Bacon, Francis, Sir (1561–1626)

English statesman, philosopher, and essayist. After a somewhat shaky start in the service of Queen Elizabeth, during the reign of James I Bacon advanced from knight (1603) to the offices of attorney general (1613) and lord chancellor (1618). In 1621, however, his position collapsed when he was forced to plead guilty of charges of taking bribes; he then retired to study and write. In the philosophy of science Bacon has become identified, sometimes simplistically, with the method of induction, the patient accumulation of data to reach conclusions. Recent research, however, has shown that this stereotypical picture of a skeptical, essentially modern figure is distorted and anachronistic; Bacon’s interest in experiment is in fact rooted in magical, alchemical, and esoteric traditions. Although the notion that he wrote Shakespeare’s plays is now discounted, his aphoristic Essays (1597–1625) are a stylistic achievement in their own right.

Evidence for Bacon’s erotic predilection for young men in his employ comes from two seventeenth-century writers, John Aubrey and Sir Simonds D’Ewes. The latter even states that there was some question of bringing him to trial for buggery. A letter survives from Bacon’s mother chastizing him for his fondness for Welsh boys. His marriage, which was childless and probably loveless, took place at the mature age of 46. Sir Francis Bacon seems to have moved entirely in a masculine world. In accord with Greco-Roman and Renaissance predecessors, his essay “Of Friendship” confines itself to relations between men. “Of Beauty” discusses the matter exclusively in terms of male exemplars. Also significant is his Machiavellian commendation of dissimulation; the best policy is “to have openness in name and opinion, secrecy in habit, dissimulation in seasonable use, and a power to feign if there be no remedy.” The need to “edit” one’s persona thus recognized is of course one facet of the closeted life, though Bacon’s caution may have been reinforced by sensitivity regarding his occult and magical interests, which were scarcely popular among the masses.


√ Bailey, Derrick Sherwin (1910–1984)

British theologian and historian; Canon Residentiary of Wells Cathedral from 1962. After World War II Bailey joined a small group of Anglican clergymen and physicians to study homosexuality; their findings were published in a 1954 Report entitled The Problem of Homosexuality produced for the Church of England Moral Welfare Council by the Church Information Board. As part of this task Bailey completed a separate historical study, Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition (London: Longmans, 1955). Although this monograph has been criticized for tending to exculpate the Christian church from blame in the persecution and defamation of homosexuals, it was a landmark in the history of the subject, combining scrutiny of the Biblical evi-
dence with a survey of subsequent history. Bailey's book drew attention to a number of neglected subjects, including the intertestamental literature, the legislation of the Christian emperors, the penitentials, and the link between heresy and sodomy. The author's interpretation of Genesis 19, where he treats the Sodom story as essentially nonsexual—an instance of violation of hospitality—has not been generally accepted. The work of Bailey and his colleagues prepared the way for the progressive Wolfenden Report (1957), which was followed a decade later by Parliament's decriminalization of homosexual conduct between consenting adults in England and Wales.

**Baldwin, James (1924–1987)**

American novelist, essayist, and playwright. Born in New York City's Harlem, his experiences as a child evangelist in the ghetto provided a rich store of material, as well as contributing to his sometimes exhortatory style. His first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953), which derives from this world, gave him immediate fame. Following the example of fellow black author Richard Wright, Baldwin had moved to Paris at the age of 24; he was to live in France for most of the rest of his life, though most of his concerns and work continued to center on the United States.

The acclaim that he had garnered in the 1950s emboldened him to publish *Giovanni's Room* (1961), an honest novel about homosexuality sent out into a literary world that was scarcely welcoming. This book recounts the story of David, an athletic, white American expatriate who discovers his homosexuality in a relationship with a working-class Italian in Paris; although it ends tragically with the death of Giovanni, the lean, yet intense style of this book, and its candor, left a lasting impression. At the time, to be sure, critics urged Baldwin to abandon such "exotic" subject matter and return to native themes. Baldwin responded with his most ambitious work yet, *Another Country* (1961), in which the sexual and racial themes are inextricably interwoven. Only partially successful, this novel presents the lives of a number of New Yorkers of varying sexual persuasions, who are linked by their friendship with a black musician.

Having successfully withstood the homophobia of the immediate post-war years, the emergence of the Civil Rights movement gave Baldwin the chance to play a role at the center of the stage. His prose work *The Fire Next Time* (1963) effectively captures the moral fervor of the Kennedy years, and Baldwin seemed the Jeremiah that the country needed. Although he continued to publish after this point, the writer seemed unable to find a balanced viewpoint, and his later novels and plays are sometimes diffuse and strident. Some of his former admirers felt that he had become too much wrapped up in the rhetoric of black liberation, with its angry indictment of white injustice; conversely, some black critics found him insufficiently militant. Try as he might, he could not convince the younger black radicals that he had not sold out to whiteness. Baldwin's estimate of the urgency of the racial crisis led him to downplay the homosexual theme. Yet as a commentator on the continuing "American dilemma" of race, Baldwin failed to deliver a message that could carry full conviction for any group. Despite his best efforts, in the view of many readers he never recaptured the crystalline precision of his earlier works. These suffice, however, to assure his reputation as a writer of compelling power, a sensitive observer not merely of blackness and gayness, not merely of America and Europe, but of the inherent complexities of the human condition.


*Wayne R. Dynes*
Ballet
See Dance.

Balzac, Honoré de
(1799–1850)
French novelist. Balzac is best known as the creator of the Comédie humaine, a vast collection of interlocking novels and stories of which about ninety were written in less than twenty years. The Comédie humaine displays both unity and diversity: if a number of narratives are set in Paris in the 1820s, the bold strategy of letting characters from one book know characters from another fosters the reader’s growing conviction of the reality of the world evoked by the novelist. The literary complex also carries conviction because of the interplay of critical attitudes that express Balzac’s intuitive analysis of modern society: even the more obscure private dramas are linked with the life of France at a particular moment in its history—the Restoration and the July Monarchy. The stresses and conflicts between thought and instinct, between Paris and the provinces, between those who cling to the past and those who move with the times—all these mirror Balzac’s need to compensate for what life had failed to give him and the truth of his own experience. Balzac transformed the novel into a vehicle for reflective commentary on modern society and so to an incalculable degree influenced succeeding generations of writers in many tongues.

While there is no evidence that Balzac was overtly homosexual, he has been suspected of a latent and sublimated bisexuality in the paternal “friendships” which he cultivated with the handsome young men with whom he surrounded himself. At the same time, the homosexual theme flourishes in his work, in either an open or a veiled fashion, even if Balzac was always considered the author who specialized in woman and marriage.

In Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes (1844–46) Balzac describes the world of the tantes (“queens”) in prison, where the prisoners, of the same sex but of different ages, are crowded together under conditions that favor homosexuality. Vautrin is the symbol of imprisoned sexuality, incarcerated because he took the blame for the crime of another, “a very handsome young man whom he greatly loved.” The novelist’s depiction of prison homosexuality goes beyond any mere documentary treatment; it does not hide the sexual dimension of prison friendships, but shows them as a form of love with values all their own. The homosexual element is present everywhere in the prison, yet unutterable and unmentionable. Vautrin’s secret is that he does not love women, but when and how does he love men? He does so only in the rents of the fabric of the narrative, because the technique of the novelist lies exactly in not speaking openly, but letting the reader know indirectly the erotic background of the events of his story. The physical union of Vautrin with Lucien he presents with stylistic subtlety as a predestined coupling of two halves of one being, as submission to a law of nature. The homosexual aspect of the discourse must always be masked, must hide behind a euphemism, a tantalizing ambiguity that nevertheless tells all to the knowing reader.

The pact struck between Vautrin and Lucien is a Faustian one. Vautrin dreams of owning a plantation in the American South where on a hundred thousand acres he can have absolute power over his slaves—including their bodies. Balzac refers explicitly to examples of the pederasty of antiquity as a creative, civilization-building force by analogy with the Promethean influence of Vautrin upon his beloved Lucien. Vautrin is almost diabolical as a figure of exuberant masculinity, while Lucien embodies the gentleness and meekness of the feminine. The unconscious dimension of their relationship Balzac underlines with magnificent symbolism. He characterizes Vautrin as a monster, “but attached by love to humanity.” Homosexual love is not relegated to
the margin of society, as in the dark underworld of the prison, but expresses the fullness of affection with all its physical demands and its spiritual powers. Homosexuality is not the whole of Vautrin’s existence, but he is incomprehensible without it, it stylizes his will to power and invests it with its driving force.

There is also a political aspect to homosexuality in Balzac: in it he saw a defiance of the society that proscribed and marginalized it and a challenge to prevailing moral values. By virtue of living outside the French bourgeois society of his day, Vautrin gains insight into its hypocrisy and expresses his contempt for its sham values. He declares that in reality honesty is useless, money is everything, the sole moral principle is to maintain a façade of propriety, justice is corrupt. The poor are no better than the rich, and it has always been this way. In such an ethical context homosexuality is the practice of those who have gauged society and perceived its hollowness, liberating themselves from the social contract, while the world of heterosexuality is a world of false anti-values maintained by shameful and covert means. The affirmation of the erotic is the negation of the legitimacy of the respectable and so-called honorable.

In 1835 Balzac published his extravagantly plotted *La fille aux yeux d’or*, which concerns a beautiful young woman kept in seclusion by a lesbian who, after an absence, discovers her ward’s infidelity with a man and kills her. Again, the writer sought to use the theme to illustrate the corruption of contemporary society, but was less successful in empathizing with his characters.

Elsewhere in his work, in *Séraphita* (1834), Balzac took up the theme of the androgyne under the influence of Emanuel Swedenborg. He asserted that he had begun to write the story at the age of nineteen and that he had long “dreamed of the being with two natures.” The underlying myth is that all the angels were once human beings who earned their elevation to this celestial dignity. The personage after whom the story is named appears to the main characters, Wilfrid and Minna, as Séraphita and Séraphitus respectively. But while Minna is an insignificant and dreamy romantic heroine, Wilfrid is a mature hero with a stormy past and aspirations for a glorious future, who nevertheless is ready to sacrifice all his ambitions to obtain Séraphita “who should be a divine woman to possess.” Balzac represents both as in love with one and the same person, a chosen being endowed with a mysterious power. The androgyne does not symbolize bisexuality, but nature in its wholeness, in its original purity, “the diverse parts of the Infinite forming a living melody.” Having revealed to the hero and heroine an ideal love, Séraphitus–Séraphita departs for a heaven free of the earthly misery that human beings must endure.

Recently, the story “Sarrasine” (1830) has attracted scholarly attention, notably from the homosexual critic Roland Barthes. This short, but resonant narrative concerns the ambiguities of a family whose fortunes are founded on the achievements of a castrato.

Balzac confronted the mysteries of homosexuality and intersexuality in their forms both real and ideal, not just as a chronicler of the France of his time, but also as a visionary whose imagination relived myths of pagan antiquity.


_Warren Johansson_

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**BANG, HERMAN** (1857–1912)

Danish novelist and short story writer. Associated with the theatre for much of his life, Bang was also active as a journalist and critic in opposition to Georg
Brandes. He died during a tour of the United States.

Bang internalized a negative view of homosexuality from the pathological theories current in his youth. Fearful of blackmail and ridicule, he guarded his expressions of what meant most to him, even in letters, so that his inner life must be read between the lines. Declaring that people were not ready for the truth about homosexuality, he withheld his essay on the subject. This study, "Gedanken zum Sexualitätsproblem," deliberately written in a neutral and objective tone, was published posthumously in Germany in 1922. Nonetheless, Bang believed that his homosexuality was a gift, linked to his creativity as a writer and permitting him to see both the masculine and the feminine side of human nature.

His first novel, Haablose Slaegter (1880; Generations without Hope) focuses on the decadent scion of an ancient family, who is evidently homosexual. His novella Mikael (1904) presents a much more joyous picture of life and love, including special friendships in artistic circles. In 1916 the Swedish director Mauritz Stiller made Mikael into a film under the title The Wings; this work is regarded by some as the first gay motion picture. Although Bang today enjoys the status of a major writer in his own country, understanding of his work has until recently been hampered by imposition of Freudian schemas, which ignore the complexities of his self-understanding.


BANNEKER, BENJAMIN (1731–1806)

American mathematician and astronomer. The son of free blacks who were landowners in Baltimore County in tidewater Maryland, he received a brief education at a one-room country school that ended when he was old enough to work full-time with his father on the farm, but like most intellectuals of the colonial period he continued to learn through private reading for the rest of his life. By his method of self-instruction he emerged a competent mathematician and amateur astronomer. Proficient enough to calculate an almanac, he devised one for the year 1791 but was unable to see it through to press. However, Banneker's Almanack for the years 1792 through 1797 was published in a number of editions. It reflected a new trend in that its contents were devoted to national events and local causes; also by popularizing the theme of anti-slavery, it contributed substantially to the abolitionist cause. Banneker assisted Major Andrew Ellicott during the preliminary survey of the ten-mile square and in establishing lines for some of the major points in the future capital of Washington. In his time he was the emblematic figure of black achievement in the sciences, and as such received considerable attention from the abolitionist societies.

Banneker remained a bachelor all his life, and no evidence can be found for any romantic attachment or for illegitimate offspring. He led a casual, rather solitary existence, and since his father died when Benjamin was twenty-eight, he had to assume full responsibility for his mother and the farm. His leisure time was given by preference to his studies. A trace of self-revelation may have escaped in a short essay in his first published almanac which declared that poverty, disease, and violence inflict less suffering than the "pungent stings ... which guilty passions dart into the heart." Benjamin Banneker deserves to be remembered as a homosexual who played a significant role in the intellectual life of the young American Republic.


Warren Johansson

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**BANQUETS**

See Symposia.

**BARNES, DJUNA**

(1892–1981)

American novelist, playwright, and journalist. She was born in Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY, the daughter of a cultivated Englishwoman and an unsuccessful artist. In her twenties she worked in New York City as a journalist and illustrator. With her tall, dashing figure, she was able to obtain colorful interviews that sold to major papers, her earnings contributing to the support of her impecunious family. The bohemian life of Greenwich Village was then at its height, and Barnes had entree into the salon of Mabel Dodge, the "den mother" of the avant-garde. She also became friends with the homosexual artist Marsden Hartley; throughout her life, Barnes was to have important gay-male friends.

In New York's milieu of feminist assertion her literary horizons widened, and at the end of World War I she went to Paris, where she became friends with James Joyce. Supporting herself with her journalism, she blended with the lesbian and homosexual life of what later came to be called the "Lost Generation" in the French capital. With Thelma Wood, a sculptress from Missouri, Barnes began a stormy affair that lasted until 1931. She also published her first serious work, a collection of poems, stories, plays, and drawings, entitled simply A Book, in 1923. Five years later her Ryder, a bawdy retelling of the history of the Barnes family, appeared briefly on the bestseller lists, the only approach to popularity she was to enjoy in her lifetime. Published anonymously, her lesbian Ladies Almanack (1928) was hawked on the streets of Paris by Barnes and others.

By the early thirties her drinking and nervous breakdowns had become serious, and she sought refuge first in Tangiers and then at the home of Peggy Guggenheim in England. The security that she finally found under Guggenheim's protection enabled Barnes to complete her masterpiece, Nightwood, which was published with an introduction by T.S. Eliot in London in 1936. This novel, which focuses around the bizarre figure of the homosexual Dr. O'Connor, stands in a class of its own: an incomparable evocation of one writer's view of Paris and Berlin during the interwar years.

Barely escaping from Paris at the start of World War II, Barnes returned to New York, where she found a tiny apartment in Patchin Place in Greenwich Village. Here she was to live in increasing seclusion for forty years, supported mainly by a tiny allowance from Guggenheim. Although she wrote less and less, Barnes did manage to publish a second major work, the bitter play Antiphon, in 1958. In her last years a few determined lesbian activists and scholars managed to penetrate her isolation, while the sale of her papers to the University of Maryland gave her a financial security that had long eluded her.

A link between the avant-garde of Paris and New York, as well as the worlds of male and female homosexuality, Barnes had a literary voice all her own that will guarantee her a place in the annals of twentieth-century sensibility.


Evelyn Cettone

**BARNEY, NATALIE CLIFFORD**

(1876–1972)

American writer and patron of the arts. Born into a wealthy family of Dayton, Ohio, Barney had been to Europe several times, before she settled in Paris in 1902 at the height of the belle époque. Living a public life, she made her home in the Rue Jacob a prominent literary salon for over a half a century. While this salon attracted many famous men of letters, it was also outstanding as a focus for the
international lesbian colony in Paris. With her affluence, self-assurance, and accomplishments as a writer, Barney provided a role model for many women, then and now. Always candid about her lesbianism, she nonetheless elicited the devotion of such figures as Remy de Gourmont, Gabrielle D'Annunzio, Bernard Berenson, and Ezra Pound.

Her first book, *Quelques portraits-sonnets de femmes*, was published in Paris in 1900. Like most of her works it was written in classic French. Influenced by Greek literature, Barney was not stylistically an experimental writer. After her affair with the celebrated courtesan Liane de Pougy, Barney established a literary liaison with the doomed Anglo-French writer of decadent themes, Renée Vivien (Pauline Tarn), who died in 1909, despite Barney’s ministrations. Her most long-lasting relationship, amounting to a marriage, was with the American painter, Romaine Brooks.

Influenced by her friend Pound, Barney’s political opinions became more conservative in the 1930s. Although she was partly of Jewish descent, she chose to spend World War II in Italy, where she expressed her admiration for Mussolini. Her outspoken memoir of this period has not been published. Her luck held up, however, and she was able to resettle in her home in Paris without incident.


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**BARNFIELD, RICHARD**  
(1574–1627)

English poet. Born in Norbury, England, Barnfield graduated from Oxford in 1592. Among his friends were the Elizabethan poets Thomas Watson, Michael Drayton, Francis Meres, and possibly Shakespeare. He published his first volume of poetry in 1594, *The Affectionate Shepherd*, a sonnet sequence based on Virgil’s second eclogue and using as main characters an older man in love with a younger. The volume was dedicated to Penelope Rich who was Sir Philip Sidney’s “Stella” and eventually the mistress of Charles Blount, a minor court figure. Hudson reads the Ganymede character in Barnfield’s poems as Blount, but Morris attacks the suggestion. No further attempts have been made to identify historical figures behind *The Affectionate Shepherd*.

The unmistakably homosexual theme in *The Affectionate Shepherd* poems may have prompted Barnfield to claim in the preface to his next volume (Cynthia, 1595) that readers had misinterpreted his first poems, but the disclaimer is ambiguous and suggests that Barnfield was in trouble for political reasons, not for the sexual love portrayed in his poems. Barnfield’s sonnets are not graphically sexual and may best be described as “homoerotic,” but they treat more obviously of an emotional infatuation between an older man and a younger than do the sonnets of Barnfield’s contemporary William Shakespeare. Of his “Poems in divers Humours” (1598), two were reprinted in the 1599 *Passionate Pilgrim* and were attributed to Shakespeare until the twentieth century. Barnfield retired from public notice soon after his last book and possibly lived as a gentleman farmer.


*George Klawitter*
Bars

In contemporary American English, a bar is a premises licensed to sell liquor by the glass to the public. In addition food may be served and entertainment offered. From ca. 1935 to 1970 the "gay bar" was the premier institution of the male homosexual community. There were no homosexual enclaves without at least one. Unlike other commercial establishments, crossing the threshold of a gay bar brought the patron immediately from neutral or hostile territory into "gay space," where only the rules of one's own community applied. The pivotal role of the bars was affirmed by the dubious accolade of police raids and shakedowns. Their positive functions notwithstanding, the popularity of the bars is linked to the high rates of alcoholism among gay men and lesbians.

Several reasons for the pivotal role of the bars in the male homosexual community may be noted. There is the well-known effect of alcohol in reducing inhibitions, which tend to rise to a higher threshold in those of deviant sexuality than in others. Also, in the Anglo-Saxon world drinking itself carries overtones of taboo, reinforced by recurrent temperance campaigns, which achieved a complete though ephemeral victory in the United States Prohibition (1920–33). Finally, bars have traditionally played a role in male culture as a whole.

It has been said that the bar itself is an institution limited to the English-speaking world. But if we alter the terms of the inquiry slightly to include taverns and cabarets, we can see that this is not so. Of course, public houses where liquor is served will vary in atmosphere and amenities according to national traditions, regulations, and customs.

Historical Perspectives. The first memorable association of male group drinking with homosexuality takes us back to Plato's dialogue, _The Symposium_, though this event, like other _symposia_, took place (presumably) in rented premises and only invited guests were present. The origins of the word tavern lead back to Roman shops, including wine shops, with open counters on the street. A more immediate source is the taphouse of late medieval Europe, where one could not only purchase drink but linger in the company of others. That patrons often became rowdy and licentious is shown by the common charge that such places were the "Devil's school." At the beginning of the sixteenth century Niccolò Machiavelli seems to have frequented a homosexual (or mixed) tavern in Florence. At the end of the century the English dramatist Christopher Marlowe presented his subversive views in a place which must have tolerated homosexual custom, if not actually soliciting it. In these two cases it is difficult to be certain about the actual character of the places; they belong to the general realm of the criminal underworld. In the early eighteenth century the nature of the London molly houses becomes very clear: they were private places of homosexual entertainment and assignation. After their unmasking, however, the various vigilance societies seem to have prevented a recurrence. In the middle of the nineteenth century the curtain lifts again, with the continental Bohemian cafés, with their mixed clientele of artists, would-be artists, prostitutes, and sexual nonconformists.

Toward the Present. Scholars can first monitor an ecology of gay bars as such in Berlin after 1900, where a host of them, operating more or less openly, was surveyed by Magnus Hirschfeld. In the 1920s lesbian bars and cabarets flourished in Germany, alongside the male ones. At this time American gay bars appeared, but as part of the speakeasy underworld, because of Prohibition. Their atmosphere has been recorded in such period novels as Lew Levinson's _Butterfly Man_ (1934), Blair Niles's _Strange Brother_ (1931), and Robert Scully's _A Scarlet Pansy_ (1933).

Once Prohibition was ended, the states established boards to control li-
cencing, and these could be used to harass operators of gay bars. Places that succeeded in staying open had to maintain a low profile, being located oftentimes in unfrequented warehouse areas and with little in the way of a sign. More elegant establishments were sometimes found in the interior of hotels. Thus it was necessary to know someone to discover the “special” bars. Many patrons were regulars, attending night after night, and an informal pecking order grew up among them. Needless to say, the loyalty of the regulars was assiduously cultivated by the owners. Some patrons would seek advice from bartenders, though this habit was less common than in straight bars because the gay bartenders, chosen for their looks, tended to function as sex objects enveloped in an atmosphere of narcissistic aloofness. Partly for protective camouflage, straight couples out for a “different” evening were welcomed. Some male bars had one or more regular heterosexual women patrons, much treasured counselors who served as unofficial “den mothers.” In small localities bars would cater to both men and women, but in large places they could be quite specialized, some for a younger, others (the “wrinkle bars”) for an older crowd, some admitting only an elegant clientele, others hosting “rough trade.” As a general rule, the bigger the city, the more specialized were the types of bars found there. Large cities also displayed a contrast between cozy neighborhood bars, with a social emphasis, and high-intensity places attracting a crowd from a broad radius.

Prices were high to take care of bribes and payoffs that were regularly required. Hitches in this system led to raids, as a result of which the patrons would be carted off to the police station and their identities taken—which could be disastrous for some. Hence an atmosphere of clandestinity and danger was always present, heightening the attraction for some patrons. The more ambitious places provided live entertainment, including semiprofessional performances by drag queens. The chief functions remained socialization and cruising, both of which were promoted by milling patterns. While it was the aim of patrons in search of a quick pickup to have one drink, find a partner, and go home, the bar owner’s interest dictated causing him to linger, drinking more and more. Some of this “stay a while” effect was achieved through positive attractions, such as a pool table, but often loud music inhibited conversation, while floor layout, dim lighting, and decor discouraged speed. In this respect the gay bar stood at the opposite pole from the fast-food outlet, where lights were bright and everything was done to encourage quick eating and departure. Some bar owners maximized patronage by having one clientele, usually heterosexual, during the day, and another, the gay crowd, at night.

Gay Liberation. Much of this atmosphere disappeared in the 1970s, when bars became more open and friendly. These changes were made possible by the heightened activity of the gay liberation movement in the phase which began, significantly enough, with the 1969 raid on New York City’s Stonewall Inn and the ensuing riot. Bar owners were quick to take advantage of the increased commercial possibilities, and a few created huge discos noted for their elaborate sound systems. In addition to their legal sales of liquor, these places saw considerable consumption and trading of drugs by patrons. Some of the more ordinary bars took on a greater civic responsibility helping to distribute movement literature and newspapers, and permitting their premises to be used for charity dances in support of AIDS victims and other causes. Unlike the pre-1970s bars where sexual activity was strictly forbidden, some bars had “back rooms” where a full range of sexual acts was consummated in the dark. In the era of AIDS, however, most of this orgiastic gratification ceased.

Comparative Perspectives. In Europe the gay bar was a characteristic of northern countries, especially Germany
and Scandinavia. Somewhat different was the homosexual pub in Britain, which tended to retain the homey comforts of the national tradition. The tourist trade of the 1960s helped to promote the spread of the gay bar to southern Europe, while Japan continued to evolve its own distinctive variation, which had existed for a number of decades.

Lesbian bars have always been relatively few. This paucity is only partly attributable to the fact that lesbians have less spending money. Historically, the virtual monopoly of homosexual bar culture by men reflects the fact that women were at one time not welcome in most bars in general, or had to be accommodated in special rooms adjacent to the rough-and-tumble of the bar itself. Although feminist pressure has removed the rules that excluded women, the custom of social drinking retains vestiges of male culture in our society.


Wayne R. Dynes

BARThES, ROLAND (1915–1980)

French literary critic and social commentator, Barthes introduced into the discussion of literature an original interpretation of semiotics based on the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. His work was associated with the Structuralist trend as represented by Claude Lévi-Strauss, Julia Kristeva, Tzvetan Todorov, and others. Attacked by the academic establishment for subjectivism, he formulated a concept of criticism as a creative process on an equal plane with fiction and poetry. Even those favorable to his work conceded that this could amount to a “sensuous manhandling” of the text. The turning point in his criticism is probably the tour de force S/Z (Paris, 1970), analyzing Balzac’s novella about an aging castrato, Sarrasine. Here Barthes turns away from the linear, goal-oriented procedures of traditional criticism in favor of a new mode that is dispersed, deliberately marginal, and “masturbatory.” In literature, he emphasized the factor of jouissance, a word which means both “bliss” and “sexual ejaculation.” Whether these procedures constitute models for a new feminist/gay critical practice that will erode the power of patriarchy, as some of his admirers have asserted, remains unclear.

Using the concept of dominant ideology of Marxist provenance, Barthes also wrote perceptive analyses of advertising and fashion. Apart from a study of contemporary Japan (L’Empire des signes, Paris, 1970), he addressed French literature and culture almost exclusively. Nonetheless, he won many adherents in the English-speaking world, in large measure because his works convey an indomitable verve and infectious relish of the subjects he discussed. These qualities, rather than any finished system, account for his continuing influence.

Barthes, who never married, was actively homosexual during most of his life. Although his books are often personal, in his writing he excluded this major aspect of his experience, even when writing about love. Because of the attacks launched against him for his critical innovations, he was apparently reluctant to give his enemies an additional stick with which to beat him. Barthes’ posthumously published Incidents (Paris, 1987) does contain some revealing diary entries. The first group stems from visits he made, evidently in part for sexual purposes, to North Africa in 1968–69. The second group of entries records restless evenings in Paris in the autumn of 1979 just before his death. These jottings reveal that, despite his great fame, he frequently experienced rejection and loneliness. Whatever his personal sorrows, Barthes’ books remain
to attest a remarkable human being whose activity coincided with an ebullient phase of Western culture.


