



FAGGOT

This contemptuous slang term for male homosexual carries overtones of **effeminacy** and cowardice. Inasmuch as its use is widespread and its origins usually misunderstood, it deserves careful consideration.

One of the most persistent **myths** that have gained a foothold in the **gay movement** is the belief that "faggot" derives from the basic meaning of "bundle of sticks used to light a fire," with the historical commentary that when witches were burned at the stake, "only presumed male homosexuals were considered low enough to help kindle the fires."

The English word has in fact three forms: *faggot*, attested by the Oxford English Dictionary from circa 1300; *fadge*, attested from 1588; and *faggald*, which the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* first records from 1375. The first and second forms have the additional meaning "fat, slovenly woman" which according to the *English Dialect Dictionary* survived into the nineteenth century in the folk speech of England.

The homosexual sense of the term, unknown in England itself, appears for the first time in America in a vocabulary of criminal slang printed in Portland, Oregon in 1914, with the example "All the fagots [sissies] will be dressed in drag at the ball tonight." The apocopated (clipped) form *fag* then arose by virtue of the tendency of American colloquial speech to create words of one syllable; the first quotation is from the book by Nels Anderson, *The Hobo* (1923): "Fairies or Fags are men or boys who exploit sex for profit." The short form thus also has no connection with British *fag* as attested

from the nineteenth century (for example, in the novel *Tom Brown's Schooldays*) in the sense of "public school boy who performs menial tasks for an upperclassman."

In American slang *faggot/fag* usurped the semantic role of **bugger** in British usage, with its connotations of extreme hostility and contempt bordering on death wishes. In more recent decades it has become the term of abuse par excellence in the mouths of heterosexuals, often just as an insult aimed at another male's alleged want of masculinity or courage, rather than implying a sexual role or orientation.

The ultimate origin of the word is a Germanic term represented by the Norwegian dialect words *fagg*, "bundle, heap," alongside *bagge*, "obese, clumsy creature" (chiefly of animals). From the latter are derived such Romance words as French *bagasse* and Italian *bagascia*, "prostitute," whence the parallel derivative *bagascione* whose meaning matches that of American English *faggot/fag*, while Catalan *bagas-sejar* signifies *to faggot*, "to frequent the company of loose women."

The final proof that *faggot* cannot have originated in the burning of witches at the stake is that in English law both **witchcraft** and **buggery** were punishable by hanging, and that in the reign of the homosexual monarch **James I** the execution of heretics came to an end, so that by the time American English gave the word its new meaning there cannot have been in the popular mind even the faintest remnant of the complex of ideas credited to the term in the contemporary myth. It is purely and simply an Americanism of the twentieth century.

Given the fact that the term faggot cannot refer to burning at the stake, why does the myth continue to enjoy popularity in the gay movement? On the conscious level it serves as a device with which to attack the medieval church, by extension Christianity in toto, and finally all authority. On another level, it may linger as a "myth of origins," a kind of collective masochistic ritual that willingly identifies the homosexual as victim. It should be evident that the word faggot and the ideas that have been mistakenly associated with it serve no useful function; the sooner both are abandoned, the better.

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FAIRY

The word *fairy*, derived from the French *féerie*, the name of the mythical realm of these supernatural beings, was one of the commonest terms for the male homosexual in America in the 1925-1960 period. In an article published in *American Journal of Psychology* in 1896, "The Fairies" of New York are mentioned as a secret organization whose members attended coffee-klatsches; dressed in aprons and knitted, gossiped and crocheted; and held balls in which men adopted ladies' evening dress. The spellings *faery* and *fary* also appear in the literature. The word designated the more stereotypical or "obvious" sort of street homosexual, with the semantic link supplied by the notion of the delicate and fastidious that had attached itself to the expression, so that it was transferred effortlessly to a dainty and effeminate type of male. The image of the "fairy" in book illustration as a winged creature flitting about the landscape probably contributed to the further evolution of *flit* as a slang term for homosexual. The semantic development of *fairy* in this sense began on the east coast and spread to the

rest of the country, but not to other English-speaking areas of the world. In the 1960s the word yielded to *gay* as a positive term preferred by the movement, and to *faggot* or *fag* as the vulgar term of abuse.

In the late 1970s a quasi-religious movement began on the west coast of the United States under the rubric of fairy spirituality. Inspired by the ideas of gay pioneer Harry Hay, this trend emphasized the concept that male homosexuals who will acknowledge their difference ("fairies" or "faeries") have special insights and gifts for interpersonal relations. It looked to the supposed homoerotic element in shamanism as a prehistoric archetype. Fairy retreats held at remote country sites, with neopagan rituals, serve to affirm solidarity among the fairies. This movement, combining counterculture survivals with elements of the hermetic tradition, is part of a larger complex of New Age religious phenomena that are characteristic of the western United States, though they also enjoy some following elsewhere.

FALLA, MANUEL DE (1876-1946)

Spanish composer. Falla ranks as a key figure in both the renovation of Spanish classical music and the flowering of Andalusian culture in the early twentieth century. His homosexuality is not known directly, but the circles in which he moved in both Paris and Granada, his friendships, style of life, and enthusiasm for the Andalusian past, enthusiasm which was frequently associated in Spain with homosexuality, permit it to be inferred.

Falla was born in the ancient Andalusian city of Cádiz. As his compositions were received with indifference in Madrid, in 1907 Falla moved to Paris, where he was successful. He left that city at the outbreak of World War I, and influenced by his librettist Gregorio Martínez Sierra, author of *Granada, guía emocional* (1911), made his home in Granada from 1919 to 1939.

Andalusian civilization was already of considerable interest to Falla; Granada was the setting of his opera *La vida breve* (Life is Short; 1904–05), and his very successful *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (1916) is an evocation of the vanished sensual and erotic world of Islamic Spain. He was the key figure in the effort to conserve, through a festival and competition in 1922, the dying *cante jondo* song of Andalusia's past. The festival, for reasons which are not public, marks a turning point in Falla's work, which became progressively less Andalusian and more Catholic in inspiration. His *Retablo de maese Pedro* (Master Peter Puppet's Show; 1923), based on an episode from *Don Quixote*, and the *Harpichord Concerto* (1927), both masterpieces, were the last major compositions he would complete. He declined to set to music a one-act libretto, *El calesero* (The Coachman), written for him by Federico García Lorca, although, strongly urged by friends, he did set Góngora's "Sonnet to Córdoba"—Córdoba was the capital of Andalusia at its peak—to music for the tercentenary of that author in 1927.

In 1927 Falla began a composition ideologically opposed to his Andalusian-themed works, an operatic setting of Verdaguer's epic poem *L'Atlántida*. In it, Catalonia and Falla's native Cádiz are fulfilled through the discovery of America by Columbus. Falla never completed his *Atlántida*, which was completed after his death by his only student, Ernesto Halffter. It has been indifferently received.

Falla was disturbed and depressed by the anti-Catholic violence of Spain of the early 1930s. Isolated and silent during the Civil War, in 1939 he fled to Argentina, where he died.

