The postwar years for the first time saw American homosexuals coming out to one another for political self-defense. Victorious over the Axis powers, the United States emerged from the war by far the strongest and richest country in the world. While in subsequent decades other nations, above all the two defeated foes, made successful efforts to catch up economically, American popular culture permeated everywhere, even its Communist rivals. Our scholarship and science, reinforced as it was by émigrés, most of whom remained after the war's end, for the first time also reached the front rank. Foreigners began to send their children in large numbers to our universities, to which baby boomers soon flocked. Film and television liberated them and their counterparts throughout the Free World from traditional restraints and religious scruples. Protected by penicillin against venereal disease and by the pill against unwanted pregnancies, the educated, secularized, upwardly and geographically mobile youth brought about a sexual revolution in the 1960s. Having survived the dangers and enjoyed the relative sexual freedom of the war, homosexual veterans of both sexes and their counterparts who had worked in factories and offices were less
willing to endure the repression that middle-class mores and small towns imposed. Many flocked to large cities where, coming out to one another, they built gay ghettos and a subculture. Try as it might, the establishment found it impossible to put the genie back in the bottle. The effort to restore the status quo ante inflicted much suffering. Because of the hysterical McCarthyite campaign fomenting a new type of inquisition against security risks and "sex perverts" in government, hostile outings and official prying reached new heights in the United States and Canada. Projective psychological tests were used to screen out "undesirable" applicants for employment, of whom "sex perverts" were a prime category. The military continued as it had done since 1942 to screen out and discharge us. Even in teaching and in private businesses "undesirables" were hounded.

Before 1969 progress toward toleration had been slow and irregular. Taking over from Switzerland, where a splinter group of the German movement had survived the war, publishing a monthly titled Der Kreis/Le Cercle, Denmark then temporarily led the way. In the late fifties Dutch Protestants and Catholics formed study groups to discuss homosexuality and religion. Dutch Catholic bishops in Holland even defied a papal order to remove a priest who had married two men. The English-speaking countries, now independent of German tutelage, took their first strides forward. Beginning in 1939 the entomologist Alfred C. Kinsey and his associates applied non-judgmental and statistical methods to sexual behavior. Deadpan, as if they were examining the sexual
life of insects, in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953) they adopted a scientific approach that treated homosexual activity with entire neutrality and discovered it to be far more widespread than anyone had imagined. Pundits were outraged but hard put to refute the Kinsey findings. In the fifties the Mattachine Society, ONE Incorporated, and in the sixties SIR, all in California, and from 1957 onward the Homosexual Law Reform Society in England created a new movement with no significant continuity with the organizations that Hitler had destroyed in 1933. Having lost the earlier tradition begun in Wilhelmine Germany, they tended to cite Kinsey and even more recent Anglo-Saxon authors. Open-minded, Kinsey addressed the problem afresh from the standpoint of an evolutionary biologist trained in the second decade of the century, with no more use for the Kabbalistic fantasy of the "female soul trapped in a male body" than for psychoanalytic explanations of the patient's life history.

The American Bar Association Model Penal Code (1955) recommended decriminalizing sodomy, but only one state, Illinois, adopted it (1961) before Stonewall. Canon Derrick Sherwin Bailey of the Church of England also argued in 1955 that the Sodom story, the most frequently cited Biblical text, was not originally homophobic, but rather a condemnation of inhospitality and that Christians could therefore accept us as brethren rather than condemn us as sinners.
In 1956 the UCLA clinical psychologist Evelyn Hooker, who worked closely with the ONE Institute, presented a study to the American Psychological Association demonstrating that homosexual men were as well adjusted as heterosexual ones. The two groups could not be distinguished on standard psychological tests, contrary to prevailing theories derived from studies of arrestees and analysands (Hooker, 1956; Marcus 1992, pp. 16-25). She rediscovered what the pupils of Griesinger and Westphal at the Charité had concluded in 1891—that homosexuality was not mental illness. In 1957 the parliamentary committee named for its chairman, Baron Wolfenden, found no good reason to prosecute homosexual behavior between consenting adults in private and no social benefits accruing from such prosecution, which furnished a pretext for blackmail or other crimes. In short, our defenders, little by little growing in numbers, and publishing their own periodicals, beginning in the United States in 1953, found increasing evidence from within the professions themselves to question the old prescriptions that jointly and severally condemned us as sinners, as criminals, and as mentally ill. Nevertheless, the establishment in all industrialized countries continued to oppress us. Émigré psychoanalysts voiced their hostility toward homosexuality more loudly on American soil than Freud and his disciples had in Europe, where until 1933 they had a strong homophile movement to monitor their publications and "keep them honest." Widely perceived as flagrantly effeminate, "homos" were confused with transvestites, child molesters, and
sissies. Authorities branded us immature, unstable, weak-minded, self-damaging, narcissistic, superficial, unreliable, cowardly, frivolous, worthless, and inclined to drug addiction and crime or even pre-psychotic. In short, the professions and society at large confused homosexuals in general with the obvious, even flamboyant minority that could not escape the clutches of the law or of involuntary psychiatric treatment.

With everyone respectable in hiding, no one visibly contradicted the stereotype or offered role models for distraught young homosexuals who had trouble identifying with the unsavory caricatures which both psychiatric writers and the popular press displayed. Consequently some of us could not even recognize that we were homosexual at all. Anyone was discovered or exposed was promptly ostracized, fired, or worse, prosecuted. Historians perpetuated the tradition of suppressing the truth about great figures of the past. As Greek and then Latin dropped out of the curriculum, the classics were increasingly encountered only in censored or bowdlerized English renderings. Homosexual novels and poetry were not included in syllabi, or were falsely interpreted as heterosexual. Biographers even turned Walt Whitman into a woman-lover. Ignorance of the past reinforced the prejudices of religion, law, and medicine.

Donald Webster Cory (from Cory-don, the title of Gide's book defending homosexuality, and from Daniel Webster), the pseudonym of Edward Sagarin, an expert in the chemistry of perfumes who dared not sign his own name) wrote in *The Homosexual in America*
(1951), the vade-mecum of every politically conscious member of our subculture of the 1950s:
"Society has handed me a mask to wear, a ukase that it shall never be lifted except in the
presence of those who hide with me behind its protective shadows. Everywhere I go, at all times
and before all sections of society, I pretend. As my being rebels against the hypocrisy that is
forced upon me, I realize that its greatest repercussion has been the wave of self-doubt that I
must harbor." Cory may have been the first American to describe his ilk as a minority:
We who are homosexual are a minority, not only
numerically, but also as a result of a caste-like
status in society. . . . Our minority status is
similar, in a variety of respects, to that of
national, religious and other ethnic groups: in
the denial of civil liberties; in the legal, extra-
legal and quasi-legal discrimination; in the
assignment of an inferior social position; in
the exclusion from the mainstream of life and
culture.
Persecutors targeted us as a defenseless prey. Because of the unchallenged moral condemnation
and Cold War paranoia over "security risks," the police made us their special target, often out of
indignation that society was not punishing us sufficiently for our depravity. Practices begun in
France under the Old Regime and modernized at the outset of the Third Republic were by the
1940s common among metropolitan police squads in the United
States and Canada as well as in Europe. Plainclothesmen who posed as potential partners until they flashed a badge and made an arrest entrapped us in cruising areas. Also, uniformed police frequently raided our bars and restaurants--even when their owners regularly paid them off--and would haul everyone there off to a precinct house. Often they released the names of all who chanced to be netted in such raids to the newspapers or made them known to their families and employers. Editors did not hesitate to print the names, addresses, and employers of those unfortunate enough to be arrested and identified.