Wayne R. Dynes

BATHHOUSES

As a result of the general expansion and commercialization of male homosexual life after World War II, the institution of the gay bathhouse became a fixture of major cities of Europe and North America. In these establishments only a small area of the premises is devoted to immersion tubs and sauna rooms; the bulk of the floor space consists of cubicles which are used for resting and for consensual sexual encounters. Other rooms are given over to nonsexual entertainment (television, billiards, music).

Historical Perspectives. Today’s gay bathhouses stem ultimately from a cultural tradition that can be traced back over two millennia. In every society in which public baths flourished, the institution was shaped not only by its specific characteristics, but also by the values and norms of the larger community.

In ancient Greece the baths formed part of the highly developed practice of physical culture and athletics. Archeologists have uncovered bath buildings adjoining the palaestras or training grounds of athletes. By attaching the bath to the athletic (and to some extent military) function of physical fitness, the Greeks broke with the sacral and ritual tradition of Near Eastern iubritution—the religious bath—which nonetheless has a successor in the continuing Jewish custom of the mikva or ritual bath.

The Romans attached far more importance to public baths than did the Greeks, creating imposing structures known as thermae for the purpose throughout their empire. Originating under the Roman republic, the bath as an institution reached its height when Rome had extended its dominion throughout the Mediterranean. Amounting almost to secular cathedrals, the baths served a variety of individual and social requirements. Thermae fulfilled a need for personal cleanliness in an era when private baths were all but unknown. In addition to care of the skin, they fostered physical culture in the broader sense through exercise and massage facilities. Baths whose waters had a high sulfur content served medicinal purposes, anticipating modern spas. Then the baths were indoor arcades, permitting strolling patrons to meet friends and business associates, exchanging pleasantries and information. Some of the more imposing Roman baths embraced cultural and educational functions by offering public lectures and making libraries available to clients. Finally, Roman baths offered a convenient gathering place for those in quest of sexual release. Initially, such contacts were necessarily homosexual, since only men were admitted to the baths. Later, under the Roman Empire, some baths were open to women, for the most part female attendants who also served as prostitutes. Thus the Roman baths offered a kaleidoscopic variety of disparate, yet related functions.

As part of its inheritance from the Roman empire, the civilization of Islam continued the custom of offering bath facilities for health and pleasure, alongside the ritual baths required by Koranic law. Medieval Islamic sources indicate that baths of the former class were used not only for health reasons, but for socialization and homosexual contacts. Significantly, modern bathhouses of Europe and America have been termed “Turkish Baths,” and sometimes boast tiled decor recalling this Muslim institution.

Strongly discouraged by Christian moralism in the early Middle Ages, public baths nonetheless reappeared in medieval cities as an essential aspect of sanitation, beginning in the twelfth cen-
tury. These locales were notoriously places of sexual dalliance. In the fourteenth century the English poets Chaucer and Langland attest the use of the word "stews" as meaning both a bathhouse and a place of prostitution, a notion that recurs somewhat later in the term "bagnio" derived from Italian bagno. It was in fact the outbreak of syphilis in Europe after 1493 that caused the decline of the medieval baths as loci of heterosexual intimacy.

In early modern Europe baths became less general in character and more institutions appealing to special interests. There is information on baths frequented by a homosexual clientele during the French Second Empire (1852–70) and the German Empire (1871–1918). While the details of the development require further elucidation, it was this specialized European homosexual bathhouse that was transferred in the late nineteenth century to North American cities. An informant describing the United States in the early years of the present century mentions baths patronized by homosexuals in New York City, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and "a small city in Ohio." Contemporaneously, they are also documented in San Francisco, while in southern California outdoor bathing facilities frequented by homosexuals gained favor. During this period security was uncertain and police raids were always a possibility. Small wonder then that many patrons preferred to take their tricks home rather than risk detection—and possible blackmail—in the bathhouse.

Toward the Present. With the more open American society after World War II these conditions began to change. Ethnographic studies of the bathhouses in the 1970s revealed a number of salient features. Mindful of the older history of raids and continuing general social disapproval, patrons continued to rate security and protection as important. The establishments kept a low profile by having obscure entrances, sometimes being located on the upper floors of nondescript office buildings—or by being situated in warehouse districts with little traffic at night. Admission was controled by a booth where, after payment the client could deposit valuables in a small lockbox. He would then proceed to a cubicle or locker, exchanging his clothing for a towel, the only garment usually worn. The layout of a successful bathhouse would facilitate encounters so that the desirable sexual contacts could be made through the characteristic milling activity in the often labyrinthine halls. Some patrons preferred to remain mostly in their rooms with the door open, indicating by body position the type of activity required. Should a potential partner regarded as undesirable enter, he would usually be gently rebuffed, as with the words "I'm just resting." One of the more attractive features of the baths was the mildness of turnouts; the rejected person, for his part, knew that other potential partners were available.

Many bathhouses possessed "orgy rooms" for group activity, though these are now mainly a thing of the past. Physically, the bathhouse should assure a certain level of comfort and cleanliness, possibly boasting a snack bar, gymnasium, and television room. However, older, deteriorating establishments were able to conceal their dilapidation by dim lighting. In a very few cases, as in the old Continental Baths of New York City, live entertainment was provided. In any event, recorded music relaying the latest hits—and sometimes pieces meant solely for a gay audience—enhanced the sexual atmosphere throughout the premises. Many patrons were repeat visitors, basking in a known, shared reality. In an era of soaring hotel prices, some tourists would use bathhouses for cheap overnight accommodation. Usually, however, an extra fee was charged for a stay of over eight hours. It was not common to find male prostitutes (hustlers) there plying their trade—few would be willing to pay for what they could get for free—but hustlers would sometimes be brought in by a client they had met outside
in order to use a room. Despite strong disapproval on the part of the management, some surreptitious drug dealing took place among patrons; consumption of mind-altering drugs, often taken just before arriving, was certainly common. As a rule, alcohol was not served, but could be brought in. Stereotypically, sexual encounters in the baths were completely anonymous; however, a few clients report having begun love affairs or friendships as a result of meetings there. A curious dynamic is that during off-hours, when few people were present, contacts could generally be made quickly, while when the building was crowded patrons could become quite choosy, in hopes that the continuing intake would produce more desirable individuals. Some patrons would have ten or more contacts, but the majority seem to have restricted themselves to two or three, or even one.

In the 1980s, with the unfolding of the AIDS crisis in the United States, the bathhouses came under attack because the promiscuous sexual encounters that took place there were held to promote the spread of the disease. Although this charge was denied, and many bathhouses began to distribute safe sex information and condoms as a positive contribution, it was clear that their days of glory were over. Many bathhouses in smaller localities were forced to close for lack of business. The owners of some establishments tried to change them into health clubs, but with mixed success. In San Francisco, as a result of pressure from public officials, the last bathhouse closed its doors in 1987. In Europe, however, bathhouses—usually termed saunas there—continue to flourish, and new ones even open from time to time.

BEACH, SYLVIA (NANCY) (1887–1962)

American expatriate bookseller, publisher, and intellectual. The daughter of a Presbyterian minister in Princeton, NJ, Beach settled in France during World War I. In 1919 she established Shakespeare and Company, an English-language bookstore and lending library in Paris that was to become one of the chief gathering places of the international avant-garde. Beach’s companion, Adrienne Monnier, whose own bookshop was located only a short distance away, played a similar role in French letters. A kind of arbiter and confidant of the whole “Lost Generation,” Beach was associated with such figures as Djuna Barnes, Natalie Barney, Bryher [Winifred Ellerman], Ernest Hemingway, Robert McAlmon, Ezra Pound, and Gertrude Stein. Her greatest accomplishment was her two decades as publisher for her close friend, the mercurial James Joyce.

A member of the influential lesbian colony in Paris in the years between the wars, Beach nonetheless led a discrete, almost closeted life, supported by her “marriage” with Monnier. Electing to stay on during the German occupation of Paris, where she saved her books from confiscation, she emerged triumphant after the war as a senior figure in the world of letters.

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BEACHES

Most North American [and many European] cities located near water have a gay [male] beach. If geography permits, it is typically more remote or difficult to reach than the beach serving heterosexuals. Only those “in the know” will go the extra distance, or negotiate the natural barriers, to get there.

Where there are no natural barriers, one portion of a large public beach may become known among homosexuals as

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Joseph Styles,

Wayne R. Dynes
gay territory. Original proximity to a tea-
room [public toilet frequented for sexual
purposes] may generate a tradition that a
section of beach is gay, and the tradition
can survive long after the tea room is gone.
In any event, the sight of hundreds of men,
and no women or children, across a stretch
of beach, readily leads most heterosexuals,
especially with families, to stay clear.
Those who unwittingly or stubbornly
invade may be offended or subjected to
“grossing out.” This behavior (one form of
camp among gays) is a deliberate enact-
ment of a stereotype attributed to homo-
sexuals that embarrasses the heterosexuals
into moving.

A gay beach may be more capable
of defense against intruding or threatening
heterosexuals than other territories such
as a park or main cruising street. Teen-
agers intent on harassment at a crowded
gay beach are likely to find themselves
surrounded by a silent but menacing group
of gay men. This added element of safety,
even if only tacitly understood, often
encourages gay men and lesbians to more
outrageous behavior for their own enter-
tainment on a gay beach than in other
public spaces. This in turn helps establish
the beach in heterosexual minds as a gay
place.

Gay beaches are favorite places
for cruising for several reasons: a large
number of potential partners is concen-
trated in a small area, and they are likely to
be above average in attractiveness, since
the tanned and well-built are readier to
show the body; there are readily manufac-
tured excuses for introducing oneself to
strangers [just let the frisbee fly too far];
what you see is almost what you get, since
modern beach costumes leave little for the
imagination; and in many cases, the gay
beach is isolated by bush or rock outcropp-
ings which serve as cover for impersonal
sex.

Holiday weekends are obviously
prime time, but depending on the prevail-
ing gay occupations in the city, certain
weekdays [e.g., Mondays for waiters and
bartenders, Wednesday for hair stylists]
may find the gay beach more occupied
than other beaches. Cruising is not neces-
sarily limited to the beach; if access is by
public transport or ferry, this may also
offer numerous opportunities. Offshore,
gay men with sailboats or yachts may
anchor, rowing to shore to offer attractive
strangers a tour in their craft.

Social skills are as important as
an attractive body in cruising a beach.
Some men set up alone on a blanket, sig-
alling their possible availability, while
others prefer to gather in groups, hoping
that mutual friends will facilitate intro-
ductions. In either case, it is common to
periodically go for a stroll along the beach,
winding one’s way through the complex of
towels and blankets, exchanging smiles or
glances. The slimmest acquaintance or
familiarity of faces may be used to strike
up conversation (which may actually be
directed not to the person conversed with,
but to a total stranger on the next blanket).

Social visiting between blanket-
based groups, whether by couples or singles,
is easy and common. A picnic lunch in-
creases socializing and lowers inhibitions
against introducing oneself to strangers
(“Are you hungry? There’s lots here.”).
Ironically, the greater exposure of flesh in
a public place often makes encounters
more conversational, and less limited to
an agenda of impersonal sex, than a dark
park or gay baths.

Lesbians appear less likely to
establish a beach and very few cities have
a lesbian beach. The reasons undoubtedly
include less cruising behavior in general
among lesbians, less traditional social
power [as women] to establish and hold
territories, and lesbian preference for a
proper social introduction and some prior
acquaintanceship before intimate encoun-
ter. When a lesbian community develops
beach-going social life, lesbians may es-
tablish some section of the existing gay
male beach as their own. Covert gay men,
or lesbians, may use a nearby heterosexual
section of beach, but wander through the
gay beach on apparent errands (trips to the washroom, water fountain, and so on).

Police—mounted on horse, or more recently in all-terrain vehicles—often attempt to discourage or harass gay beachers, or to surprise or entrap those using “the bushes.” Heterosexual resentment of gay male impersonal sex opportunities may lead to political decisions to eliminate gay beaches (e.g., by constructing a promenade, or supervised swimming pool). But an experienced gay man who knows how to search is likely to discover some portion of beach frequented by gays, even in foreign lands.

See also Geography, Social; Resorts; Tourism.


John Alan Lee

BEAT GENERATION

The origins of this trend in American culture can be traced to the friendship of three key figures in New York City at the beginning of the 1940s, Allen Ginsberg (1926– ) and Jack Kerouac (1922–1969) met as students at Columbia University, where both were working at becoming writers. In 1944 Ginsberg encountered the somewhat older William Burroughs (1914– ), who was not connected with the University, but whose acquaintance with avant-garde literature supplied an essential intellectual complement to college study. Both Ginsberg and Burroughs were homosexual; Kerouac bisexual. At first the ideas and accomplishments of the three were known only to a small circle. But toward the end of the 1950s, as their works began to be published and widely read, large numbers of young people, “beatniks” and “hippies,” took up elements of their lifestyle.

The beat writers and their friends were only sporadically resident in San Francisco, but the media played up this connection, especially during the “flower-child” era in the mid-1960s. This reputation is not without relation to the Bay City’s emerging status as a gay capital. To be sure the beat writers placed little stress on developing a fixed abode—their pads were never photographed for House Beautiful. Seminomadic, they traveled extensively not only in the United States, but in Latin America, Europe, North Africa, and Asia. Significantly, one of the most widely read beat texts was Jack Kerouac’s novel On the Road (1957).

The word beat was sometimes traced to “beatific,” and sometimes to “beat out” and similar expressions, suggesting a pleasant exhaustion that derives from intensity of experience. Its appeal also reflects the beat and improvisation of jazz music, one of the principal influences on the trend. Some beat poets tried to match their writings with jazz in barroom recitals, prefiguring the more effective melding of words and music in folk and rock. The ideal of spontaneity was one of the essential elements of the beat aesthetic. These writers sought to capture the immediacy of speech and lived experience, which were, if possible, to be transcribed directly as they occurred. This and related ideals reflect a new version of American folk pragmatism, preferring life to theory, immediacy to reflection, and feeling to reason. Contrary to what one might expect, however, the beat generation was not anti-intellectual, but chose to seek new sources of inspiration in neglected aspects of the European avant-garde and in Eastern thought and religion.

In the view of many, the archetypal figure of the group is William Burroughs. Born into a wealthy business family in St. Louis, Burroughs drifted from one situation to another during his twenties and thirties; only after meeting the younger writers did he find his own voice. First published in Paris in 1959, his novel Naked Lunch became available in the United States only after a series of landmark obscenity decisions. With its phantasmagoric and sometimes sexually explicit sub-
BEAT GENERATION

ject matter, together with its quasi-surrealist techniques of narrative and syntactic disjunction, this novel presented a striking new vision. This novel was followed by The Soft Machine and The Ticket That Exploded to form a trilogy. Nova Express (1964) makes extensive use of the "cut-up" techniques, which Burroughs had developed with his friend Brion Gysin.

A keen observer of contemporary reality in several countries, Burroughs has sought to present a kind of "world upside down" in order to sharpen the reader's consciousness. One of his major themes has been his anarchist-based protest against what he sees as increasingly repressive social control through such institutions as medicine and the police. Involved with drugs for some years, he managed to kick the habit, but there is no doubt that such experiences shaped his viewpoint. His works have been compared to pop art in painting and science fiction in literature. Sometimes taxed for misogyny, his work tends to be a masculine one, sometimes exploiting fantasies of regression to a hedonistic world of juvenile freedom. Burroughs's hedonism is acerbic and ironic, and his mixture of qualities yields a distorting mirror of reality which some have found, because perhaps of the many contradictions of later twentieth-century civilization itself, to be a compelling representation.


Wayne R. Dynes

BEATS AND HIPPIES

This social trend in mid-twentieth-century American life was constituted by groups of alienated youths and younger adults, recognizable by their counterculture enthusiasms and defiance of then accepted norms of dress, deportment, and relation to the work ethic. Beat is the older term and it came into use to designate a self-marginalized social group of the late 1950s and early 60s that was influenced by existentialism and especially by the writers of the Beat Generation. The journalistic word "beatnik" is a pseudo-Slavic coinage of a type popular in the 1960s, the core element deriving from "beat" (generation), the suffix -nik being the formative of the noun of agent in Slavic languages. The term "hippie" was originally a slightly pejorative diminutive of the beat "hipster," which in turn seems to derive from 1940s jivetalk adjective "hep," meaning "with it, in step with current fashions." The original hippies were a younger group with more spending money and more flamboyant dress. Their music was rock instead of the jazz of the beats. Despite differences that seemed important at the time, beats and hippies are probably best regarded as successive phases of a single phenomenon.

Although the media, which incessantly sensationalized the beats and hippies, did a great deal to foster recruitment, the phenomenon has older roots, stemming not only from its immediate prefiguration in the small circle of beat writers and their friends, but also from the established bohemian lifestyle of Western Europe and North America. Bohemianism is typically the product of the confluence of outcast groups in inner cities. Yet beats and hippies, as part of the whole Counterculture trend, had also a rural contingent, manifested in the establishment of farms run communally. Here a striking forerunner is the English utopian socialist Edward Carpenter (1844–1929), a bearded, sandal-wearing man who lived with his male lover and other associates working a market garden and practicing various arts and crafts. Significantly, Carpenter, who had been almost forgotten, was revived during this period by homosexuals attracted to

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hippie ideals. These roots notwithstanding, there was much that was distinctively American about the phenomenon, and to the degree that it spread to Western Europe and Japan it was identifiable as part of the general wave of Americanized popular culture.

Attracted by the prestige of the beat writers, many beats/hippies cultivated claims to be poets and philosophers. In reality, once the tendency became modish only a few of the beat recruits were certifiably creative in literature and the arts; these individuals were surrounded by masses of people attracted by the atmosphere of revolt and experiment, or just seeking temporary separation—a moratorium as it was then called—from the banalities of ordinary American life. At its height the phenomenon supported scores of underground newspapers, which were read avidly by curious outsiders as well. As part of their general defiance of convention these papers published explicit personal advertisements, including those of homosexuals. Many journalists got their start in these now defunct publications, carrying with them into the mainstream media significant traces of the values they had upheld in their former careers.

Seekers after “cosmic consciousness,” beats and hippies became known for their efforts at mind expansion through the use of drugs, alcohol, and sex. Group smoking of marijuana (“grass,” “pot”) became universal, a kind of secular sacrament which served as a collective bond. Grass was not only a bond of pleasure but one of danger, since stiff criminal penalties imposed by often-overzealous lawmen, led to numerous busts. Part of the appeal of rural communes lay in their suitability as sites for growing the plant. The clandestine comradeship engendered by the ever-present custom of smoking grass—the legally proscribed marijuana—created an outcast’s tie with homosexuals, themselves subject to legal sanctions for their deviation. Significantly, the street term for the Other, “straight,” could refer either to non-drug users or heterosexuals. In the 1960s psychedelic substances generated in the chemical laboratory, notably LSD, enjoyed considerable popularity. LSD trips were said to aid creativity, and a type of visual art, characterized by swirling lines and lurid colors and used mainly in underground newspapers and posters, was sometimes termed LSD art. Experimentation with drugs was also popular among the political radicals of the New Left, though they were inclined to criticize hippies for their apathy and lack of social conscience.

Mysticism exerted a potent influence among beats and hippies, and some steeped themselves in Asian religions, especially Buddhism, Taoism, and Sufism. This fascination was not new, inasmuch as ever since the foundation of Theosophy as an official movement in 1875, American and other Western societies had been permeated by Eastern religious elements. Impelled by a search for wisdom and cheap living conditions, many hippies and beatniks set out for prolonged sojourns in India, Nepal, and North Africa. Stay-at-homes professed their deep respect for American Indian culture.

Ignoring the deeper aspects of these exotic trends, Middle America continued to fix its disapproving gaze on the more superficial aspects of the beat–hippie lifestyle. Abundant facial hair and a preference for casual, “funky” clothing set these deviants off from the squeaky-clean look of mainstream America, which professed its disgust at “dirty hippies.” Most hippies were heterosexual, but their long hair exposed them to jibes of effeminacy. In this way they could experience something of the rejection that had always been the lot of homosexuals.

The lure of unconventional behavior and experience exercised a siren call on American youth, which was chafing restlessly under the reign of the “uptightness” of the Eisenhower years. Paradoxically, it was the new prosperity of postwar America that allowed young people to drop out and “do their own
thing” for a time, secure in the knowledge that—unlike members of racial minorities—they could safely rejoin the mainstream when the time came. For much smaller numbers of people, of course, historic Bohemias had offered similar attractions. Here, as in the decaying inner cities of America, a small core of creative individuals was surrounded by a large mass of outcasts and the urban poor. Even though their travels in beatdom might only be temporary, graduates of the experience developed a degree of lasting estrangement from, or at least skepticism toward, the conventional pieties of the American Establishment. Among the views that were now brought into question was the automatic pigeonholing of sexual minorities as “sick.”

In a larger sense, beat attitudes, with their stress on feeling instead of reason, are a manifestation of the perennial appeal of the Romantic reaction against Classical norms. The vagabond ideal of traveling lightly, with few possessions, has affinities with hobo life, with the gypsies, and ultimately with the “wandering scholars” of the Middle Ages. With its adoption of a variant of jive talk, largely derived from black urban speech, the movement has left a lasting impression on the English vernacular, as seen in such expressions as “cool,” “spaced out,” and “rip off.” As has been noted, the stress on experiment and social unconventionality created a natural affinity with homosexuality, which had been marginalized by Anglo-Saxon culture. Because of this perceived link—and the vogue of such seductive slogans of the polymorphous perverse as “If it feels good, do it” and “Copulate, don’t populate”—it is likely that many apprentice beatniks permitted themselves to delve into aspects of sexual variation that would otherwise have remained a sealed book to them.

In the 1970s hostile critics, and some who had outgrown their earlier enthusiasm, proclaimed with relief the demise of the hippie movement. Its themes of rejection of worldly goods and the more materialistic aspects of the American dream seemed to be reversed by the yuppie trend. Yet insofar as hippiedom was only the latest manifestation of a recurring strand in Western civilization, celebration of its obsequies is unwarranted.


Wayne R. Dynes

BEAUTY COMPETITIONS

As a rule the heterosexual norms of the modern world have affirmed a dichotomy of physical contests: women may compete on the basis of beauty and charm, while men match their brawn and muscle development. The reason for this separation seems to be a fear of the consequences that could ensue if men were publicly adulated as sex objects. Ordinary language, for example, permits women to be called “beautiful,” while men must be styled “handsome.” Recently these distinctions have broken down, but only partially.

Ancient Greece. Greek mythology shows a number of competitions among women, notably the Judgment of Paris, which was won by Aphrodite, the goddess of love. In the daily life of ancient Greece, however, competitions among males were more important. There were three categories of these. The first, the kallisteia, were connected with cults and the winner had to perform a ritual for a deity. While character and deportment were significant, these contests seem to have been decided on the basis of physical beauty. The eunidia focused on athletic prowess where strength was important. Finally, the euexia stood somewhat between the two, emphasizing balance of form rather than physical strength as such. These events must be understood against the backdrop of several lasting features of Greek civilization: its agonistic character, the famil-
iar display of the nude male body in the
gymnasia, and the positive evaluation
placed on the institution of pederasty in
which the beauty of the beloved youth is a
key component. The Romansseem to have
had no equivalent, and the rise of Chris-
tianity, which prized modesty and prudery,
put a stop to any public admiration of the
body, whether male or female.

Modern Times. The Renaissance
version of the medieval tournament seems
to have sometimes given handsome young
men a chance to impress powerful patrons,
and even to gain the favor of such an
exalted monarch as James I of England.
However, these events were exceptional.
In the nineteenth century the rise of ath-
letics and the desire to escape the constrict-
tions of Victorianism led to the physical
culture movement. Among the first super-
stars of body building was Eugene Sandow,
who seems to have been as notable for
good looks as for muscles. As the rituals of
this subculture developed, however, a
simultaneous parallel and contrast
emerged between physical culture events
for men and beauty contests for women. A
woman became, say, “Miss Norway” for
comeliness and charm, while “Mr. Nor-
way” was selected [or so it was main-
tained] exclusively on the basis of his
hypertrophied muscles.

In due course several cracks in
this edifice appeared. In the 1940s publish-
ers of muscle magazines discovered that
they could attract a homosexual clientele
by emphasizing more sexy, somewhat less
muscular models. In its own sphere the
homosexual subculture had drag contests
in which success in simulating the female
was the criterion. With the coming of open
gay liberation in the 1970s, “groovy guy”
contests were sponsored by bars and gay
organizations, but somehow the custom
never went beyond the bar milieu. Male
stripping (“burlesque”) became common
both for gay men and straight women
patrons—though the purveyors of the lat-
ter entertainment have tried to keep men
out, at least during certain hours, lest the
event “turn queer.” At the same time the
all-male domain of the muscle contest has
been invaded by women body builders;
how many of them are lesbians is un-
known. The ambiguity that continues to
envelop all these social phenomena seems
to be rooted in the late-modern utopian
longing for egalitarianism, with its charac-
teristic difficulty in accepting the fact that
human beings recognize a hierarchy of
brain and beauty among their fellows, and
in fact enjoy doing so.

Wayne R. Dyens

Beccaria, Cesare Bonesana, Marquis
(1738–1794)

Italian criminologist, economist,
and jurist. Though of retiring disposition,
he held several public offices in the Aus-
trian government in Milan, the highest
being counselor of state. Through the of-
cices which he occupied and the books
which he wrote he stimulated reforms
throughout Europe, but especially in the
sphere of penal law. His classic work on
this subject was a small treatise entitled
Dei delitti e delle pene [1764]. This book
aroused such interest that further editions,
translations, and commentaries appeared
within a short time throughout Europe,
and by the end of the eighteenth century
the number of editions had climbed to
sixty. Beccaria’s critique of the criminal
law and criminal procedure of the Old
Regime was inspired by opposition to
arbitrary rule, to cruelty and intolerance,
and by the belief that no man had the right
to take away the life of another human
being.

His treatment of the sodomy laws
is limited to a single paragraph in the
chapter entitled “Delitti di prova difficile”
[Crimes Difficult to Prove]; in some edi-
tions it is Chapter XXXI, in others XXXVI.
He introduces the subject as “Attic love,
so severely punished by the laws, and so
easily subjected to the tortures that over-
come innocence,” which implies that
suspects were cruelly tortured to exact confessions of guilt. He goes on to reject the notion that satiation with pleasure is the cause of this passion, and ascribes it to the practice of educating the youth at the moment when their sexual drive is mounting in seminaries that isolated them from the opposite sex.

Beccaria thus had no notion of the modern concept of homosexuality, nor was he greatly interested in the crime of sodomy. The importance of the work lies in the tremendous impetus that it gave to the campaign for reform of the archaic and barbarous criminal laws. Of all the leading intellectuals of that day, the one who took the greatest interest in Beccaria’s work was Voltaire, who in 1766 published an anonymous Commentary on the book. In it he endorsed almost all of Beccaria’s principles, adding to many of the book’s chapters anecdotes exemplifying the faults and contradictions in the existing penal system. Other translators and commentators expanded Beccaria’s concise arguments by appending their own notes and comments, so that a full collection of these would illustrate the reception of the book. England revealed the faults of its own system during the very period that reform was on the march in Europe: it was not until 1816 that exposure in the pillory to the hatred and violence of the mob was abolished as a penalty for buggery, and when Sir Robert Peel undertook a major revamping of the criminal laws in 1828 he not only let the death penalty stand but even made it easier to obtain a conviction.