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Daniel Eisenberg

FAMOUS HOMOSEXUALS, LISTS OF

It seems that every disadvantaged social group has a need to find distinguished individuals of the past with whom it can identify. This need is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in the case of the homosexual minority in modern society. Even in the era when sexual activity between members of the same sex was branded as a "crime against nature," their conduct was extenuated by the fact that figures celebrated in the annals of war, politics, and literature had loved their own sex.

In "L'Amour nommé Socratique," an article in his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764), Voltaire gives one of the earliest of such lists, based largely on his knowledge of Greco-Roman pederasty. The anonymous author of *Don Leon* (ca. 1836) has the poet Byron say:

When young Alexis claimed a
Virgil's sigh, He told the world his
choice; and may not I? . . .
Say, why, when great Epaminondas
died,
Was Cephidorus buried by his side?
Or why should Plutarch with
eulogiums cite
That chieftain's love for young
catamite,
And we be forced his doctrine to
decry,
Or drink the bitter cup of infamy? . . .
Look, how infected with this rank
disease
Were those who held St. Peter's holy
keys, . . .
How many captains, famed for deeds
of arms,
Have found their solace in a
minion's arms!

The first serious attempt to draw up a list of notable homosexuals of past centuries was in the second volume of Heinrich Hoessli's *Eros: Die Männerliebe der Griechen* (1838). Later in the nine-

teenth century other lists were assembled by Karl Heinrich Ulrichs and by the British writers Henry Spencer Ashbee, Sir Richard Burton, and Havelock Ellis. An entire volume entitled *Berühmte Homosexuelle* (Famous Homosexuals) was compiled in 1910 by the pioneer student of homosexuality, the Berlin physician Albert Moll. No fewer than 300 names appear in Magnus Hirschfeld's major work synthesizing almost two decades of research, *Die Homosexualität des Mannes und des Weibes* (1914). The early phase of the postwar homophile movement produced a 751-page roster in Noel I. Garde's *Jonathan to Gide* (1954), which is, however, the high-water mark for the uncritical use of sources (such as including Pontius Pilate, the Roman prefect of Judea, on the basis of a passing mention in a novel published in 1932!). The most recent specimen of this class of literature is Martin Greif's often fanciful *The Gay Book of Names* (1982).

The need for such writings is motivated by the insult and humiliation heaped upon the homosexual minority by those who defame it. The ability to identify with glorious and universally admired figures in history gives the member of the oppressed minority role models conveying a sense of inner worth. The homosexual attains the conviction that he belongs to a part of mankind with its own achievements, its own traditions, and its own right to a "place in the sun." The tendency can become so marked as to invite parody, as amusingly executed by James Joyce for the counterpart among the Irish in *Ulysses* (1922). Paradoxically, some homophobes still revere noted figures in the past of their own nation despite the unanimous testimony of impartial biographers to their homosexuality. The phenomenon is comparable to that of anti-Semites who admire Spinoza and Einstein.

Historians of homosexual behavior have found that the method of accumulating famous names has a number of inadequacies. It tends to assimilate differ-

ent types—exclusive homosexuals and bisexuals, **pederasts** and **androphiles**—under one rubric, neglecting the historical ambiance of the individual's orientation. Rarely is there a concern with the nexus between homosexual behavior and interests, on the one hand, and creativity, on the other. Use of evidence is often slipshod, and famous persons are included whose homosexuality is doubtful—even unlikely. Finally, focusing on a small constellation of politicians, writers, and artists obscures the life experience of the great mass of ordinary homosexuals and lesbians. Because of these drawbacks, books containing such lists are now regarded as belonging to the realm of popular culture rather than to that of scholarship.

The term eponym refers to a person from whom something, as a tribe, place or activity, takes its name. In this way proper names become common nouns designating any practitioner of the activity in question, such as *onanist* (from the Biblical Onan), *sapphist* (from Sappho of Lesbos), *sadist* (from Donatien-Alphonse-François, Marquis de Sade), and *masochist* (from Leopold von Sacher-Masoch), along with such jocular expressions as a *Tilden* (from the tennis star) and *Wildeman* (from Oscar Wilde). Similarly, French has the verbs *socratiser* and *engider*, both meaning "to sodomize." The latter is a nonce coinage created by the novelist Louis-Ferdinand Céline from the name (André) Gide. One writer of the early twentieth century commented that to name sexual practices after living persons who embodied them was to invite actions for libel, but it constitutes a fascinating intersection between **biography** and **social labeling**.

Warren Johansson

FANTASIES

Fantasies are mental scenes, produced by the imagination, distinct from the reality in which the person lives. This article concerns those of sexual content.

Everyone fantasizes to a considerable extent; thinking and fantasy are

inseparable. Every time one sets a goal, makes a plan, or considers the desirability of a course of action, one fantasizes. One of the ways in which human beings differ from animals is that animals, to our knowledge, do not have fantasies.

The use of fantasies to produce and enhance sexual excitement is common. Fantasies may contain activities one would like to do or repeat: sex with a highly desirable partner or partners, or under exciting circumstances. These are unproblematic as long as the fantasizer accepts that there are things one would like to do which are impossible or impractical to realize, and takes steps toward the realization of appropriate fantasies. The prospect of realizing sexual fantasies is one of the great stimuli of human activity.

Potentially more stressful are fantasies of activities one might not or definitely would not like to do. These involve every sort of situation depicted in **pornography**, among them the infliction or suffering of pain, violence, or humiliation; promiscuous or anonymous sex; unfaithfulness to a partner; the exposure of the body to harm; and activities which do not conform to one's sexual orientation (gay or straight). Such erotic fantasies are potentially in conflict with one's self-image, and may cause worry and guilt.

If fantasies cause great distress, the assistance of a competent therapist may be helpful. That such fantasies are very widespread, however, suggests that their existence is normal and even healthy; we all have within us atavistic capacities, such as that to inflict pain, which cannot be expressed directly in a civilized society. Fantasies can help discharge tensions rather than increase them. A fantasy does not produce action against one's principles or true wishes. Furthermore, fantasies need not be revealed to anyone, although sharing them can be an exciting part of love-making. Lovers with fantasies that dovetail (the dominant with the submissive, for example) are truly blessed, although this is far less frequent than pornography

would suggest. The commercial sex industry (pornography, **prostitution**, **phone sex**) is primarily devoted to providing fantasies.

Daniel Eisenberg

FASCISM

The term fascism derives from *fasces*, the bundles of rods carried by the lictors of ancient **Rome** to symbolize the unity of classes in the Republic. Fascism is the authoritarian movement that arose in **Italy** in the wake of World War I. Although Hitler admired its founder Mussolini and imitated him at first—the term *Führer* is modeled on Duce—one cannot simply equate his more radical National Socialist movement with the Italian phenomenon, as writers of the left are prone to do. "Fascism" was also applied to related trends in eastern Europe, the Iberian peninsula, and Latin America. Some of these regimes (especially the Horthy dictatorship in Hungary and the Falange in **Spain**) had pronounced clerical-traditional overtones, which set them apart from the more secularist regimes of Italy and Germany. Whether all these political trends constitute so many variants of a single genus of fascism, or whether they are only loosely connected, is still earnestly debated by historians.