This harassment fell chiefly on males, as the police regarded the chief sexual offense of women as heterosexual prostitution, although they occasionally raided lesbian bars. In 1953 the New Orleans vice squad carted off 64 lesbians from a French Quarter club. Hence every one of us who stepped out in the evening in search of a partner for casual sex could end the night with our lives in ruins. The few criminal lawyers who would touch handle such cases were often little more than blackmailers in their own right, extorting enormous sums from a client for having the case quietly settled with no arrest record. Even the honest judges who heard the charges in these cases could at times be incredibly ignorant and naive. Some even imagined that if a defendant whose only crime was to have propositioned a 45-year old plainclothesman were not "put away," the very next day he would be raping defenseless old women and children! In such a legal and social morass the shadow of blackmail, arrest,
exposure, and ruin hung over every active homosexual, whatever his social position.
The regular operation of the vice squads produced a constant stream of arrests. According to
John D'Emilio, in the District of Columbia they amounted to more than a thousand a year in the
eyear 1950s. Washington police often resorted to entrapment in Lafayette Park and in downtown
movie theatres. In Philadelphia misdemeanor charges against homosexuals numbered 100 a
month. Arrests could fluctuate enormously in response to political situations such as the eve of
an election in which a police chief or district attorney wanted to convince the voters that he was
"cracking down on vice" in his bailiwick. Bar raids could result in arrests in scores or even
hundreds and spread panic through the gay community of a large city. A single police raid in
1955 in a Baltimore club bagged 162. Ann Arbor, Baltimore, Boise, Dallas, Memphis, Seattle,
and Wichita saw sudden peaks of police harassment during the 1950s.
Through a survey, the Institute for Sex Research found that officers of the law had victimized 1
male homosexual in 5. Before the Manhattan District Attorney's office took the sound advice of
the Kinsey Institute, arrests there had in the 1940s numbered as many as 15,000 a year. Like
prostitutes, homosexuals were "sex offenders" subject to verbal and sometimes physical abuse
and to humiliating forced examinations for venereal disease followed, if they were found
positive, by brutal interrogations to trace their sexual partners. In the eyes of the law, and even
of the national American Civil Liberties Union until 1966, we were simply criminals against
whom the police legitimately and routinely took repressive measures. We deserved no
protection when on top of police harassment, we suffered random violence by robbers posing as
hustlers or simply by homophobic men out to "prove their virility." If tens of thousands of us
were thus outed after the end of hostilities and the discharge of most of the veterans, the armed
services also continued to screen out inductees and discharge under less than honorable
conditions those whom they labeled "perverts." These unceasing grievances implanted a sense
of being an oppressed group, and motivated the creation of the first homosexual rights
organizations in 1950-51, when a few bold leaders emerged to voice our grievances and struggle
for our rights.
To come out publicly or to be outed nevertheless still meant ostracism and ruin--even suicide. If
an outee lived in a small town, he virtually had to flee and attempt to begin life again elsewhere,
often in a new occupation and under an assumed name. Normally the victim was fired even in
the largest cities unless he worked in one of the "gay professions." Every form of business, from
banks, insurance companies, and brokerage houses to car dealerships, construction companies,
and engineering firms joined the learned professions and academia in denouncing, excluding,
persecuting, and firing us.
Homophobes, police, security watchdogs, and gossip columnists sporadically outed even the
rich, famous, and
privileged while neighbors, schoolmates, fellow workers, and even relatives often disowned kith
and kin when they discovered "the awful truth." No one was safe from gay bashing even in the
few gay ghettos that had sprung up in such places as New York's Greenwich Village and upper
West Side (with perhaps fifty gay bars and restaurants) and similar neighborhoods in other large
cities from Washington and Chicago to Los Angeles and San Francisco. Even other cities such
as Houston, Philadelphia, Boston, and New Orleans had spawned small enclaves, but at work
and even at play outside them one had to "pass" to avoid trouble with employers, gangs, police,
and other predators. Virtually no one came out to the general public rather than merely to
friends or relations. Outing almost invariably entailed ruin, at least of one's career, and
homosexuals (except for psychopaths like Roy Cohn) did not, as a point of honor, out one other.
Hence only a very few had dared to come out to heterosexuals, even those closest to them, and
probably not even a hundred in the whole country had come out to the general public.
It was less the brave but discreet pioneers, who themselves often hid behind pseudonyms, than
the self-proclaimed student radicals of the late sixties who by their raucous, even violent
demonstrations prepared the way for Stonewall. Inspired by the counter-culture to defy what
they dubbed "the Establishment" and to scorn conventions openly and even rudely, the young,
with hippies in the vanguard, set about building a new, more open, and fairer society. When the
"sexual revolution" came in the sixties
and seventies, it was often anarchic, undisciplined, and sometimes motivated by irresponsible hedonism. But swept along by the mood of the times, it made a breach in the hitherto impregnable wall of puritanical morality and hypocrisy.

**American Contradictions**

American attitudes towards sexuality in the immediate postwar period were contradictory. On the one hand, millions--both abroad and at home--had proved themselves in battle and tasted sexual freedom. Just as they naturally sought ways of continuing their altered lifestyles in peacetime, they confronted powerful efforts to restore the old arrangements, to reimpose "normalcy." As Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) has shown, these pressures particularly affected women. They were urged to give up their jobs and independence and return to subservience in the home. But only in the late 1960s did the refusal of many to do so, perhaps particularly of lesbians, inspire a new phase of the women's rights movement.

Psychoanalysis gained influence as the Jewish émigrés driven out of Germany and Austria found a new clientele in the American upper and upper-middle class, particularly among those most alienated from traditional religion. The urban elites turned to the analyst not so much for therapy as for secular confession and moral guidance. As a result, many homosexuals were induced or even compelled to embark on futile and expensive "cures" to become "normal." They usually failed, as Howard Brown (1976) and Martin Duberman (1991) so deftly described in their
autobiographies. As Alfred Kinsey commented in 1948, among their clientele the psychiatrists encountered only the most disturbed and maladjusted personalities—those shipwrecked on the reefs of an intolerant society and without a map to guide them through perilous waters. Moreover, the émigrés from Central Europe arrived in a country that had never had an organized homosexual rights movement, but where even ministers and rabbis became a major source of referrals. Consequently the psychoanalysts drifted rightward into the ingrained prejudices of the Judeo-Christian tradition. From them we received not sympathy, but condescension, ridicule, and disdain.

The Viennese psychoanalyst Edmund Bergler (1899-1962) became the coryphaeus of this regressive tendency. In 1937 he had written a benign and tolerant article on homosexuality, but as the years passed in New York, where he had found refuge from Hitler, he grew more hostile and embittered against his homosexual patients. He concocted an elaborate theory of "psychic masochism" that depicted us as foes of the social order who earned the suffering inflicted upon us. These "injustice collectors," he insisted, constantly blamed others for misfortunes which they had unconsciously brought upon themselves. In *Fashion and the Unconscious* (1953) he pilloried gay fashion designers as "women's worst enemies" who did their best to make them *unattractive* to men. In *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?* (1956) he excoriated Kinsey, who had taken him to task in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), for "making
propaganda for homosexuals." In *One Thousand Homosexuals* (1959) he reached the all-time high-water mark in medical literature for the undisguised hatred and contempt which he heaped upon his unfortunate analysands. He went so far as to urge that influential homosexuals in the arts be outed by such snide innuendos as "He is a man among men but not among women." His blatant prejudices assured his works a welcome reception among the clergy, and they even became *Pastoral Psychology* book-of-the-month club selections, while *Time Magazine* cited him as the "final authority."

Bergler died before the post-Stonewall gay liberation movement could drive him to new heights of frenzied vituperation. However, his antipathy was widely shared by his colleagues, who inclined to denigrate Kinsey. The other most virulent psychiatric homophobes were Irving Bieber, Abram Kardiner, and Charles Socarides. All widely acclaimed in both professional and popular media, Bergler and then Bieber in *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study* (1962) insisted that homosexuality is an acquired illness and therefore curable. They were followed by the New York Academy of Medicine's report in 1964.

Psychiatrists and psychologists, who in those days often trailed in their wake, could express only an ill-concealed rage at the recommendations of the Wolfenden Committee. In contrast, they had never objected to any policy, even of Hitler's or of Stalin's, or to any decision that deprived us of rights or subjected us to legal sanctions. Evidently they believed that
ostracism and punishment were the best—if not the only—therapy. Hence they explicitly favored the notion that only the fear of legal penalties would pressure homosexuals to "seek help."

Nevertheless, the Mattachine Society of New York and other homosexual rights groups often invited such authorities—as well as members of the clergy—to address their meetings. The audience listened demurely while they bitterly reproached the "homosexual personality" or harped on the "sinfulness" of homosexual acts. After all, they represented the establishment whose "understanding" we desperately needed. In California homophile groups began to reject this absurd and self-demeaning tactic as early as 1955.