In the United States Beccaria was popular at an early date: John Adams alluded to him in his speech in defense of the British soldiers on trial for what came to be known as the “Boston Massacre.” But the greatest influence of Beccaria by far was on the Bill of Rights, as the part of it which refers to criminal law and procedure cannot be understood apart from Beccaria’s demands for reform. The Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments to the American Constitution may be called the Lex Beccaria, since they guarantee the rights of the accused in a criminal proceeding, provide that no person “shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself,” and prohibit “excessive fines” and “cruel and unusual punishments.” In adopting the Bill of Rights the founding fathers accepted and ratified Beccaria’s thinking, and it is therefore a major error to assume that homosexual law reform has no history in the United States before the State of Illinois repealed its sodomy statute.

Had the principles of the treatise On Crimes and Punishments been followed, all the laws prohibiting consensual homosexual behavior in private would have been surcisChecked from the books in the first decade after the adoption of the Bill of Rights—as they were in France in 1791. The Enlightenment thinkers held that the basic principles of justice are the same everywhere, as all human beings respond to the same fundamental drives and aspirations. If a society that is tolerant of homosexual expression remains a distant goal, Beccaria was one of those pioneers who started the movement in its direction.


Warren Johansson

BECKFORD, WILLIAM (1760–1844)

English author, art collector, and patron. The only legitimate child of one of the richest men in England, Beckford had a spoiled, cossed childhood. At school in Switzerland he already gave signs of a special sensitivity to male beauty. On his return to England he met and fell in love with a nobleman, William Courtenay, then
eleven years old. Powerful residues of this infatuation accompanied him on his grand tour of the European continent (1780-82), and they were transmuted into the manuscript of his Gothic novel Vathek, which was published in French only in 1787. On his return to England he resumed seeing Courtenay, and the simmering scandal was only partly effaced by his marriage in 1783. Beckford judged it advisable to spend a number of years in exile abroad, in Portugal, Spain, and Paris, where he witnessed the French Revolution.

After his return to England he commenced construction, in 1796, of a remarkable architectural folly, his Gothic revival country seat of Fonthill Abbey, which he embellished with frescoes, stained glass and objets d'art. Financial reverses forced him to sell Fonthill in 1821, which was fortunate as it fell into ruin shortly thereafter. Beckford lived the rest of his life in Bath and London, taking a lively interest in homosexual gossip. Having survived several scandals and the repressive atmosphere of the era of the Napoleonic wars, his homosexual interests were prudently reduced to those of an epistolary voyeur. Despite his irregular life and his dilettantism, Beckford made contributions in two areas. His novel Vathek, with its exotic oriental setting and androgynous characters, formed part of the pre-Romantic literary movement. Fonthill Abbey, though only a portion of it survives, was one of the first major secular constructions of the Gothic Revival trend in British architecture.


BELGIUM
The kingdom of Belgium, though a relatively small country, enjoys a pivotal geographical position in Europe. The lands that are now Belgium, together with northern Italy, saw the emergence of European urban society at the end of the Middle Ages. As yet insufficiently explored, the history of homosexuality in Belgium promises to offer important insights. In our present state of knowledge, however, the beginnings are melancholy, since the first execution for sodomy documented anywhere in Europe took place in Ghent in 1292.

Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries show a considerable increase of prosecutions of the criminal act of vuyle faichten (buggery). In 1373, Willem Case and Jan van Aersdone were executed in Antwerp. In Mechelen, one person was burned at the stake, and in 1391 the same city witnessed a mass trial of seventeen people, among them two women. Yet only one confessed and was executed. In Ypres, the death penalty was imposed on two men in 1375. Twenty-two executions were recorded in Antwerp, Brussels, and Louvain during the fifteenth century.

The occurrence of these trials, though only a few led to executions in medieval Flanders, raises the question of whether there is a link between urbanization and the regulation of sexuality from above, especially since homosexual behavior continued to go largely unnoticed between farmers and male servants in the countryside. In the view of Geert Debeuckelaere, the cities witnessed more homosexual acts because of the anonymity of the urban environment. Yet medieval cities were relatively small and anonymity could only be assured from the eighteenth century onward, when urbanization had increased. Probably—but more research remains to be done and generalization is very risky—the persecution of sodomy was also inspired by a general policy of social control, launched by the small urban economic and political elite, and thus a forerunner of the "civilizing process" in modern Europe.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the persecution of sodomy was intertwined with a radical and intolerant campaign of Protestants against Catholics.
and, more precisely, their religious orders. In Ghent, the Church hierarchy yielded to a new political Committee of Eighteen, which favored Protestantism. After the execution of some Franciscan friars in Bruges in 1578, eight Franciscans and six Augustinians were burned at the stake in Ghent. But only a few trials occurred after 1579, when the Low Countries, until then part of the Spanish Empire, were divided into the largely Calvinist Northern Provinces, now the Netherlands, and the almost exclusively Catholic Southern Provinces, now Belgium. In 1601 a Jesuit was burned in Antwerp; in 1618 two women were tried for sodomy in Bruges; in 1654 the sculptor Jérôme Duquesnoy was strangled and burned at the stake after having seduced two boys aged 8 and 11; finally, in 1688, two women who had "raped" a 17-year-old boy fled the country before the actual trial could take place.

In 1713 the Southern Provinces became part of the Austrian Empire. In 1781, the Antwerp trial of Jan Stockaert, who admitted having sex with more than a hundred boys, indicates that an important change was taking place. Contrary to practice in the previous centuries, the authorities were very careful in judging the nature of the crime and even more in determining the appropriate punishment. The court of Antwerp did not sentence Stockaert to death, but asked the Secret Council in Brussels for advice. As a result the court decided to execute Stockaert secretly within the prison walls. In the future, similar cases were to be punished by banishment or, sometimes, by execution in prison—punishment enough even without the theatrical show of public burning. This veil of secrecy contrasts with the mass sodomy trials occurring at about the same time in Holland, but it is hard to explain why. Perhaps the Church did not want to be compromised by witnesses saying that Stockaert also had sex with clergymen, but it is more probable that repression through the spread of fear and guilt was considered a better strategy against the gradually growing gay subcultures in Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, and Liège.

Legalization. In 1795 the French invaded and introduced the Code Pénal of 1791 on Belgian territory: sexual activity between people of the same sex was no longer a crime as long as it was pursued among adults and in private. The temporary reunion of the Northern and Southern Provinces in the United Kingdom of Holland from 1815 until Belgium became independent in 1830 did not bring about any change.

The control and regulation of sexuality was gradually shifted to a medical model of homosexuality and confined to personal communication within the walls of the physician's office. Still, Belgian experts assumed different positions during the International Conference on Criminal Anthropology in Brussels in 1892. Léon de Rode distinguished congenital and acquired inversion, but the Catholic Lefebvre warned against the "corrupting" activities of pederasts and advocated punishment. A preliminary survey reveals that prison sentences remained very common until the early twentieth century, but an enlightened elite did not share Lefebvre's plea for police repression. The trial in 1900, for example, against Georges Ekhhoud's gay novel Escal-Vigor (1899), provoked by a conservative, was considered a ridiculous matter and the author was acquitted.

Gay Activism. In the absence of systematic research, it is impossible even to sketch the evolution between 1900 and the emergence of a gay liberation movement in the late 1960s in Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, and Louvain. In 1968, the Gesprekken Ontmoetingscentra (G.O.C.) were established after the model of the Dutch C.O.C. Meanwhile, gay student groups were organized at universities. In 1975 the Federatie Werkgroepen Homofilie (FWH) was to coordinate gay activism and started publishing Infoma, later the Homokrant. But soon more radical groups were founded, such as the Rooie Vlinder (Red Butterfly,
leftist) and the Roze Aktie Front, while gay subculture organized itself, setting up gay periodicals (De Janet van Antwerpen, Zonder Pardon, Link, Antenne Rose-Info, Tels Quels, Anderzijds), radio programs, film festivals, and other gay-defined activities, alongside the commercial circuit of gay bars, discos, coffeeshops, and restaurants.

A success of gay activism in Belgium was the repeal in 1986 of the article 372bis of the penal code, which had been introduced in 1965 stipulating eighteen instead of sixteen as the age of consent for homosexual contact.

The relative decline of gay activism in the 1980s showed its vulnerability in an age of health crisis and rising moral judgment. Yet, an AIDS-prevention campaign sponsored by the Department of Health warned against the scapegoating of homosexuals and actually discussed the campaign with FWH and the Roze Dinsdag Beweging, a recent gay activist group. Also, the acquittal of Professor Michel Vincen- eau, the owner of two gay bathhouses who was prosecuted for “organizing male prostitution,” reveals a fairly enlightened public opinion toward the gay community.

Pedophile organization is rather limited; an Antwerp workshop on pedophilia is still active, but a police crusade was launched in February 1987 against CRIES, the Centre de Recherche et d’Information sur l’Enfance et la Sexualité in Brussels.


Rudi Bleys

BELOVED DISCIPLE

This mysterious figure of the New Testament, sometimes identified with John the Evangelist, has attracted the attention of some homosexuals as an “affective ancestor.” According to Christian tradition, the Apostle John is the author of the Fourth Gospel, the Book of Revelation (also known as the Apocalypse of St. John), and three of the Catholic Epistles. All these ascriptions have been questioned by modern Biblical criticism, and the consensus is that this group of writings, so different from one another, cannot be by one author. It is traditional to identify as John the unnamed disciple “whom Jesus loved” and who reclined on his bosom at the Last Supper (John 13:23). Again this identification has been denied by some modern scholars.

Depictions of the college of the Apostles in medieval art generally distinguish John as a youthful beardless man, in contrast to his older bearded associates. A special theme of late medieval German sculpture is the Christ–John pair, in which these two figures are excerpted from the Last Supper context with John, identified as the Beloved Disciple, asleep with his head in Christ’s lap. These sculptural groups belong to a broad category of devotional imagery, intended for meditation; the groups are probably not homoerotic in any primary sense. It has been shown, however, that they generated a group of mystical texts in which John is spoken of as enjoying the milk of the Lord. This motif may relate to the imagery of Christ as mother.

However this may be, explicit mentions of a physical erotic relationship between the two New Testament figures appear in our documents only in the sixteenth century. According to the playwright Christopher Marlowe [1564–1593], as reported by the informer Richard Baines, “St. John the Evangelist was bedfellow to Christ and leaned always in his bosom, that he used him as the sinners of Sodoma.” This blasphemous assertion has a precedent in the confession of a libertine of Venice who was tried about 1550 for believing, among other heresies, that St.
John was Christ's catamite ("cinedo di Cristo"). Thus present research suggests that the idea was diffused from Italian heterodox currents, which are still, however, insufficiently known. In the post-Stonewall years in New York—in the 1970s—the most successful gay religious organization was the Church of the Beloved Disciple. Although the ascription of the orientation is doubtful and unproven, some would place St. John at the head of a host of "gay saints," including St. Sebastian, Sts. Sergius and Bacchus, and St. Aelred of Rievaulx. But the erotic activities and sentiments of these figures are also shadowy, and as yet the ranks of the beatified, as determined by the Roman Catholic church, contain no absolutely bona fide, certified homosexual individual.

Historical research reveals a complex dialectical trajectory of the particular matter in question: first, the identification of John with the anonymous Beloved Disciple; followed by tentative, perhaps largely unconscious medieval hints of a kind of mystical marriage between Christ and his favorite. The carnal element comes into the open in the sixteenth century, but in a scoffing, heretical context. Finally, some modern homosexuals have sought to give a positive interpretation of the presumed relationship as a religious warrant for the dignity of gay love. All these developments reflect a legendary embellishment of laconic scriptural texts. The true relationship of Jesus Christ and his mysterious Beloved Disciple will probably never be known.

**BENEDICT, RUTH F.**
(1887–1948)
American anthropologist. Benedict became known to a large public through her popularized characterizations of whole cultures as having particular personalities. Unsatisfied with a marriage contracted in 1914, she enrolled in the New School for Social Research in 1919 and was influenced by students of Franz Boas (1858–1943) to study with the master himself at Columbia University. She earned her Ph.D. in 1923 with a dissertation on the distribution of the concept of the "guardian spirit" in native North America. In subsequent years as Boas's "right-hand" administrative subordinate and chosen successor she did fieldwork among the Zuñi and Cochiti in the American Southwest.

Although her collections of folklore are known to specialists, *Patterns of Culture* [Boston, 1934], her book applying the "Apollonian" character to the Zuñi and contrasting them to the "Dionysian" Kwakiutl studied by Boas, and the "treacherous" Dobu studied by Reo Fortune, made her famous. This book introduced simplistic characterizations of primitive cultures to a wide audience as a means of demonstrating the variability (and thus malleability) of "human nature"—with passing mention of different conceptions of homosexuality [pp. 262–65]. Benedict was noted for a lack of sympathy for male students. She had a coterie of younger women around her, including her most famous student, Margaret Mead (1901–1978), with whom she was sexually, intellectually, and politically involved during the last two decades of her life (both had relationships with other women as well, and Mead with several men, including her three husbands). Aiming to contribute to psychological war efforts, the two pioneered "the study of culture at a distance" during the Second World War, working with persons in New York who had been raised in cultures of strategic interest. Benedict wrote about Romanian and Thai culture, as well as her famous discussion of militarism and aestheticism in Japanese "national character," *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* [Boston, 1946]. As with her characterization of Zuñi as free of conflict, her interpretation of Japan has had numerous specialist critics—and many readers.

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_Stephen O. Murray_

**BENTHAM, JEREMY**
(1748–1832)

English philosopher and law reformer. Bentham was the founder of the Utilitarian school of social philosophy, which held that legislation should promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. As a law reformer, he attacked statutes based on what he perceived as ancient prejudices and asked instead that laws justify themselves by their social consequences, that is, the promotion of happiness and diminution of misery. His _Principles of Morals and Legislation_ (1789) was eventually extremely influential in England, France, Spain, and Latin America where several new republics adopted constitutions and penal codes drawn up by him or inspired by his writings.

Bentham’s utilitarian ethics led him to favor abolition of laws prohibiting homosexual behavior. English law in his day (and until 1861) prescribed hanging for sodomy and during the early nineteenth century was enforced with, on the average, two or three hangings a year. Bentham held that relations between men were a source of sexual pleasure that did not lead to unwanted pregnancies and hence a social good rather than a social evil. He wrote extensive notes favoring law reform about 1774 and a fifty-page manuscript essay in 1785. In 1791, the French National Assembly repealed France’s sodomy law but in England the period of reaction that followed the outbreak of the French Revolution made reforms impossible. In 1814 and 1816 Bentham returned to the subject and wrote lengthy critiques of traditional homophobia which he regarded as an irrational prejudice leading to “cruelty and intolerance.” In 1817–18 he wrote over 300 pages of notes on homosexuality and the Bible. Homophobic sentiment was, however, so intense in England, both in the popular press and in learned circles, that Bentham did not dare to publish any of his writings on this subject. They remained in manuscript until 1931 when C. K. Ogden included brief excerpts in an appendix to his edition of Bentham’s _Theory of Legislation_. Bentham’s manuscript writings on this subject are excerpted and described in detail in Louis Crompton’s 1985 monograph _Byron_. Bentham’s views on homosexuality are sufficiently positive that he might be described as a precursor of the modern gay liberation movement. Bentham not only treats legal, literary, and religious aspects of the subject in his notes, but also finds support for his opinions in ancient history and comparative anthropology.

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**BERDACHE**

Though mostly applied to the Indians of North America, this word was originally a Persian term, _bardag_, that spread to Europe by the sixteenth century (Spanish _bardaxa_ or _bardaje_; French _bardache_). It meant a boy or young man who was kept by a man as his male courtisan. This term clearly referred to the passive partner in male/male anal intercourse, while the name applied to the active partner was _bougre_ [French] or _bugger_ [English]. When French explorers came to North America, they referred to individual Native Americans as “berdaches.”

While the emphasis of the Europeans was clearly on the homosexual aspects, in their references to sodomy and the more neutral word *berdache*, American Indian cultures focused on the gender role of the androgynous male. Before the
coming of the Europeans, many aboriginal societies, in almost all areas of the Americas, accepted the reality of sexual diversity and incorporated into their lifestyle more than two gender possibilities. Their acceptance came as a result of their religion’s appreciation for people who are different from the average. They believed that all persons were the way they were because the spirits made them that way. In their view, there were certain individuals who were created by the spirit world as different from either men or women. Such individuals belonged to an alternative gender, and their guiding spirit—what we would call a person’s basic character—was seen as more important than their biological sex in determining their social identity.

In contrast to many societies, where such people have been derided, American Indians often respected berdaches as especially gifted. Since women had high status in most of these cultures, and the spirit of women was regarded just as importantly as the spirit of men, a person who combined the spirits of both the masculine and the feminine was seen as having an extraordinary spirituality. Such sacred people were often honored with special ceremonial roles in religious ceremonies, and were often known as healers and shamans. They had the advantage of seeing things from both the masculine and the feminine perspective, and so were respected as seers and prophets.

With such a respected view, a family with a berdache in it was considered fortunate. Along with Amazons, females who took on a more masculine role, berdaches were known as creative people who worked hard to help their family and their community. They often served as teachers of the young, and as adoptive parents for orphaned children. In this way, their society did not have homeless children, and there was no need for orphanages because of the common acceptance of adoption by both berdaches and other adults.

The berdache often remained single, but in some tribes his marriage to a person of the same sex was accepted just as a heterosexual marriage was, and their homosexual behavior was not stigmatized. Since the emphasis of marriage was to pair up people in different genders, a berdache would not marry another berdache. The husband of the berdache, or the wife of the Amazon, was not considered different in any way from a heterosexually married person.

Both the Spanish in Latin America, and the English in North America, heavily suppressed berdaches, and the tradition had to go underground. In many tribes it has disappeared, but in others it has continued to be a recognized social and sexual role among traditionalist American Indians today.

While “berdache” is usually applied strictly to American Indians, considering the history of the term, it is also proper to apply it to other areas of the world. Similar traditions of an alternative gender role, with a homosexual component as part of its acceptance, exist in many culture areas: Siberian Arctic, Polynesia, India, Southeast Asia, and some areas of East Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Some interpretations suggest close parallels with the “drag queen” concept in Europe and North America, although that role is not institutionalized as a distinct gender as much as it is in these other cultures.

The berdache role seems to be one of the most common forms in which homosexual relationships are socially recognized. In contrast, there are other cultures that are not accepting of androgynous males, for example the super-masculine warrior societies of Melanesia, medieval Japan, and ancient Greece. In this type of society, homosexual relationships are more likely to be institutionalized in the form of intergenerational pairings between men and boys.

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BERLIN

Bergler, Edmund (1899–1962)
American psychoanalyst. Peripherally associated for a time with Freud in Vienna, he emigrated in 1938 and thereafter practiced in New York City. Perhaps the most vocal of the homophobic “experts” who courted the attention of the American public in the years after World War II, Bergler promoted the notion of “injustice collecting” as a key feature of the allegedly inevitable unhappiness of homosexuals. In his book Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life? (1956) he asserted that all homosexuals harbor an unconscious wish to suffer [psychic masochism] but can be cured if willing to change, tormented by “conscious guilt” over their homosexual activity. But at the same he accused homosexuals of “trying to spread their perversion” and of seducing adolescent boys who would then be “trapped in a homosexual orientation.” Bergler also maintained that women’s fashion is a masculine invention secondarily foisted upon the female sex to alleviate man’s unconscious “masochistic fear of the female body,” and that women’s fashion are designed by male homosexuals, “their bitterest enemies.” Although Bergler had entree into leading magazines and journals of opinion, he was dismayed by the success of the Kinsey Reports and their implicit tolerance of same-sex relations which he sought to combat. His major theoretical positions rejected by his colleagues even in his lifetime, his influence waned precipitously after his death, so that his writings are now of interest solely as a classic document of psychoanalytic rationalization of moralizing prejudice.

Warren Johansson

BERLIN

Berlin rose to prominence first as the capital of Brandenburg and then of Prussia. It became capital of Germany in 1871, retaining this status through the Weimar republic and the Third Reich until its occupation by the victorious Allies in May of 1945. Currently its three million inhabitants are divided between East Berlin, capital of the Communist German Democratic Republic, and West Berlin, an enclave of Western life surrounded by the Berlin Wall.

No trace of homosexual life has been found in the chronicles of the first three hundred years of the city [founded in the thirteenth century], since the legal prosecution of homosexuality that was usual elsewhere did not exist in Berlin before the introduction of the Constitutio Criminalis Carolina in 1532. The Saxon penal code, which Eike von Repgow had codified in 1225 in the Sachsenspiegel and which was in force in Berlin with some modifications, knew no penalty for “lewd and lascivious acts against nature.” In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Berlin Municipal Court pronounced numerous death sentences for sodomy.

Only with the rise of Prussia to the status of one of the great powers of Europe under King Frederick II [the Great; 1712–1786] can any information other than legal sanctions be discovered on homosexuality in Berlin. In 1753 there appeared the first of many anonymous pamphlets accusing Frederick II and his brother, Prince Henry, of homosexuality. These allegations are probably justified, and under the regime of Frederick II an extensive homosexual subculture developed in the Prussian capital. In 1782, in his Letters on the Gallanties of Berlin, Johann Friedel describes homosexual street prostitution, a brothel-like inn [Knabentabagie], secret signs by which the homosexuals recognized one another, and the name given the Berlin pederasts, warme Brüder (“warm brothers”). By this account persecution by the police seems not to have been especially intensive at that time, and in 1794 a new penal code which retained the inspiration of Frederick II came into force that
abolished the death penalty for sodomy and replaced it with imprisonment and flogging.

In 1750 Berlin had some 90,000 inhabitants, by 1800 170,000, and by 1880 over 1 million. This vigorous population growth was accompanied by a steady development and extension of the homosexual subcultures. The most frequent and extensive accounts of homosexual life in the big city that figure in the writings of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs pertain to Berlin. Although homosexual acts [since 1851 only between males, since 1853 only anal intercourse] remained criminal, the police seem actually to have tolerated the flowering of homosexual life: after approximately 1870 public balls for homosexuals were held, and for the first time in the world an organized gay movement emerged. In the suburb of Charlottenburg (officially incorporated into Berlin only in 1920), on May 15, 1897, Magnus Hirschfeld, together with E. Oberg, M. Spohr, R. Meinenreis, H. von Teschenberg and F. J. von Bülow, founded the Wissenschaftlich-Humanitäre Komitee [Scientific-Humanitarian Committee], whose main goal was to abolish the antihomosexual Paragraph 175 of the Imperial Penal Code. But this goal, which was to be achieved through influence on public opinion and petitions to the German Reichstag meeting in Berlin, was down to the very end (the Committee dissolved itself on June 8, 1933 to forestall being banned by the Nazis) unattained.

In 1898 the anarchistic Berlin periodical Der Eigene (The Exceptional) converted itself into the first long-lasting gay publication (down to 1931). (Its predecessors, Ulrichs’ Uranus of 1870 and Raffalovich’s Annales de l’unisexualité of 1897 appeared in only a single issue each.) Der Eigene was edited by the Berlin writer Adolf Brand, who in 1903 founded the Gemeinschaft der Eigenen (Community of the Exceptional), after the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee the second gay organization in Berlin. These two organizations embody a significant part of the gay history of Berlin, but the majority of Berlin’s homosexuals never had any contact with either one.

After World War I numerous gay and lesbian periodicals appeared in Berlin, and even in films and in the theatre homosexuality could no longer be fully taboo, as after the fall of the monarchy considerably more liberal censorship rules were in force. In 1932 Berlin had some 300 homosexual bars and cafés, of which a tenth were for lesbians. During the Nazi era between 1933 and 1945 virtually all homosexual life was driven underground, and a persecution without parallel in history began. Many gay Berliners suffered as inmates with the pink triangle in the concentration camp established north of Berlin at Oranienburg/Sachsenhausen, and not a few of them were killed there.

After the liberation in 1945 Berlin was divided and in the Western part of the city after approximately 1948 new gay organizations developed, periodicals were founded, bars opened, and gay balls tolerated, although thanks to the conservative regime under Konrad Adenauer in Bonn the even more punitive version of Paragraph 175 inserted in the Penal Code by the Nazis remained in force until 1969. In the eastern part of the city the regime applied Paragraph 175 in its pre-Nazi wording (only “acts similar to coitus” were punishable, but not mutual masturbation and prostitution), but on the basis of the Stalinist notions of morality gay men and lesbians were forced underground and threatened with prosecution.

Only in the 1970s did an increasingly liberal climate facilitate the emergence of a gay movement in both halves of Berlin on the Anglo-American model. There was no continuity with the tradition of the pre-1933 organizations, the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee and the Community of the Exceptional. In East Berlin, moreover, up until the 1980s periodicals and organizations for gay men were forbidden. Whereas West Berlin today exhibits a homosexual subculture that
with its numerous autonomous institutions (communications centers, journals, publishing houses, sports and choral societies, religious, political and trade union groups, a gay member of the city council, and so forth) is comparable to other Western metropolitan areas, in East Berlin the corresponding development has proceeded much more slowly because of the obstacles imposed by the Communist government in that part of Germany.


**BERNESQUE POETRY**

This type of Italian poetry may be regarded as an outgrowth of burchielleseque poetry; it also continues the tradition of obscene carnival songs (*canti carnascialeschi*). The genre takes its name from Francesco Berni (1496/8–1535), the best known of the poets who were engaged in softening the original obscenity of the burchielleseque trend so as to make it more accessible—while retaining the essentials of its coded language.

Bernesque poetry relies on double meanings—which are often deployed in a masterful way—characteristically incarnated in food items [round ones such as apples symbolize buttocks, phalliciform ones such as eels stand for the penis] or objects of daily use [the chamber pot represents the anus, the needle symbolizes the penis].

While the Bernesque poet gave the appearance of choosing everyday objects so as to produce comic effects by heaping excessive praise on trivial things, in reality he constructed a subtle net of double meanings in order to exalt sexual relations.

Unlike the burchielleseque poets, however, who often delighted in cobbling together tangles of words that seemed to lack any coherent meaning, the Bernesque poets always made compositions that were fully meaningful, in a colloquial, humorous, and [at first sight] simple tone. This aspect permits the reader to enjoy their works as humor, even if he misses the double meanings.

In the Bernesque genre, homosexual themes [generally having to do with anal contacts] often occur. The poets sometimes took great pains to compose seemingly innocuous poems for boys [such as Berni’s directed to “young abbé” of the Cornari family], which when decoded reveal highly obscene senses.

Berni also wrote serious love poems in Latin, which were fairly explicit, in praise of boys. A priest, he was shut up for a year and a half in an Abbruzzi monastery for a homosexual scandal, the full details of which are not known (1523–24). Moreover, some private letters have survived containing innocent requests to friends, but which read with the code of burchielleseque language reveal requests for the sending of boys [examples are those to Vincilao Boiano of May–August 1530].

Many authors wrote Bernesque poetry with homosexual themes. Among them are Angelo Firenzuola (1493–1543), Andrea Lori [sixteenth century] Matteo Franzesi [sixteenth century], Giovanni Della Casa (1503–1556), Benedetto Varchi (1503–1565), Lodovico Dolce (1508–1568; he also wrote a long work “For a Boy”), and Antonio Grazzini, known as “Il Lasca” (1503–1584).

With the Counterreformation, and the more repressive climate that came to prevail in Italy as a consequence, practitioners of the Bernesque genre found it prudent to abandon erotic double entendres, and the mode gradually ebbed,
coming down to a series of rhetorical exercises on harmless subjects, such as the death of a cat, baldness, and the like.

A final, unexpected offshoot of the genre appeared in the amusing satires of Giuseppe Giusti (1809–1850), who revived the spent Bernesque tradition, neglecting the erotic double meanings in favor of a patriotic commitment to Italian unification.