Italy. Not essentially racist like Nazism or anti-bourgeois like Marxism, Italian fascism, with its corporative binding of workers and employers, has been less consistently hostile to homosexuals. Attracting adherents from **anarchism** and syndicalism, both of which had been strong in Italy, Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) deserted pacifist, gradualist socialism to found fascism after his exhilarating wartime experience of violence. He henceforth extolled war as purifying, progressive, and evolutionary because the strong overcame the weak. He also argued in a discussion of a draft penal code in 1930 that because Italians, being virile, were not homosexuals, Italy needed no law

banning homosexual acts, which he believed only degenerate foreigners to practice. A ban would only frighten such tourists away, and Italy needed the money they spent to improve its balance of payments and shore up its sagging economy. Napoleon had promulgated his code, which did not penalize homosexual acts between consenting adults, in northern Italy in 1810, and thus decriminalized sodomy. It had already been decriminalized in Tuscany by Grand Duke Leopold, the enlightened brother of Joseph II. The Albertine Code of 1837 for Piedmont-Sardinia was extended to all its dominions after the House of Savoy created a united Kingdom of Italy, a task completed in 1870. Pervasive was the influence of the jurist Marquis Cesare Beccaria, who argued against cruel and unusual punishments and against all offenses motivated by religious superstition and fanaticism.

Thus Italy with its age-old "Mediterranean homosexuality" in which women were protected, almost secluded—upper-class girls at least in the South being accompanied in public by *dueñas*—had like other Latin countries allowed female prostitution and closed its eyes to homosexuality. As such it had become the playground par excellence during the "grand tour" of the English *milords*, and also the refuge of exiles and *émigrés* from the criminal sanctions of the Anglo-American common law and the Prussian code. The Prussian Code was extended in 1871–72 to the North and then South German territories incorporated in the Reich, including ones where the Code Napoléon had prevailed in the early part of the century. Byron and John Addington Symonds took refuge in Italy, as William Beckford did in Portugal and Oscar Wilde in Paris. Friedrich Alfred Krupp's playground was in Capri, Thomas Mann's in Venice, and Count Adelswärd Fersen's also in Capri.

Il Duce's rise to power did not end Italy's welcoming role. Although he emphasized the virility of Italians and the

decadence of foreigners and decried homosexuality as a sign of weakness, Mussolini regarded homosexuals either in the old clerical fashion as sodomites given over to vice or in the ancient Roman fashion as effeminate—but not as a threat to the virility of the race. (Personally, Mussolini was somewhat of a sexual acrobat, in that he had a succession of mistresses and often took time out in the office to have sex with one or another of his secretaries.) Like Napoleon III under the French Second Empire, he preferred to leave same-sex conduct outside the criminal code in order to avoid sensational trials that would expose his nation to ridicule in the foreign press. Rather he decided to exile homosexuals to remote areas of Italy where they would provoke no scandal. Believing in military strength through numbers, Mussolini did more than Hitler to subsidize parents of numerous progeny, thus hoping to increase Italy's population from 40 to 60 million. Although local authorities occasionally conducted raids on gay cruising areas and the like, before 1938 he did not persecute homosexuals more than previous regimes had done.

However, after he formed the Rome-Berlin Axis with Hitler in 1936, Mussolini began, under Nazi influence, to persecute homosexuals and to promulgate anti-Semitic decrees in 1938 and 1939, though these were laxly enforced, and permitted exceptions, such as veterans of World War I. New laws were passed penalizing "offenses against race and the provisions for education of the youth of the Regime." After 1938 homosexuals thus were considered political offenders. Oppressing homosexuals more than Jews, Mussolini's regime rounded up and imprisoned a substantial number, a procedure poignantly depicted in Ettore Scola's excellent film *A Special Day* (1977). Fascists whose homosexual behavior embarrassed the regime were usually only dismissed from their posts. Notorious homosexuals without influence were

punished merely with short jail sentences. Political opponents received longer sentences. Following established Italian fascist practice, homosexuals were sent into exile (*confino*) in remote places (generally islands) where they eked out a meagre existence. The actual enforcement of the laws, and in particular mass roundups of suspected homosexuals, were left to local authorities. But the bulk of Italians in town and country continued under fascism, as they had previously, the occasional homosexual practices for which Italy had been so famed. Even exclusive homosexuals, if they were not unlucky, survived fascism unscathed.

Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe "clerical fascism" overthrew all the democratic regimes established in the wake of the Allied victory and the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, as well as those carved from the territory of the Russian Empire. The only exception was Czechoslovakia. With the encouragement of the clergy and support from the peasantry, gentry, army, and professional and business classes, Admiral Horthy seized control of Hungary from the Communist Béla Kun in 1920 and as "Regent" unleashed a "White Terror" largely directed against Jews, two years before Mussolini marched on Rome with his blackshirts. One by one the other democracies fell. In Poland the tolerant Marshall Piłsudski, who dominated Poland after seizing Russian and Lithuanian territory, actually decriminalized sodomy when a uniform penal code (*Kodeks karny*) was adopted for the whole of Poland in 1932. (This perhaps hearkened back to the days of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw when Poles lived under the Code Napoléon, or perhaps to the thwarted project to introduce the Code into "Congress Poland" after 1815.)

By contrast, most of the dictators of East Central Europe simply perpetuated the old clerical strictures; by allying with the Catholic or Orthodox Church they stiffened reactionary opposition to liberalization, just as they encouraged tradi-

tional Christian hatred of Jews. In this unfavorable climate none of these countries could develop a sexual reform movement of any significance.

Naturally amid such ethnic diversity and various dates of introduction of the Code Napoléon, differences in sexual expression were vast, and even within one country no consistent pattern existed. Fascists were less consistent and more divided among themselves than even Communists or Nazis. After all, they had no sacred text like *Das Kapital* or *Mein Kampf*, and further were not ruling only a single powerful country. Many were nevertheless influenced by Hitler, himself perhaps in part inspired by his totalitarian rival Stalin's homophobic repression in Soviet Russia beginning in January 1934. Being hostile to classical liberalism with its emphasis on toleration and the rule of law, fascism made homosexuals uneasy. However, it may be doubted whether they suffered more during the 1920s and 1930s in the fascist countries (not counting Nazi Germany) than in France and the Anglo-Saxon democracies, where premature attempts to found gay movements were suppressed by police action with no outcry whatsoever from the defenders of civil liberties. Czechoslovakia, the only democracy in Central Europe to survive this period, simply continued the Austrian penal code of 1852 that penalized both male and female homosexuality.