As chance would have it, the one leader of the German sexual reform movement who gained influence and a personal following in the United States was Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957). In his early years he had sought to fuse the emerging psychoanalytic doctrines of the 1920s and the political radicalism of the Communist Party into a unified program for the revolutionary transformation of society—a consummation still devoutly wished by what remains of the American left. Although his name became a near-synonym of "sexual freedom" among his admirers, who number some gay activists, he did not make a single positive comment about homosexuality in any of his writings. Proving that his pre-exilic homophobia had not abated, Reich wrote to the educator A. S. Neill in 1948 that while his doctrine of sex economy treated the problems of "natural genitality," Hirschfeld's World League
for Sexual Reform had promoted a sexology that concentrated on lingams [the Sanskrit word for phallus], condoms, and perversions. His curious dictum that homosexuality was a fascist disease destined to "wither away" under socialism is still parroted by the dwindling gaggle of American adherents to leftist "orthodoxy." So he reinforced the belief, even among political radicals, that "homosexuality is a disease" for which the late capitalist environment bears the hideous responsibility.

As this atmosphere was taking hold, a momentous event occurred--the Kinsey Reports, as they came to be known, plotted sexual orientation on a continuum from heterosexual to homosexual. One could not simply relegate "perverts" to some arcane category light years removed from the rest of the human race. Most controversially, the Report, which was based on interviews with 10,000 subjects, far the largest sample ever made, even now, showed that 37% of the male population had had at least one homosexual experience resulting in orgasm sometime after adolescence. It showed that those predominantly or exclusively homosexual at the moment might constitute 10% of the male population (4% lifelong exclusives). An immediate best-seller, the male Report was followed in 1953 by one on females, showing that a much smaller but still significant percentage of women (2 to 6% of the unmarried and less than 1% of the married) were almost exclusively homosexual. These figures, flatly refuting the notion that homosexuality was a rare "disorder" of the "insane and half-insane not in institutions" (Gershon Legman)
but in our midst, excited disbelief and furious denunciation.

Gradually, despite the redoubtable opposition of the clergy and even of most of the medical profession, the import of the Kinsey findings sank in. As his colleague C. A. Tripp wrote in the *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* (1, 662-666), "its great value was the establishment of reliable baseline data . . . the realization that masturbation is practiced by at least 95% of males . . . [and] the occurrence of homosexuality in over a third (37 percent) of males.” But many individuals had to suffer before more enlightened attitudes took hold.

**McCarthyism**

A new pretext for persecuting us arose as the Kinsey Report percolated through society. As the spirit of wartime collaboration faded and the Soviet Union extended its control over East Central Europe, tensions with the Communist bloc increased. The outbreak of the Cold War not only inspired a virtual obsession with "the Communist menace" but offered some right-wing demagogues a golden opportunity to link the Stalinist left, even though it had not promoted sexual reform for a decade and a half, with other "subversive" phenomena, including modern art and homosexuality.

Those right-wingers who strove to tar the left with homosexuality remarkably ignored the Communist regimes' official repression. Beginning just fifteen months after Truman's stunning election upset of November 1948, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy made ill-founded but skillfully publicized charges
against civil servants whom he sensationally accused from his privileged position on the floor of the U.S. Senate. He denounced the Truman Administration for harboring Communists and security risks. Finding fewer Communists than anticipated, the Wisconsin Senator from "sex perverts in government." Thus McCarthyism made homosexuality an issue in American politics which it had never before been. In his Lincoln's Birthday speech in Wheeling, West Virginia in February 1950, he captured the headlines by claiming that he had "in his hand a list of 205" active Communist Party members with the names of those in a spy ring in the State Department. Discussing "security risks," Undersecretary John Peurifoy testified that most of 91 employees discharged from the State Department for "moral turpitude" were homosexual. Their names, however, were not published, so that they were not outed to the general public, but the government did keep secret blacklists of them and of others. In March the Senator brought the alleged case of a convicted homosexual who, though he had quit the State Department in 1948, was now holding a "top-salaried, important position" with the CIA. McCarthy demanded the immediate firing of the man whose name he disclosed only in executive session: "It seems unusual to me, in that we have so many normal people. . .that we must employ so many very, very unusual men in Washington." In June 1950 the Senate, caving in to mounting pressure, authorized a subcommittee to probe into the allegations of "homosexuals and other sex perverts" working for the government and to report in December, after the
elections.
Consisting of four Democrats and three Republicans, the subcommittee was headed by Senator Clyde Hoey of North Carolina. Hoey, a Southerner generally conservative on economic issues, had until that time resisted the right-wingers' assaults on civil liberties. Moreover, an earlier body headed by the Democratic Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland had concluded that McCarthy "had perpetrated a monstrous fraud and a hoax on the Senate" because he "had in his hand" only documents in the public domain which were readily accessible to any Congressman or journalist. But this time McCarthy won a bloodless victory because the subcommittee did not denounce him. Absent a gay rights organization, or even visible homosexuals in public life, no one at any point on the political spectrum would come to the defense of the loathsome "sex perverts" polluting the capital. Now the prohibition of homosexuals in the military was extended to civilian employees, not only those in sensitive positions but even ones in the Library of Congress and the Department of Agriculture.

The subcommittee held that those engaging in homosexual activities were "social outcasts" who feared exposure and thus became subject to blackmail by foreign agents. The best case that it could use to bolster this assertion was that of an Austrian counterintelligence officer, Alfred Redl, who committed suicide in 1913 after a letter was intercepted with payment for information that he furnished to the Russians. The report
falsely averred that the Russians had taken advantage of the officer’s homosexual proclivities to blackmail him, that his treason was discovered only after the outbreak of the First World War, even misspelling his name! Never mentioned was the far more interesting Harden-Eulenburg affair that had occurred a few years earlier in Wilhelmine Germany, perhaps because even into the 1970s this scandal was a lingering embarrassment to German historians and to the right-wing Christian Democratic regime which the Western powers had helped to install in the Federal Republic of Germany. Only recently did a conservative Soviet monthly, *Nash sovremennik*, publish an article by Valentin Pikul' (1988) which confirmed that Redl acted on financial motives, not because the Russians coerced him by threatening to out him to his Austrian superiors.

The subcommittee opined that the District of Columbia's laws against "sexual perverts" were *inadequate*. Private homosexual acts were *not* then a crime there, and those arrested by the vice squad--often entrapped by agent provocateurs--often slipped back into the shadows after posting derisory sums of money as surety. It is just possible that an earlier body which drafted the penal code for the District counted at least one member who persuaded the others to follow Enlightenment principles and omit the offense in question. The subcommittee recommended correcting these shortcomings in the law and its administration so that no one guilty of "perverted sexual acts" would escape identification and punishment.
The unchallenged traditional attitudes toward homosexuality precluded any but a punitive approach; a vicious circle of reasoning underlay such a policy. The threat of blackmail with which the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee had cried to high heaven to urge the repeal of §175 and which law reform protagonists were to invoke in England against the "blackmailers' charter" was now cited to deny homosexuals employment in order to protect "national security." To this day no American secret has ever, so far as is known, been betrayed by a homosexual out of fear of disclosure or for gain, much less for sexual favors.

This new situation made our plight even worse: now not only guilty of "moral turpitude," we were even a threat to the security of any organization to whose secrets we had access. Even law firms, banks, and other corporations feared that their secrets were unsafe in our hands. Given the absence of any organized gay movement and the defensive on which media coverage of McCarthy's repeated accusations had put the Democratic administration, homosexuals were the most helpless of his targets.