Giovanni Dall'Orto

BÈZE, THÉODORE DE (1519–1605)

Leading Calvinist Reformer. Born in Vézelay in Burgundy he was the son of the Royal Bailiff, a member of a wealthy and powerful noble family. From the age of nine onward he was educated at Orléans and Bourges in the house of the German philologist Melchior Weimar, who indoctrinated the boy in the principles of Protestantism. In 1539 Bèze received a law degree from the University of Orléans, and at the same time fell in love with Marie de l'Etoile, but she died after a year and a half. Bèze settled in Paris, where he enjoyed the company of prominent and literary circles, while his literary talents unfolded at the expense of the career in law for which his father had destined him. After violent inner struggles he broke with his past and moved to Geneva, renouncing the Roman Church for Calvinism. For ten years he taught Greek in Lausanne and completed the metrical translation of the Psalms begun by Clément Marot that afterwards was incorporated in the French Protestant liturgy, his polemic and theological writings converged with those of Calvin. In 1558 he became a preacher and professor of theology in Geneva, and thereafter was one of the intellectual champions of French Protestantism (his enemies called him "the Huguenot Pope") until his retirement at the end of the century.

Although twice married, Bèze was openly attacked and vilified for his supposed homosexual liaison with his friend Audebert, the evidence for which was an epigram in the collection of poems officially entitled Poemata, unofficially Juvenilia (first edition: Paris, 1548). Admired by many when they were published, the poems were strongly influenced by the classical authors with their pederastic interests and allusions, so that the evidence for Bèze's homosexuality is uncertain at best. What is certain is that the Catholic party joined in vilifying him after a writer named François Baudouin, who had changed sides several times and been nicknamed Ecebolus by Bèze himself, in 1564 denounced him as a vice-ridden cinætus. Two years later a Catholic theologian named Claude de Saintes, embroiled in a polemic with Bèze, gave vent to a personal attack in which Bèze's sodomitical union with Audebert is likened to his spiritual embrace of Calvin and Bèze himself is branded as unworthy of a holy office. In 1582 Jérôme Bolsec, a Catholic physician and theologian, further reproached Bèze in a pamphlet addressed to the magistrates of Geneva, saying that many scoundrels and lawbreakers had taken refuge there in the guise of adhering to the Reform, including felons apprehended in the crime of sodomy; that in Paris and Orléans Bèze had in his youth freely pursued sensual pleasures and debauchery of all kinds. The opponent added that a Latin poem had been composed in which Bèze is termed a pathetic and an effeminate and lustful poet who became a teacher of sacred eloquence at the instigation of Satan. Others joined in the chorus
of abuse even after Bèze’s death, while the Protestant party defended him as the victim of malicious misinterpretation on the part of his foes. Even from the standpoint of the twentieth century, the sources do not sustain the allegation that Bèze’s friendship for Audebert amounted to a homosexual liaison. His life is more an emblem of the web of insult and countercharge that characterized the first century of the Reformation.


*Warren Johansson*

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Bibliographical control of published material on homosexuality encounters several problems. First, there is the inherent vastness of the subject itself: to paraphrase Goethe, the history of homosexual behavior is virtually coterminous with that of the human race. Accordingly, serious study must be cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and transhistorical. Secondly, the taboo in which the theme has been enveloped means that until recently subject bibliographies often had no entry for it, or when they did would relegate it to some negative umbrella category, such as “perversion” or “sexual deviation.” Even today the indexes and tables of contents of books often fail to mention the topic. Finally, the difficulty of establishing gay studies courses and programs in universities—blocked as they have been by tradition, inertia, and simple prejudice—has starved the field of money, personnel, and prestige. Standing against these hindrances is the devotion of countless individual gay and lesbian scholars, who have not only amassed a vast amount of primary data, but sought to display them in works of reference.

**Origins.** Greek literature rejoices in extensive discussions of homosexuality, or to be more accurate of *paiderasteia*. [For modern listings of this accumulated heritage, see Félix Buffière, *Eros adolescent: la pédérastie dans la Grèce antique* [Paris, 1980], and Claude Courouve, *Tableau synoptique de références à l’amour masculin: auteurs grecs et latins* [Paris, 1986].] The Greeks themselves had no discipline of bibliography proper; however, for an anthology of passages on homosexuality, see *Athenaeus* [fl. ca. A.D. 200], *Deipnosophists*, Book 13.

The tradition of erudition that emerged in early modern Europe after the invention of printing saw some hesitant assemblage of references to homosexual behavior. These data are found scattered in Latin tomes in the fields of theology, law, medicine, and classical studies. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries some of this information was digested for more popular consumption in admittedly meager encyclopedia articles in the vernacular. It was these sources that had to be patiently combed by such pioneers of homosexual scholarship as Heinrich Hoessli and Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, John Addington Symonds, and Havelock Ellis.

The emergence of systematic bibliographical control had to await the birth of the first homosexual emancipation movement in Berlin in 1897. This movement firmly held that progress toward homosexual rights must go hand in hand with intellectual enlightenment. Accordingly, each year’s production was noted in the annual volumes of *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* (1899–1923), by the end of the first ten years of monitoring over 1000 new titles had been recorded. Although surveys were made of earlier literature, up to the time of the extinction of the movement by National Socialism in
1933, no attempt had been made to organize this material into a single comprehensive bibliography of homosexual studies. Nonetheless, much valuable material was noted in the vast work of Magnus Hirschfeld, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (Berlin, 1914).

The American Phase and Its Influence. The nascent American homophile movement, which began about 1950, took cognizance of the need for a comprehensive bibliography. Donald Webster Cory's *The Homosexual in America* (New York, 1951), a landmark of the early movement, had as appendices lists of both non-fiction and fiction on the subject. By the late 1950s small-scale efforts toward this end had begun to coalesce in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area, two of the movement's strongest centers. After many delays, the Los Angeles endeavors resulted in the most ambitious project attempted up to that point: Vern Bullough et al., *Annotated Bibliography of Homosexuality* [2 vols., New York, 1976], which was prepared in the Los Angeles offices of ONE, Inc. This work provides about 13,000 entries arranged in twenty broad subject categories. Some notion of the enormousness of the whole subject is conveyed by the fact that, even at that date, the number of entries could probably have been doubled. Unlike most of the other American bibliographies, this work is international and multilingual in scope; unfortunately the set is marred by thousands of small errors and lacunae, especially in foreign-language items. The title notwithstanding, annotations are very few, and uncertain in their critical stance. Full subject indexes, which would have served to offset some of these shortcomings are lacking; instead each volume has its own author indexes. The shortcomings of this major work, undertaken largely by volunteer staff working under movement auspices, illustrate the problems that have, as often as not, been made inevitable by the social neglect and obloquy in which the subject has been enveloped. Unfortunately, plans for a completely revised edition of the ONE bibliography have had to be shelved, at least for the present.

In San Francisco in the 1960s William Parker began gathering material for a one-person effort. His first attempt was *Homosexuality: Selected Abstracts and Bibliography* (San Francisco, 1966); this publication, and a number of other earlier lists, are now most easily accessible in the Arno Press reprint: *A Gay Bibliography: Eight Bibliographies on Lesbianism and Male Homosexuality* (New York, 1975). Parker's more definitive work is *Homosexuality: A Selected Bibliography of over 3,000 Items* (Metuchen, NJ, 1971), followed by two supplements (published in 1977 and 1985), which carry coverage up through 1982. These volumes arrange the material (English-language only) by types of publication; there are helpful subject indices. Although some note is taken of films, television programs and audiovisual materials, the coverage of print items is almost entirely restricted to nonfiction.

Parker's two supplements cover six- and seven-year periods respectively, but there is no current annual bibliography. *Gay Books Bulletin* [later *The Cabirion*], issued by the Scholarship Committee of the New York Chapter of the Gay Academic Union (1979–85), concentrated on in-depth reviews, but ceased after twelve issues. The best way of monitoring current production is through the "Relevant" section of the scholarly Dutch bimonthly *Homologie* (Amsterdam, 1978– ).

In San Francisco the lesbian monthly *The Ladder*, published by the Daughters of Bilitis organization, included notices of books from its inception in 1956 (the full set was reissued with a new index in New York in 1975). Eventually these notices were coordinated on a monthly basis by Gene Damon (Barbara Grier), whose later columns have been recently collected in a handy, indexed volume: *Lesbian: Book Reviews from the Ladder, 1966–1972* (Reno, 1976). Utilizing input from Marion Zimmer Bradley and others,
Damon and Lee Stuart produced the first edition of *The Lesbian in Literature: A Bibliography* (San Francisco, 1967). This work subsequently appeared in an expanded, third edition: Barbara Grier, *The Lesbian in Literature* (Tallahassee, 1981), with about 3100 items, including some nonfiction. The entries are coded by an unusual rating system, which correlates both relevance and quality.

The complement to Grier in the male sphere is Ian Young, *The Male Homosexual in Literature: A Bibliography* (Metuchen, NJ, 1982), with 4282 items, interpretive essays by several hands, and title index. While there are no annotations, Young sweeps the field: fiction, poetry, drama, and autobiography. Like Grier, the volume is limited to works written in English and translations of foreign works.

Apart from the general bibliographies just discussed, which claim to cover at least the whole-English language production in their chosen domains, there are also a number of works defined by country of production. William Crawford (ed.), *Homosexuality in Canada: A Bibliography* (Toronto, 1984), contains a good deal of material, in French as well as English, that has been overlooked elsewhere. Manfred Herzer, *Bibliographie zur Homosexualität . . .* (Berlin, 1982) is an exemplary compilation of nonfiction items published in German from 1466 to 1975. A similar work, annotated, is Giovanni Dall’Orto, *Leggere omosessuale* (Turin, 1984), which covers Italian publications from 1800 to 1983. Still to be covered is the rich Italian material before 1800. Claude Courouvé’s work on French bibliography has been privately published.

Almost from the beginning homosexual organizations have created their own periodicals to supplement the mainstream journals which tend to scant, or even exclude altogether research on sexual variation. A detailed roster of no less than 1924 publications existing (or believed to exist) in the 1980s is Robert Malinowsky, *International Directory of Gay and Lesbian Periodicals* (Phoenix, 1987). By definition, this work does not include older journals that had ceased (309 of these are listed in Bullough, et al., cited above), nor does it provide, for obvious reasons, a listing of the contents of these publications. Gay and lesbian journals are covered only sporadically in current bibliographies, and even copies of the less familiar newspapers are hard to find once they leave the stands; here the gay and lesbian archives are doing an essential job of preservation, since public and university libraries usually do not preserve these materials.

A summation of bibliographical work appears in Wayne R. Dynes, *Homosexuality: A Research Guide* (New York, 1987). In addition to the bibliography section proper, each of the approximately 170 subject groups contains an introduction outlining the strengths and problems of the topic in its current state of development (or lack of development). This volume is conceived as interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and transhistorical, and may be consulted for a sense of the complexity of the overarching field. In some respects it is the complement to the present *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*, where space for citations is necessarily limited.

*Electronic Retrieval*. In due course the bibliographical situation will be transformed by electronic systems of retrieval of material from data-base sources. For financial reasons, this shift began first in the natural and biological sciences. An early exemplar is the MEDLARS medical database, which traces its origins to 1964. A facility of considerable use to the study of homosexual behavior is the PsychLIT Database, which offers citations and summaries in psychology and related disciplines published from January 1981 on. It is compiled from material published in *Psychology Abstracts* and the PsychINFO Database. PsychLIT covers about 1400 journals in 29 languages from approximately 54 countries. The *Lexis* system,
available mainly in law libraries, goes back to the early 1970s. Geared mainly to the practice of law in North America, Lexis also offers access to British and French libraries. As these examples show, the time frame of such enterprises tends to restrict the items collected to recent years, so that exclusive use of such sources narrows the focus of material at the researcher’s disposal by date of origin of the material.

Large public and university libraries are beginning to record their acquisitions—though not usually extending to older holdings—in on-line systems, which are gradually being “hooked up” into larger systems. One such computerized catalogue lists the recent acquisitions of 25 major American research libraries, with terminals and print-out facilities in all of them. These retrieval systems are commonly linked to printers, so that users can with minimal effort obtain a permanent record of what they have found. In using all these instruments, it must be remembered that they are only as good as what has been entered in them. Classifiers may lack sophistication, so that entries under “Georgian” may mix indiscriminately the American state, the Soviet republic, the Caucasian language, and English architecture. Also, books and periodical articles tend to live in two different universes as far as on-line systems go. For a number of reasons (including the inherent convenience of the book format), conventional, hard-copy materials will probably continue to be used for a long time to come. Of course, the two modes are not incompatible, and the ideal situation is probably that of simultaneous access to most collections of material through both channels.

Whatever systems may be used, the compilers must face the problem of the enormous proliferation of material. In 1910, say, a one-page item would be worth noting, while by 1980 the output has increased so markedly that selectivity is imperative. Today no one would aspire to collect every piece of writing with some relevance to homosexuality in any given year: too much would simply be redundant. Like all else in human affairs, the problems are in part a function of the time matrix. Yet when all is said and done, our knowledge of homosexuality is increasing. Masses of material that in former decades would have been ignored are being recorded and classified by state-of-the-art techniques.

See also Libraries and Archives.


BILITIS

The name Bilitis is one of the Hellenic forms of Ba’alat, the female counterpart of Baal in Northwest Semitic mythology. In the writings of Philo of Byblos, Baaltis is equated with Dione, one of the three daughters of Uranos and consorts of Kronos, who receives the city of Byblos as her domain. The significance of Bilitis for lesbianism stems not from antiquity proper, but from the work of Pierre Louys, Les Chansons de Bilitis, traduites du grec, first published in 1894, although clandestine editions with the erotically explicit lesbian passages appeared only after the author’s death, with the title Les Chansons de Bilitis inédites (1929), and as Les Chansons secrètes de Bilitis (1931). Louys originally offered the collection of texts to the world as translations from a classical source; it made the author’s reputation in France and was never surpassed by his later writing. The heroine of the work is described as “born at the beginning of the sixth century before our era, in a mountainous village located on the banks of the Meias, in the eastern part of Pamphylia. . . . She was the daughter of a Greek and a Phoenician woman.” Leaving her homeland, she settled in Mytilene on the isle of Lesbos, “then the center of the world,” which “had as its capital a city

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more enlightened than Athens and more corrupt than Sardis." Here she became part of the circle around Sappho, the poet-ess who taught her the art which she expressed in some thirty elegies devoted to her attachment to a girl of her own age named Mnasidika.

This product of the decadent school of the fin-de-siècle has, though written by a man, became one of the classics of lesbian literature, and was to give its name to the American organization: The Daughters of Bilitis, founded in San Francisco in October 1955. The name was chosen just because it "would sound like any other women's lodge," but convey an esoteric meaning to lesbians everywhere.

This first lesbian political organization in the United States was founded some five years after the Mattachine Society. The leaders of the group were Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, who had settled in San Francisco as lovers in 1953. Their desire was to socialize with other lesbian women. When one of their acquaintances invited them to a meeting to discuss the start of a social club, the two accepted with enthusiasm. On September 21, 1955 eight women—four couples—gathered and within a few weeks had formed the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB). Before long Martin and Lyon were arguing that DOB should broaden its activities to include the political task of changing the public's attitude toward lesbianism. The model for the new endeavor was the Mattachine Society of San Francisco.

The group split over the suggestion, and the six women who remained joined forces with the Mattachine Society and with ONE, Inc. in what was then called the homophile movement. In April 1956 the group participated in its first public event, a forum cosponsored by Mattachine on the differing problems faced by lesbians and homosexuals. DOB then resolved to hold its own "public discussions," where lesbians could attend without fear as the "public." In October of the same year the organization published the first issue of its monthly publication, The Ladder, in a printing of 200 copies that was mailed to "every lesbian whom any of its members knew" and to professionals in the Bay Area.

For the most part, the Daughters of Bilitis worked closely and cooperatively with its male homosexual counterparts throughout the 1950s, since in an era of intolerance, the tiny movement had to close its ranks for self-protection. The full support of the Mattachine Society mitigated the growing pains of DOB, and the shared outlook—the belief that dispelling myth, misinformation, and prejudice was the primary means of bettering the status of their members—bound the organizations together. But DOB also existed to provide self-help for lesbian women, a haven where they could experience a sense of belonging instead of the rejection that they encountered elsewhere, and where they could reorient their lives so that they could face the larger society with renewed strength.

The pages of the Ladder reflected the priority that DOB attached to personal problems of the individual lesbian, especially the one living in isolation far from the subculture of the large cities. The magazine reported political news, but was never meant to be a political journal, and so the publishers shunned advocacy, devoting space instead to poetry, fiction, history and biography. It was also a soundingboard for the experience that society distorted and denied. The special concerns of lesbians were debated on its pages, such as the rearing of children in a lesbian household, the problems of the still married lesbian, and the low salaries and restricted job opportunities of women in Eisenhower's America. Published continuously for sixteen years, this journal remains a major source for the period's activism; it was reprinted by Arno Press [New York] in 1975 with a new index by Gene Damon.

Some male attitudes, such as the notion of the homosexual organizations
that this was a “ladies’ auxiliary,” created tension between DOB and its allies. The promiscuity of many homosexual men and the police harassment which they encountered struck the lesbians as an encumbrance and a stigma unjustly attached to them by society. At jointly sponsored events the men even questioned the need for a separate women’s group, to which the DOB members replied by asserting their need for autonomy and their identification with a larger movement for the emancipation of women—foreshadowing the far more radical feminism of the 1960s.

On the whole, DOB attracted significantly fewer members than did the male organizations, in part because the pool of potential constituents was smaller, in part because women had a more precarious economic position in American society. Professional women who had been successful felt that they did not need the group, and those who benefited from its nurturing efforts achieved independence and “graduated.” The founders and leaders were white-collar semi-professionals who could not identify with the blue-collar bar subculture of working women, reflecting the fact that women are generally more sensitive to class identity than are men. The lesbian patronage of the bars belonged to a different subculture with its own well-defined identity—one that the membership of DOB generally did not share. But during the initial phase of the American homosexual movement, the Daughters of Bilitis were the rallying point for lesbian interests and aspirations.


Evelyn Gettone

BIography and Autobiography

The appeal of biography is multifaceted, ranging from a desire to elevate one’s imagination by dwelling on the accomplishments of great figures to an all-too-human love of gossip and muckraking. Moreover, the form of a human life, from birth to death, provides a readily comprehensible narrative structure in which the reader can identify with the subject as the moving center. Homosexual autobiographies, uncommon before modern times, are the external embodiment of a process of internal self-examination; in writing autobiography and publishing it, one willy-nilly creates an apologia for oneself. Problems of concealment are common in the biographies and autobiographies of homosexuals; lengthy tomes have been compiled about such figures as Walt Whitman and Willa Cather without a mention of their sexuality. Determining the sexual orientation of noted figures of the past is significant for its own sake: the establishment of historical truth in its fullness. This aim of truth usually accords [though it occasionally conflicts] with the psychological need that members of any minority group have for heroes. And homosexuals and lesbians, so often stereotyped en masse as hopelessly neurotic if not deranged, understandably yearn for reassurance that all have not been cases in the medical waxworks museum of Krafft-Ebing’s Psychopathia Sexualis. Although such psychological needs are normally met by candid and accurate biographies, there is also a temptation to provide “gay hagiography,” works which extoll an individual because he or she is homosexual, not to mention the “reclamation” of figures whose sexual orientation is uncertain.

Classical Antiquity. The first hesitant emergence of biography as a genre about 500 B.C. is grounded in Greek individualism, the idea that the uniqueness of the human personality stands over against and must not be subsumed by one’s public persona as fixed by official or class standing. This awareness allowed the Greeks to maintain biography as a genre distinct from history, which is concerned more with the general and typical. The Theban poet Pindar (518–438 B.C.), whose writings are suffused with homoerotic sentiment,
eulogized great athletes in brief odes. Broadly speaking, the funeral oration, one of the sources of Greek biography, tends to fall into the trap of “de mortuis nil nisi bonum,” the stipulation that only admirable aspects of the deceased should be displayed. Another type of skewing is the novelized biography, as seen in Xenophon’s (ca. 434–ca. 355 B.C.) Cyropaedia. In later variants the temptation to invent details is freely indulged, a temptation fostered by increasing demand for “juicy bits.” On the whole these faults are remarkably avoided in the portraits of Socrates by his school; the writers candidly reveal the faults as well as the stature of this lover of men. Relatively few lives of women were produced; here, however, the career of the Lesbian poet Sappho (who flourished ca. 600 B.C.) provided a focus, though one afflicted to some extent with romantic invention.

While much has been lost, we know that Greek biographies concentrated on two types of people: public figures (statesmen, law givers, rulers, and generals) and intellectuals (poets and philosophers). A remarkable collection of biographies of public men survives: the Parallel Lives of Plutarch (ca. A.D. 46–ca. 120), who portrays an equal number of Greek and Roman subjects, preparing the way for international biography in contrast to the nationalistic (and even localistic) restriction of earlier Greeks. Although Plutarch was keenly interested in psychological motivation, his mentions of homoerotic aspects in some of his subjects are totally matter-of-fact: he takes his subjects’ interest in boys as almost routine. Diogenes Laertius and Philostratus wrote lives of the philosophers replete with pederastic revelations.

The Romans, who regularly eulogized their ancestors, had a more ambivalent attitude toward homosexual behavior. They also savored the eccentricities and scandals that might be associated with it. Such gossipy preoccupations come to the fore in Tacitus’ Annals and Histories, arranged around the lives of emperors, and even more in Suetonius’ Lives of the Twelve Caesars, written in the early second century, where the foibles of one Roman emperor after another are set forth with a relish that anticipates a modern supermarket scandal sheet. The most outrageous life of a homoerotic Caesar stems from the late empire: that of Heliodorus (reigned 218–222), attributed to Lampridius, one of Suetonius’ continuators. Oddly, the first major surviving autobiography, except for the inscription erected by Augustus Caesar, came later. In his Confessions, St. Augustine (354–430) contrasts his life before and after he became a Christian; here we see a life transformed by a shift from one set of ideals to the other. Although Augustine wrote his memoir after his conversion, he nonetheless saw fit to include in it an account of his deep friendship with a fellow student. His immensely popular autobiography, which long remained unique, thus preserved a moving account of special friendship that was to reverberate through the centuries.

Medieval and Modern Times. The Gospels are echoed in Philostratus’ Life of Apollonius of Tyana, a homosexual philosopher. Biographically, the early and high medieval eras are notable for the lives of the saints. One, that of St. Pelagius/Pelagia, gives an account of an attempted homoerotic seduction and the saint’s heroic resistance. The letters and lives of monks often attest to particular friendships, though the conventional aspect of such effusions makes it difficult to use them as direct historical evidence.

The Italian Renaissance, with its emphasis on the idea of fame, gave renewed life to the art of secular biography. In 1550, for example, Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) published his monumental Lives of the Architects, Sculptors, and Painters, providing, in addition to serious assessments of the art works, many poignant details of the artists’ personal lives. Then in 1562, the flamboyant bisexual sculptor Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1571),
completed his *Autobiography*. In France, Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592), though he published no autobiography as such, devoted much of his writing to introspection and to musing on the nature of his own intense male friendships.

At the end of the sixteenth century the repressive influence of the Council of Trent, coupled with the new standards of decorum dictated by literary classicism, caused self-censorship to eliminate details that would previously have been permitted. One has to wait until the *Autobiography* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) for a new standard of candor and authenticity. In this account of his life, devoted to a search for the truth about himself, Rousseau describes his involvement in a youthful homosexual episode in Turin.

*The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. The Victorian period counts as the high water mark of prudery and censorship. Yet in this era scholars began to uncover material from the archives that had been neglected before. The *Life of Michelangelo* (1893) by the English homosexual John Addington Symonds (1840–1893), with its hints of the artist’s abnormal sexuality, is an example of the fruits of this new research. At the same time, regrettably, the late nineteenth century was obsessed with a purported link between genius and insanity championed by such psychiatrists as Cesare Lombroso, leading to the popular genre of “psychopathographies,” in which the torments and inadequacies of literary and artistic figures are highlighted. Related to this trend is Sigmund Freud’s 1910 essay on the homosexuality of Leonardo da Vinci. Despite the expectations it awakened, psychoanalytic method did not contribute much in the ensuing decades to the deep analysis of historic figures.

The rise of the homophile movement in Germany at the turn of the century fostered a diligent scrutiny of the current production of biographies for indications of homosexuality and lesbianism. At this time the sexual orientations of such varied figures as Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (founder of Theosophy), François de Boisrobert, Christina of Sweden, Heinrich von Kleist, August von Platen, and Walt Whitman came out of the shadows. Subsequently several of the major figures of the German Movement, including Kurt Hiller and Magnus Hirschfeld, wrote their own memoirs.

Because the trials of Oscar Wilde in 1895 mercilessly exposed the intimate details of his sexual activities, his life could not be sanitized. The first sympathetic accounts were the memoirs of friends, such as Robert Ross and André Gide. Almost a century had to pass before we got the fuller biographies of H. Montgomery Hyde and Richard Ellmann. It may be, however, that the best life of Wilde is his inadvertent autobiography, the *Letters* as edited by Rupert Hart-Davis (1962). The memoirs of Wilde’s scholarly contemporary John Addington Symonds could be published only in 1985.

Twentieth-century French writers excelled in self-examination as set forth in diaries intended for publication. Best known of these works is the extensive *Journal of André Gide* (1869–1951), covering the years 1889–1949, and Marcel Jouhandeau’s (1888–1979) colossal *Journaliers* in 26 volumes. Jean Cocteau (1891–1963) also wrote a number of memoirs and diaries, some of which are being published posthumously.

Michael Holroyd’s full biography (1967–68) of Lytton Strachey (1880–1932) provided both candor and balanced detail; it succeeded in reviving the reputation of the subject as well as contributing to the expanding industry of Bloomsbury scholarship. Subsequently a number of large biographies have appeared on such Bloomsbury figures as Lord Keynes, E. M. Forster, and Virginia Woolf. An unusual contribution is Nigel Nicolson’s *Portrait of a Marriage* (1973), treating the homosexuality of both his parents: Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West. Attention
to the expatriate writers and artists of that generation in Paris has focused especially on noteworthy lesbians, including Natalie Barney, Romaine Brooks, and Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas.

A distinguished recent biography of a major figure of the past is Louis Crompton's *Byron and Greek Love* (1985). Not seeking to replace other biographies of the poet, Crompton highlights the periods of Byron's known homoerotic infatuations; he also shows the problems engendered by the homophobia of his contemporaries, as well as Jeremy Bentham's efforts to argue against it. The continuing fascination with such romantic figures as William Beckford, Queen Christina of Sweden, T. E. Lawrence ("of Arabia"), and King Ludwig II of Bavaria has led to numerous biographical works, but establishing the truth tends to prove elusive. Adequate studies of the homosexuality or bisexuality of a number of kings of England and France are still lacking, though the record is somewhat better with military commanders.

The post-Stonewall gay movement after 1969 has been commemorated in a number of activist reminiscences, most of them slight. Perhaps coincidentally, Tennessee Williams decided to make a clean breast of things in his *Memoirs* (1975), while William Somerset Maugham was finally dragged completely out of the closet in the lengthy biography by Ted Morgan (1980). The homosexuality of the English dramatist Joe Orton was revealed in the lurid circumstances of his murder by his lover in London in 1967; Orton has now been profiled not only in the biography by John Lahr (1978), and in the writer's *Diaries*, but also in an explicit film, *Prick Up Your Ears* (1987), based on both these sources and directed by Stephen Frears. Needless to say, Hollywood films on the lives of public figures who were homosexual or bisexual typically black out unconventional sexual aspects. In 1986 ex-Congressman Robert Bauman published a rare example of an autobiography of a gay political figure; its existence, however, is probably owing to his public exposure.