Spain and the Falange. The middle-class, ascetic, deeply Catholic Franco, who overthrew the Spanish Republic in the Civil War of 1936-39, established one of the harshest of the fascist regimes, executing many of the defeated republicans and jailing others under brutal conditions. The great homosexual poet Federico García Lorca was shot by a death squad near Granada in 1936; it is said that they fired the bullets through his backside to "make the punishment fit the crime." On the other hand, the Falange theoretician José Antonio Primo de Rivera, who was killed by the left at the beginning of

the Civil War, was widely believed to be homosexual. Even Franco himself, rumor has alleged, had an occasional fling during his service in Morocco.

More than Mussolini, Franco resisted the theories and pressures of Hitler, whom he regarded as a despicable (and perhaps deranged) upstart. It has been argued that Franco was not a fascist at all and that he actually maintained a pro-Jewish policy, granting asylum to refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe and attempting to protect Sephardic Jews in the Balkan countries. In his last years he in fact liberalized Spain to a certain extent, allowing among other things a resurgence of gay bars, baths, and culture even before the accession of King Juan Carlos upon his death in 1975. Today Spain is one of the freest countries in Europe.

Latin America. Juan Perón in Argentina and other dictators in Latin America mouthed fascist doctrines without even the consistency of Mussolini's Eastern European imitators. Naturally Latins, like Slavs, being considered inferior peoples by Hitler, did not in general espouse racism (Hitler had to make the Japanese honorary Aryans to ally with them in the Tripartite Pact of 1937), so they had no reason to think of homosexuals in his terms. Rather, they looked upon them with amused contempt, in the vein of Latin machismo. This machismo reinforced clerical prejudice to keep social intolerance the rule in Latin America. As Perón was gaining power in 1943-44, there was some repression, perhaps instigated by the military, but after he consolidated his rule in 1947 there was little.

Conclusion. On the whole, fascism was too tradition-minded and lacking in innovative will to formulate a coherent policy regarding such a "modern" phenomenon as homosexuality. The twentieth-century demand of homosexuals for justice and equality, the homosexual emancipation movement, which was heralded in Germany as early as 1864, and was

first organized by Magnus Hirschfeld in 1897, elicited a violent and reactionary response from National Socialism and to a lesser extent from the other great totalitarian movement, Stalin's Communism. However, in countries where homosexual emancipation did not exist (and no need was felt for it in states that had adopted the Code Napoléon), a campaign of repression simply had no motive in the ideology of the rightist regimes that dominated much of the interwar period.

See also Holocaust; Nationalism.

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William A. Percy

FASCIST PERVERSION, BELIEF IN

Fascism and National Socialism (Nazism) were originally distinct political systems, but their eventual international ties (the "Rome-Berlin axis") led to the use of "fascist" as an umbrella term by Communist writers anxious to avoid the implication that "National Socialism" was a type of socialism. Neither in Italy nor in Spain did the right-authoritarian political movements have a homosexual component. Rather it was in Weimar Germany that the right-wing paramilitary groups which constituted the nucleus of the later National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) attracted a considerable number of homosexuals whose erotic leanings overlapped with the male bonding of the party. This strong male bonding, in the later judgment of their own leaders, gave the Nazis a crucial advantage in their vic-

tory over the rival Social Democratic and Communist formations in the early 1930s.

The most celebrated of the homosexuals in the Nazi Party of the 1920s was Ernst Röhm, whose sexual proclivities were openly denounced by left-wing propagandists, but this did not deprive him of Hitler's confidence until the putsch of June 30, 1934, in which he and many of his homosexual comrades in arms were massacred. Ironically enough it was said that with Röhm the last socialist in the NSDAP died. For Communist writers as early as the mid-1920s homosexuality was an element of "bourgeois decadence," or of *le vice allemand* (the German vice), and theorists such as Wilhelm Reich who were opposed to homosexuality could claim that the right-wing youth were "becoming more homosexual." The victory of National Socialism at the beginning of 1933 then reinforced Communist and émigré propagandists in their resort to "fascist perversion" as a rhetorical device with which they could abuse and vilify the regime that had defeated and exiled them—and which they hoped would be transient and unstable.

In particular, the statute by which Stalin restored the criminal sanctions against homosexuality that had been omitted from the penal codes of 1922 and 1926 was officially titled the "Law of March 7, 1934"—a pointed allusion to the anniversary of the National Socialist consolidation of power one year earlier. Maxim Gorky is even supposed to have said "Destroy the homosexuals and with them destroy fascism!" During his exile in the Soviet Union, the leftist German director Gustav von Wangenheim (1895–1975) made a film entitled *Bortsy* (The Fighters; 1936), in which the Nazis are shown as homosexual. The reaction of the Hitler regime to all this was to enact a new and more stringent version of the notorious Paragraph 175 in the legal novella of June 28, 1935. Under its provisions the number of convictions for homosexual activity rose

to many times what it had been at the end of the Weimar Republic.

While the subject of homosexuality was still largely taboo in the British and American press during World War II, allusions to the theme of "fascist perversion" are found in denunciations of Nazi Germany, and occasional echoes of the belief recur in left-wing propaganda of the recent decades. In the United States Maoists charged that the gay liberation movement of 1969 and the years following was an example of "bourgeois decadence" that would vanish once the triumph of socialism was achieved. Communist and Catholic organizations in coalitions of the American left have even formed ad hoc alliances for the purpose of excluding "gay rights" from the common program of the umbrella group or of keeping gay speakers off the platform at major rallies. The belief in homosexuality as a "fascist perversion" is one of the Stalinist myths of the 1930s that are belied by the historical facts but still kept alive by uncritical writings on the subject and by artistic treatments such as Luchino Visconti's film *The Damned* (1970).

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Warren Johansson

FASSBINDER, RAINER WERNER (1945–1982)

West German filmmaker, author, director, and actor. With his "anti-theatre" troupe in Munich Fassbinder set out to redefine the aesthetic experience on stage. His search quickly brought him (along with the members of this troupe who would often serve as his actors) to film. From his first films in 1969 to his forty-third in 1982, he explored the intricate connections between love and ma-

nipulation while also charting his vision of the path of German history (especially the periods of the Third Reich and the growth of a West German society he felt to be economically affluent but spiritually impoverished).

Often castigated as someone who expressed a solely subjective view, Fassbinder openly made use of a variety of sources—his own love affairs, Hollywood films, works from German literature—which he then filtered into his own entwinement of the personal and the public spheres. A relatively static camera (especially in his early films), mirrors and frames, layers of sound, a heightened sense of melodrama—these are all elements of a cinematic style which Fassbinder employs in order to speak for those who have been denied a voice.

Those films where homosexual relationships form the main theme clearly demonstrate Fassbinder's concern and his techniques. *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972), *Fox and His Friends* (1975), and *In a Year with Thirteen Moons* (1978) all deal with same-sex relationships in which erotic desire becomes a function of the struggle for dominance of one partner over the other. His films of two literary masterpieces, *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980), a television mini-series, and *Querelle* (based on a novel of Jean Genet; 1982), explore intense homoerotic relationships between men as well as openly homosexual ones.

