism, Theatrical.

## DRAMA

See Theatre and Drama.

## DREAMS

Since the beginning of time human beings have dreamed and have been fascinated, perplexed, and terrified by their dreams. Universal as is the experience of dreaming, the interpretation of dreams is

variable and culturally conditioned. In various traditions dreams have been understood as religious experience (divine possession); predictions of future events, good or ill; a review of the previous day's happenings; wish fulfillment; and communications, often puzzling or disguised, from the unconscious. Their elliptical, protean character suggests that dreams are messages in code. This code requires translation by an interpreter, who may be the dreamer in person, a village elder, a priestly figure, an occultist, or a psychiatrist. When a dream has homosexual content, the hermeneutic process is complicated by the ethical assumptions of the dreamer and the interpreter, which reflect the attitudes of society toward same-sex experience.

To understand their dream experiences human beings have formulated a lore to which the ancients gave the name *oneirocritical*. Because the ancient world accepted homosexual interest and activity as part of human sexuality, the dream interpreters of the eastern Mediterranean cultures could calmly explain the homoerotic episodes in dreams in terms of their overall system of signs and meanings and without anxiety. Such was the work of **Artemidorus** of Daldis (middle of the second century), which alludes to pederastic and homosexual dream sequences and assigns them a specific, often prophetic meaning. Not so the Christian Middle Ages; the literature of dreams became exclusively heterosexual because the taboo with which theology had tainted sexual attraction to one's own sex imposed a censorship that is only now being lifted.

The folk, the occult, and the psychoanalytic traditions offer quite varied approaches for the interpretation of dreams. Yet all work with a set of symbols which the interpreters claim to have validated through individual experience. Some begin by questioning the client about events in his life that may have activated the dream and then try to elicit his own understanding, before they proceed to an

explanation or prediction on the basis of the reported dream material. Others may simply elaborate the client's own association. An interpreter with a flair for a particular set of images and symbols may tend to focus on the latent content of these, while giving only formal translation-like explanations of others. In some traditions one symbol is assigned universal significance, but another may have a polyvalent range of meaning that is pointed to the client's concrete life situation. If the interpreter ignores the latter, he may encounter justified contradiction and even rejection from the client.

The homoerotic content of dreams, in a culture where homosexuality is severely tabooed, may provoke deep, fundamental conflicts. Such dreams are dangerous to the subject, charged as they are with explosive content which the client may not be ready to accept and which may therefore greatly frighten him. The interpreter is well advised to postpone the analysis and explanation of such dreams until a time when the client is able to accept them without needless anxiety. Other dreams may be at odds with the subject's overt sexual life, and he may even wish to adapt their content to his conscious orientation. **Kinsey** mentions instances of such disparity in the subjects of his interviews.

According to the psychoanalytic tradition, the dream, by widening the avenues of perception and attention, can lift amnesia of past events in the life of the subject. The dream may reflect the role of homosexuality in psychic conflict, portraying with special clarity the ways in which it complicates the analytic relationship. The dream also exposes the homosexual conflicts of adolescence, a period often relegated to the limbo of the client's memory. Broader intellectual and social acceptance of overt homosexuality may increase rather than decrease the problems raised by its unconscious dynamics, as the subject then has to confront the possibility of having homoerotic de-

sires that are within reach of gratification. Homosexuality becomes meaningful to a subject only when he can integrate it with his own living experience. Future studies of the role of homosexuality in the dream need to take account of the long repressed homoerotic component of human culture, as well as the value assigned specifically homosexual symbols in the traditional literature of dream interpretation. Moreover, new research on the physiology of sleep is likely to open future perspectives on the dream.

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Warren Johansson

## DRUGS

As used in this article drugs are substances introduced into the body to produce pleasure, altered states of consciousness, or hallucinations (short-term psychosis). Not included, because they are considered neither major social issues nor gay-related, are drugs and foods which influence brain chemistry in other ways (for example, antidepressants; tranquilizers; the amino acid tryptophan; phenylethylamine, the psychoactive ingredient in chocolate).

Drugs are of diverse origins and have sharply contrasting characteristics. Some are produced by plants (alcohol, caffeine, cannabis [marijuana], coca, mescaline, nicotine, opium); some are concentrated extracts (cocaine, heroin, spirits); others are manufactured (amphetamines, barbiturates, LSD, volatile nitrites). Some drugs have a high overdose potential (heroin; PCP), others low (cannabis); some are effective in very small doses (LSD), others only at high doses (alcohol); some are highly addictive (cocaine, nicotine, opiates), others mildly so (alcohol), and others not addictive at all (cannabis, LSD). In addition,

drugs vary dramatically in mode of action and effects on the brain and other bodily systems. They can be divided into depressants and stimulants, with the hallucinogens a subcategory of the latter.

*Policy.* The degree to which society should or can tolerate recreational drug use, psychic exploration or artistic creation through drugs, or self-destructive use of drugs, is an unresolved question. There is a partial consensus that private use, which does not impede societal functioning or lead to gross neglect of health, is tolerable and can even be endorsed (the glass of wine with dinner). The use of drugs is so widespread in human history—it has been proposed that agriculture was born from a desire to easily produce alcoholic beverages—that their use could respond to some biological drive. There is also a consensus that society has the right to demand unimpaired capacity from those in hazardous activities with responsibility for the safety of others (surgeons, pilots, drivers of automobiles). Between those extremes there is a vast, confused area. It should be noted that there has never been a country or society in which unrestricted use of all psychoactive drugs has been permitted over any period of time.

Under ideal conditions, with controlled strengths and purities and a warm, supportive environment, there is little long-term harm to the healthy subject in infrequent use of drugs. However, drug use easily becomes frequent, and the amount used may increase because the body develops tolerance for some drugs and the desired effects decrease. Frequent use can cause bodily harm, although this varies with the drug and the user, and some bodily harm (for example, sports injuries) may be considered acceptable by society. The history of drugs reveals that while benefits are immediately evident, harmful effects may not be discovered until much later. Damage from drugs can be produced so slowly that it is hard to perceive, and sometimes it has no early symptoms at all; addiction can make the