Other factors such as the escalating Cold War worked in McCarthy's favor. Despite bitter opposition, he became a hero of the right. Reelected in the Eisenhower landslide of 1952 that gave the White House back to Republicans after twenty years, McCarthy basked in his glory. In 1953 a Republican majority in Congress did finally amend the criminal code of the District to make private homosexual conduct illegal.
With Republicans in control of both Congress and the White House, McCarthy's accusations against the executive branch and the Army began to embarrass them. In 1954 a campaign against him in the Senate featured the accusation, which was accurate, that a young graduate from the University of Wisconsin employed to handle veterans' affairs in his office had been arrested as a homosexual—and then summarily fired. Senator Ralph Flanders of Vermont added the humiliating charge that McCarthy himself was a homosexual. Hank Greenspun, publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun*, openly and repeatedly charged not only McCarthy but most of his staff with being homosexual, and challenged the senator to sue. McCarthy failed as completely in this instance to pick up the glove as in almost every other where he was called a liar and a slanderer. The need to squelch the rumors of his own sexual deviation may have motivated the senator's sudden marriage in 1953 at the age of 45. The childless couple adopted a little girl. In those days marriage counted as proof positive of an individual's "normality." Censured by the Senate in 1954, McCarthy thereafter faded from the political scene. His death in 1957 seemed anticlimactic and provoked no great wave of emotion among either friends or foes. The young New York attorney who along with G. David Schine served as one of McCarthy's chief aides during his heyday, Roy Cohn, was undeniably a classic hypocritical, self-hating homosexual. He gave lavish gay parties while publicly denouncing perversion at every opportunity. Those who currently favor
outing have cited his case as an egregious one that truly deserved it. Although the rumor mills constantly ground about him and his friend and ally Cardinal Spellman, Cohn's homosexuality was not publicly confirmed until his death of AIDS in 1986. Panels not exactly respectful of his memory figured in the AIDS Memorial Quilt from 1987 onward.

McCarthyism is a complex historical phenomenon. It goes far beyond the victimization of an unorganized, defenseless minority --which is what homosexuals were in the America of 1950. During the whole of the 1940s the conservative bloc in Congress--most northern and western Republicans and certain southern Democrats --had steadily opposed defense appropriations, compulsory military service, and foreign aid to America's allies; McCarthy himself had done so as late as 1949 in spite of Truman's efforts to establish a bipartisan anti-Communist foreign policy. After the McCarthy era, peaking in Eisenhower's victory over Taft at the Republican Convention in 1952, the isolationist (non-interventionist) stance of the right was dramatically reversed. Even arch-conservatives could not vote enough money for the military establishment, unanimously renewed the draft (which in the summer of 1941 the House had passed by a majority of 1), and cheerfully granted billions of dollars to shore up right-wing regimes threatened by "the international Communist conspiracy."

The Bureau Was a Closet

That this turnabout did not have exclusively patriotic
motives was clear to insiders such as J. Edgar Hoover (1895-1972), the immensely powerful director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from 1924 until the day of his death. Persistent rumors identified this Argus-eyed guardian of America's internal security as an exclusive homosexual, but confirmation had to wait until two decades after the end of his career. Hoover never married, had no apparent interest in the opposite sex, and never allowed a female agent in the Bureau. In addition, he had a very close lifelong relationship with his chief subordinate Clyde Tolson. In the late 1950s a pseudonymous article in ONE Magazine named them as lovers, whereupon FBI agents descended upon ONE's office, but found the editor, Dorr Legg, adamantly uncooperative. Other articles on Hoover faintly echoed this assertion. Johansson later approached the author of a piece in The Nation at a meeting of the New York Mattachine Society and received explicit confirmation. About 1967, when the manuscript of a volume of fiction by Casimir Dukahz (pseud.) titled Vice Versa included a chapter in which J. Edgar H. writes a letter to his friend Francis C. S. on "how to become a boy-lover," the printers refused to set type for it for fear that the FBI would persecute them for the rest of their lives. When in the mid-1960s Angelo d'Arcangelo's Homosexual Handbook indiscreetly outed Hoover, the FBI did pressure the publisher to remove the embarrassing mention, but obligingly provided some thirty or forty additional names for the last chapter of the second edition (1969).

That a national idol, the head of the Federal Bureau of
Investigation for 48 years, could have been a lover of his own sex must come as an astonishing revelation to many Americans. Magnus Hirschfeld, however, had written: "Like the judges, the first Uranian police officials whom I met struck me as a contradiction in themselves. More than once policemen who had fallen into the hands of blackmailers came to me for advice, even police captains and high police officials" (1914, p. 515). Hoover's psychological vantage point may have given him penetrating insight into the murky depths of the clandestine and illegal. As a homosexual in the America of the 1920s and later, he understood perfectly how the artfully maintained façade of the social order conceals a reality that in many directions departs from its norms. He also fully appreciated the imperative to project at all times a personal and institutional public image that need correspond to no objective truth. His power over official Washington rested less upon his knowledge of who was a drug addict or a "sex pervert" (and even during the McCarthy era, it seems, he held the persecution of homosexuals to a minimum) than upon his scrutiny of how large a share of the countless billions of dollars voted for military supply contracts and foreign aid was finding its way back into the pockets of those who cast the votes. Conveniently enough for the beneficiaries in this cabal, Hoover magnified the "Communist threat" out of all proportion to its internal dimensions by the late 1940s, although privately he believed that the activists of the American left belonged less in prison than in an insane asylum. It is even
alleged that the information which magnified Watergate into a political crisis and led to the resignation of Richard M. Nixon from the presidency came from his personal files. On the other hand, his reluctance to prosecute organized crime--which had received its initial impetus from the ill-fated Prohibition experiment and was about to regroup around clandestine traffic in drugs--with the requisite vigor stemmed from awareness that the mobster Meyer Lansky had come into possession of photographs of him in sexual intimacy with Tolson.

During Hoover's lifetime, and even the following decade, the establishment media either never explicitly mentioned the truth about his sexual proclivities or else vigorously denied them. For example, Merle Miller, who himself achieved a certain notoriety by coming out in the book *On Being Different: What It Means to Be a Homosexual* (1971), asked President Truman: "What did you think of J. Edgar Hoover?" The reply was: "One time they brought me a lot of stuff about his personal life, and I told them I didn't give a damn about that. That wasn't my business. It was what he did *while* he was at work that was my business" (Miller 1973, p. 389). General Harry Vaughan, who as Truman's top military aide had worked with Hoover, was asked by Ovid Demaris: "Do you think Hoover and Tolson were homosexuals?" He answered: "Oh, no!" Demaris continued: "What makes you so positive?" Vaughan explained: "Well, because he was a red-blooded, virile individual. I can imagine that I might be in a job like that, having an old college classmate of mine associated
with me, and we'd be living together" (Demaris 1975, pp. 109-110). But as the years passed and
dread of the Director's vengeance waned, the truth seeped out, and on Tuesday February 9, 1993
the Public Broadcasting System aired an hour-long program based on a forthcoming book by the
Hoover* (1993), which reveals all about Hoover's private life.

For all his personal idiosyncrasies, Hoover earned a lasting place in history. He not only "began
professional police training in America" but brought American law enforcement into the
twentieth century, thanks to a "fascination with scientific police work and record-keeping" which
"accords almost perfectly with the American love of science and technology." "His career
represents a record of organizational design and control with enormous ramifications for the
political culture of the United States. His activities in overcoming the built-in divisions of
federalism, while simultaneously (and successfully) denying that a national secret police was
under construction, are but one unique aspect of a career" that reshaped the structure of the
government without overtly violating America's received political values. "His pioneering
entrepreneurship into public relations of a scale and quality to water the mouths of the best
politicians of the century led the way for contemporary bureaucratic actors" (Lewis 1980, pp.
139, 154, 155). His managerial ethos reflected the skill of a lover of his own sex who, forever
aware of the discrepancy between image and reality,
knew how to control and manipulate the one and the other with consummate finesse.

*The Unforeseen Consequences of McCarthyism*

It remains for future historians to uncover the morass of corruption, waste, and theft of public funds into which McCarthyism plunged the nation for the ensuing four decades--and bled it white so that now, in 1992, almost every public institution finds itself in fiscal crisis. McCarthy engineered the greatest gay witch-hunt in American history, but the names of those dismissed from government service, as it seems mostly minor officials and employees, were not made public. Many more, including both of the present authors, who had thought of a career in the Foreign Service, were deterred from entering any branch of the Federal Government--as were many other homosexuals.