The lives of ordinary male homosexuals and lesbians of the past are for the most part hidden from us. Representing turn of the century American life, however, are the memoirs of Claude Hartland (1901) and Ralph Werther ("Earl Lind," 1918; 1922). The four volumes of the diaries of Donald Vining cover a third of a century: 1936–75. Lesbian scholars have begun to emphasize collective records, as seen in Margaret Cruikshank, ed., *The Lesbian Path* (1980), and Julia Penelope Stanley and Susan J. Wolfe, eds., *The Coming Out Stories* (1980). A much-noticed contribution to this genre is a collection of the reflections of some fifty Catholic religious: Rosemary Curb and Nancy Manahan, eds., *Lesbian Nuns: Breaking the Silence* (1985). Mostly unpublished are the tape-recorded reminiscences of older homosexuals gathered by oral-history projects in several cities of North America; an exception is Keith Vacha's *Quiet Fire* (1985), in which older gay men tell their own story.

Research Challenges. The problems confronting any scholar who would attempt an in-depth study of the personality of a subject believed to be homosexual or lesbian are serious. Where same-sex practice is documented through autobiographies or police records, there remains the task of situating the individual's sense of self within the larger context of prevalent attitudes toward homosexuality. In many cases, however, a self-protective instinct caused the individual to lead a closeted life. In individual cases it may be hard to establish whether the subject is a deeply closeted individual, whose secrets will nonetheless emerge with determined effort, or whether contemporary gossip or later speculation has labeled someone homosexual who in fact was not. In the past some overenthusiastic researchers have, in effect, "shanghaied" historic figures for enshrinement in the homosexual pantheon.
In order to proceed with the investigation of some person of the past believed to have been homosexual, one should ascertain the presence of several of the following indicators: the subject is unmarried (even, as sometimes happens, to the point of vehemently resisting marriage); the subject belonged to a circle other members of which are known to have been gay; the subject had interests or pursuits prevalent at the time among gay people; and the subject adopted unusual turns of phrase (say the use of pronouns appropriate to the opposite sex). Once the scholar has attained familiarity with the period, a cluster of such signs triggers a bell. One need scarcely add that the absence of one of the others should not bring the investigation to a halt. Many almost exclusively homosexual figures, for example, have been married; the giveaway is the taunting phrase "the marriage was a failure."

Above and beyond these endeavors of detection, sexual orientation needs to be fitted into larger contexts that will show how it molded the individual's own personality, and in turn what are the social functions of the orientation in the host society. The task is formidable, but conscientiously pursued it will yield substantial rewards in understanding the inner life of the subject of the biography.

Wayne R. Dynes

Biology
See Animal Homosexuality; Sociobiology.

Birds and Avian Symbolism

Human interest in birds, both wild and domestic, and study of their behavior impinge on sexual concerns in several ways. From ancient Greek times onwards, barnyard fowls have provided a ready source for the observation of behavior, including sexual acts. Principles drawn from study of these birds have sometimes been transferred to other species, including the human. Aristotle noted homosexual behavior in fowls, and in the eighteenth century the French naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc de Buffon reported his own independent observations in birds. In the present century, the social hierarchy of the barnyard formed the starting point for the concept of the pecking order in psychology.

In 1977 a considerable stir took place in the American media over the reports by George and Molly Hunt (University of California, Irvine) of female–female pairs of gulls. As early as 1885 a female–female swan pair had been reported from England, and there is now documentation of preferential same-sex patterns among a number of species of birds living in the wild.

Birds figure in erotic metaphor and symbolism in a variety of ways. In contemporary North America the term "chicken" circulates among pederasts to denote an attractive teenage boy. This usage should not be confused with the clipped form "chick"—occasionally found in older sources in the full form, "chicken" showing the origin—meaning woman. The general derivation from slang chicken—child is clear (attested from the eighteenth century onwards). The homoerotic sense may be traced back as far as the late nineteenth century: "The Affection which a sailor will lavish on a ship's boy to whom he takes a fancy, and makes his 'chicken,' as the phrase is." (Congressional Record, April 21, 1890). In another bird metaphor, the pursuer of adolescents is called the chicken hawk in today's street language.

Curiously, this semantic development had a forerunner in Latin, where pullus, chicken, was a general term of endearment, especially for handsome boys. Pularius (literally "poulterer") meant a "kidnapper of boys" or "boy stealer"; more generally it signified "pederast."

The male fowl, the cock, has provided a slang term for penis, by way of
the watercock or faucet (an evolution paralleled in other languages). Once the metaphor was created, however, it was reinforced by a natural similarity: "The extreme erectness of the cock, straining upwards, has suggested to many besides the Greeks the erectness of a timid penis" (Smith and Daniel). There is also evidence of a broader association of birds with the penis, as seen in Italian, uccello, bird, penis, and German vögel, to copulate (from Vogel, bird). Somewhat unusually, contemporary Spanish street language uses the female form polla, hen, to designate the penis. Contrast the established French poule, hen, whore. In older American slang, the word capon, a castrated rooster, served as an abusive epithet for an "effeminate man, a homosexual."

Confusingly, in a few parts of the English-speaking world, as in the southern United States, the slang word cock refers to the female pudenda. There is no doubt, however, that in the compounds cock-sucker and cockteaser the male organ is meant (though the former term is usually limited to male homosexuals, the latter to flirtatious heterosexual women).

In seduction scenes depicted on ancient Greek vases, roosters are the most common gift presented to youths by older male suitors. In the mythological realm the cock was associated with the bisexual god Dionysus. The noblest bird of all, the eagle, sometimes deputizes for father Zeus in depictions of the rape of Ganymede. A common emblem for homosexual lust in classical writing was two male partridges, who were said to be so highly sexed they turned to each other as easily as to the female. Another bird, the kite was linked to homosexual behavior because of a fanciful association of its Latin name milvus with mollis, a passive homosexual. Ancient folklore held that ravens conceived through their beaks; hence the Roman satirical poets Martial and Juvenal styled felators "ravens." Finally, the ibis, a bird well known to the Egyptians, figured as a symbol of anal preoccupations because it was reputed to employ its long beak to clean its own bowels.

See also Animal Homosexuality.


Wayne R. Dynes

BISEXUALITY

Human bisexuality may be defined as the capacity to feel sexual attraction toward, and to consummate sexual performance with, members of the opposite and one's own sex. The concept needs to be distinguished from androgyny and hermaphroditism, with which, however, it is historically affiliated.

History of the Concept of Bisexuality. Modern thinking about bisexuality stems in part from medical investigations in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, which found that during the first few weeks after conception the urogenital system of the human embryo is undifferentiated as to sex. (Bisexuality in plants had been recognized since the beginning of the nineteenth century.) Determination of the anatomical gender of the organs of the originally neutral being is triggered by the intervention of mechanisms later identified as chromosomal. This embryological discovery suggested that human maleness and femaleness is in some sense secondary, and the puzzling duality of our natures could be restored, at least on the level of ontogeny, to a primal unity. Almost inevitably, these modern findings called to mind ancient Greek and Near Eastern mythological thinking about primordial androgyny. From this fertile mix of ideas it could be concluded that human sexual attraction should also be undifferentiated as to gender, since our postnatal gender dimorphism is but a secondary process superseding, but not completely effacing, an original oneness. The result of such
research and speculation was to offer two complementary models, one of primordial unity, the other of a comprehensive triad: neutral, male, and female. Both the unitary and the triadic themes were to exercise their influence on the concept of sexual orientation.

Before this medical and mythological amalgam could be applied to the psychodynamic sphere, a conceptual apparatus had to be invented and diffused that assigned human sexual orientation to two distinct poles—heterosexual and homosexual—a polarity which is distinct from, yet analogous to the gender dimorphism of male and female. In classical antiquity and the Middle Ages, as well as in many non-Western cultures today, no such dichotomy was recognized. The medieval sodomite was viewed as a departure, sinful it is true, from universal human standards which form the abiding context. Thus, although the Middle Ages had to all intents and purposes its own notion of the homosexual (the sodomite), it lacked a concept of the heterosexual as such. The polarity of heterosexual and homosexual attraction was formulated in Central Europe in the 1860s by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and Károly Mátiás Kertbeny, who developed the homosexual concept. By the end of the century it had become widely familiar, and in the work of such writers as Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Otto Weininger, Wilhelm Fliess, and Sigmund Freud, the heterosexual–homosexual contrast melded with the previously discussed medical concept of primordial gender neutrality. Hence the Freudian idea of the "polyomorphic perverse," in which the individual’s attraction is freeform and undifferentiated (though in mature individuals this state yields to full heterosexuality). From this family of ideas descends the contemporary popular notion that "we’re all bisexual."

In the 1940s growing dissatisfaction with such notions of bisexuality led to significant critiques. Sándor Rado’s paper of 1940 signaled their abandonment by the psychoanalytic community. In 1948 Alfred C. Kinsey faulted the then-current concept of bisexuality on two grounds. First, in view of its historical origins, reliance on the term bisexuality fosters confusion between the categories of gender and orientation, which must be kept quite distinct. Second, Kinsey averred, the triad of heterosexuality, bisexuality, and homosexuality is too rigid, and should be replaced by his own more supple 0-6 scale. While Kinsey effectively attacked the prevailing exclusivism, his numerical scale presented its own problems and failed to gain widespread popular recognition. Its legacy was to leave the term “bisexual” with a somewhat amorphous and controversial claim to all those who could not be classified as exclusively heterosexual or homosexual.

The countercultural and social-utopian currents of the 1960s and 70s stimulated attempts at revision and partial restoration of the paradigm among many innovative (or would-be innovative) thinkers, who viewed the inherited “gender system” of fixed roles for men and women as an albatross which kept women inferior and hindered the full self-realization of both men and women. There was thus a trend to regard the anatomical differences of men and women as a minor matter. If this be so, it makes little sense to be overly concerned about the gender of the individual to whom one is attracted, and we are all free to be simply “humansexuals.”

Also in this period the vocal assertion of homosexual rights, often cast in the minority mold, suggested to some that bisexuals too were a neglected and victimized minority, suffering from the invisibility which had once characterized homosexuality, and who should join together to fight for recognition and rights [Klein, 1978]. Adoption of this “bisexual activist” view would lead to full-fledged recognition of three orientations, as seen, for example in the 1986 New York City gay rights ordinance, which explicitly protects heterosexuals, homosexuals, and bisexuals.
Contrasting with this triadic scheme is a unitary futurist utopian model which posits bisexuality as the eventual human norm, superseding both exclusive heterosexuality and exclusive homosexuality which would be regarded as forms of sexual restrictiveness, and even bigotry.

In support of their contention, the advocates of bisexuality point to earlier civilizations and contemporary tribal societies where, they claim, bisexual response is the norm. This would be true also in advanced industrial societies, which, it is held, would be also bisexual were it not for their sophisticated apparatus of sexual repression. Here one should interject the caveat that since the concepts of heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality are themselves of recent Western origin, it may not be wise to impose them insouciantly on cultures other than one's own. Still, with all due caution, one can observe that some societies, such as ancient Greece and some contemporary Melanesian tribes do exhibit a serial bisexuality, in which the maturing male does undergo homosexual experience as part of initiatory rites, assuming the heterosexual roles of husband and father afterwards. This seriality is far, however, from the ideal of nonorientation propounded by some theorists, that is to say, the notion that an individual is free to choose objects of sexual attraction in total disregard of their gender.

Bisexual Liberation Movement. In the 1970s (and to a lesser extent in the 1980s) a number of organizations were active in support of “bisexual liberation,” modeled on the gay liberation and the other sexual freedom movements. While these groups did not establish a consensus definition of bisexuality, they tended toward a broad conceptualization in which bisexuality was thought of as a basic capacity to respond erotically and emotionally/romantically to persons of either gender, either simultaneously or serially; the response did not have to be equal but had to be sufficient for a bisexual to feel somewhat alienated from identification as either homosexual or heterosexual.

Bisexuals, according to the leaders of this movement, were discriminated against by homosexuals as well as by heterosexuals, and much of the discussion revolved around a critique of homosexuals' attitudes toward bisexuality, and the exclusion of recognition of bisexuels in the gay movement, which was seen as dedicated to the fostering of an exclusively homosexual identity. Other topics were the implications of bisexuality for such institutions as marriage and the ghettoization which leaders decried in homosexual circles at the time. Bisexuals, it was held, should be allies in a common struggle with gays against discrimination, but should function as a bridge to the heterosexual world rather than being submerged in an exclusivist subculture.

Many bisexual spokespeople advocated bisexuality as superior (for various reasons) to either form of “exclusivism” (heterosexual or homosexual); they also held it to be much more threatening to the prevailing sexual norms, precisely because it potentially involved everyone rather than a small minority which could be ghettoized.

With the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, bisexuals were targeted as the most serious source of infection for the heterosexual majority, and “bisexual chic” passed as quickly as it had arisen. With it, for the most part, went the bisexual liberation movement. Its self-description as threatening had been realized all too quickly, but in a way none of its leaders had foreseen.

Bisexual Patterns. Examination of the biographies in this Encyclopedia reveals that many of the individuals chronicled displayed behavior patterns which today might be labeled “bisexual," whether a wide or a narrow definition is used. It is difficult, however, to analyze and categorize data from such a wide spectrum of eras and cultures.

Contemporary American society exhibits a number of behavior types which
may be classified as bisexual. There are, for example, macho men, basically heterosexual, who become to some degree habituated to achieving occasional gratification—employing the inserter role only—with men who would define themselves as gay. Among women, the sense of sisterhood engendered by the women's movement, accompanied in some cases by a wariness toward men, has led to lesbian contacts involving women whose previous experience was essentially heterosexual.

The United States, together with other advanced industrial societies, reveals a number of versions of serial patterns of other- and same-sex behavior. In what is sometimes termed situational homosexuality, inmates of total institutions, typically men's and women's prisons, form homosexual liaisons, only to resume their heterosexual patterns on release. Some young men follow a career of male prostitution for a time, and then, as their looks fade or other circumstances supervene, settle into a completely heterosexual lifestyle. Yet another type of serial experience appears in "late blooming" individuals, that is, men and women who have entered into heterosexual marriages or relationships, and then find, sometimes as late as their fortieths, that they are strongly attracted to members of their own sex. It should be noted that self-reports of persons' sexual orientation are not always fully reliable; for understandable reasons, some men and women who are essentially homosexual will say that they are bisexual, in the belief that this label is less stigmatizing.

It seems that there are few individuals in today's society who have attained the posited ideal of "gender-blindness," choosing their partners solely on the basis of personal qualities, so that they will go with a man one day and a woman the next. It is hard to say how many come close to this ideal, with gender playing a relatively small role. If they are comparable with the Kinsey "3's" (those who accept and equally enjoy both types of contacts, and have no strong preferences for one or the other"), they are a substantial group, Kinsey's "3's" representing somewhere between 4 and 5 percent of all males for at least three years of their life.

Those persons who are bisexual under the definition cited at the beginning of this article, but who have a definite preference for one side or the other, may be compared to Kinsey's "2's" and "4's", described by him as "predominantly" one way but "rather definitely . . . more than incidentally" the other way. Added together, these represent about 10.5 percent of the male population at age 25, divided between 7 percent predominantly heterosexual and 3.5 percent predominantly homosexual. Add the "3's" and we see why it is said that, using a broad definition, about 15 percent of the American male population is bisexual for a significant part of their lives.

As the types selectively reviewed above and the Kinsey figures suggest, most people fall more strongly on the one side than the other, and when all is said and done may be classified as predominantly heterosexual or homosexual with at least as much justification as bisexual. Moreover, there seems to be a kind of funnel effect, whereby as an individual grows older he or she tends to focus more and more exclusively on one sex or another. Thus the number of Kinsey "3's" declines from 4.7 percent at age 25 to 2 percent at age 45. This trend is particularly evident if one contrasts adolescent "sexual experimentation" with the more settled patterns of later life. The risk, perhaps, is in sliding easily from the description "predominantly homosexual" (or heterosexual) to just plain "homosexual" (or heterosexual), thereby picking up the connotations of exclusivity often associated with those terms.

Conclusion. All in all, the present status of the concept of bisexuality is far from satisfactory. As has been noted, both learned discussions and popular think-
ing display a recurrent tendency to confuse bisexual orientation with anatomical or psychic androgyne. Further, the assembling of useful ethnographies of contemporary groups requires a careful delimitation of the specific type or variety of bisexual behavior to be studied. With respect to individual psychodynamics, it is essential to pay careful attention to the depth and quality of the experience, rather than relying on a mere quantitative assessment of “sexual outlets.” It is to be hoped that with further well-planned research, the present chaotic amalgam of “bisexuality” will yield to a more rational spectrum of “bisexualities,” perhaps in parallel to a comparable phalanx of “homosexualities.”


Wayne R. Dynes

BLACK GAY AMERICANS

Thus far the social profile and achievements of black gay Americans have not received their due. This neglect stems from several sources. White Americans tend to view blacks almost monolithically, through a lens of stereotypes, one of which is that the black male is typically a macho heterosexual. The slighting of black lesbians is part and parcel of the relative invisibility of lesbians as a whole. Until recently, most socially conscious black gays chose to put their energies in the civil rights movement, rather than in the gay movement. Finally, there is the view that homosexuality is somehow alien to the black experience. Some black nationalists claim that same-sex behavior was unknown in Sub-Saharan Africa until European colonialists imposed it. Although abundant evidence now exists for a variety of homosexual social patterns in black Africa, the notion that the behavior is somehow distinctively white lingers.

Earlier History. For countries such as Brazil and Haiti there is evidence of direct transfer of forms of homosexual life as part of the African cultural diaspora. For North America such evidence is lacking, perhaps because the slave masters, observing Protestant norms of opposition to “sodomy,” ruthlessly sought to stamp the phenomenon out. Oral tradition suggests, however, that just as white masters engaged in sexual relations with black women, some white men would seek the sexual company of attractive young black slaves. After Emancipation, at the turn of the century, there is evidence of large-scale black dance events in such centers as St. Louis and Washington, D.C. These gatherings probably lie at the origin of the drag balls in Harlem in the 1920s, which attracted both blacks and whites. Not altogether dissimilar is the still surviving tradition of Mardi Gras in New Orleans—though a more visible black–white gay presence is evident in the carnivals in Brazil.

New York City’s Harlem, originally developed as housing for the white middle class, emerged at the end of World War I as a vital center of black culture (the Harlem renaissance). A number of black gay writers contributed to this flowering, including the poet Countee Cullen (1903–1946), and the prose writers Richard Bruce Nugent (1906– ) and Wallace Thurman (1902–1934). Other writers such as Langston Hughes (1902–1967) were very discreet and ambiguous in their sexuality but occasionally displayed homoerotic sensitivities. More tolerant than Greenwich Village, Harlem’s vibrant nightclub scene attracted many white gays from other parts of the city. Here they were regaled by such bisexual and lesbian entertainers as Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, "Moms" Mabley, and Gladys Bentley (1907–1960). Of these, Bentley was most easily identifiable, with her male attire and tough, butch behavior; eventually she
married her white lesbian lover in a highly publicized ceremony. Her recording career spanned the two decades after 1928. During the heyday of McCarthyism she was forced to conform and denounce her lesbianism, but even that could not save her singing career.

While the Depression of the 1930s put an end to the special brilliance of Harlem, black gay and lesbian life continued as before. There is increasing evidence of bars and nightspots in many American cities that were largely and completely black. More frequently than their heterosexual counterparts, blacks and whites entered into homosexual coupled relationships—though such “salt and pepper” couples could attract the particular ire of white bigots and also the disapproval of black relatives.

Toward the Present. In the 1960s James Baldwin achieved national—and international—renown with his depiction of blacks and gays in such books as Another Country (1962) and Tell Me How Long the Train’s Been Gone (1968). In a more subdued way the playwright Lorraine Hansberry lent her support to the nascent lesbian movement. Black gays such as Bayard Rustin made important contributions to the civil rights movement.

In the years of gay liberation after the Stonewall Rebellion relatively few black gays and lesbians participated. This reflected in part their sense of the greater urgency of the black civil rights movement, as has been noted, as well as the feeling of many who did attend that they were not comfortable. Heterosexual black leaders, even radicals, tended to keep their distance from the cause of gay liberation well into the 1980s. In 1983, after a stormy battle over gay participation in the 20th anniversary March on Washington, a group of prominent black leaders endorsed the national gay rights bill and put a speaker, Audre Lorde from the National Coalition of Black Gays, on the agenda; the following year the Reverend Jesse Jackson included gays in his “Rainbow Coalition.”

The largely white and middle class gay subculture sometimes openly discriminated against blacks, as in the practice of “carding” whereby black patrons of nightclubs were singled out by being required to present personal documents to be admitted.

These and other problems led to the formation of such organizations as Black and White Men Together (renamed Men of All Colors Together in some cities) and the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays (1978). Several little magazines appeared featuring black writers, and such black lesbian and gay authors as Michelle Cliff, Anita Cornwell, Larry Duplechan, Audre Lorde, and Anne Allen Shockley took their place in America’s gay bookstores. Samuel R. Delaney came to be recognized as one of the four or five most distinguished science fiction writers of America. New York’s Blackheart Collective brought together and published gay black poets. Other black gays became known in the worlds of music, sports, and the church. Black gay self-affirmation in turn stimulated similar movements among Asian-American and American Indian gays. Meanwhile, organized black homosexuals continue to wage a two-front battle against both racism in the gay community and homophobia in the black community.

Black Perspectives on Homosexuality. While a substantial portion of black Americans share the dominant modern industrial-world model of homosexuality, the majority of the black population, perhaps reflecting class differences as well as a different ethnic tradition, seems to accept a different, more Mediterranean conception. For these blacks, homosexuality tends to be equated with effeminacy, and the penetrator is less likely to view himself as homosexual. Thus, there are fewer inhibitions preventing a “macho” black male from engaging in sexual activity with another male, as long as he himself retains the “male role” and his partner restricts himself to the “female role,” than for his white counterpart. The high pro-
portion of young black males who pass through American confinement institutions and absorb models of homosexuality which are normative in prisons, jails, and reformatories may contribute to this perspective.

Complicating the American black perspective on homosexuality is the perception that slavery represented an attack on black manhood and that continued white (economic, political, legal) control over black men is an extension of that attack. Thus behavior which is seen as undermining black manhood, such as taking what is perceived as a feminine sexual role, is seen by many as a betrayal of the race, imposing a burden on black gays which whites do not ordinarily share.

Nonetheless, the black community, having long commiserated in the face of common oppression and misfortune, seems to have developed an ethos which is somewhat more tolerant of individual eccentricities, including sexual ones, and cognizant of the pernicious effects of discrimination of all kinds. Black culture seems to have been spared much of the anti-sexual heritage of the white Puritans and their successors, and the sort of organized witchhunt which white heterosexual society has from time to time inflicted on white homosexuality has apparently been absent from black American history. It is on this community ethos of relative tolerance that black gays must build in the future.

Kinsey Statistics. The Kinsey Institute study of homosexuality in the San Francisco Bay Area, published by Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg in 1978, sought to measure differences between white and black homosexuality; the original Kinsey surveys had restricted themselves to whites. Among the findings of this survey (which has undergone some methodological criticism) is that homosexual blacks were more likely to be “out” with their families than whites, were more sexually active but had fewer partners, were more likely to cruise at private parties and on the street, were less likely to worry about public exposure of their orientation, were less likely to have sex with strangers, more likely to accept older partners, more likely to engage in anal sex, less likely to belong to a homophile organization, and were less likely to have been arrested (in contrast with the heterosexual blacks in the study, who were more likely to have been arrested than the heterosexual whites).

Interracial Homosexuality. Given a perspective which frequently interprets homosexual relations as signifying dominance and submission, interracial sexuality must often deal with racial politics. For many heterosexual black men, it is more acceptable to take a dominant, controlling sexual role with a white male who takes a “female” role because this is seen as reversing and compensating for the historic political dominance of whitemen, a white dominance which has frequently been expressed (hetero)sexually, not only in slave society when white men freely appropriated black women, but in the contemporary world where black prostitutes are seen as having been appropriated by financially more powerful white male clients. This dynamic is expressed in the most extreme form in prison rape, which often follows racial lines.

Some gay blacks, on the other hand, being more comfortable in the submissive role, generalize from their experience of whites as holding the major power positions of American society to perceive white males as particularly sexually powerful, and so are attracted to them.

Whites, too, can get caught up in this situation, seeking out black transvestites and effeminate gays because they feel more comfortable dominating them or placing them in roles which elicit contempt from such white males. In the other direction, there are whites who are drawn to more “macho” black men because they are responding to a popular belief which depicts blacks as more virile, sexually uninhibited and forceful, with larger organs and without the supposedly weaken-
ing qualities of cultivated white civilization. Certainly the images of black men presented in written, photographic, and cinematic gay pomography do nothing to dispel such notions.

Having outlined such situations, it must also be noted that there is widespread interracial homosexuality which does not follow such lines, but which may be affected more by the attractiveness of the "different," curiosity, class differences, rebellion against social custom, or a belief that race should not be a factor in discriminating between potential sexual partners.

The San Francisco Kinsey survey found that 22 percent of white but only 2 percent of black homosexual males had never experienced interracial sex; none of the whites reported more than half their partners to be black, while two-thirds of the blacks reported more than half their partners to be white. For lesbians, only 28 percent of the whites had interracial experience, while 78 percent of the blacks did, and 30 percent of those had a majority of white partners.

Interracial couples seem to be rarer than the frequency of interracial sex would lead one to expect, probably because the dynamics of an ongoing relationship are more likely to trigger hostility from a society which is both homophobic and racist than would isolated encounters.


Ward Houser

BLACKMAIL

Blackmail is the popular term for what criminal law designates as extortion, which is defined as the making of a demand for some action (the handing over of money or secret information, or the commission of some official act) with a threat (to reveal some compromising action committed by the victim) for one's own gain or to the detriment of the victim. Until quite recent times the fear of blackmail in homosexual circles was intense. Most overt homosexuals were obliged by the moral attitude of society to lead a double life, posing as heterosexuals in public view and engaging in forbidden sexual acts clandestinely. By contrast, the professional criminal often cannot be blackmailed simply because he has no façade of respectability, or else lives in a subculture in which such a demand would be promptly met with violence against the would-be informer.

History. The origins of blackmail lie in the practice of delation that was widespread in antiquity. Before a modern police and detective force existed, the state power had to rely on informers who were characteristically rewarded for the information which they conveyed to the authorities. But if they could obtain a far greater sum from the delinquent party than the state would pay for the information, cost-benefit analysis pointed in the direction of extortion. It has been established that by the end of the thirteenth century, the moral teaching of the Western Church had succeeded in outlawing homosexual behavior, for which the Bible and the Code of Justinian prescribed the penalty of death. This meant that the individual who defied the ban on sodomy orical acts exposed himself to capital punishment, and had besides to conceal even his interest in the forbidden conduct. In practice the fact that sexual behavior tends to be relegated to the most intimate sphere of private life, one to be hidden from all except the participants, made it nearly impossible for the state power to uncover and punish the culprits. But the potential blackmailer, if he discovered the homosexual propensities of his victim, could extort major sums of money from him for his silence.
The lifelong hypocrisy and concealment that Christian morality imposed upon the homosexual meant that in early modern times, for the criminal underworld blackmail of covert sex offenders was to be a lucrative source of income, as the morals squads of nineteenth-century Europe quickly discovered. Even in countries like France, where the Constituent Assembly had abolished the laws against sodomy in 1791, the social ruin that would befall the homosexual whose conduct became widely known was basis enough for the practice of chantage (although French law prefers the term extortion). Léo Taxil even alleged that every government from that of Napoleon 1 to the Third Republic had used homosexuality as grounds for political blackmail. A third use of blackmail—after money and social control—was for purposes of espionage, as in the case of the Austrian Colonel Alfred Redl, who was supposedly compelled by the Russians to reveal his country’s military secrets.