Yet Fassbinder, himself homosexual, shows that the failure of the relationships he depicts to survive or even to nurture does not stem from the nature of homosexuality itself. Rather, he makes evident that such love cannot succeed in this society under conditions where human beings have lost their ability to form any relationship except one based on objectification and exploitation.

In the end, though, what Fassbinder presented is not an analysis of the futility of love, be it homosexual or heterosexual in nature. By portraying the precari-

ous existence of relationships between love and manipulation and by using the fates of individual characters to portray the path of German history and its influence in shaping everyday existences, Fassbinder's films open the possibility for change.

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James W. Jones

FELLATIO

See Oral Sex.

FERENCZI, SANDOR (1873–1933)

Hungarian psychoanalyst. Born to a Jewish family in Miskolc in northeastern Hungary, he grew up in his father's bookstore and lending library. He studied medicine at the University of Vienna, graduating in 1894. Ferenczi met Sigmund Freud for the first time in 1907. He underwent analysis with Freud, and the two passed many summers together. Ferenczi became a central figure in the psychoanalytic movement and the founder of psychoanalysis in Hungary, where he played much the same role as did Karl Abraham in Berlin. He translated many of Freud's writings into Hungarian, and under the short-lived Communist regime of Béla Kun he was appointed professor of psychoanalysis at the University of Budapest.

Major Contributions. Ferenczi's reputation was established by his *Über die Entwicklungsstufen des Wirklichkeits-sinnes* (On the Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality), in which he described the feeling of infantile omnipotence. His second major book, *Thalassa:*

Versuch einer Genitaltheorie (Thalassa, an Essay on the Theory of Genitality) he began to write in 1914 and published in 1924. In it he described the "Thalassal regression," and for the first time used the word *bioanalysis*. During the same period Ferenczi developed a more active form of psychoanalytic technique, in which directives to the patient were used to provoke increasing tension that would mobilize unconscious material and overcome the patient's resistances. He urged active interference, role playing, and free expression of love and affection for the patient. While critical of some of his innovations, Freud could later say that Ferenczi "has made us all his pupils."

With Freud's British disciple, Ernest Jones, Ferenczi had an unhappy and ambivalent relationship. Jones underwent a training analysis with Ferenczi in the summer and autumn of 1913, but later composed a negative account of his analyst's last years, saying that an "unhappy deterioration of his mind" had set in and that he suffered from a "very deep layer of mental disturbance." Those who knew Ferenczi at the close of life dismiss Jones' allegations as mythical.

Publications on Homosexuality.

Ferenczi's contribution to the study of homosexuality took the form of two papers, an early one in Hungarian on "Homosexualitas feminina," published in *Gyógyászat* in 1902, and a German article of 1914 entitled "Über die Nosologie der männlichen Homosexualität" (On the Nosology of Male Homosexuality), first delivered at a psychoanalytic congress in 1911. The first article described a lesbian transvestite named Roza K. who because of her sexual interests and manner of dressing had been rejected by her family and was in frequent conflict with the police. She led a pitiable existence of wandering between a charitable institution, a prison, a shelter for the homeless, and a psychiatric hospital. Ferenczi saw her as posing two problems: a clinical one and a political one; he proposed that "communal hos-

pices" be created where homosexual persons could find sufficient freedom to work if they chose, and at the same time a refuge from the hostility which they encountered in the outside world. The patient exhibited numerous masculine traits, but also, in his view, stigmata of degeneration, in particular a repellent ugliness. He concluded that the abnormality of her sexual drive was nature's infallible way of inhibiting her reproductive activity.

In the latter article Ferenczi expounded the difference between subject and object homoeroticism, that is to say, he rejected the notion that "homosexuality" was a single clinical entity. The "active" homosexual feels himself a man in every respect, is as a rule very energetic and aggressive, and nothing effeminate can be discovered in his physical or mental type. The object of his sexual drive is his own sex, so that he is a homoerotic through transfer of the love object. The "passive" homosexual, whom Ferenczi styles "inverted," alone exhibits the reversal of the normal secondary and tertiary sexual characteristics. In intercourse with men, and in all relations of life, he feels himself a woman and thus is inverted in respect of his own ego, so that he is a homoerotic through subject inversion. The first type, the object homoerotic, is almost exclusively interested in young, delicate boys with a feminine appearance, yet feels pronounced antipathy to the adult woman. The second, the subject homoerotic, feels attracted to more mature, powerful men, but can relate to women on terms of equality. The true invert, said Ferenczi, is seldom impelled to seek psychoanalytic advice; he accepts the passive role completely, and has no wish other than to be left alone and allowed to pursue the kind of gratification that suits him. The object homoerotic, on the other hand, suffers acute dysphoria, is tormented by the consciousness of his abnormality, never satisfied by his sexual activity, plagued by qualms of conscience, and overestimates the object of his desires as well. It is he who

seeks analytic help for his problems, and also is promiscuous because of repeated disappointment with his love object. Subject and object homoeroticism, concluded Ferenczi, are different conditions; the former is a developmental anomaly, a true "sexual intermediate stage," while the second is suffering from an obsessional neurosis.

Besides these articles, in April 1906 Ferenczi presented to the Budapest Medical Association a paper entitled "Sexualis átmeneti fokozatokról" (On Sexual Intermediate Stages), which was his report, as a neuro-psychiatrist, on the 1905 volume of the *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* which the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee in Berlin had sent to the Association, asking it to take a stand against the penal sanctions to which homosexuals were subjected. In the report, published in *Gyógyászat* the same year, Ferenczi fully endorsed the position of Hirschfeld and his supporters, saying: "I consider the repression of the homosexuals profoundly unjust and utterly useless, and I think that we should give our firm support to the petition drafted by the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee and signed, since the beginning of 1905, by some 2800 German physicians." Thus Ferenczi was one of those who even at the turn of the century spoke out against the archaic penal statutes and in favor of legal and social toleration.

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Warren Johansson

FETISHISM

A fetish is an object or, in fact, any focal point which has come to stir irrational reverence or obsessive devotion. A sexual fetish, unlike a mere preference, usually amounts to an exclusive demand, in that full arousal cannot occur in the absence of the fetish—be it a black shoe, a particular piece of underwear, or some partner-attribute such as perhaps broad shoulders, narrow or broad hips, large breasts in women or a large penis in men, an extreme presence or absence of fat, an abundance or absence of body hair, and the like.

Fetishistic demands usually stem from an early, particularly pleasurable experience, although it can perhaps never be precisely determined how one person's pleasurable experience is transformed into a lifelong fetishistic requirement, while a similar event for someone else may hardly stand out as exceptional, let alone as an ongoing fetish. And yet the basic mechanisms of strong preference-formations are known.

The pre-adolescent male's sexual response tends to be extremely diverse (polymorphous) and easily triggered by virtually any exciting event—anything from fast rides, big fires, and loud noises to being called on in class, seeing animals in coitus, or imagining close bodily contact with other children or adults. The onset of puberty quickly brings a narrowing down of sexual response to a much reduced number of specifically sexual items. The range is narrowed still further by the conditioning effects of a person's individual experience and basic disposition, until only a few strong preferences prevail—preferences that tend to become narrowed to ever fewer targets as a person builds up aversion reactions to "opposite" alternatives. At the extreme end of this whole conditioning process are the narrow, intense fetishistic preferences.