The refusal to employ homosexuals on moral grounds and because we were deemed to be security risks lingered long after McCarthy himself faded away. Even private employers and universities scrutinized their employees' sexual lives more carefully. Journalistic exposés such as Laird and Mortimer's *Confidential* series smeared political opponents with lurid accusations of homosexuality. Also, new devices such as lie detectors probed ever more deeply into the past actions and into the inclinations and orientations of applicants for "sensitive" positions. The "homofiles" that police kept in major cities as far back as the early modern era could now be maintained on a national scale, instantaneously updated by data communicated
electronically to a central index. The apparatus of the modern state was capable of a surveillance that far exceeded the powers of the Inquisition or the post-Reformation heresy hunters. It was only in the 1970s that the gay rights movement gained the strength to combat the exclusionary measures that had cost many hundreds of "outed" homosexuals and lesbians their jobs in the Federal Government--often in positions where no conceivable security issue was involved. Until then both radicals and liberals had shunned such an outcast minority, which found its first open and brave spokesman in Franklin Kameny.

Given its blanket rejection of sexual reform, the Stalinist left has on occasion resorted to its own brand of McCarthyism. Whittaker Chambers clandestinely joined the Communist Party in the 1930s. With others he spied for the Soviet Union. By the 1950s he had lost his earlier faith and turned conservative. Soon he denounced his former companions. His testimony proved crucial in convicting the diplomat Alger Hiss of perjury, as he had maintained close relations with both Hiss and his wife. His former friends began a word-of-mouth campaign based on the allegation that his evidence was tainted because as a homosexual he was untrustworthy. Chambers was indeed homosexual, but his opponents used the information in a way tantamount to a homophobic smear campaign. On the other hand, defenders of Alger Hiss noted that Chambers gave far more proof of intimacy with Mrs. Hiss than with the convicted former State Department official.
The homosexuals who had fought to "make the world safe for democracy" were no longer willing to endure such injustice and persecution in their own country. McCarthyism proved the stimulus for founding the homophile movement. But in England, where the homophobia was not so rampant, homosexuals and their allies repealed the laws against buggery and gross indecency and most important of all, set in motion a wave of legal reform throughout the English-speaking world.

Persecution in Britain

American experience interacted with that of other English-speaking countries. The British believed that the war had caused an increase in homosexual activities and that they should take vigorous measures to reverse the trend. Gradually, a mitigation of their rampant homophobia set in, though not before considerable damage had been done there too. Postwar austerity and reaction to wartime laxity may have increased puritanism and aggravated intolerance. Toward the end of the 1950s economic conditions began to improve and a less severe attitude towards "morals" set in, heralding the changes of the 1960s.

One notable espionage case resonated with McCarthyism. The flight of two Britishers, Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, to the Soviet Union in March 1951, caused a considerable uproar. Both these ultra-elite diplomats were on the verge of exposure as spies. Though not lovers as widely reported at the time, the pair, of whom only Burgess was really homosexual, were manipulated by the heterosexual master spy Kim Philby and--as it
came out many years later--also by Anthony Blunt. Curator of the Queen's collection, Blunt directed the Courtauld Institute in London, the leading British institution for art history. All of the clique stemmed from a homosexual coterie of which they had been undergraduate members while at Cambridge. Regarded as above suspicion, Maclean had worked his way into the British Embassy in Washington with top secret clearance, so that he had access to American as well as British intelligence. The affair occasioned much hostile comment in America about our ally's lax security measures.

Movie Stars: Idols of the Masses

In a country where there are no Lords and no established Church, reform had to wait until the opinion of the masses changed. In spite of the spectacular neo-realistic films of the Italians, Hollywood movies were particularly influential in the early postwar period. Stars' homosexuality did not become evident until long after their deaths, because in many cases the hints were too subtle or obscure for the average moviegoer to catch. The homosexual underground, however, was aware of their secret proclivities, and in the mid-1950s scurrilous publications like *Hush-Hush* and *Confidential* ventured to out several. As Michael Bronski pointed out in his perceptive study, *Culture Clash* (1984), Sal Mineo, who achieved fame quite young in *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), played a juvenile who kept a photograph of Alan Ladd, upon whom he had a crush, in his locker at school, and died so that James Dean, the superstar, could get together with Natalie Wood. Dean played a self-conscious, insecure
teenager seeking any way at all of proving his manhood. After participating in a hot-rod race in which his rival was killed, he suffered acute anguish: "What can you do when you have to be a man? It was a matter of honor. They called me a chicken. You know, chicken? I had to go." Dean realized his mistake in acquiescing in the image. "You can't keep pretending you're tough, you know?" He later accepted Sal Mineo's love. Throughout the production, the homoerotic context predominated, although the obligatory heterosexual finale capped it off. In 1976 Mineo--by now a rotund, middle-aged retiree--was murdered under circumstances that suggested, as the tabloids gloated, a homosexual motive. When discovered two years later, the assailant proved to be a conventional holdup man. This large black man did not fit the accounts of eyewitnesses who had seen a slender man with long blond hair. Many suspect that the police had simply found a convenient fall guy.

Although many homosexuals, deeply aroused by actors' sex appeal, often identified with the actresses on the screen so that they could imagine the male stars making love to them, they never received the slightest encouragement of their emotions from such stars as Douglas Fairbanks and Rudolph Valentino. Hollywood has been rightly accused of producing shallow, non-ideological films, pieces of mere entertainment if not escapism. But their stereotypical characters, improbable plots, and contrived endings result from the fact that reality is never allowed to intrude into these works of pure ideology. Because sex role stereotypes
framed the plots, the male film stars, as Bronski observed, "often projected lifeless, wooden images."

A sensational 1968 case lifted the curtain briefly: the murder of Ramón Novarro, who had been born in Mexico and starred in romantic leads in silent films, notably *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1922) and *Ben Hur* (1925). With the advent of the talkies the star made a comeback as a character actor. Apparently he had a servant bring hustlers to his home in Hollywood. One night, however, he inadvisedly invited a pair of brothers. Tempted by the aging Novarro's wealth, the younger of the covetous hustlers murdered him. The protracted trial during 1969 and 1970—in which the older one was convicted—in Los Angeles revealed all the sordid details of the actor's proclivities and activities.

Berating the film industry for blacking out the subject of homosexuality, Vito Russo (1981) analyzed the contrast between the he-man and the sissy. Hollywood's imagery and its shaping of popular notions of gender identity are, rather than homosexuality proper, the chief burden of his book. Instead of any honest portrayal on celluloid, moguls and agents in collusion fabricated heterosexual romances even for their most active homosexual stars. Because outing ended careers in acting as abruptly as in sports, no one dared to come out.

*Homophile Organizations: Mattachine and Daughters of Bilitis*

The American movement, an immediate by-product of McCarthyism, which doomed a number of individuals to outing, induced a few to come out to all and sundry. Lisa Ben, liberated
by her wartime job, published some nine issues of Vice Versa in 1947 (Marcus 1992, pp. 5-15).

It was a fleeting first. The pioneer activist Harry Hay, who had worked in the movies, founded the Mattachine Society in Los Angeles in 1950-51. He named it after the French Renaissance Société Mattachine, a shadowy group that performed musical masques about which he had read while preparing lectures on the evolution of popular music for a course in a workers' education project. Symbolizing the fact that "gays were a masked people, unknown and anonymous," the word itself has been derived from the Arabic of Moorish Spain, in which the word *mutawajjihīn* meant "masqueraders." The name implied that the Society's members were still "wearing masks." In fact, many felt obliged to use pseudonyms so that no one who knew them in everyday life would suspect their activism on behalf of such outcasts. During the following two decades this tradition of anonymity and secrecy was faithfully observed.

McCarthyism shaped the political situation in which the Society grew. Hay and his associates modeled it rather on Freemasonry than on the Communist Party which he had long devotedly served. Both enjoined secrecy, had hierarchical structures and as D'Emilio explained, practiced "democratic centralism." Imitating the orders of freemasonry, the founders envisaged a pyramid with five "orders." Members gained responsibility as they rose within the structure. Each order was to have one or two representatives from a higher level. As the Society expanded its membership, the orders would subdivide.
Thus separate divisions in each layer of the pyramid could extend horizontally. Consequently, members of the same order in different groups would not know one another. The fifth order made up of the founders would centralize leadership. Their decisions would pass down to the lower orders. The membership groups were called "guilds" until May 1953 and "chapters" thereafter. The structure was designed to create obstacles for infiltrators such as FBI agents. It offered the members, who were not expected to come out publicly, a modicum of security.