*Arguments of the Homosexual Rights Movement.* The early homosexual rights movement made much of the danger of blackmail in its propaganda for repeal of the notorious Paragraph 175. The threat of extortion exacerbated the fear and misery of the homosexual who already exposed himself to imprisonment and social ruin every time he sought sexual gratification. The situation of the victim was made even worse by the legal practice of allowing the blackmailer, even if found guilty in court, to testify against the other party in turn, so that the homosexual who was subjected to extortion had every reason to fear any judicial inquiry. English law, by contrast, confined the proceeding against the blackmailer to the simple question of whether the extortion had been committed. The blackmailer could be a male prostitute, but more often a young criminal who knew that he could entice a homosexual into a compromising situation and then obtain either money or valuable objects as the price for his silence. The actual demand could be expressed in a letter which stated or implied that if the recipient did not pay the sum demanded, his conduct would become public knowledge or would be disclosed to the authorities. If the victim or his family were wealthy, the sums extorted annually could run into thousands of dollars. On the other hand, a petty criminal desiring only a small sum might merely threaten the homosexual with physical violence on the spot. More subtle forms of blackmail could turn upon the conduct of a businessman or politician in his professional life, or take the form of threats to reveal an individual’s conduct on the pages of a newspaper or magazine. This latter practice was a lucrative source of income for the yellow press of the early twentieth century.

In the face of an intolerant public opinion, the homosexual threatened with blackmail rarely attempted to seek aid from the police, and there were cities in which the police force itself, or individuals on the margin of law enforcement, engaged in regular shakedowns of homosexuals whom they either entrapped or observed in known trysting places. The invention of instantaneous photography provided the blackmailer with a convenient tool, since an unsupported allegation of behavior that left no physical trace could far more easily be refuted than the evidence of the culprit in flagrante delicto. Even if the victim sought the aid of an attorney, he would find that no respectable member of the bar would touch the case, and he would be referred to a criminal lawyer on the fringe of the profession who for his services would demand fees that amounted to an indirect mode of extortion. Some masochistic individuals were unable to break out of the blackmailer’s clutches, others sought to escape by fleeing to another country, some were driven to suicide when they saw no way out of their plight. Only rarely would a particularly strong or aggressive individual find the courage to intimidate or even kill the blackmailer. Of Magnus Hirschfeld’s ten thousand subjects only a small number had
ever been imprisoned, but more than three thousand had been blackmailed. A study made in Austria in the early 1970s, when homosexual conduct was still illegal, came to a similar figure: approximately one-third of a sample group of homosexuals had been victims of extortion.

*Official Response.* The arguments mounted by Hirschfeld and other supporters of the early homosexual rights movement were compelling enough to persuade even the National Socialist lawmakers who in the legislation of June 28, 1935 increased the penalties for male homosexuality, but at the same time amended the Code of Criminal Procedure to allow the district attorney to refrain from prosecuting an individual whose criminal conduct had subjected him to blackmail. In contrast, the subcommittee of the United States Senate that was appointed in 1950 to investigate Senator Joseph R. McCarthy’s charges that the administration was harboring “sex perverts in government” found that the danger of blackmail made homosexuals security risks; and since the penal laws of the District of Columbia had no provision against homosexual acts the subcommittee urged that the code be amended in this direction. In other words, it created a situation in which a homosexual employee of the Federal Government could be dismissed from his job and even prosecuted for his sexual activity, and then used the risk of blackmail to justify the policy it was advocating. This is a classic instance of how arguments formulated as an appeal for toleration could be maliciously turned into justifications for further intolerance.

*Current Situation.* In the debate over the recommendations of the Wolfenden Committee in England after 1957, the issue of blackmail played a considerable role, and the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 was even dubbed “The Blackmailer’s Charter” because of the opportunity that it had given the criminal underworld to prey upon otherwise respectable, law-abiding members of society. As the threat of prosecution faded with the reform of the criminal laws, beginning in England in 1967, and even more with the education of law enforcement officials in regard to homosexuality, the danger of blackmail receded. In retrospect, blackmail was the tribute which fear paid to intolerance. It will end only when the social stigma attached to homosexual behavior has been eradicated. The rallying cry of the gay liberation movement “Come out!” is an appeal for candor and courage on the part of the homosexual community that will relegate the eventuality of blackmail to the dark annals of history.


*Warren Johansson*

**Bloch, Iwan** (1872–1922)

German physician, historian, and sex researcher. One of an extraordinary group of investigators active in Wilhelmine Berlin, Bloch perhaps surpassed all the others in learning. Omnivorously curious, he is said to have possessed a personal library of 80,000 volumes. In addition to the medical approach in which he had been trained, Bloch directed his full attention to historical, literary, sociological, and ethnographic evidence, so as to create a multidisciplinary concept of Sexualwissenschaft (sexual science). In his own time he viewed the problem of venereal disease as emblematic, holding that this once overcome, humanity could look forward to a bright future.

Rejecting the degeneration theory, Bloch first held that homosexuality could be acquired in a multiplicity of ways, but then—on the basis of first-hand observation—accepted Hirschfeld’s doctrine that “true homosexuality,” of congenital
origin, was not morbid, but rather healthy in that it was spontaneous and occurred in individuals who were able to function as well as other members of society. He distinguished homosexuality per se from pedophilia, pederasty, hermaphroditism, misogyny, and "pseudo-homosexuality" (the latter largely corresponding to bisexuality).

Some of the English translations of Bloch's works, especially those dealing with anthropological and historical subjects, are so heavily abridged as to be no true measure of his erudition.


BLOOMSBURY

Taking its name from the district of London where many of the members lived, the Bloomsbury coterie influenced British thought and letters during the first half of the twentieth century. Broadly cultural rather than academic in their interests and affiliations, its members practiced and favored several arts, standing for civilized tolerance as against the competitive ethic of official Britain. Adherents were socially cohesive, but sexually varied: the salons of Bloomsbury hosted heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexual members.

The group began in March 1905, when the Stephen family launched their "at homes" at 46 Gordon Square. Many of the recruits were young men who had just been graduated from Cambridge, where they had absorbed, in an atmosphere of wide-ranging enquiry, the ethical precepts of the philosopher G. E. Moore. At Cambridge most had belonged to a secret soci-
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.


Wayne R. Dynes

**Blüher, Hans**  
(1888–1955)  
German homophile leader and scholar. His early, controversial studies on the German youth movement (Wander-vogelbewegung) 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.

**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 (Bohème) 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 Epoque. In the United States the archetypal bohemiens 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
particular concentration in the bohemian quarters. While attracting a more varied and upscale clientele, these mob-protected bars created a new interface between bohemia and crime. Then, when Prohibition was repealed in 1933 much of the acquired aura of clandestinity—and the need for payoffs—lingered in gay bars in the bohemian quarters, where the effects of sleazy, specious glamor and the aura of the forbidden were not to disappear until the 1960s.

The beatniks and hippies of this period sanctioned sexual experimentation along with the use of consciousness-expanding drugs and similar avenues of secession from the constraints of American middle-class life. To a considerable extent, the post-1969 phase of the gay movement was launched from the social base of an “alternative” culture in the metropolitan bohemiens whose residents were not threatened by the ostracism and economic boycott that would have befallen known activists in Middle America.


Wayne R. Dyaes

**BOISROBERT, FRANÇOIS LE METEL DE** (1592–1662)

Courtier of Cardinal Richelieu and founder of the French Academy. Born in Caen, he practiced law briefly in Rouen, but after some legal troubles in that city he left for Paris with letters of recommendation to highly placed personalities. In the French capital he soon gave proof of his lifelong talent for insinuating himself into circles of pretty and educated women whom he flattered and entertained. In time a sexual interest in the handsome pages who adorned the court of Louis XIII awakened in him, and he exhibited a feminine delight in appearing publicly in elegant and luxurious clothing. But at the same time he evinced a wit and humor, a gift for storytelling, that made him a favorite of Cardinal Richelieu. He knew how to wound and stigmatize some, to flatter and cajole others. Though not high-born or brilliant, he gained access to the highest circles thanks to the Cardinal’s protection, and in spite of his undisguised sexual proclivities. “He could have given the Greeks lessons in how to make love,” said a contemporary, and he even earned the sobriquet of “the mayor of Sodom.” His position at court he also used to intercede on behalf of less talented and needy men of letters. As a token of his favor Richelieu conferred the title of canon at Rouen on Boisrobert, but this in no way changed his lifestyle.

At this time a group of writers assembled weekly in a remote corner of Paris to discuss matters of language and literature, and out of this Boisrobert created an association with formal membership and statutes—the French Academy, admission to which became a coveted symbol of recognition as a littérature of the first rank, and at the outset it was Boisrobert’s personal recommendation that mattered, and he presided over the Academy with elegance and refinement. An incident at the theatre cost him the favor of the monarch, and he was exiled to Rouen, but returned as Cardinal Richelieu was dying [1642]. In favor again, he encountered hostility from the grammarian and lexicographer Gilles Ménage, who railed at him as “Cet admirable Pathelin/Aimant le genre masculin” [That admirable pathetic/Loving the masculine gender]. After a further mishap that led to a second exile in Rouen, the courtier returned to bask in the favor of the ladies of the court, with whom he had a feminine identification that made them overlook or forgive his own erotic proclivity for pages and manservants. With a physique reminiscent of a fragile statuette he combined a charm that enabled him to empathize with the female sex and to play the role of courtier with skill and
audacity. The French Academy with its forty immortals remains a monument to his incarnation of the homosexual affinity for literature and art.


*Warren Johansson*

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**BONDAGE**

*See Sadomasochism.*

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**BONDING**

*See Friendship, Homosociality.*

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**BONHEUR, ROSA**

(1822–1899)

French painter. Born into a family of artists, Bonheur was encouraged early on by her father, who sent her to the Louvre to copy old-master canvases and urged her to visit farms and stables to sketch. She was only nineteen when she entered her work for the first time in the official Salon. In her twenties she frequented the slaughterhouses and horse fairs for material. For these visits she obtained a permit to wear male costume. At the age of twenty-six she won her first Gold Medal, awarded by a jury that included Corot, Delacroix, and Ingres. Five years later, her reputation reached its height in France with the display of *The Horse Fair*, an imposing tour de force which today adorns The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Prosperity enabled her to acquire a chateau near Fontainebleau, where she kept a menagerie of exotic animals. She traveled frequently and hobnobbed with royalty. Claiming that the duties of her craft required her full attention, Bonheur never married.

At the age of fourteen Rosa Bonheur began a friendship with Nathalie Micas, a sickly child whom she protected. In their blossoming relationship (which Bonheur described as “sisterly”), Nathalie looked after the clothes and the studio, freeing Bonheur for her work. Although it was never openly acknowledged as a love affair, this intimate connection lasted until Nathalie’s death in 1889.

Her last years were illuminated by a passionate friendship with a young American artist, Anna Elizabeth Klumpke, whose mother had brought her daughters from San Francisco to Paris so that they might take advantage of European culture. Although they had met in 1889, the very year of Micas’ death, it was not until 1898, in an imperious letter to Mrs. Klumpke, that Bonheur announced that she and Anna had decided to share their lives. Klumpke’s writings leave little doubt of the nature of her relationship with Bonheur. In a few letters to intimate friends the aged painter referred to her companion as “my wife.” Despite family opposition, Bonheur made Klumpke her sole heir.

Although there had been notable women painters in earlier centuries, Bonheur’s career flourished in an era of increasing assertion of women’s rights and creativity, as seen in the careers of such writers as Flora Tristan and George Sand. Bonheur also took advantage of the interest in androgyny then current to paint “men’s” subjects, while adopting, however guardedly, a male role in her personal relations as well. After her death Bonheur’s reputation declined, but it revived again with the late-twentieth century resurgence of interest in academic painting.


*Kathy D. Schnapper*
BOSTON

The capital of Massachusetts was founded in 1630 by John Winthrop and other Puritans as "the city on a hill" to be a beacon to show the world how true Christians should live. The religious convictions of the colonists naturally entailed a hatred of all forms of sexual "depravity." As early as 1636 the General Court of Massachusetts Bay asked Rev. John Cotton to draft a law code for the colony, which included the death penalty for "unnatural filthiness, whether sodomy, which is carnal fellowship of man with man, or woman with woman." Although this proposal was not accepted, another law—providing for the death penalty for male homosexuality only—was adopted in 1641.

Because of its exceptional harbor and enterprising merchants and shipowners, Boston achieved wealth and sophistication in the eighteenth century. Profits from the sordid triangle trade—molasses, rum, and slaves—were not disdained by these mercantile aristocrats. Secularizing merchants won their prolonged struggle against dour ministers, but the Puritan strain has never been completely eradicated. Boston's aggressive patriots, like the Adamses, remained more puritanical than the Southern deists with whom they were allied. After 1830 clipper ships and China trade brought new wealth and power to the Boston Brahmins, who gave the city the particular cachet it has long retained. The flowering of New England lifted the city—now called the Athens of America—to the front rank of American culture. Bostonians profited in the mid-nineteenth century from speculation in railroads, textile and leather manufacturing, banking and profiteering from the Civil War, while abolitionists, wrapping themselves in the mantle of moral superiority that their Puritan forebears had worn, berated both Southern slaveowners and Northern robber barons. President Charles William Eliot (1834–1926) raised Harvard to a leading position among American universities and, by adopting the German Ph.D. system, turned it into a world center of scholarship.

Prominent homosexuals as well as bars and an emerging gay subculture can be traced to this period. The Imagist poet Amy Lowell smoked cigars and had a long-term relationship with a lesbian lover. Katherine Lee Bates, who wrote "America the Beautiful" in 1893 and was a professor at Wellesley (1885–1925), was also gay. In 1907 the Monatsberichte of the Berlin Scientific-Humanitarian Committee printed a letter which said that "Boston, this good old Puritan city, has homosexuals by the hundreds," Yankees being the most numerous, but French Canadians also well represented. Homosexuality extended into all social classes, from the North End teeming with immigrants to the fashionable Beacon Hill and Back Bay. The grapevine carried word of homosexual figures in the highest stratum of Bostonian life. However, the anonymous correspondent believed that the American homosexuals were "astonishingly ignorant about their own true nature"—which amounted to saying that while they were conscious of their physical desires, they had not yet been exposed to European concepts of homosexual identity and militancy. The political emancipation of the American gay subculture lay decades in the future.

With the coming of the subway, street-car, and electric tram, suburbs developed. World War I increased the cosmopolitanism of Bostonians and loosened their sexual mores. During Prohibition certain speakeasies, including the Napoleon Club and the Chess Room in the Hotel Touraine, attracted a gay clientele. Irish politicians such as James Michael Curley broke the power of the Brahmins who retreated to Beacon Hill or the suburbs, though they still held power in the financial district. One governor was reputedly gay, as were the son of another and two cardinals. A gay ghetto developed on St. Botolph Street, on the border between the Back Bay and the South End, the once-
fashionable district where George Santayana lived. Italians occupied the North End and blacks were displaced from the back of Beacon Hill to Massachusetts Avenue where they had their own speakeasies and jazz places, their numbers swollen by emigrants from the South.

World War II saw more black immigration and more sexual experimentation in the military by all classes of males and females. After the war, as the elite and upper-middle class fled the city to the automobile suburbs, the gay movement began with the formation of Boston’s Daughters of Bilitis and the founding of the Mattachine Society of Boston in the late 1950s by the erratic and picturesque figure of Prescott Townsend, a scion of one of the great Brahmin families, who summered in nearby Provincetown, now a major gay resort. Gay bars in and near the “combat zone” and in Scally Square continued the prosperity they had gained during the war.

Boston declined in the 1950s and 1960s for economic and social reasons. Later, a bitter dispute over school busing pitted Irish in South Boston and Italians in East Boston intent on protecting their ethnic neighborhoods against blacks and Hispanics, now the fastest growing element in Boston’s mix. Economic recovery and urban renewal began in the late 1960s and have since accelerated. Homosexuals arrived in great numbers on elegant Beacon Hill and Back Bay and subsequently gentrified the South End and the Fenway.

After the Stonewall Rebellion in New York City in 1969 Boston’s gay movement developed. The Mattachine Society had been replaced by the Homophile Union of Boston (HUB).

In 1977 the Boston Boise Committee organized to demand fair trials for a group accused of child pornography. The District Attorney was thrown out of office, and only two of the defendants were convicted. Out of the Committee grew GLAD (Gay and Lesbian Advocates) and the North American Man–Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), founded in 1978 and now a national group, although the Boston chapter disbanded subsequently.

Fag Rag, the second oldest gay periodical still published in North America, was founded in 1970 by an editorial group that included Charley Shively. Three years later appeared the Gay Community News, a lesbian/gay weekly unique in being a collective equally balanced between men and women. A successful gay book publisher, Alyson Press, was created by Sasha Alyson, who also founded a pro-religious paper Bay Windows.

Though deeply divided and often cantankerous, Boston’s gay community ranks as one of the most important in North America. Its annual Gay Pride March has been held each year since 1971 in mid-June, before the one in New York. The Good Gay Poets was organized in 1972 and has continued to publish. If Boston has less of a Bohemia and is more discreet in its gay life than New York or San Francisco, as an educational center each year it attracts thousands of the brightest American youth. With over 200,000 students in numerous colleges and universities, large numbers of faculty, and outstanding medical and legal institutions, the city vies with Paris, London, and New York as one of the leading cultural centers of the world. Increasingly, it is also a tourist mecca that lures the gay vacationer in search of erotic pleasures.


Antonio A. Giarraputo and William A. Percy

BOSTON MARRIAGE

The term “Boston marriage” was used in late nineteenth-century New England to describe a long-term monogamous relationship between two otherwise unmarried women. The women were
generally financially independent of men, either through inheritance or because of a career. They were usually feminists, New Women, often pioneers in a profession. They were also very involved in culture and social betterment, and these female values formed a strong basis for their life together. Their relationships were in every sense (as described by a Bostonian, Mark DeWolfe Howe, the nineteenth-century Atlantic Monthly editor, who had social contact with a number of these women, including Sarah Orne Jewett who had a Boston marriage with Annie Fields), “a union—there is no truer word for it.” Whether these unions sometimes or often included a sexual relationship can not be known, but it is clear that these women spent their lives primarily with other women, they gave to other women the bulk of their energy and attention, and they formed powerful emotional ties with other women. If their personalities could be projected to our times, it is probable that they would see themselves as “women-identified women,” i.e., what we would call lesbians, regardless of the level of their sexual interests.

Henry James intended his novel The Bostonians (1885), which he characterized as “a very American tale” (the italics are James’s), to be a study of just such a relationship—“one of those friendships between women which are so common in New England,” he wrote in his Notebook. James’ sister Alice had a Boston marriage with Katharine Loring in the years before Alice’s death.


Lillian Faderman

BOTTICELLI, SANDRO
(ALESSANDRO DI MARIANO FELIPPE; CA. 1444–1510)

Italian painter of the early Renaissance in Florence. Botticelli’s art matured in the cultural efflorescence fostered by the Medici family—a milieu that was shattered by the turbulent events of the end of the century, including the theocratic dictatorship of Savonarola. After this break there developed the different artistic ideals that were to crystallize in the high Renaissance.

Botticelli’s paintings capture perfectly the essence of a transient era. The remarkable beauty of the artist’s style stems from a thoroughgoing fusion of the older linear manner known as the International Style with the new sense of formal rigor demanded by Renaissance ideals. Although most of Botticelli’s surviving works were religious—responding to standard patterns of patronage—he also excelled in portraiture as well as mythological allegory of classical derivation. Paintings in the latter category, above all the celebrated Primavera (Spring) and the Birth of Venus, were created in an atmosphere of philosophical syncretism generated by the Neo-Platonic movement. The chief figure in this trend, Marsilio Ficino, advocated a concept of Socratic love, a cautious and high-minded rationalization of his own homoerotic leanings. Moreover, the influence of another closeted homophile Humanist, the poet and philologist Angelo Poliziano has been detected in Botticelli’s works.

More concrete evidence of Botticelli’s sexual orientation is available. On November 16, 1502, someone dropped a denunciation in the box of the sinister Uffiziali di Notte, a municipal committee concerned with morals charges. According to this anonymous informant, the artist had been engaging in sodomy with one of his young assistants. Perhaps because of the painter’s venerable age and high professional standing, no further action was
taken. In view of the fact that Botticelli never married, and that such liaisons with pupils [garzoni] were common, as shown by similar accusations lodged, among others, against Donatello and Leonardo, it seems unwise to dismiss the incident, as some modern scholars, in their zeal to preserve Botticelli’s “purity,” have done.

In the last decade of his life Botticelli had the misfortune of seeing his art come to be regarded as old fashioned, and he painted little. On his death his artistic reputation fell into a decline that lasted some 250 years. The triumphant revival of Botticelli, which was made possible in the light of more inclusive nineteenth-century taste, owes much to two homophile writers: the aesthete Walter Pater, who included an essay on the painter in his immensely popular The Renaissance (1868), and the scholar Herbert Horne, who published his great monograph on Botticelli in 1908.

Wayne R. Dynes

BOTTO, ANTONIO
See Pessoa, Fernando.

BOWLES, JANE
(1917–1973)

American writer. Born Jane Auer to a middle-class Jewish family of New York City, she early had a sense of a powerful imagination together with a awareness of standing apart from others. A childhood brush with tuberculosis resulted in an operation that made her lame, increasing her alienation. In 1937, at a party in Harlem, she met the bisexual American writer and composer Paul Bowles. They soon traveled to Mexico together, and in the following year were married. Jane began work on her novel Two Serious Ladies, which was published by Knopf in 1943. In 1947 Paul left for Morocco, where Jane joined him the following year. Tangiers was to be her home for the rest of her life.

Jane had had lesbian relationships before her marriage and was to have a number afterwards, often with Europeans visiting Morocco. In 1948 Paul introduced her to an illiterate, but charismatic young woman of Fez, Cherifa, with whom Jane was to have a stormy relationship over the years. She suffered intermittently from a writing block, complicated by troubles with drinking. During their stay in Morocco Jane and Paul Bowles became acquainted with many visiting gay literary figures, including William Burroughs, Truman Capote, Allen Ginsberg, and Tennessee Williams.

Jane Bowles’ last years were difficult, and she converted to Catholicism. She was hospitalized on several occasions in a clinic at Málaga, where she died on May 4, 1973. Her husband Paul continued to live and work in Morocco, devoting himself to translating the work of local writers.

In the view of the poet John Ashbery, Jane Bowles was “one of the finest modern writers of fiction, in any language.” Her work stands outside the mainstream of American fiction, and some have likened it to the Jewish mystical tradition of the Kabbala. She had a powerful sense of women’s independence from men, which she strove to incarnate in the force and quality of her writing.


Evelyn Gettone

BRAND, ADOLF
(1874–1945)

German book dealer, publisher, and writer. Brand is chiefly remembered for editing Der Eigene: Ein Blatt für männliche Kultur [The Exceptional: A Magazine for Male Culture] between 1896 and 1931—a publication that has been claimed as the world’s first homosexual periodical. It began to appear in April 1896 with the subtitle Monatsschrift für Kunst und Leben [Monthly for Art and Life], and only in July 1899—that is to say, after the found-
BRAND, ADOLF

Brazíl

This vast country, with its 140 million inhabitants, is unique in Latin America in deriving its language and much of its culture from Portugal. It enjoys the envious distinction of being known internationally as the New World country with perhaps the greatest freedom for homosexuals. Visitors concur in praising the beauty and vivacity of Brazilian gays who may be easily encountered in the streets, squares, and places of public accommodation. Historical and anthropological factors underlie this phenomenon. The vibrant multiracial character of Brazil, which blends large components of native Indians, Africans imported as slaves, and Portuguese colonists—all groups that had their own homosexual traditions—explains the strong presence of male and female homosexuals in Brazilian society.

The Colonial Era. When the Portuguese reached Brazil in 1500, they were horrified to discover so many Indians who practiced the "unthinkable sin of sodomy." In the Indian language they were called tivira, and André Thevet, chaplain to Catherine de Medici, described them in 1575 with the word bardache, perhaps the first occasion on which this term was used to describe Amerindian homosexuals. The native women also had relations with one another: according to the chroniclers they were completely "inverted" in appearance, work, and leisure, preferring to die rather than accept the name of women. Perhaps these cacoiambeguire contributed to the rise of the New World Amazon myth.

In their turn the blacks—more than five million were imported during almost four centuries of slavery—made a major contribution to the spread of homosexuality in the "Land of the Parrots." The first transvestite in Brazilian history was a black named Francisco, of the Mani-Congo tribe, who was denounced in 1591 by the Inquisition visitors, but refused to discard women's clothing. Francisco was a member of the brotherhood of the quimbanba, homosexual fetishists who were well

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known and respected in the old kingdom of Congo-Angola. Less well established than among the Amerindians and Africans, the Portuguese component (despite the menace of the Tribunal of the Holy Office [1536–1621]) continued unabated during the whole history of the kingdom, involving three rulers and innumerable notables, and earning sodomy the sobriquet of the “vice of the clergy.” If we compare Portugal with the other European countries of the Renaissance—not excluding England and the Netherlands—our documentation (abundant in the archives of the Inquisition) requires the conclusion that Lisbon and the principal cities of the realm, including the overseas metropolises of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, boasted a gay subculture that was stronger, more vital, and more stratified than those of other lands, reflecting the fact that Luso-Brazilian gays were accorded more tolerance and social acceptance. Thirty sodomites were burned by the Inquisition during three centuries of repression, but none in Brazil, despite the more than 300 who were denounced for practicing the “evil sin.” They were referred to as sodomitas and fanchonos.

Independence. With Brazilian independence and the promulgation of the first constitution (1823) under the influence of the Napoleonic Code, homosexual behavior ceased to be criminal, and from this date forward there has been no Brazilian law restricting homosexuality—apart from the prohibition with persons less than 18 years of age, the same as for heterosexuals. Lesbianism, outlawed by the Inquisition since 1646, had always been less visible than male homosexuality in Brazil, and there is no record of any mulher-macho ("male woman") burned by the Portuguese Inquisition. In the course of Brazilian history various persons of note were publicly defamed for practicing homosexuality: in the seventeenth century two Bahia governors, Diogo Botelho and Camara Coutinho, both contemporaries of the major satirical poet, Gregório de Matos, author of the oldest known poem about a lesbian in the Americas, “Nise.” He himself was brought before the Inquisition for blasphemy in saying that “Jesus Christ was a sodomite.” In the nineteenth century the revolutionary leader Sabino was accused of homosexual practices. A considerable surviving correspondence between Empress Leopoldina, consort of the Brazil’s first sovereign, Dom Pedro, with her English lady in waiting, Maria Graham, attests that they had both a homosexual relationship and an intense homoemotional reciprocity. Such famous poets and writers as Álvares de Azevedo (1831–1852), Olavo Bilac (1865–1918), and Mário de Andrade (1893–1945) rank among the votaries of Ganymede. The list also includes the pioneer of Brazilian aeronautics, Alberto Santos-Dumont (1873–1932), after whose airship the pommes Santos-Dumont were named.

At the end of the nineteenth century homosexuality appears as a literary theme. In 1890 Aluísio Azevedo included a realistic lesbian scene in O Cortico, and in 1895 Adolfo Caminha devoted the entire novel O Bom Crioulo (which has been translated into English) to a love affair between a cabin boy and his black protector. In the faculties of medicine of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia various theses addressed the homosexual question, beginning with “O Androfilismo” of Domingos Firmínio Ribeiro (1898) and “O Homosexualismo: A Libertinagem no Rio de Janeiro” (1906) by Pires de Almeida—both strongly influenced by the European psychiatrists Moll, Krafft-Ebing, and Tardieu. From 1930 comes the first and most outspoken Brazilian novel on lesbianism, O 3º Sexo, by Odilon Azevedo, where lesbian workers founded an association intended to displace men from power, thus setting forth a radical feminist discourse.

