

ment recalling one effected some years later by the English novelist E.M. Forster. Always of a delicate constitution, Charles Tomlinson Griffes died of pneumonia in 1920. His papers passed into the hands of his younger sister Marguerite, who destroyed many of them, apparently because she feared their "compromising" nature. In this way precious material for the understanding of his inner life has been lost.

Griffes was the first important American composer to be fully conversant with the avant-garde, as represented by such figures as Claude Debussy, Ferruccio Busoni, and Edgard Varèse. He was also influenced by Indonesian and Japanese music. His *Symphony in Yellow* of 1912 bears a dedication to Oscar Wilde. The choral work *These Things Shall Be* employs a text by another English homosexual writer, John Addington Symonds. One of his last works, the experimental *Salut au Monde*, uses texts from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. The general public, however, knows Griffes best for his sensual short pieces, *The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan* and *The White Peacock*.

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Ward Houser

## GROSS INDECENCY

As a term of art for homosexual acts, "gross indecency" entered English law through the **Criminal Law Amendment Act** of 1885. An amendment, drafted by Henry Labouchère and retained as Section 11 of the Act, has the following language: "Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or is party to the commission of, or procures or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with another male person, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. . . ." Earlier legislation, culminating in the 1861 Offenses Against the Person Act, directed against anal activ-

ity (buggery), required proof of penetration (down to 1828 the law was interpreted to require proof of penetration and emission). Ambitiously, the 1885 legislation enlarged the prohibition to include any homosexual contact whatsoever. As Havelock Ellis pointed out in 1897, it was illogical to include private acts, since no one would be present to record the indecency or be outraged by it. At all events, Oscar Wilde was convicted ten years later under the 1885 Act in a case that sent shock waves throughout the Western world.

"Indecency" has a broad connotation, suggesting anything held to be unseemly, offensive, or obscene. The 1861 Act had mentioned "indecent assault" against both females and males. Apparently wishing to leave no uncertainty that consensual acts, as well as coercive ones, fell within the scope of the prohibition, Labouchère seems to have deleted the noun "assault," adding the adjective "gross" by way of compensation. There is no crime of "petty indecency."

In 1921 a Scottish Conservative M.P. proposed to criminalize acts "of gross indecency between female persons." This legislation was not adopted, and in fact lesbian acts have never been against the law in the United Kingdom. The 1967 Criminal Offenses Act (England and Wales) removed private conduct between consenting adults from the scope of the criminal law, but left the expression "gross indecency" for public acts. If committed by members of the Armed Forces or Navy, even private acts remain a matter of gross indecency. It also remains illegal to "procure" an act of gross indecency; in a bizarre case, the director of a play, *The Romans in Britain*, was prosecuted in 1982 for a brief episode of simulated buggery.

Five New England states and Michigan imitated the British statute. As of 1988 Michigan still recognized "gross indecencies between males" and "gross indecencies among females." Generally, however, the expression has little currency in American law and is unlikely to

acquire much, as it would be vulnerable to attack under the "void for vagueness" principle.

See also **Common Law**.

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William A. Percy

## GUIDES, GAY

In the nineteenth century various guides of limited circulation were published of the demimondes of Paris, London, Brussels and other cities, sometimes including directories of prostitutes; none is known to have had a homosexual emphasis. For some decades in our own century, it appears, homosexual men exchanged among themselves handlists of favorite haunts—bars, restaurants, hotels, baths and public meeting places. A few seem to have been duplicated in a kind of *samizdat* form, reproduced in carbon-copied or mimeographed sheets. These lists were distributed privately, and sold, if at all, clandestinely. This clandestinity served to protect the establishments listed from notoriety that might result in police harassment.

Out of the small handlists pamphlets and books emerged. The earliest surviving example seems to be *The Gay Girl's Guide* (69 pp.), a male-oriented publication with a directory of "where to make contacts," that apparently began publication in Boston in 1949. It was succeeded by the international *Guide Gris*, first published in San Francisco in 1958 with subsequent editions, which seems to be the first such collection to appear as a real book. In the 1960s, the *Incognito Guide*, published in Paris, enjoyed fairly wide circulation. In 1972, "John Francis Hunter" (John Paul Hudson) published a heroic one-man job of 629 pages, *The Gay Insider USA*. While these and other guides of those decades are now obsolete, they are

useful for the historian who wishes to establish the "homo-geography" of the recent past.

Currently three well-established publications dominate the field: the *Spartacus Guide*, covering the world outside the United States; the Movement-oriented annual *Gayyellow Pages*, blanketing North America, with one national and five regional editions; and the lesbian *Gaia's Guide*, edited by Sandy Horn. Gay guides have also been published for such cities as London, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, with special telephone books ("yellow pages") appearing also for the latter two.

Wayne R. Dynes

## GUYON, RENÉ CHARLES MARIE (1876–1961)

French jurist and sexual theorist.

Guyon earned a doctorate in law from the University of Paris with his study *La Constitution australienne de 1900* (Paris: Chevalier-Marescq, 1902). This work and his *Ce que la loi punit: code pénal explicqué* (Paris: Larousse, 1909) brought him to the attention of the King of Siam, who appointed him in 1908 a member of the Code Commission and in 1916 chief of the Drafting Committee of the Siamese Code of Law. In 1919 the Siamese government published Guyon's *The Work of Codification in Siam* in both English and French editions. René Guyon developed early the principle of privacy, that law should never invade the bedroom. "The greatest charity you can render your neighbors," he wrote, "is keeping out of their private lives." In Siam (called **Thailand** after 1949), as the *Spartacus Gay Guide* notes, "The right to be homosexual has never been forbidden or restricted."

In his philosophy, Guyon developed a rationalism indebted to Epicurus and updated with Einstein, Freud, and modern science. He expounded his ideas in a series of works: *Essai de métaphysique matérialiste* (Paris: Costes, 1924); *Essai de*