Mattachine was formed at a moment when the organized left was rapidly shrinking under an incessant barrage of vilification. After Henry Wallace lost his third-party bid for the presidency which Hay had supported, the leaders, most of whom had Marxist-Leninist leanings, had to express their concepts in language intelligible to ordinary laymen. In April 1951 they set out their goals and their ideas about homosexuals as a minority in a one-page document. Beginning in the fall of 1950, discussions led to the formation of the Society that adopted its official title in July 1951. The founders believed that "relations of production" had created the injustice and oppression which they endured. The structure of society produced these relationships, which they analyzed by treating homosexuals as an oppressed cultural minority that accepted a "mechanically . . . superimposed heterosexual ethic." Their existence therefore became fraught with "self-deceit, hypocrisy, and charlatanism" and a "disturbed,
inadequate, and undesirable . . . sense of value." Collectively we thus constituted a "social minority." Unaware of its oppression, this minority needed to develop a group consciousness. That, and recognition of its status, would give it pride in its own identity. By promoting such a positive self-image, the founders intended to forge a unified national movement with other minorities and those whom they deemed "progressive." A small number of homosexuals had become ready, willing, and able to resist. With this maximalist ideology, the organization aimed, partly through a moving initiation ceremony, at instilling pride in our distinctive values and traditions. Still trying to keep from being outed themselves, its members certainly never thought of exposing others. Outing was utterly foreign to the mentality of a day when everyone "wore the mask."

The semipublic meetings that the organization sponsored suddenly became popular. Many veterans, unwilling after they had fought for their country to be oppressed by it, joined Mattachine. Its chapters proliferated, first in Southern California and then in a few large cities across the nation. Aware of the onus of loathing and disgust that his leadership of a band of homosexuals was certain to earn, Hay himself felt obliged to sever all his ties with the Communist Party. Moreover, such an involvement had become anomalous: in the the wake of Stalin's repudiation of the sexual reform movement between 1933 and 1936, any interest that the American Communists had ever taken in radical sexual politics had long since
evaporated. In the Soviet Union and other Communist countries male homosexuals were branded as "enemies of the working class" and sent to concentration camps for "reeducation."

In February 1952 the members of Mattachine faced their first crisis when plainclothesmen entrapped one of their founders, Dale Jennings, in a Los Angeles park. When let out on bail, he phoned Harry Hay, who quickly convened a meeting of the fifth order. Because the Society was still operating clandestinely, it set up a front, a Citizens Committee to Outlaw Entrapment, to publicize the incident. Failing to get any response from the media, it distributed leaflets in gay bars and on beaches. This may have been the first use ever in the United States of such broadsides to raise gay political consciousness. When the trial opened in June, Jennings forthrightly acknowledged that he was a homosexual but denied the accusations leveled against him. When the jury deadlocked after lengthy debate, the district attorney dropped the charges. The contrast with the usual self-demeaning hypocrisy in such cases was such that the Citizens Committee justifiably exulted that the event was a "great victory for the homosexual minority."

A victory it was, but in a certain sense a Pyrrhic one because it had made Jennings' homosexuality public knowledge. He remained bitter for years about having been thus outing and had serious trouble getting jobs for a long time afterwards.

After this initial triumph the Society grew rapidly. It extended its network across Southern and Central California, with
groups in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Francisco. The membership also diversified, attracting more conservatives. By May 1953 the fifth order estimated that there were nine guilds with a membership of 200, with about 2,000 attending discussion groups with some regularity. Encouraged by their success, the leaders moved to incorporate the Society as a nonprofit educational institution. An acceptable front for dealing with society at large, especially with heterosexual experts from the professions and with bureaucrats, the Mattachine Foundation hoped to conduct research and to use the findings to enlighten the public. The Foundation's very existence might persuade potential members that they would not run afoul of the law in such an organization. Professional support, however, materialized but slowly. Although the research psychologist Evelyn Hooker of UCLA declined an invitation to sit on the board of directors, she maintained close ties with Mattachine and ONE, from whom she secured the pool of homosexual subjects for her groundbreaking investigations. Hay's and the other founders' political careers provided them with the skills to construct a movement within an intensely homophobic society, but also compromised them in most Americans' eyes. A Los Angeles newspaperman, Paul Coates, attacked the Mattachine Society in March 1953. He linked "sexual deviates" with "security risks," asserting that they were conspiring to gain "tremendous political power." To quiet the ensuing uproar, the fifth order convened a two-day-long meeting in Los Angeles in
April to reorganize Mattachine as an open organization. They exhorted members to defend everybody’s First Amendment rights, whatever political views they had espoused. Any of them might be interrogated by the dreaded Un-American Activities Committee. Kenneth Burns, Marilyn Rieger, and Hal Call allied against the leftists and partially drafted the society’s constitution.

Paradoxically, the founders prevailed on every issue; nevertheless, because anti-Communism had become so strident, the fifth order agreed not to run for office in the restructured Society. With a minimalist ideology, the new leaders denied all significant differences, except sexual orientation, between homosexuals and the rest of the population. Now in control, these quasi-assimilationists rejected the concept of a "homosexual minority." Under their leadership, the convention approved an organization with open membership. The bitter infighting, and his own resignation, made Harry Hay despondent. For a long time he played but a slight political role. In the late 1970s, in the autumn of his life, after brief participation in the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, and later, the Gay Liberation Front of Los Angeles, he was to reemerge as the godfather of the Radical Faery movement.

The 1950s also witnessed the rise of the first lesbian organization in the United States. In October 1955 four couples in San Francisco formed the Daughters of Bilitis, named for the heroine in Pierre Louÿs’ Les Chansons de Bilitis (1894), purportedly containing translations of ancient texts recounting
the adventures of a half-Greek, half-Phoenician woman who settled in Mytilene and became a member of the poetess Sappho's circle. The group's founders and moving spirits were Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, lovers who had migrated to the Bay area two years earlier. Martin and Lyon widened and transformed what began as a social club into a movement to educate the public. Independently created, Daughters of Bilitis allied with Mattachine and sponsored discussion sessions. Its monthly magazine, *The Ladder*, published stories, verse, biographies, and history as well as columns discussing problems of concern to lesbians. However, DOB remained a tiny group. It attracted white collar semi-professional women but not professionals or workers. After 1960 much friction developed between DOB and the far larger Mattachine Society and ONE Incorporated. Daughters of Bilitis was the most cautious, apologetic, and conformist of the three groups; it in no way anticipated the élan of the later feminist movement.

A figure characteristic of that period was Arthur C. Warner (b.1918), a graduate of Princeton and Harvard Law School, whose sexuality had compromised him with the authorities while he was serving in the Navy during the war and again in 1957, when he was entrapped in Lafayette Park in Washington. Based in Princeton, but Chairman of the Legal Committee of New York Mattachine throughout its existence, he cultivated a wholly unobtrusive style of seeking legal reform. Posing as a disinterested expert, he attended dull committee meetings waiting for the right moment to suggest a change in the law so minor that it would escape lay
notice. Warner opposed not just the sodomy laws, under which few men and almost no women were actually prosecuted, but also loitering and solicitation statutes under which large numbers of gay men were entrapped. The pretext ratified by the courts was that such an affront to masculinity would so outrage the party propositioned that he would assault the other on the very spot. Entrapment thus protected "law and order." Warner's activism persisted well after Stonewall. He succeeded in having the solicitation clause removed from the New Jersey Criminal Code, and with other legal activists, after all pleading with conservative-dominated legislatures had failed, won decisions from state supreme courts that declared the sodomy statutes unconstitutional. In the long run, however, such oblique tactics had severe limitations, not the least of which was to leave public opinion unchanged. A classic specimen of the illogic which then prevailed was the belief that we, who had to endure insult and defamation in total silence, were "mentally ill," while those who could not hear the subject mentioned without falling into hysterical abuse were paragons of "right reason."  