And yet all this work of conditioning applies almost exclusively to males. For reasons that are still not fully under-

stood, female sexual response is virtually non-conditionable (Kinsey, 1953, p. 642f.). Thus despite local, rewarding sex experiences of myriad kinds, women simply do not become "fixated" onto any one particular kind of sex practice or preference in the way that men do. (Nobody on record ever saw a female black-shoe fetishist and probably never will, although this and a host of equivalent male fetishes are commonplace.)

Male homosexuality affords uniquely useful insights into the whole problem of understanding fetishes. By its very nature, the male-male pairing affords a double chance of seeing a fetishistic demand revved up in intensity by being fed from both sides. By contrast, since fetishistic responses are very rare among women, they are virtually non-existent among lesbian couples.

In heterosexual couples the fetishistic male has to work out a compromise acceptable to his female partner; this may call for tact and other forms of inhibition on his part, and a degree of forbearance from her—a compromise on both sides that can greatly obscure the true reactions of each. However, there is no indication that heterosexual men, if given equally responsive partners, would be any less inclined toward fetishism than are homosexual men.

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C. A. Tripp

FICHTE, HUBERT (1935–1986)

German writer. One of the major (West) German authors of the postwar

period, Fichte is rare among German authors in that he not only treated the subject of homosexuality openly but even made it his starting point and guiding force.

Born the illegitimate child of a mother who was unable to realize a longed-for career as an actress and a Jewish father who seems to have disappeared after emigrating to Sweden, Hubert Fichte grew up an "outsider." After a career as a child actor in Hamburg theatres and in the movies (and an ambivalent relationship with Hans Henny Jahnn), Fichte set off for France with a traveling scholarship from the French government. In that country he served for a time as a leader in the camps of Abbé Pierre. Back in North Germany and in Sweden, Fichte devoted himself—and in a completely professional manner—to farming. At the same time he worked on translations (rendering *Simplizius Simplizissimus* into French, together with Jean Giono), and on his own writings.

His first publications (1959, 1961) brought him his first successes: writing fellowships and participation in the congresses of the influential Gruppe 47. From 1965 onward his strongly autobiographical novels, beginning with *Das Waisenhaus*, appeared. In the year in which the last novel in this series, *Versuch über die Pubertät*, was published (1974), Hubert Fichte began an ambitious project: "The History of Sensibility," planned for 19 volumes, novels and books containing "glosses," on which he labored almost obsessively until his death, and which is now being edited in a fragmentary form by the administrators of his literary heritage. Some of the volumes (so far as can be judged from the extant published work and the plans for publication) derive from the autobiographical world of the earlier novels; an additional section continues a project that Fichte had undertaken alongside his novels. Closely related to the novels is a "poetic anthropology/ethnology" that focuses not just on Afro-American religions—to which two large volumes of text

and parallel volumes of illustrations by the photographer Leonore Mau, who had been living and working with Fichte since 1963, are devoted (*Xango: Die afroamerikanischen Religionen: Bahia, Haiti, Trinidad*, 1978/84, *Petersilie: Die afroamerikanischen Religionen: Santo Domingo, Venezuela, Miami, Grenada*, 1980/84)—but also on traditions and phenomena of European culture with the same perspective of the ethnologist and anthropologist. In these works high culture (Sappho, Homer, August von Platen, Genet) is treated and depicted with the same attentiveness as the world of the Hamburg "Palais d'Amour." After Fichte's death there appeared *Homosexualität und Literatur: Polemiken*, vols. 1 and 2 (1987–88).

What is new, different, and rewarding in Hubert Fichte is more than his range. It is stimulating to observe how the new standpoint, which probably even without "gay consciousness," leads to new forms of verbalization and to open forms (even the format of Fichte's novels on the printed page—with much blank space—is open). His use of text collages at the macro and micro level can be read as the reflex of a process "of fragmentation and rebirth." In this process Fichte brought together a broadly conceived interpretation of "purity" and "religion."

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Marita Keilson-Lauritz

FICINO, MARSILIO (1433–1499)

Italian philosopher and humanist. The son of a physician, he preferred to take up the study of philosophy rather

than to follow in his father's footsteps. The arrival in Italy of learned Byzantines fleeing Constantinople after it had fallen to the Turks in 1453 gave Italian humanists the opportunity of studying Greek works which had been previously unknown to them. In this way the young Ficino discovered Platonism, learning Greek in order to study its texts.

Having gained the favor of the Medici family in Florence, Ficino was protected by them for the rest of his life; they presented him with a precious gift of Greek manuscripts, which he translated. Ficino quickly became a respected personality, attracting various pupils in a kind of Platonic Academy. In 1473 he took priestly orders, while continuing his philosophical speculations and taking on the responsibility of showing that the philosophy of Plato was in accord with Christian doctrine, as St. Thomas Aquinas had done earlier with Aristotle.

Among his most important works is the *Theologia platonica* (published in 1482), to which must be added strictly religious works (e.g., his Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul), and philosophical disquisitions (e.g., his Commentary on Plato's Symposium of 1469, in which he revived the form of the Platonic dialogue), as well as an impressive number of translations from the Greek of works of Plato and other ancient Greek thinkers. These translations made available to a scholarly public works that for the most part had been inaccessible up to that time in the West.

Marsilio Ficino is one of the most representative personalities of the Italian Renaissance. His fame is inseparable from his love and painstaking work of rediscovery, translation, commentary, and advocacy of the works of Plato.

Of special significance in this regard is his resurrection of the Platonic ideal of love, as it is known from the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*. In the sixteenth century Ficino's version was elabo-

rated in countless treatises on love, becoming the prototype of a new concept of "courtly love."

Under the rubric of *amor socraticus* Ficino set forth a paradigm of a profound but highly spiritual love between two men, perhaps linked by their common devotion to the quest for knowledge. According to his statement in the above-mentioned Commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, this love is caused, following Plato's conception, by the vision of beauty vouchsafed by the soul of the other individual—a beauty that reflects the supernal beauty of God. Through the physical beauty of a young man—women were incapable of inciting this rapture, being more suited to stimulate copulation for the reproduction of the species—the prudent man ascends to the Beauty which is the archetypal Idea (in Plato's sense) on which the beauty he sees depends—hence to God himself. Thus contemplating the physical and spiritual beauty of a young man through love is a way of contemplating at least a fragment of Divine Beauty, the model of every individual terrestrial beauty.

Ficino practiced this love metaphysic with the young and handsome Giovanni Cavalcanti (ca. 1444–1509), whom he made the principal character in his commentary on the *Convivio*, and to whom he wrote ardent love letters in Latin, which were published in his *Epistulae* in 1492. It is an ironic fact that the object of his love always remained (as Ficino himself laments) in a state of embarrassment.