The Contemporary Gay Situation. It was only at the end of the 1970s that gays were able to realize the dream of the terceiristas of Azevedo’s novel. In 1976
appeared the main gay journal of Brazilian history, *O Lampido* ("The Lantern"), which had a great positive effect on the rise of the Brazilian homosexual movement. By 1980 twenty-two organized groups had been formed and two national congresses had been held. Such a promising start was succeeded by inevitable setbacks, caused mainly by the lack of political discipline of the gay activists who had founded the groups and the material and intellectual poverty of the participants. Four gay groups remain [Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, and two in São Paulo], all of them legally recognized. Among the main victories of the Brazilian gay movement is the freeing of homosexuals from the role of "sexual deviants and inverters" and the ratification of several resolutions on the part of scientific bodies protesting antigay discrimination and calling for financial support for research on homosexuality. One of the chief battles of gay activists is to denounce the repeated murders of homosexuals—about every ten days the newspapers report a homophobic crime.

Recently the transvestite Roberta Close appeared on the cover of the main national magazines, receiving the accolade of "the model of the beauty of the Brazilian woman." In the mid-1980s more than 400 Brazilian transvestites could be counted in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris; many also offer themselves in Rome. When they hear the statistics of the Kinsey Report, Brazilian gays smile, suggesting through experience and "participant observation" that in Brazil the proportion of predominantly homosexual men is as high as 30 percent.

Since 1983, with the death of the first Brazilian AIDS victim, the "epidemic of the century" has caused much concern in the homosexual community. Situated in the third place in the world, after the United States and France, Brazil was tardy in mounting a public information campaign aimed at the prevention of AIDS. Given the general bisexuality, the spread of the disease was particularly worrisome among less prosperous youth, who constitute half of the population. Brazil, once the paradise of gays, has entered a difficult path.


**BRITAIN**

*See England.*

**BRITTEN, BENJAMIN**

(1913-1976)

English composer. His works, written in a variety of media, achieved both popular and specialist success, though with the passage of years they came to be labeled "traditionalist" by some. Britten shared much of his life with the tenor Peter Pears, who frequently interpreted his works. In the late 1930s he began several collaborations with the poet W. H. Auden, including incidental music to two plays, songs, and the operetta *Paul Bunyan* (1941). Words have always been an important stimulus for Britten: he has set to music poems by Michelangelo and Rimbaud, among others. In 1976 he was named a life peer [Baron Britten of Aldeburgh] by Queen Elizabeth.

In his dramatic compositions Britten worked with the idea of "parable" as a means of effecting changes in existing patterns of human relationships. The opera *Peter Grimes* (1945) is loosely based on a poem by George Crabbe. Grimes, a fisherman accused of involvement in the death of two apprentices, cannot face social pressure and commits suicide. In this choice of subject it has been argued that Britten was presenting, perhaps uncon-
sciously, a parable of his own homose-
sexuality. The libretto of The Turn of the Screw (1954) derives from a famous story by Henry James, which it follows closely. Two orphaned children are placed in the care of a new governess, who must struggle for control of the boy Miles with the ghost of Quint, a former valet. Although she persuades Miles to repudiate Quint, the effort is too much and he falls lifeless beside her.

In the story one could assume that the ghost is a figment of the characters' imagination—a collective delusion—but in the opera he must appear in the flesh. Hence the relationship takes on a more clearly pederastic character than it otherwise would have done.

The Turn of the Screw remains shrouded in a certain amount of ambiguity, which disappears in the case of Death in Venice (1976). Thomas Mann's novella, which the opera faithfully follows, concerns a Central European bourgeois, the image of respectability, who falls precipitously in love with a teenage boy. The Britten setting, which has been successfully staged in a number of major opera houses, offers an adroit, sometimes moving version of a subject that at first sight would seem difficult for audiences to accept. Death in Venice is not only a fitting climax to a brilliant career, but an example of the work of a homosexual artist who made creative use of the opportunities that a changing social climate provided.


Wayne R. Dynes

BROOKS, ROMAIN GODDARD (1874–1970)

American artist. Born in Rome to a wealthy American family, Romaine had a childhood marred by her mother's preferring her sickly brother to her. At the age of seventeen she was sent to a girls' finishing school in Geneva, where she had crushes on several other students. She showed a talent for both art and music, and was able to transfer to Paris. She was briefly married to the homosexual pianist John Ellingham Brooks, and had a stormy relationship with the predatory Italian writer Gabriele d'Annunzio. In 1905, after study in Italy, Romaine Brooks began a serious career as an artist in Paris, capped by her successful show in 1910. Her specialty was portraiture, where she showed the influence of James McNeil Whistler, though she never studied with him. Her finest single work is probably her self-portrait, which captures a magnificent brooding figure set against a ruined landscape (Washington, DC, National Collection of Fine Arts). Many of her female portraits, including one of Una Lady Troubridge, the companion of Radclyffe Hall, have an androgynous quality.

On the eve of World War I Brooks met Natalie Barney, a wealthy lesbian expatriate. Their relationship was to last for fifty years. The two women collaborated on Barney's book One Who Is Legion, for which Brooks produced a series of quirky drawings of impossibly thin figures. Some have detected a humorous side in this aspect of her work, complementing the high seriousness of her portraiture.

The last thirty years of Brooks' long life were passed in obscurity, and she did not live to see the revival of interest in women artists that emerged in the 1970s (including a posthumous retrospective of her work in 1971). Brooks stood apart from modernism and abstraction, pursuing a humanistic art that gradually opened a gulf with the avant-garde. Her importance is secured, however, by her place in the constellation of creative expatriate lesbians in Paris in the first half of the twentieth century, which included not only Natalie Barney, but Djuna Barnes, Gertrude Stein, and Alice B. Toklas.

*Kathy D. Schnapper*

**Brothels**

Because of the clandestinity in which they have been shrouded, it is difficult to essay a history and typology of houses of male prostitution. Where demand was present, however, generally means would be found to satisfy it. Often male prostitutes would be included—as they are today in Mexico—as a sideline of the female brothel, men being the clients of both. Secular houses of prostitution must be distinguished from locales where sacred prostitutes were available.

*Historical Perspectives.* In fourth-century Athens houses existed in which attractive boys were readily available. There seems to have been no need for concealment, as their owners paid a special tax. Attractive slaves were freely traded for use in such establishments. Athenian law strictly insisted that only slaves or metics [foreigners resident in the city], not free-born citizens, could be inmates. Occasionally, as in the case of the handsome Phaedrus, a well-born war captive who became a member of Socrates’ circle, a boy would catch the fancy of a client who would buy and free him.

While male prostitutes existed in medieval Europe, their situations are hard to assess, in part because the category of house of prostitution merged, as it had often done in the Roman Empire and still does in many countries, with that of the bathhouse (the “stews” or “bagnio”). The institution flourished in medieval and later Islam, though what connections it had with Europe is uncertain. In China boy brothels were known to exist in profusion from Sung (960–1279) times. In the late nineteenth century, European travelers report visiting a then-characteristic type of brothel situated on a junk.

*Nineteenth-Century Paris.* From early nineteenth-century Paris we have an exceptionally detailed report of a male brothel in the Rue du Doyenne, which even had its own resident physicians. This establishment was closed by the police in 1826. François-Eugène Vidocq, in his *Vol-leurs* (1837), mentions an establishment run by a certain Cottin for the benefit of pederasts in the Paris of the July Monarchy. The ex-police chief Louis Canler reported in his *Mémoires* that an individual nicknamed *la mère des tantes,* “the mother of the queans,” kept a house of male prostitution that attracted a varied clientele. Under the Second Empire Paris had a world-renowned male brothel kept by an elderly proprietor who had been a hustler in his youth but was left destitute by the Revolution of 1848. Toward 1860 he organized his establishment in such a manner that clients of every social and economic class could frequent its premises. The room corresponded in price to the degree of luxury that it afforded, and could be rented by the hour or by the day, as well as reserved by correspondence in advance. Likewise a customer with a particular sexual preference could arrange to have his desires satisfied by an appropriate partner, and if he was not pressed for time, even without advance notice he could have a prompt search made for the hustler of his choice. The proprietor energetically managed the affairs of the brothel, aided by the pan-European notoriety which it enjoyed among both potential clients and aspiring employees. Thus modern capitalist methods of business administration filtered down to the market for illicit sexual pleasures in the prosperous France of Napoleon III.

*The Cleveland Street Affair.* Victorian London was to be scandalized by the discovery on July 4, 1889 of a male brothel at 19 Cleveland Street in the West End. This aspect of the sexual underworld of London had been familiar to Henry Spencer Ashbee, who had written that if discretion did not forbid it, “it would be easy to name
men of the very highest positions in diplomacy, literature and the army who at the present day indulge in these idiosyncrasies, and to point out the haunts they frequent." What particularly alarmed the British authorities was that messengers from the General Post Office were being recruited as hustlers for a brothel that catered to "the most abominable of all vices." For the British press of that day the sordid facts of the case were virtually unmentionable, even by way of euphemism, and only the peripheral aspects were publicized at the time, thanks to Henry Labouchere, who had also been responsible for the provisions on "gross indecency" in the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885. The proprietor of the house from the latter part of that year until the scandal broke was Charles Hammond, who fled the country on July 6, 1889, and a few months later took up residence in Seattle, joining a long list of British exiles and émigrés. He had kept a roster of his clients that fell into the hands of the police when the premises were raided. The conduct of the case revealed the inequity of class justice in the prosecution of sexual offenses, as the wealthy and powerful figures compromised by the disclosures found underlings in the field of law enforcement who did their best to obstruct the investigation.

The Contemporary Scene. The male house of prostitution continues to exist at the present day. Its raison d'etre is the same as that of a legitimate enterprise, that is, to make a profit by satisfying the demands of customers who will patronize the establishment again and again. The brothel offers the client the assurance of full protection against being cheated, robbed, assaulted, or blackmailed during or after the sexual encounter; furthermore, the client, who may be socially prominent or in a sensitive position in political life or in the diplomatic or intelligence community, is shielded from public exposure of his homosexuality, which would make his existence impossible. In one typical establishment, the brothel owner carefully screens applicants to exclude those with criminal records or a history of hepatitis or venereal disease. The would-be male prostitute is usually a model, sometimes an aspiring actor, who takes on the trade to supplement his income. The owner interviews the candidate to determine the character of his own preferences; to have qualms is perfectly acceptable, as he is not disqualified for not desiring a partner of another race or refusing to participate in sadomasochistic activities. The versatile applicant is preferred, but one who is extremely attractive will be accepted even if he takes the active role only. The owner asks the candidate whether he objects to having nude photographs of himself appear in magazines or motion pictures; such exposure usually precludes a further career as a commercial model. The applicant is finally required to perform in a situation approximating one with a client, if he proves impotent under these conditions he is disqualified. If he passes the test he is photographed in the nude with his penis both relaxed and erect. The owner carefully records the exact dimensions of the virile member. The photographic and other data are, with additional vital statistics, then entered in a book which is shown to prospective clients. The owner warns his new employee not to have sexual contact with others in the house, as this causes conflicts and undesirable attachments among the staff.

The financial arrangement consists of a fixed fee for a stated period of time, which in certain establishments is split on a prescribed basis between the management and the prostitute, who retains any tips that he receives from the client. Minimum fees for first-class establishments have risen with inflation, and may be as high as $225 for a single encounter. Prostitution is characterized by the commercialization of the entire relationship: emotional indifference to the customer, barter, and promiscuity. The employees of the brothel rarely use their real
names, only assumed ones; they are cautioned not to become emotionally involved with their clients or to see them outside the business context, and also not to give customers their real names, addresses, or telephone numbers. For economic reasons, the house seeks to control the channels of contact between the client and the prostitute.

The prostitute is expected to maintain a youthful and attractive exterior. The hair must be carefully groomed and not too long, while body hair is shaved off or removed with depilatory creams. The clothing worn by the male prostitute must correspond to the image that he desires to project, whether as an escort for dinner in an exclusive restaurant or as an habitue of leather bars. At the outset the employment can be financially rewarding and emotionally gratifying, but as time goes by it looms more and more as a dead end, financially and emotionally, as age and the strain of the sexual routine take their toll. The prostitute often needs drugs or alcohol or both in order to perform on demand, and these stimulants are ruinous to the peak of physical attractiveness that the successful provider of sexual services must maintain. The time span of a career in this field is seldom more than three years, but as the house has a steady supply of new applicants, it can always find replacements for those who retire.

See also Kadesh; Prostitution.


Buddhism

A spiritual tradition founded in northern India in the sixth to fifth century B.C. by Siddhartha Gautama (known as "the Buddha," or "Awakened One"), Buddhism places emphasis on practicing meditation and following a spiritual path that leads from a state of suffering, viewed as the result of attachment, to a state of enlightenment, transcendence and bliss called nirvana. This path is seen as extending over many lifetimes. Buddhism has exerted a major influence on the cultures of India, Nepal, China, Japan, Tibet, Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, and in the current century has gained a foothold in Western countries as well. Among world religions, Buddhism has been notable for the absence of condemnation of homosexuality as such.

Early and Theravada Buddhism. For an account of the earliest form of Buddhism, scholars look to the canonical texts of the Tipitaka preserved in the Pali language and transmitted orally until committed to writing in the second century B.C. These scriptures remain authoritative for the Theravada or Hinayana school of Buddhism, now dominant in Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka.

The Pali Canon draws a sharp distinction between the path of the layperson and that of the bhikkhu (a mendicant monk, an ordained member of the Buddhist Sangha or Order). The former is expected primarily to support the Sangha and to improve his karmic standing through the performance of meritorious deeds so that his future lives will be more fortunate than his present one. The bhikkhu, in contrast, is expected to devote all his energies to self-liberation, the struggle to cast off the attachments which prevent him from attaining the goal of nirvana in the present lifetime.

The layperson's moral code pertaining to sexuality consists of the resolution to avoid kāmesu micchacāra. As a "training rule" or resolution it does not have the absolute prohibitive nature of Western religious codes (e.g., the Ten Commandments), and is promulgated not as the desire of a God but as a practical guide toward improving one's karma and so (eventually) attaining nirvana. The Pali phrase cited is literally translated as "wrongdoing in the sense-desires," and thus is thought originally to have covered misuse of all the senses (for example, gluttony). In most current English transla-
tions, under the influence of Victorian missionaries who did the early translations, this has been rendered, however, as "sexual misconduct."

The lay moral code (Pañcasila) leaves it up to the individual to interpret what such misconduct might be, but the supplementary texts spell out such offenses as adultery, rape, and taking advantage of those over whom one exercises authority. What is not included even in the supplementary canonical texts is any condemnation of pre-marital sex or of homosexuality as such. In short, the unmarried Buddhist layperson is free to engage in consensual homosexual acts. This had led to a great deal of tolerance of homosexuality in modern Buddhist countries.

The monastic code of discipline or vinaya, however, is aimed at curtailing all passions, including sexual ones. "Is not the Law taught by me for the allaying of the fever of pleasures of the senses?" explains the Buddha in a canonical vinaya text. Thus all acts involving the intentional emission of his semen are prohibited for the monk; the insertion of the penis into a female or male is grounds for automatic expulsion from the Sangha, while even masturbation is a (lesser) offense. On the other hand, the vinaya is silent on matters which presumably were not thought to arouse the sense-pleasures; thus there is no law against a monk receiving a penis into his own body. While a monk is prohibited by lesser rules from even touching the body of a female (even a female animal), no such rule pertains to other males, and the physical expression of affection is very common among the Buddhist monks.

The full rules of the vinaya are not applied to the sāmanera or novice monk, who may be taken into the Sangha as early as seven years old and who is generally expected though not obligated to take the Higher Ordination by the age of 21. In this way the more intense sexual drive of the male teenager is tacitly allowed for. A sāmanera may masturbate without committing an offense. Interestingly, while a novice commits a grave offense if he engages in coitus with a female, requiring him to leave the Sangha, should he instead have sex with a male he is only guilty of a lesser offense requiring that he reaffirm his sāmanera vows and perform such penance as is directed by his teacher. This may be the only instance of a world religion treating homosexual acts more favorably than heterosexual ones.

While there is very little secondary Theravada literature (at least in English) pertaining to homosexuality, it has been speculated that homosexual orientation may arise from the residual karma of a previous life spent in the opposite gender from that of the body currently occupied by the life-continuum. This explanation contains no element of negativity but rather posits homosexuality as a "natural" result of the rebirth cycle.

The Mahayana and Japanese Buddhism. The form of Buddhism which spread northward into Tibet, China, Japan, Korea, and Mongolia from its Indian heartland came to be known as the Mahayana. It de-emphasized the dichotomy between monk and layperson and relaxed the strict vinaya codes, even permitting monks to marry (in Japan). The Mahayana doctrinally sought to obliterate categorical thinking in general and resolutely fought against conceptual dualism. These tendencies favored the development of positive attitudes toward homosexual practices, most notably in Japan.

Homerocticism was introduced to Japan, legend has it, by the Buddhist monk Kukai, also known as Kobo Daishi, in 806 upon his return from studying with a spiritual master in China. According to Noguchi Takeori and Paul Schalow, while "homosexuality surely existed in Japan before then ... the traditional account of its origins helps explain why homosexuality became a preferred form of sexual expression among the Buddhist priesthood."
When Father Francis Xavier arrived in Japan in the mid-sixteenth century with the hope of converting the Japanese to Christianity, he was horrified upon encountering many Buddhist monks involved in same-sex relationships; indeed, he soon began referring to homoeroticism as the "Japanese vice." Although some Buddhist monks condemned such relationships, notably the monk Genshin, many others either accepted or participated in same-sex relationships. Among Japanese Buddhist sects in which such relationships have been documented are the Ji-shu, Hokke-shu, Shingon, and Zen.

Practitioners of Ji-shu revered Amida, the "Buddha of the Pure Land" or of "the Western Paradise." Many of its devotees were warriors, and Father Xavier reported that Ji-shu monks acted as teachers, spiritual masters, and lovers to the sons of samurai. Practitioners of Hokke-shu (or Nichiren) Buddhism, the "black" or "lotus" sect, revered Shakyamuni (Siddhartha Gautama). They were well known for their sacred mantra, Namu-myohorengyoku, "homage to the lotus of the good law." While Hokke-shu monks officially disapproved of all forms of sexual intercourse, relationships between monks and novices often appear to have been both pedagogic and amatory. According to Xavier, despite their official disapproval of intercourse, the monks "openly admitted" their sexual preference for other males; moreover, Xavier reports that "the vice was so general and so deeply rooted that the bonzes [monks] were not reproached for it."

Shingon Buddhism is traditionally linked to homoeroticism by way of its founder, Kukai (mentioned above). The Japanese manifestation of Tantric Buddhism, Shingon may also have included homoerotic sex-magical practices which are now lost to us.

Zen, that form of Buddhism perhaps most familiar to Westerners, emerged during the ninth century. In the Zen monasteries of medieval Japan, same-sex relations, both between monks and between monks and novices (known as kashiki and shami), appear to have been so commonplace that the shogun Hojo Sadatoki (whom we might now refer to as "homophobic") initiated an unsuccessful campaign in 1303 to rid the monasteries of same-sex love. Homeroitic relationships occurring within a Zen Buddhist context have been documented in such literary works as the Gozan Bungaku, Iwatsutsuij, and Comrade Loves of the Samurai.

The blending of Buddhism and homoeroticism has continued to figure prominently in the works of contemporary Japanese writers, notably Yukio Mishima and Mutsuo Takahashi.

Although not specifically linked to homoeroticism, at least one Japanese response to AIDS should be noted. In 1987, Wahei Sakurai reported that at a fertility shrine in Kawasaki City where elements of Shinto and Buddhism are blended, a local priest, Hirohiko Nakamura, displayed two paintings, one of a samurai, the other of a deity in meditation, both in the process of destroying AIDS, in the hope that these paintings, when combined with prayers, would protect practitioners from the disease.

Tibet. Although four major traditions of Buddhism emerged in Tibet, only one, the Gelug or d Ge.lugs.pa sect, has been traditionally associated with same-sex love. The Gelug, or "yellow hat," tradition was founded in the early fifteenth century by Tsongkhapa Lozang, and it is to this tradition that the Dalai Lama (spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhism) belongs. "Among the Gelugpas," Lama Anagarika Govinda explains, "intellectual knowledge . . . including history, logic, philosophy, poetry . . . medicine and astrology, was given particular prominence . . . the Gelugpas had to qualify themselves through a long course of studies in one of the monastic communities [like Drepung, Ganden, or Sera]."

It is most probably in its adoption of the strictest vinaya rules regarding
females that the Gelug tradition has become linked to homoeroticism. According to these rules, no woman may stay overnight within the monastery walls. Moreover, the Gelugpas (at least in the past) condemned heterosexual intercourse for monks, believing that the mere odor resulting from heterosexual copulation could provoke the rage of certain deities. Such misogynistic and anti-heterosexual notions may have encouraged same-sex bonding. A number of writers have suggested that homoerotic relationships were until recently quite commonplace in Gelug monasteries, especially those relationships between so-called “scholar” and “warrior” monks. In the early twentieth century, E. Kawaguchi, describing the monks of the monastery at Sera as “descendents of the men of Sodom,” reported that the monks “scarcely fight for a pecuniary matter, but the beauty of young boys presents an exciting cause, and the theft of a boy will often lead to a duel. Once challenged, no priest can honorably avoid the duel, for to shun it would instantaneously excommunicate him from among his fellow-priests and he would be driven out of the temple.”

_Buddhism in America_. Among those who may be credited with introducing the West to Buddhism are Walt Whitman and Henry David Thoreau, both of whom are thought to have loved members of the same sex and both of whom blended elements of Buddhism with elements of other spiritual traditions in their work. In the latter half of the twentieth century, many American gays are practitioners of Buddhism, and the blending of homoeroticism and Buddhism may be found in the work of a number of gay American writers and musicians including Allen Ginsberg, Harold Norse, Richard Ronan, Franklin Abbott, and Lou Harrison. Of these, Ginsberg has perhaps been the most vocal in terms of claiming Buddhism, especially in its Tibetan manifestation as taught by the late Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, as a source of inspiration. A number of Buddhist organizations have also begun to focus on the specific concerns of gay people, as, for example, the Hartford Street Zen Center of San Francisco, whose co-founder, Issan Dorsey, is a gay Zen monk. Other organizations, like the Buddhist AIDS Project of Los Angeles, while not addressing the specific concerns of gays, have been established to provide services for persons with AIDS.

While some practitioners of Buddhism maintain that the practice of same-sex love runs counter to the moral precepts set down long ago by Buddhist monks, many others, both gay and non-gay, maintain that if one accepts one’s gayness and attempts to dwell in harmony with and to care for one’s fellow creatures, then one is indeed following in the steps of the Buddha.


Randy P. Conner and Stephen Donaldson

**BUGGERY**

By the early eighteenth century buggery had become the universal signifier in English law for intercourse regarded as criminally unnatural, whether man with man, man with woman, or man or woman with beast. That is to say, it had come to encompass male homosexuality (anal and oral), deviant heterosexual conduct (anal and oral), and bestiality. Lesbianism, which
was never criminalized in England, is not included in this list. Curiously, after homosexual offenses between consenting adults were decriminalized in 1967 in England and Wales, a few cases were still prosecuted subsequently for male–female buggery.

Although the legal definition is broad, attention tends to focus on anal relations, as shown by the verb "to bugger," which almost always refers to anal penetration. Once invested with an aura of taboo—the word bugger was considered unprintable outside of legal statutes and commentaries—it has undergone considerable banalization in popular speech, as seen in such expressions as "the old bugger" = "the old guy." Note also "bugger up" (mess up) "buggered out" (tired), and "bugger-all" (nothing). All these expressions are much more common in Great Britain than in North America, where the word family is obsolescent. There is no etymological link with "bug" or "bogeyman," though these words may enter into the outer zones of the term's semantic penumbra.

Historical Background. The history of the word bugger displays a number of revealing bypaths of popular prejudice. Ultimately it stems from the Old Bulgarian bǔlgarina, the ethnic name of the Slavic people inhabiting the southeastern part of the Balkan peninsula. Although the Bogomil and Paulician (dualist) heresies emerge in Bulgaria—on the periphery of the Byzantine empire—as early as the tenth century, it was only in the wake of the Fourth Crusade (1204) that medieval Latin bulgarus (and its vernacular congeners) came to be associated with these heresies. In the West the principal reflex of the dualist systems was the Cathar or Albigensian heresy in southern France.

And so in the thirteenth century bugre appeared in Old French with two meanings: (1) Albigensian heretic; (2) sodomite. Sexual depravity had, in fact, been charged to certain Gnostic sects as early as the time of Irenaeus of Lyon (late second century). In the Middle Ages heresy and "unnatural" sexual activity were both traced to the instigation of the Devil, since neither could presumably have occurred to anyone spontaneously. At all events the ascription of sexual irregularity to the Albigensians seems wholly unfounded, albeit the perfecti—the inner circle of rigorists—did abstain from all types of intercourse. Thus what might at most be termed a case of sexual exceptionalism, chastity, was slanderously converted into its opposite, sexual licence. Such accusations no doubt helped to rationalize the bloody suppression of the Albigensian heretics.

The English derivative of bougre is bugger, which in the medieval texts has the sole meaning of "heretic." The first occurrence of "buggery" in the legal sense of "sodomy" is in the fateful law of 1533 (25 Henry VIII c. 6). In his commentaries on the laws of England, Sir Edward Coke (1552–1634) defined buggery as "a detestable and abominable sin amongst Christians not to be named, committed by carnal knowledge against the ordinance of the creator and order of nature by mankind with mankind or with brute beasts, or by womankind with brute beast" (Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England, 1644, pp. 58–59). All that is lacking in this catalogue of capital crimes [for which the penalty specified was execution by hanging or drowning] is heterosexual buggery. That is supplied in the comprehensive definition found in G. Jacob's Law Dictionary of 1729: "Buggery ... is defined to be carnalis copula contra Naturam et hoc vel per confusionem Specierum, sc. a Man or Woman with a brute Beast; vel sexuum, a Man with a Man, or Man with a Woman."

An additional factor is the Old French use of bougre to mean "usurer," a moneylender who profits from interest. This association (heretic = sodomite = usurer) derives from the ancient notion that interest is "unnatural" because money, unlike land, is intrinsically sterile, just as homosexual activity is doomed to sterility. Lexicographers have noted the
curious fact that the three areas of human experience that generate the greatest amount of slang are money, sex, and inebriation. Though it is now obsolete, the sodomite-usurer line united the first two.

In France the word *bougre* never gained status as a term of art in law codes, though it sometimes makes its way into reports of executions ("sin of buggery"). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a contrast developed between *bougre* for the active homosexual partner as against *bardache* for the passive one. Modern French retains the old word, together with the female counterpart *bougresse*, mainly as a jocular term of pity or mild abuse; the sexual content has almost entirely faded away. As has been noted, the English enshrined the term buggery in the statute books and legal commentaries, tying the meaning to the sexual aspect, but broadening it to include a whole spectrum of carnal offenses (excepting only lesbianism and masturbation).

In southern Europe forms prevailed in which the second consonant is soft; hence Spanish *bujarrón* and Italian *buggerone* (cf. the French variant *bougeron*). At the end of the fifteenth century the Italian word was carried northwards to German-speaking countries by travelers and mercenaries in the adapted form *puseran* (*puserati*), with devoicing of initial 'b.' Thus Albrecht Dürer labels his 1504 drawing of the Death of Orpheus "Der erst puserant" (the first bugger). Although the word has disappeared in modern German, variants linger as loan words in several neighboring Slavic tongues. Thus when the American gay poet Allen Ginsberg visited Prague in 1965 his popularity among Czech students provoked the ire of the Communist authorities and he was roughed up by a plainclothesman who yelled the epithet *buzerant* at him (see "Kral Majales," *Collected Poems, 1947–1980*, 1984, p. 353).


Wayne R. Dynes

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**Burchiellesque Poetry**

This term denotes a type of Italian poetry (*alla burchia*, "haphazardly") utilizing "Aesopic" or coded language, and bristling with obscene double meanings which offer a certain parallel to the famous poems in *jargon* of François Villon (1431–ca. 1463). Burchiellesque poetry flourished from the early years of the fifteenth century through the sixteenth. The leading practitioner of the mode was Domenico di Giovanni, known, because of his facility, as "Il Burchiello" (1404–1449).