**Frank Kameny—the First Visible Gay Activist**

Franklin Kameny (b.1925) emerged as a new leader with a far more visible and public style. A middle-class Jew from New York City, he entered college at fifteen. Following military service, he completed his undergraduate education and enrolled in Harvard's astronomy Ph.D. program. While conducting research in Arizona in 1954, Kameny came out. Obtaining an undergraduate
boyfriend, he was initiated into the homosexual society of Tucson. After finishing his doctorate, Kameny joined the Army map service. In December of 1957 he lost his job because the government learned of his arrest in 1956 for lewd conduct. Thus outed and ousted, he appealed without success to the Supreme Court (denial of certiorari). By 1959 he was broke, living on Salvation Army handouts. Even as his unpaid bills mounted and his health deteriorated from malnutrition, he never lost his resolve. A letter of his from 1960 conveyed the strength of his character:

I am not a belligerent person, nor do I seek wars, but having been forced into a battle, I am determined that this thing will be fought thru to a successful conclusion, come what may. . . . I will not be deprived of my proper rights, freedoms, and liberties, as I see them, or of career, profession, and livelihood, or of my right to live my life as I choose. . . .

The past 2 3/4 years have not been easy ones. . . . The mills of justice in this country grind slow and exceedingly expensive, and unless the Government decides to surrender, there will be much time and money needed before victory is ours.

Kameny fought back to become, from his base in Washington, a leading gay activist of the 1960s. He was the first American repeatedly to insist on naming his sexual orientation and stubbornly to demand media visibility for it. Kameny frequently
spoke out against "security clearances" then serving as a weapon to intimidate government employees. Sometimes he represented the victims as a lay advocate at official hearings. He argued quite pointedly that "In this society, rightly or wrongly, those called mentally ill simply do not get all their rights. The entire homophile movement is going to stand or fall on the question of whether or not homosexuality is a sickness." Under his guidance, the new policy of Washington Mattachine affirmed that "homosexuality per se cannot properly be considered a sickness, illness, disturbance, disorder or pathology of any kind, nor a symptom of any of these, but must be considered as a preference, orientation, or propensity, not different in kind from heterosexuality and fully on par with it" (Lee 1977, pp. 50-51). On the Fourth of July in 1964 he and Barbara Gittings of DOB led the first public demonstration for gay rights ever--symbolically outside of the cradle of American liberty, Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Not once in its 36-year history had the German movement found the courage to stage such an action. As Lee remarked, only a very strong character who thrrove on notoriety was likely to survive a highly visible public homosexuality.

**Continuing Repression and Defamation**

In June 1954, a conservative Democratic senator elected from Wyoming in the 1948 Democratic landslide, Lester C. Hunt, took his own life. The press could only hint at the truth. As it turned out, the Washington police had arrested Hunt's son in a raid on a homosexual party. Two Republican Senators--one of whom
might have been McCarthy himself—warned him that every voter in the state would receive mail about his son's disgrace if he ran again. After claiming that a kidney ailment prevented him from running for a second term, Hunt killed himself in his office at the Senate Office Building.

In his novel *Advise and Consent*, which became a play and a film, Allen Drury hypocritically turned the story into a tale of leftist intrigue. In it, a former Communist is on the verge of being named Secretary of State. To conceal his Communist affiliations, the villain threatens to reveal a compromising wartime episode from the past of the closted chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. The novel thus indicted the left as subverting national policy by blackmailing patriotic Americans with threats to expose their homosexual proclivities or activities. The film trivialized the homosexual encounter, picturing it as a half-forgotten episode. It even contained a scene with the Senator entering a gay bar full of "obvious" types to find his old partner in his lapse from heterosexuality, but fleeing in horror from the scene of abnormality as his erstwhile partner falls headlong into the gutter. Outed by leftist opponents as "morally unfit" for office, the Senator ultimately commits suicide.

A local "witchhunt" got out of hand in Boise, Idaho. Towards the end of 1955, the police arrested three men and charged them with having sex with adolescents. The New Left journalist John Gerassi, who wrote *The Boys of Boise* about the events, believed
that an elite group in the Idaho capital was eager to embarrass opponents who controlled the city
government. Whatever the merits of this conspiracy theory about driving their enemies from
power, the police entrapped and arrested many. For over a year Boise's gay underworld was
subjected to an investigation so intense that, as D'Emilio observed, scores fled the city and many
lives were ruined. With growing local and then national media publicity, the affair escalated.
Gossip about the "boys of Boise" made the city a laughing stock. This donnybrook probably
signaled the end of the most acute phase of McCarthyite persecution.
Experts at the Kinsey Institute explained, in a conversation with Warren Johansson in 1962, that
in a big city the vice squad is cognizant of the extent of "perversion" and of the crucial fact that
such tabooed activities involve wealthy and powerful members of society. Consequently it never
pursues the investigation of a "ring" too far, but is content to entrap and arrest the friendless and
powerless--the street hustler, the procurer, the naive out-of-towner. But in Boise it was not the
local police, but the private Dice detective agency brought in by an angry father that intensified
the search to the point of compromising the prominent and influential. Probably Boise's
"homosexual underworld" was no more extensive or threatening than that of any other medium--
sized city of the Rocky Mountain states, but the number and prominence of thoseouted was
unparalleled, at least proportionately to its population.
In the 1930s Newton Arvin won recognition as a socially conscious literary critic. He analyzed major works by homosexuals such as Whitman and Melville, in a leftist, albeit nondoctrinaire manner. While denouncing social injustices throughout his life, to the extent that William Buckley's sister accused him of Communist sympathies, he prudently concealed his homosexuality not only from society in general but from his left-wing colleagues as well. In 1960 Arvin was teaching at Smith College, then a socially elite women's school. On September 2, the police arrested him and another instructor, Edward Spofford, in their homes. They were charged with possessing obscene photographs and literature and outing in a barrage of local newspaper stories which accused them of being members of a "smut ring." In addition, Arvin was identified as "being a lewd and lascivious person in speech and behavior." Almost without delay Smith fired Arvin. Depressed and frequently hospitalized, he died of cancer three years later (Katz, 1989).

There were many other less well known cases at other colleges and universities in England as well as America. The medievalist Ernst Kantorowicz, who went undetected in his lifetime, was outed posthumously by Percy in the Encyclopedia of Homosexuality (1, 657-658), a revelation confirmed in a private letter from his successor at the Institute, Felix Gilbert. Norman F. Cantor raised the subject in a chapter of his new book, Inventing the Middle Ages ("The Nazi Twins"). Surprisingly, Kantorowicz's students and relatives contest the assertion,
claiming that he was bisexual if not heterosexual. Most outings lacked any angle other than that of university politics; the outing of a professor meant instant dismissal that would conveniently make his tenured position vacant for others who coveted it. Mostly the outings resulted from accidental denunciation, often by persons the professor approached, or from entrapment by the police or by an outraged bystander. No one was safe, whether tenured or untenured, administrator, or student at any level. All lived in dread, because being outed meant being ousted from their profession, as from most other callings: law, medicine, the clergy and the military.

**Scandal and Law Reform in Britain**

The case of the twenty-seven-year-old Lord Edward Montague made headlines on both sides of the Atlantic. The wealthy peer, liked to give bohemian parties at his historic Hampshire home, Beaulieu. On these occasions, he and some friends, including the journalist Peter Wildeblood, were in the habit of taking young men to a hut on the seashore. In August 1953 someone complained. With a peer of the realm under suspicion, the police decided to make a major investigation. Eventually, two gay airmen were pressured to testify against Wildeblood and Montague. After an eight-day trial, Wildeblood and another man were sentenced to eighteen months, Montague to twelve (Hyde, 1970). In 1957, though, Wildeblood had the last word in his hardhitting book about the affair and his experience in prison, *Against the Law*, which was widely read in Britain and played a beneficial
role in shifting public opinion in favor of law reform.

The case of the noted actor Gielgud had less grave consequences. From his debut in the 1920s Sir John had been noted for his elegant style and expressive clarity of voice. He excelled as Hamlet, performing the role more than 500 times. After the war he championed the work of modern playwrights, including the homosexual Terence Rattigan. At a Chelsea party in 1953 Sir John had a bit too much to drink and later in a public place asked a young man to go to bed with him. He refused to take no for an answer and, as the British say, there was a bit of a row. On the young man's complaint Gielgud was arraigned and fined ten pounds upon conviction for "persistently importuning for immoral purposes." The negative effects were short-lived, however, and at his next appearance Gielgud received an ovation (Hyde, 1970).