Apart from these letters there are numerous indications that Ficino's erotic impulses were directed toward men. After his death his biographers had a difficult task in trying to refute those who spoke of his homosexual tendencies.

Fortunately the universal respect enjoyed by Ficino, his sincere and deep faith, as well as his membership in the Catholic clergy, put him outside the reach of gossip and suspicions of sodomy—which, however, such followers as Benedetto Varchi were not spared.

After Ficino's death the ideal of "Socratic love" became a potent instrument to justify love between persons of the same sex; during the high Renaissance many persons were to make use of this protective shield. Yet this use served ultimately to discredit the ideal in the eyes of the public, and with the passage of the years it was regarded with increasing distrust, until—about 1550—it became simply identified with sodomy itself. Consequently, in order to save it, from the middle of the sixteenth century the ideal was heterosexualized, and in this guise it long survived in love treatises and in Italian and European love literature in general.

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Giovanni Dall'Orto

FICTION

See Novels and Short Fiction.

FIDENTIAN POETRY

This minor genre of Italian poetry originated as a vehicle for homosexual themes that within the larger context of burlesque poetry have given rise to **Burchiellesque** and **Bernesque** poetry. The initiator of Fidentian poetry was Camillo Scroffa (1526–1565), a jurisconsult of Vicenza, in his *Cantici di Fidenzio* published in 1562 (but composed about 1545–50).

The *Cantici*, which probably come from Scroffa's student days at Padua, are supposed to have been written by an "amorous pedant," one Fidenzio Glottocrisio Ludomagistro, who is hopelessly in love with the handsome Camillo Strozzi. It is possible that the *Cantici* began as a student prank at the expense of a pedantic teacher at the University of Padua, Pietro Giunteo Fidenzio da Montagnana.

In fact the author seems to have forgotten this hoax of his youth; he decided to prepare an edition only after a series of unauthorized, and often enlarged, published collections had made the material popular.

The anthology amounts in the main to an anti-Petrarchan pamphlet, poking fun at well-worn conventions of love poetry, while at the same time it is a satire on the excessive preoccupation with classical antiquity into which the humanists had fallen, both from a linguistic standpoint and in view of their exaltation of the so-called Socratic love.

In fact not only is the fictitious author of the *Cantici* "Socratically" in love with his pupil "in the ancient manner," but he composes love poetry in a language in which immoderate love for the Latin language produces a thoroughgoing bastardization of the Italian, which has to bear an endless assault of Latinisms. The effect is comically pompous.

Scroffa's literary astuteness emerges in his having created a very human character, one who is pathetically caught up in the toils of an "impossible" love, set apart from the lives of normal people, and incapable of seeing anything wrong in the overwhelming sentiment he feels for "his" Camillo. The poems are tender and very candid, to the point that, the satire notwithstanding, the reader feels great sympathy for the hapless Fidenzio.

What came to be known as Fidentian poetry—which is technically the opposite of macaronic poetry, which mixes vernacular elements into Latin, instead of vice versa—was cultivated even before the first authorized edition of the *Cantici* in 1562, and lasted until the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Scroffa's first imitators kept close to his homoerotic inspiration. The finest among them are probably the anonymous author of "Jano Argyroglotto" (who also translated an anacreontic poem) and Giambattista Liviera (1565–early seventeenth century).

With the spread of Counterreformation ideas, the tone of the compositions was prudently and prudishly changed from homoerotic to heterosexual. Incapable of maintaining the subtle balance between irony and transgression, which Scroffa had exemplified, later Fidentian poetry became a sterile and repetitive poetic exercise, the equivalent of the mannered poetry which was in fact the original target of the *Cantici di Fidenzio*.

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Giovanni Dall'Orto

FIEDLER THESIS

In a 1948 essay widely circulated in the 1950s ("Come Back on the Raft Ag'in Honey"), the innovative literary critic Leslie Fiedler argued that interracial male homoerotic relationships (not necessarily genitally expressed) have occupied a central place in the American psyche. Citing works by Fenimore Cooper, Richard Henry Dana, Herman Melville, and Mark Twain, he even spoke of the "sacred marriage of males."

Whatever the ultimate verdict on this thesis may be, it is probably true that male homosexuals—and lesbians—have for a long time been more open to interracial contact than the population at large. It has been suggested that racial complementation serves as a surrogate for the absent complementation of gender. Those who hold this view find a similar pattern in relationships that cross class lines. In the case of racial dyads, as seen typically in the "salt-and-pepper couple," the greater frequency may also be facilitated by the fact that no children will be born from the union, a question that heterosexual couples—in view of the lingering racism of our society—cannot ignore. That interracial gay relationships have been accompanied by some self-consciousness (and hostility on the part of bigoted individuals)

transpires from such slang epithets as *dinge/chocolate queen*, *snow queen*, *rice queen*, and *taco queen*.

In the late 1970s the organization Black and White Men Together appeared in a number of American cities, attracting a good deal of support. In addition to offering social opportunities, the group has sought to explore the subtler aspects of the dynamics of such relationships, as well as to oppose racism. In some cities it is called Men of All Colors Together (MACT).

See also **Black Gay Americans; Working Class, Eroticization of.**

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FILM

Movie making is both an art and an industry. It has drawn for inspiration on theatre, fiction, biography, history, current affairs, religion, folklore, and the visual and musical arts. Active in stimulating the fantasy lives of viewers, motion pictures also reflect, though in a highly selective and often distorted way, the texture of daily life.

History of Motion Pictures. Although the first crude efforts with a proto-movie camera were made in the 1880s, films did not begin to be shown in specially designed cinemas until the beginning of the present century. Widely regarded at the time as disreputable and not suitable for middle-class audiences, the silents were subject to pressure to make them more respectable.

By 1913 Hollywood had emerged as the center of America's film industry, and by the end of the decade it was the world's leader. This commercial success drew additional attention from the "guardians of morality" in the pulpits and the press. In 1922 Hollywood set up an office

of self-censorship, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (popularly known as the Hays Office), to head off efforts to install government censorship. However, the Motion Picture Production Code was not promulgated until 1930; four years later, at the behest of religious groups, it was strengthened. In 1927 sound dialogue was introduced (the "talkies"), making possible, inter alia, the inclusion of suggestive dialogue of the Mae West type, though a constant running battle with the guardians of the code was required to retain even the subtlest double entendres.

In its heyday (1930–60) the motion picture industry was dominated by a small number of powerful Hollywood studios cranking out seemingly endless cycles of films based on a few successful exemplars. The focus on the stars, which had begun in the silent era, was continued, some of them now becoming (for reasons that are not always clear) gay icons: Bette Davis, Judy Garland, and James Dean. Anything that did not conform to the code had to be shown in a few "art theatres" in the large cities or in semi-private film clubs such as Cinema 16 in New York; it could find no mass audience.