Among the followers and successors of Il Burchiello, one should note Antonio Cammelli (1436–1502) and Bernardo Bellincioni (1452–1492), who wrote many compositions on homosexual themes. Various other writers also wrote *alla burchia*, notably Domenico di Prato (ca. 1370–ca. 1432), Rosello Roselli (1399–1451), and the great architects Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) and Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472).

Burchiellesque language also appeared in prose: for Tuscan Renaissance writers it was standard practice—when they wrote euphemistically on sex (as in private correspondence, for example)—to have recourse to Burchiellesque "cypher," as did Niccolò Machiavelli and Francesco Bembi.

Burchiellesque poetry faded away in the sixteenth century, giving life to the less exuberant variant of burlesque known as Bernesque. Yet elements of Burchiellesque language lingered for a long time, for example in the Roman pasquinades satirizing the popes.

Often innocent nonsense, foreshadowing the later limericks, Burchiellesque language consists entirely in double meanings, which usually stem from riddles or puns; these are almost always obscene, and often homoerotic. To the uninitiated burchiellesque poems can seem complete in themselves in terms of their surface meaning, so that they seem harm-
less if somewhat eccentric. In other instances they are hermetic at the surface level also, and indecipherable to anyone who does not possess the key.

Interpreting burchiell-esque language is difficult, inasmuch as often the solution is a riddle leading to another riddle. For example, it is possible to read the verb tagliare [meaning "to cut" in standard Italian] as "tosodomize" because it echoes the word tagliare, "chopping board." In former times these boards were round, not square; hence the meaning "anus." The metaphorical meaning of tagliere parallels that of tondo ("round" and, by extension, a round sculpted or painted relief), which also means "anus."

Burchiell-esque jargon is generally constructed through symmetrical contrasts: asciutto, "dry" = "sodomy" vs. umido, "humid" = "heterosexual coitus"; valle, "valley" = "vulva" vs. monte, "mountain" = "anus." In other comparisons the counterpart of the penis is not the vagina, but usually the anus.

Penetration is not usually expressed in the heterosexual sense, but commonly in terms of anal copulation with a man as object. This prominence of sodomitical coitus probably reflects the "transgressive" intent of burchiell-esque poetry, for which anal relations are more suited than "banal" heterosexual contact.

The difficulty of burchiell-esque language, and the "scandalous" subject matter, have combined to discourage scholarship. Even today there is no critical edition of the works of Il Burchiello, the founder of the trend, nor has a key been worked out that would enable one to recover all the hidden meanings.


Giovanni Dall’Orto

BURMA

A southeast Asian republic of about 40 million people, Burma is an agricultural, mountainous country. Conquered by Great Britain in the nineteenth century, it achieved independence in 1948. Knowledge of homosexuality in Burma is complicated by the fact that the country has been largely closed to tourists since independence (except for brief tourist visits of up to seven days), by the dominant language, Burmese (which is tonal and part of the Sino-Tibetan group), by the Burmese script (which derives from south Indian scripts), and by the plurality of cultures and cultural influences. More than one hundred indigenous languages are spoken in Burma. Besides Burmese, Mon, Shan, Karin, Chinese, and Kachin are spoken by large numbers of people, though at the time of the British occupation only Burmese, Mon, and Shan had written alphabets.

Animism, which preceded Buddhism, introduced in the fifth century, is still practiced by the hill tribes in the northeast such as the Shans, Karins, and Kachins. Among the Kachin, the Ga-shadip, according to Joel M. and Ester G. Maring, is “conceptualized as a bisexual human being who controls the fertility of the soul and of human beings. The Kachin chief makes periodic offerings to the ga-shadip.” Such bisexual mythic beings appear widely across southeast Asia, in Indonesia and in northern Australia.

Burmese Buddhism, like that of Thailand, is of the Theravada School dominant in Sri Lanka and in Southeast Asia and has been compulsory in large parts of the country since King Anawaratha conquered Thaton in the south in 1044 and forcibly removed the entire population, including Buddhist monks, to Pagan in the north. It has been tolerant of homosexuality. Monks are said to be highly sexed and tourists are warned to be careful of sexual advances—though such reports may be exaggerated. Transvestism is also
known. The first Western report of homosexuality in Burma stems from Jan Van Linschoten’s [1563–1611] visit to Pegu.

Homosexuality is said to be portrayed in puppet plays in a comic way as in Indonesian puppet theatre, in Asia as far west as Turkey and in Europe. Homosexuals no doubt existed and exist in Burmese theatre—especially probably in Burmese dance—as they certainly do in the closely related dance traditions of East Java. Dance in Burma is largely based, as in Indonesia, in East Java and Bali, on the epics of India, the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The greatest oil painter of modern Burma, U Thein, was almost certainly homosexual; for example, in the painting “Best Friend” in the National Museum in Rangoon, the artist’s Friend is portrayed as the Loving Buddha, an icon suggestive of homosexuality.

Homosexual references or writings have not been found in Burmese; but as Burmese literature is based on Indian literatures—which are highly erotic without, especially in south India and in Tantrism, distinguishing between hetero- and homoeroticism—it seems reasonable to look for them. Homosexual writing in Thai—also tonal and written in a similar script with a common south Indian origin—has been reported; so, given the close interrelationship of the two bordering cultures [the Burmese conquered Thailand in the eighteenth century and sacked the capital Ayuthaya], this also points to the fact that homosexual references and homoerotic writings may exist in Burmese. The issue is complicated by the massive destruction of Burmese culture both by war [such as the British conquest in the nineteenth century and scorched earth policies in World War II] and by nature [a ferociously hot climate in the north which led to the destruction of the wooden palace of Burmese rulers and its contents in Mandalay after it survived World War II—and high humidity in the south]. Manuscripts in Rangoon and in London at the British Library and the University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies [the main repositories outside Burma] have not been assessed for homosexuality so far as is known.

With over 2,000 monuments, the great archaeological site of Pagan sacked by the Mongols in 1287 [but not destroyed], should be examined [particularly its wall reliefs and frescoes] by someone familiar with Buddhist iconography and its possible homosexual references. The erotic symbolism of the stupa and the spire needs to be considered—especially in regard to the great Shwedagon pagoda in Rangoon and such masterpieces as the Ananda pagoda in Pagan and also in relation to Tantric Buddhism which is highly influential in Burma. The underplaying of eroticism is a serious handicap. I. B. Horner in translating the Pali scriptures in the early twentieth century left out many references to sexuality at the time of Christ, including the split among Buddhists in Sri Lanka over five theses, one of which concerned nocturnal emissions by monks. The influence of Chinese culture—also tolerant of homosexuality—on Burmese culture must also be considered. For much of its history Burma, like Thailand, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan [though only culturally for Japan], was a vassal state of China where the ruler had absolute power until 1908. In the matter of sexuality this meant that he—or she—could do as he—or she—please sexually. Burmese rulers, like Thai, Korean, and Vietnamese, modeled themselves on Chinese. Their sexuality needs to be examined in detail by a competent scholar as does the art and literature, both written and oral.


Paul Knobel
BURNS, JOHN HORNE (1916–1953)

American novelist. Born into an Irish Catholic family in Andover, Massachusetts, Burns was educated at Harvard University. He taught English at the Loomis School from 1937 to 1942. During World War II Burns served in the Army in North Africa and Italy. There he gathered the material for his book *The Gallery* (1947), a series of brilliant episodes unified by the passage of the characters through the Galleria Umberto in Naples. Many readers have regarded the section entitled "Momma" as the most vivid account of the special atmosphere of a classic gay bar that has ever been written. The characters, several of whom are campy queens, are sharply delineated, and the author showed a remarkable ear for argot and the rhythms of gay speech. Other parts of the novel contain gay allusions, but these are generally too subtle to be picked up by most readers. The overarching presence in the novel is the freedom and sensuality of Italy, and the book is thus another document in the attraction of the northerner for fabled Mediterranean lands, though in this instance refracted in the turmoil of war.

Sensing a change in the American literary climate signaled by critical attacks on writers who allegedly belonged to the "fairy Freudian" school, Burns sought to direct his talent into more conventional paths. Although the main character of *Lucifer with a Book* (1949) is heterosexual, the novel contains a number of minor gay characters. Its main purpose was to indict the hypocrisy of American secondary education, which Burns knew well. *A Cry of Children* (1952) also has a heterosexual hero, a pianist named David Murray. Although homosexuality enters into this book as well, it is much more negatively presented. This shift reflects not only the hostile climate of the Cold War years, but Burns' own confusions stemming from his growing alcoholism. The writer died of sunstroke during a visit to Leghorn, Italy.


BURTON, RICHARD FRANCIS, SIR (1821–1890)

British explorer, geographer, adventurer, writer, anthropologist, translator, and sexologist. Although married unhappily to the beautiful but obtuse Isabelle Burton, by whom he had no children, he led a life that was eccentric and scandalous. In his youth, he visited boy-brothels in Karachi, which led him to have a lifelong interest in homosexuality, although this interest bore fruit only toward the end of his life. Burton was famous for his explorations in Arabia and Africa, and he traveled to every part of the globe, often being the first white man to visit the regions which he explored. He wrote a long series of thick volumes on Africa and other places, and translated several books.

The later part of Burton's life was devoted to translation of the *Thousand and One Nights* and other works of oriental eroticism, which created a stir at a time when such writings were considered to be outrageously pornographic and unspeakable. He added insult to injury by appending a notorious "Terminal Essay" to the *Nights* which included a long article on pederasty, one of the first (and the first published in English) extended discussions of this taboo theme in modern times. Burton believed that there was a so-called "Sotadic Zone" in the equatorial regions of the world in which pederasty was widespread and tolerated, while the northern and southern regions tended to outlaw pederasty and limit it to a minority. He said that the hot weather was the factor which determined all of this, a theory which now appears unlikely but which was taken seriously in the early days of sexology. It now appears that this division
into two zones has some validity, but is due to folkways, morality, and economic factors rather than the weather. This essay has sometimes been mistaken for a “gay lib” apology ahead of its time, but a close reading reveals that Burton looked upon sodomy as a lurid vice suitable for shocking Mrs. Grundy when Burton was in a mischievous mood. There is no proof that he ever had sexual relations with any woman (including his wife) or boy, although the visit to the brothels of Karachi has naturally led to suspicions that he did more than just look at the catamites.

The final years of Burton’s life were spent in Trieste, working on a massive erotic masterpiece which supposedly included much information on homosexuality, information supplied to him by Symonds, Ulrichs, Henry Spencer Ashbee, and Guy de Maupassant. However, the manuscript was destroyed after Burton’s death by his widow as part of her sanctification plans for her husband’s memory. This work was supposedly an annotated translation of the Perfumed Garden of the Sheikh Nefzawi (or Nafzawi), but the French translation had no references to pederasty. The Glory of the Perfumed Garden is a recent work claiming to be the “missing” half of this work, with chapters on pederasty and lesbianism, but this may be a fraud.


Stephen W. Foster

BUTCH–FEM (LESBIAN) RELATIONSHIPS

Butch–fem[me] relationships are a style of lesbian loving and self-presentation which can in America be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century; historical counterparts can be found even earlier. Butches and fems have separate sexual, emotional and social identities, outside of the relationship. Some butches believe they were born different from other women; others view their identity as socially constructed.

While no exact date has yet been established for the start of the usage of the terms “butch” and “fem,” oral histories do show their prevalence from the 1930s on. The butch–fem couple was particularly dominant in the United States, in both black and white lesbian communities, from the 1920s through the fifties and early sixties.

Basic Features. Because the complementarity of butch and fem is perceived differently by different women, no simple definition can be offered. When seen through outsiders’ eyes, the butch appears simplistically “masculine,” and the fem, “feminine,” paralleling heterosexual categories. But butches and fems transformed heterosexual elements such as gender attitude and dress into a unique lesbian language of sexuality and emotional bonding. Butch–fem relationships are based on an intense erotic attraction with its own rituals of courtship, seduction and offers of mutual protection. While the erotic connection is the basis for the relationship, and while butches often see themselves as the more aggressive partner, butch–fem relationships, when they work well, develop a nurturing balance between two different kinds of women, each encouraging the other’s sexual-emotional identity. Couples often settle into domestic long-term relationships or engage in serial monogamy, a practice Kennedy and Davis trace back to the thirties, and one they view as a major lesbian contribution to an alternative for heterosexual marriage. In the streets of the fifties, butch–fem couples were a symbol of women’s erotic autonomy, a visual statement of a sexual and emotional accomplishment that did not include men.

Butch–fem relationships are complex erotic and social statements, filled with a language of stance, dress, gesture,
and comradeship. Both butches and fems carry with them their own erotic and emotional identities, announced in different ways. In the fifties, butch women, dressed in slacks and shirts and flashing pinky rings, announced their sexual expertise in a public style that often opened their lives to ridicule and assault. Many adopted men’s clothes and were short “DA” hair cuts to be comfortable and so that their sexual identity and preference would be clearly visible. As Liz Kennedy and Madeline Davis, authors of a study of a working-class black and white butch-fem community in Buffalo, New York, 1940–60, have pointed out, the butch woman took as her main goal in love-making the pleasure she could give her fem partner. This sense of dedication to her lover, rather than to her own sexual fulfillment, is one of the ways a butch is clearly distinct from the men she is assumed to be imitating.

The fem woman, who can often pass as a straight woman when not with her lover, actively sought to share her life with a woman others labeled a freak. Before androgynous fashions became popular, many fems were the breadwinners in their homes because they could get jobs open to traditional-looking women, but they confronted the same public scorn when appearing in public with their butch lovers. Contrary to gender stereotyping, many fems were and are aggressive, strong women who take responsibility for actively seeking the sexual and social partner they desire.

Community Aspects. Particularly in the fifties and sixties, the butch-fem community became the public face of lesbianism when its members formed bar communities across the country, and thus became targets of street and police violence.

In earlier decades, butch-fem communities were tightly knit, made up of couples who, in some cases, had long-standing relationships. Exhibiting traits of feminism before the seventies, butch-fem working-class women lived without the financial and social securities of the heterosexual world, caring for each other in illness and death, in times of economic depression, and in the face of the rampant homophobia of the fifties. Younger butches were often initiated into the community by older, more experienced women who passed on the rituals of expected dress, attitude, and erotic behavior. This sense of responsibility to each other stood the women in good stead when police raided their bars or when groups of men threatened them on the streets.

Bars were the social background for many working-class butch-fem communities and it was in their dimly lit interiors that butches and fems could perfect their styles and find each other. In the fifties, sexual and social tension often erupted into fights and many butches felt they had to be tough to protect themselves and their women, not just in the bars but on the streets as well.

Butch-fem is not a monolithic social-sexual category. Within its general outline, class, race, and region give rise to style variations. In the black lesbian community of New York, for instance, “bull dagger” and “stud” were more commonly used than the word “butch.” A fem would be “my lady” or “my family.” Many women of the lesbian literary world and of the upper classes also adopted this style of self-presentation. In the 1920s, Radclyffe Hall, the author of The Well of Loneliness, called herself John in her marriage to Lady Una Troubridge. Butch-fem style also shows the impact of changing social models and politics. Feminism, for instance, as well as open relationships and non-monogamy, have been incorporated into butch-fem life of the seventies and eighties.

With the surge of lesbian feminism in the early seventies, butch-fem women were often ridiculed and ostracized because of their seeming adherence to heterosexual role playing. In the eighties, however, a new understanding of the historical and sexual-social importance of
butch-fem women and communities has begun to emerge. Controversy still exists about the value of this lesbian way of loving and living, however. Members of such groups as Women Against Pornography depict butch-fem as a patriarchal, oppressive, hierarchical way of relating. The American lesbian community is now marked by a wide range of relational styles: butch-fem is just one of the ways to love, but the butch-fem community does carry with it the heritage of being the first publicly visible lesbian community.

Related Terms.

“Stone butch”: a butch woman who does not allow herself to be touched during lovemaking, but who often experienced orgasm while making love to her partner. This was a sexual style prevalent in the forties and fifties.

“Baby butch”: a young-looking butch woman with a naive face who brings out the maternal as well as sexual longings of fem women.

“Kiki”: a term used from the forties through the sixties for a lesbian who could be either butch or fem. A publicly kiki woman in the forties and fifties was often looked upon with suspicion though in the privacy of butch-fem homes, different sexual positions were often explored.

“Passing woman”: a woman who works and dresses like a man; this style of self-presentation was often used in the past to transcend the gender limitations placed on women. Many working-class women “passed” in order to hold down the jobs they wanted without harassment; in earlier decades passing women often married other women. Passing women have their own sexual identity.

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Joan Nestle

BYRON, GEORGE GORDON, LORD (1788–1824)

English Romantic poet, born in London. The most influential poet of his day, with a world-wide reputation, Byron became famous with the publication of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage (1812–18), an account of his early travels in Portugal, Spain, Albania, and Greece. The proud, gloomy, guilt-ridden, alienated Harold defined the “Byronic hero” who was to reappear in various guises in Byron’s later poems, notably in “Manfred,” “The Corsair,” and “Lara.” The type became a defining image for European and American romanticism. Forced into exile in 1816 because of the scandal caused by his wife’s leaving him, Byron settled in Italy, principally in Venice. There he wrote his sparkling satire on cant and hypocrisy, Don Juan. He spent the last months of his life in Greece, trying to help the Greeks in their struggle to gain independence from the Turks.

Notorious in his lifetime for his many affairs with women, Byron at 17 fell in love with a Cambridge college choir boy, John Edleston, two years his junior. This love is expressed in such early poems as “To E—,” “The Cornellian,” and “Stanzas to Jessy,” but most fully in the “Thyrrha” elegies written after Edleston’s death in 1811 and published [in part] with Childe
Harold. Because of the intense homophobia of English society these poems were ostensibly addressed to a woman, as the name “Thyrza” and Byron’s use of feminine pronouns implied.

During his first journey to Greece [1809–11] Byron was involved in several liaisons with Greek boys. One of them, Nicolò Giraud, he made his heir when he returned to England. Details of these affairs appear in letters to his friend John Cam Hobhouse, sometimes in a Latin code. Rumors about Byron’s homosexual adventures, circulated in London by Byron’s ex-mistress Lady Caroline Lamb after Byron’s wife left him, were a principal reason for Byron’s being forced to go into exile; publicity about his love affair with his half-sister, Augusta Leigh, compounded the scandal. We know nothing more of the homosexual side of Byron’s life until his final return to Greece. There he fell in love with the fifteen-year-old Loukas Chalandritsanos, a young soldier in the Greek resistance movement, whose family he had befriended. Byron’s last three poems, “On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year,” “Last Words on Greece,” and “Love and Death,” poignantly describe his love for Loukas, which was not reciprocated.

Byron died at Missolonghi attempting to provide financial and military aid for the Greeks while under the spell of this “maddening fascination,” as he called it.

Byron’s bisexuality remained a secret from the general public until 1935, when Peter Quennel broached the subject in Byron: The Years of Fame. A surreptitiously published erotic poem, Don Leon, purporting to be Byron’s lost autobiography, probably written in 1833, had set forth many of the facts about Byron’s homosexuality but was dismissed as an unwarranted libel. An edition appeared in 1866 but it remained unknown to all but a few specialists. When the Fortune Press reprinted it in 1934, the publication was confiscated by the British police.


Louis Crompton

BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Like China and Egypt this Greek Empire was known for its stability and conservatism. Held together by fidelity to Orthodox Christianity and Roman law, the Byzantine Empire evolved over eleven centuries. This development falls into three distinct formations: 330–711, 711–1071, 1071–1453, each about half the size of the previous. Beginning in 641 the empire lost Asian and African provinces to Islam; in 1071 half of Anatolia fell to the Turks. Byzantium defended Europe from invaders in spite of bitter religious squabbles involving monks and heretics.

Basic Features. The beginning of the Byzantine empire, also known as the Eastern or East Roman Empire, is usually placed at A.D. 330, when Constantine the Great founded his new capital, Constantinople, on the ancient site of Byzantium [now Istanbul]. From the first the new city was Christian, but many of its institutions, including the Senate and the law code, continued the traditions of ancient Rome. Latin was the official language until the reign of Justinian, but Greek was from the start the language of commerce and intellectual life. The imperial administration, which never wavered in its policy of antihomosexual repression, managed largely to drive same-sex love underground. Yet some of the dearth of current knowledge of Byzantine homosexuality is probably owing simply to inadequate attention by modern scholars.

Byzantine monks and scholars did copy and transmit many ancient Greek pederastic texts, including the tenth book
of the Greek Anthology. Although lexicographers and antiquarians recorded rare ancient terms for homosexual acts, and some original heterosexual erotica are also known from the empire, homosexual erotica of this kind have not yet come to light. From the time of Constantine nude figures disappeared from art, and nothing is heard of gymnasia after 380. The pre-Justinian period was nonetheless one of some ambiguity: those who overthrew him alleged that Constans, Constantine’s son, was an exclusive homosexual who surrounded himself with barbarian soldiers selected more for looks than for military ability.

The Cappadocian Fathers, Sts. Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzen, and most of all John Chrysostom, harshly condemned homosexuality. Uninfluenced by Latin Christianity, they set the tone for the official attitudes of the Orthodox church.

The Byzantine terms for male homosexuality are paiderastia, arhenomixia (“mingling with males”), and arhenokoitia (“intercourse with males”). The general designation for sexual immorality in Byzantine law codes is aselgeia (“lasciviousness”). Malakia, which had meant “effeminacy” in Classical Greek, came to mean “masturbation,” so that in the Byzantine cultural sphere the translation of I Corinthians 6:9 reads “masturbators . . . shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Homosexual behavior is also styled the “sin of the Sodomite” (e.g., Macarius the Great, Patrologia Graeca, 34:2243).

Justinian. The reign of Justinian (527–565) constitutes what is sometimes termed the First Golden Age of Byzantium. Justinian’s military campaigns succeeded in recovering Italy and other areas of the empire that had been lost to the barbarians in the preceding century, and he adorned the cities of the empire with splendid buildings, above all the cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. He also reorganized Roman law in the Corpus Juris Civilis, the ultimate basis of the civil law tradition that today dominates legal systems in a large part of the globe.

Even before assuming full power in 527, Justinian seems to have been implicated in an anti-homosexual trial of 521. The chronicler John Malalas describes the trial of two bishops, Isaias of Rhodes and Alexander of Diospolis in Thrace; the former was exiled after being subjected to cruel tortures, the latter castrated and publicly dragged in an ignominious procession.

Not surprisingly, the Corpus retains the antihomosexual laws promulgated by his predecessors in 342 and 390. Justinian shrewdly perceived, however, that just as in the case of divorce, the hated practices could not be extirpated by a stroke of the pen. Initiating a more tenacious and extended series of steps, he issued two new antihomosexual laws in 538–39 and 559, which reiterated the death penalty already prescribed by the Theodosian Code 9.7.3. In the first of the novellae (no. 77) he ascribed homosexual lust to diabolical incitement and claimed that “because of such crimes there are famines, earthquakes, and pestilences,” inferring that homosexual behavior endangered the very physical basis of the empire. Enough of the seismological literature of antiquity had survived into his reign to make such reasoning clearly a superstitious regression, a point conveniently ignored by Christian apologists who would have Justinian act only out of “sincere concern for the general welfare.” The second (no. 141) was the first law ever to refer explicitly to Sodom, where the land supposedly still burned with inextinguishable fire. Seeming to combine magnanimousness with severity, Justinian appealed to such sinners to confess themselves humbly and penitently to the Patriarch of Constantinople, consigning them to the avenging flames if they did not repent. In fact Justinian and his consort Theodora conducted a kind of witch hunt among homosexuals of the city, several of whom were publicly disgraced, whether penitent or not. The rulers used the imputation of homosexuality
to persecute those "against whom no other crimes could be imputed," [Edward Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire] or whose fortunes offered a tempting adjunct to the imperial treasury [Procopius, Secret History, 11:34–36].

Later Byzantine Times. Needless to say, these measures, though reaffirmed in later codes such as the Basilica, did not stop same-sex activity. A number of emperors themselves are believed to have been homosexual. Successful in military campaigns against the Arabs, Slavs, and Bulgars, the iconoclast Constantine V [r. 741–775] sought to limit the power of the monasteries. Theophanes the Confessor lists the "impious lust for males" among his crimes. A particularly tragic case, the alcoholic Michael III [r. 842–867], fell in love with a macho soldier-courtier, Basil the Macedonian, whom he made coruler in 866. Basil promptly murdered his patron, and founded the Macedonian dynasty. Also thought to be homosexual were Basil II [r. 976–1025], a great campaigner against the Bulgarians, Constantine VIII (joint ruler with his brother 976–1025, sole r. 1025–1028), and the Empress Zoe’s husband Constantine IX [r. 1042–1055]. Eunuchs played a major role at the imperial courts, reaching their zenith under the Macedonian dynasty (867–1057).

Accusations of homosexual vice became a standard device of Byzantine polemics. After the ninth century such charges become rarer probably after the consolidation of Christian family values and emerging masculine ideals. In the field of law the Basilica do not repeat the old regulations but only something of secondary importance from the Pandects, a change that might be significant in view of the foregoing circumstance. In the last centuries of the Eastern Empire, however, complaints about homosexuality again surface [e.g., in the Patriarch Athanasius I and Joseph Bryennius]. The vice flourished in both male and female monasteries [typicon of Prodromos tou Phoberou, 80.31–82.1]; the typica denied access to the monasteries to beardless youths and eunuchs in an effort to shield monks from temptation.

The Later Byzantine Empire. Beginning in 1071 the Comneni created a new state. After the Byzantines expelled the Latins, who ruled the Eastern empire from the time of the Fourth Crusade (which captured Byzantium in 1203–04) until their expulsion in 1261, the Palaeologi restored a decentralized state ruled by "feudal" magnates on the Western model with the commerce dominated by the Italian maritime republics. Cities shrank, Turks from the East and Bulgars, Serbs, and Franks in the Balkans encroached and barbarized the provinces, and culture declined so precipitously that by the time the capital fell in 1453 the dwindling elite had less knowledge of Plato and Homer than did the Renaissance Italian humanists, who had mastered as well the Corpus Juris Civilis and the Orthodox fathers.

An eleventh-century text offers evidence for homosexual clergy in the Orthodox church. The Penitential of pseudo-John IV the Faster instructed the confessor to inquire about the sin of arrekenoktita, which in this text means "anal intercourse" in general. Ecclesiastical law punished the "sin of the Sodomite" with two or three years of epitimpan, while civil law [the Eclogues] established decapitation by the sword as the penalty.

In the Orthodox church priests, the "white clergy," could marry, but not monks or bishops, the "black clergy." Still a staple of reading, the texts of the Cappadocian Fathers, whose admonitions to those who could not resist sex to marry young probably lowered the age of marriage, denounced homosexuality as the most heinous of sins, but nothing could prevent its spread in the monasteries. At the most famous monastic establishments, those on Mount Athos, from which even female animals were banished, homosexuality must have flourished from early times; certainly it became notorious there in later centuries.
In 1453 Byzantium fell at last to the Ottoman Turks, and Mehmed the Conqueror immediately sent his agents to requisition the most beautiful boys of the Christian aristocracy for his harem. Mehmed tried to rape the fourteen-year-old son of the noble Lucas Notaras; father and son both perished for their resistance. Likewise the sons of the historian George Phrantzes were killed for refusing to yield to the Sultan's lusts.

These episodes suggest a cultural contrast that was probably less acute in practice, for interface with Islamic homosexuality must have begun centuries earlier. Officially, the greater vigilance of the Byzantine authorities against “the vice” would have served to distinguish them from their adversaries; in practice, there was undoubtedly a good deal of borrowing from Islamic pederastic customs. This cultural interaction awaits further study.


*William A. Percy*