

reelected in 1952 in the Eisenhower landslide that brought the Republican Party back to the White House after 20 years of Democratic rule.

Once the Republicans had become the majority party for a brief time, McCarthy's tactics became a source of embarrassment to them, and in 1954 a campaign was launched against him in the Senate which included the (true) accusation that a young University of Wisconsin graduate employed in his office in 1947 to handle veterans' affairs had been arrested as a homosexual and then promptly fired, and the (probably false) accusation that McCarthy himself was a homosexual, which Senator Ralph Flanders of Vermont included in his denunciation. However, it was alleged that McCarthy's marriage in 1953 at the age of 45 was motivated by his need to squelch the rumors of his own sexual deviation; the marriage remained childless, though the couple did adopt a little girl. What is significant in retrospect is that Roy Cohn, a young attorney who was one of McCarthy's chief aides during his heyday, was a lifelong homosexual who died of AIDS in 1986. Censured by the Senate in 1954, McCarthy thereafter faded in political importance, and when he died in 1957 no great wave of emotion went through the ranks of either his friends or his enemies.

Aftermath. The policy of denying employment to homosexuals on moral grounds and as security risks, however, remained long after McCarthy himself. It was only in the 1970s that concerted efforts were begun to combat the exclusionary measures that had cost many hundreds of homosexuals and lesbians their jobs in the Federal Government—often in positions where no element of security was involved. Given the absence of any organized gay movement in the United States in 1950 and the defensive on which McCarthy's unprecedented accusations had put the Democratic administration, homosexuals were the most exposed of his targets.

Broader Perspectives. Fairness requires one to note that the left has also sometimes employed its own variety of McCarthyism. During the 1930s the young Whittaker Chambers was a clandestine member of the Communist Party of the United States who cooperated with others in securing information for the Soviet Union. By the 1950s, having become more conservative, he denounced his former companions and their ideas. His testimony was of central importance in the conviction of Alger Hiss for perjury. In their turn his erstwhile friends began a word-of-mouth campaign based on the claim that his information was tainted because he was a homosexual and therefore untrustworthy by nature. While Chambers was in fact homosexual, the way his opponents used the allegation amounted to a homophobic smear campaign. In France, after André Gide published his negative reflections on his trip to the Soviet Union in 1936–37, he was attacked by his former Communist associates as a *pédé* (faggot).

These recent events are in fact the newest episodes in a long history. The sexual aspect of McCarthyism has an ancestry going as far back as Aeschines, Cicero, and the Byzantine Emperor Justinian (r. 527–565), whose laws against sodomites forged the "crime of those to whom no crime could be imputed," a weapon for political intimidation and blackmail that even the enlightened twentieth century has not deprived of its cutting edge.

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Warren Johansson

McCULLERS, CARSON (1917–1967)

American novelist, short-story writer, and playwright. Born Carson Smith

in Columbus, Georgia, the writer lived in a small town world of summer heat, drab houses, greasy-spoon cafés, and small-scale factories that provides the basic setting for her work. Her typical characters suffer alienation through loneliness, inadequate financial and psychological support, and incomprehension of their fellows. McCullers further sets her characters apart by making them freaks, oddities, and outcasts. Despite this unpromising material, her central theme is love, which though often thwarted nonetheless casts a transcendent note that cuts through the otherwise overpowering bleakness. Without love the human community could not survive the corrosive pressures of fear, violence, and racial and social injustice. As she wrote: "[L]ove is a joint experience between two persons—but the fact that it is a joint experience does not mean that it is a similar experience to the two people involved. There are the lover and the beloved, but these come from two different countries So there is one thing for the lover to do. He must house his love within himself as best he can; he must create for himself a whole new inward world—a world intense and strange, complete in himself." At the time she wrote, the pre-gay liberation years, this underlying philosophy of love struck a deep chord in many homosexual readers.

As a young woman her determination to succeed was exemplified by her siege at the door of the cottage of her idol, the established writer Katherine Anne Porter, whom she forced literally to step over her. Her relationship with her husband Reeves was unhappy, and after repeated bouts with alcoholism he committed suicide. At several points in her life she felt strong lesbian attraction, as with the aristocratic Swiss Annemarie Clarac-Schwarzenbach. McCullers had major friendships with gay male writers, including Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote, and W. H. Auden.

Published when she was twenty-three, the novel *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940) presents the isolation of the

deaf-mute hero and the effort of the other characters to break through to some kind of communication with him. *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1941) deals, in sometimes opaque prose, with the thwarted homosexual longings of an army officer, Captain Penderton. In the homophobic climate of the time, such themes earned her scorn from establishment critics, who abjured her to give up her "preoccupation with perversion and abnormality." She did not do so, and attained fame nonetheless. Although her last years were marred by illness, her New York funeral produced a remarkable outpouring of writer solidarity, reflecting esteem for her person and her work. Subsequently, material from *Ballad of a Sad Cafe* (1951) was adapted for the stage by the homosexual playwright Edward Albee.

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Evelyn Gettone

MEDICAL THEORIES OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Since Greek antiquity medical science has pondered the issue of homosexuality, seeking an explanation for behavior that seemed to contradict the evident anatomical dimorphism of the opposite sexes in human beings. Broadly speaking, the theories proposed by medical authors fall into two categories: those which explain the phenomenon as the result of innate or constitutional factors, and those which see in it a purely psychological disorder, one possibly amenable to therapy.

Classical Antiquity. The Greek **Hippocratic Corpus**, the collection of medical treatises ascribed to Hippocrates of Cos but actually written by an entire school of physicians from the sixth to the first century, touches upon the issue from the standpoint of generative secretions from the parents. If both male and female