By the mid-sixties television had begun to call the tune, and some studio lots were given over to producing standard fare for the small screen. Yet motion pictures survived and the sixties saw the rise of independent producers, who broke the stranglehold of the big studios. The demographics of the motion picture audience also changed, becoming more segmented, younger and more sophisticated. In this new climate some offbeat themes became realizable, often in films for "special audiences" such as counterculture youth and blacks. Even the rise (in the eighties) of videos rented in stores and played on home VCRs did not kill the movie houses. Moreover, the videos proved a boon to film scholars, who were able to reexamine older statements and theories through minute study of the films themselves.

Although the naive observer regards movies as a direct transcription of reality, technical and aesthetic considerations require transformation of the basic material. Moreover, social pressures—and the basic need to make money that is affected by them—shape choices of what is to be excluded and included. Gay and lesbian scholars have argued that their communities have never been adequately represented in mainstream motion pictures, which have been content to serve up brief glimpses and easy stereotypes. Be this as it may, there is much to be learned from a careful study of filmic images—mainstream and experimental, amateur and pornographic—that relate to alternative sexuality.

Beginnings. The first serious homosexual film appears to be Mauritz Stiller's *The Wings* (1916), based on the novel *Mikaël* by the Danish gay author Herman Bang. This work is an early example of the perennial practice (not of course limited to homosexual movies) of basing the story line on a successful novel. In 1919 the German director Richard Oswald produced an educational film *Anders als die Andern* (Different from the Others) with the advice and participation of the great sex researcher Magnus Hirschfeld. The movie portrays the difficulty of establishing a homosexual identity in a hostile environment, the expectation of marriage imposed by relatives, coming out, the tensions within gay relationships, blackmail, and the tragedy of suicide. The stormy reception accorded public showings of *Anders als die Andern* tended to discourage the otherwise innovative film industry of Weimar Germany from venturing much further into the realm of homosexuality. Probably the first explicit lesbian in film, however, was featured in G. W. Pabst's *Pandora's Box* (1929), based on a play by Frank Wedekind. In 1931 Leontine Sagan's *Mädchen in Uniform* appeared, based on a play by lesbian writer Christa Winsloe. The story, which concerns the love of a sensitive student for

her teacher, serves a broader purpose of questioning social rigidity and authoritarianism. This film, whose intense performances held audiences from the beginning, is rightly designated a classic.

Constricted by the Hays office, America produced little that was comparable. An exception is the experimental *Lot in Sodom* (1933) of James Watson and Melville Webber, which however played upon lingering fin-de-siècle ideas of decadence. In France Jean Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite* (1933), set in a boy's school, has homoerotic overtones, but these are not explicit.

Drag Films and Scenes. From the nineteenth-century tradition of theatrical transvestism—male and female impersonation—the movies inherited a minor but surprisingly persistent motif. Julian Eltinge, a renowned female impersonator from the vaudeville circuit, was brought to films by Adolph Zukor in 1917. The plots of his popular films generally offered some pretext for his making a transition from male to female attire. Brandon Thomas's theatre staple *Charley's Aunt* was first filmed as a silent in 1925, to be followed eventually by four sound versions. The plot concerns a young aristocrat at Oxford who comes to the rescue of two fellow students by disguising himself as the Brazilian aunt of one of them. In the German musical comedy *Viktor und Viktoria* (1933; remade in England in 1935), an aspiring actress gets her chance to replace a major male star by doing his role first as a man and then as a woman—a double disguise. In 1982 Blake Edwards remade this comedy to great effect starring Julie Andrews. Beginning with *Morocco* in 1930 Marlene Dietrich essayed a series of male impersonations—a device which became virtually her trademark. In the historical drama *Queen Christina* (1933), rich in homosexual and lesbian innuendo, Greta Garbo made a stunning appearance as the monarch disguised as a boy. Billy Wilder's *Some Like It Hot* (1959) featured Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis as musicians compelled

to disguise themselves as women because they inadvertently witnessed a gangster shootout. Although this film has remained a great favorite among gay men, only the last scene, in which Joe E. Brown insists that he still wants to marry Lemmon even though he is a man, is truly homosexual. The grossly obese transvestite Divine (who died in 1988) appeared in a number of deliberately tacky John Waters films in the 1970s and 80s. After an initially tepid audience response, the musical *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1976) became the focus of a cult of remarkable longevity in which members of the audience dress up as the characters, doubling the action as the film unfolds. Tim Curry plays a "sweet transvestite," Dr. Frank-N-Furter, who creates a muscle-bound monster for his own delectation. Then the French weighed in with *La Cage aux Folles* (1979), about two older gay men on the Riviera. This list could be extended for many pages. The point of the drag films is not so much whether they are explicitly homosexual, but their capacity to challenge gender role conventions. Yet the genre is so well entrenched that, unless specially charged, it has lost most of its power to shock, and thus change thinking.

The Sissy Motif. While contempt for effeminacy is deeply rooted in Western culture (it is already found among the ancient Greeks), the motif took on special coloration in America, where the sissy was identified with effete European culture as contrasted with the frontier-bred he-man. Thus in the film *Mollycoddle* Douglas Fairbanks is a foppish expatriate living in Europe who must win his way back to his rugged, masculine American heritage. In the comedies of Harold Lloyd, the bespectacled weakling is made to prove his masculinity over and over again.

In the 1930s, as the Hays Office code tightened its stifling hold, the sissy became a camouflage for the male homosexual, who could not be presented directly. In Lewis Milestone's 1931 version of *The Front Page*, a milktoast

poet-reporter, played by Edward Everett Horton, is a foil for the tough-guy reporters. During the 1930s Ernest Truex and Franklin Pangborn made the character virtually their own. With the collapse of censorship in the late 1960s, this subterfuge became less common, but it is still resorted to occasionally when the filmmakers wish to blur the image of a homosexual character.

Buddy Films. The drag and sissy films featured individuals who were generally isolated and risible, and hence could scarcely be regarded as role models by the general public. It was quite different with the buddy films—a classic example is *Beau Geste* (1926)—which generally presented dashing specimens of manhood who bonded with others of their ilk. For this reason homoerotic overtones generally had to be more subtle than in the other two genres. Many of these films raise problems of interpretation, in that the homoerotic elements that are detected by gay viewers (and a few homophobes) are often ignored by general audiences. Is it a case of projection (on the one hand) or obtuseness (on the other)? Recent literary criticism has emphasized that each work lends itself to a multiplicity of interpretations as the reader recreates the work. Regardless of whether this principle applies to films in general, it does seem helpful in understanding the divergent interpretations of buddy films.

An early landmark of the genre is William Wellman's *Wings* (1928), not to be confused with Stiller's earlier work. As one of the two flyer heroes is dying in the arms of the other, the survivor epitomizes: "There is nothing in the world that means more to me than your friendship." A sinister example is Alfred Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* (1951), based on a novel by Patricia Highsmith, where two men make a double murder pact. Adolescent alienation was the theme of *Rebel without a Cause* (1955), in which, however, the delicate Sal Mineo character dies so that James Dean can be united with Natalie Wood. In

