

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.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Warren Johansson, "The Etymology of the Word Faggot," *Gay Books Bulletin*, 6 (1981), 16-18, 33.
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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-klatches; 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.