Instead of reinforcing the campaign against "perversion," these British outings caused the political elite to question policies about sexual conduct. Until then the Christian churches had turned a deaf ear to pleas for toleration. But in February 1954 the Moral Welfare Council of the Church of England published a report which professed to "take the initiative" in conceding some justification to the demands of those who sympathized with "the invert's plight." It admitted that criminal law reform was long overdue.

The Secretary of the Moral Welfare Council, Derrick Sherwin Bailey (1910-1984), published the following year Homosexuality
and the Western Christian Tradition. Canon Bailey knew only a few books written in English earlier in the century—by Edward Carpenter, Havelock Ellis, Edward Westermarck—whom he bitterly excoriated for "casting slurs on the Church." He attempted to rewrite history so as to shield the church from reproaches by "prejudiced defenders of the homosexual." The most novel thesis of his work was that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah—which he believed historical—was motivated by divine wrath not at the homosexual depravity of the inhabitants, but only at their inhospitality. Against all evidence, he claimed that the verb "to know" in Genesis 19:5-8 had been falsely interpreted to mean that the Sodomites desired carnal knowledge of the angels (though it is unambiguously used in that sense—cited from the Akkadian text of the Code of Hammurabi—about Lot's daughters in the very same passage), and that the myth of Sodom as a hotbed of unnatural vice was invented by Hellenistic Judaism.

These interventions set the stage, however, for a Conservative government to appoint a committee under Sir John Wolfenden. In testimony to that Committee, the Moral Welfare Council, joined by the Roman Catholic Church and the Society of Friends, urged repeal of the statutes of 1861, which replaced the death penalty for buggery with life imprisonment, and of 1885, which penalized as "gross indecency" all other male homosexual acts even when committed in private. Also, on the other side of the Atlantic, Warren Johansson, independent of Franklin Kameny but anticipating his stand against the label of "mental illness,"
had obtained from the Austrian National Library in Vienna a photostat of Freud's statement in the newspaper *Die Zeit* of October 27, 1905 in which he flatly denied that homosexuality was a disease: "Should we not then have to classify as sick men many great thinkers and scholars of all ages, whose sound minds it is exactly that we admire?" On December 1, 1955 he sent this text together with a translation and commentary to the Wolfenden Committee--and effectively pulled out the rug from under the psychiatric-psychoanalytic establishment.

In August 1957 the committee by a vote of 12 to 1 recommended decriminalizing homosexual conduct among consenting adult males, endorsing after two centuries Enlightenment ideas on the irrelevance of sexual behavior to the criminal law. It carefully skirted the history of the law--terming its biblical and theological sources "obscure"--and of efforts to reform it, but stigmatized the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 as "the blackmailer's charter" because of the opportunity it gave the criminal underworld to prey upon otherwise respectable, law-abiding citizens. Rejecting the claim that homosexuality was an illness, it even incorporated a segment of Johansson's paper--to the rage and dismay of psychiatric reviewers who could not figure out what hit them! A British commentator in the fall of 1957 concluded that the liberal wing of the establishment was solidly behind the reform, whose adoption was only a matter of time. Ten years later, on a private member's bill, after several lame-duck votes for reform, a Parliament with a Labour majority enacted
this recommendation into law in England and Wales. Scotland, where the law of 1887 was still in force, did not follow until the 1980s, and the Republic of Ireland's anti-sodomy law fell only in 1991 when the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg held that homosexual behavior fell within the scope of the right of privacy.

**The Rebellious Sixties**

In the 1960s our society and culture changed rapidly. Restrictions on premarital sex went largely by the wayside thanks to penicillin and the pill. Sexual experiments became fashionable: "If it feels good, do it" and "If it moves, kiss it." Increasing prosperity fostered hedonism and luxury. Freedom and libertinism replaced duty and bourgeois morality (the so-called "Protestant ethic") that Cold Warriors had reimposed during the previous decade, as James Levin wrote in the *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*. Successful agitation for civil rights for African-Americans and (later) for equal opportunity for women created a climate for change. The cultural blackout diminished, occasionally fiction, drama, and even finally film portrayed homosexual characters or relationships. After 1963, Andy Warhol and other underground artists began to treat the subject with few if any inhibitions.

Some of the old patterns of queer-baiting persisted. The 1963 assassination of President Kennedy was wrapped in mysteries that have not yet been resolved to everyone's satisfaction, and assassination buffs have composed a vast literature around its
puzzling aspects. The official report held Lee Harvey Oswald to be the lone assassin, although later tests have purportedly shown that the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle he allegedly used was incapable of such a performance. In the welter of speculation and conspiracy allegations, it was almost inevitable that a homosexual connection would be forged. The dubious honor of proposing it lies at the doorstep of then New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, who charged that Clay Shaw, a prominent, though closeted Louisiana businessman and covert CIA operative, had been involved. In the judgment of most observers, Garrison's machinations, which were exposed in full (Kirkwood, 1970), failed to produce the alleged link. His homosexuality now exposed as part of a conspiracy theory *manqué*, Shaw lived only a few more years after the trial. As so often occurs in conspiracy theories, a minority was made the scapegoat in this version. In the years immediately preceding the tragedy, William Percy was on several occasions present at cocktail parties given by the Laurie brothers in the French Quarter, frequented by gay and straight guests alike, at one of which he even met Jim Garrison. At these social gatherings the desirability of assassinating Kennedy was advocated. In 1991 the film *JFK* made Garrison the hero, reviving some of the homophobic stereotypes.

On October 7, 1964 police arrested President Johnson's confidant, Walter W. Jenkins, in the men's room of the YMCA (according to others, of the Hay-Adams Hotel frequented by J. Edgar Hoover). According to police blotters, the charge was
"Disorderly conduct (indecent gestures)," as we learn from an article in *U.S. News & World Report* (October 26, 1964). The $50 collateral Jenkins posted was forfeited. Andy Choka, 61, a resident of the Washington U.S. Soldiers Home, was also arrested and forfeited his $50 collateral. Reporters followed a "tip" that led to the disclosure of Jenkins' arrest on October 14, just three weeks before the Presidential election. Jenkins, it was further revealed, had been arrested at the same YMCA five years earlier, when Senator Johnson's administrative assistant was also charged with "disorderly conduct (pervert)," forfeiting the $25 collateral.

As a result of his outing Jenkins was obliged to resign as the chief Special Assistant to the President. He was then hospitalized with "nervous exhaustion and high blood pressure." Bill Moyers, another longtime associate of the President's, replaced him as the number one aide. Thus the outing moved him into position to play a fateful role during that administration. On October 15 the President ordered the FBI, still firmly in the grip of J. Edgar Hoover, to hold a "full and complete" inquiry about the affair. Jenkins, then 46 years old, the father of no fewer than six children, had served Johnson as a highly trusted aide since 1939 while his fellow Texan rose through the ranks: Representative, Senator, Vice President, and then President.

Officials in Washington had been concerned about the presence of homosexuals in important positions involving national security because of the belief that "Soviet Russia preys upon
such persons, threatening them with exposure to force them into espionage." No specific instance of such pressure had, however, come to light in October of 1964 when the Jenkins scandal broke, yet the assertion of the report of the Senate Subcommittee of 1950 was repeated interminably in the media. No evidence, as Representative Barney Frank has often reiterated, was produced—then or subsequently—that Jenkins or any other homosexual in America had voluntarily or involuntarily betrayed confidential or "sensitive" information to the Soviet Union or any other Communist country, though such individuals, it must be admitted, have betrayed many European governments.

It was anticipated that the "outing" of Jenkins would harm Johnson's prospects of winning the White House in his own right, but the Republican candidate barely managed to carry his own Arizona and the core of the historic Confederacy, alienated from the Democratic party by Johnson's opportunistic support for civil rights for "Negroes." So the Jenkins affair was soon forgotten, even if it inspired jokes such as the sign on the White House lawn: "Trespassers will be violated."

Despite occasional throwbacks to homophobia and the incessant blacking out of homosexuals, the sixties were generally positive. Gay bars and other haunts proliferated, but police harassment never relented. In 1964, on the occasion of the New York World's Fair, Mayor Robert Wagner closed down all the gay bars--heedless of the tourist business which they might have attracted. Some establishments had clienteles differentiated by
age, class, style of dress, and in rare cases by sadomasochistic preferences and other fetishes.

Bath houses with abundant opportunities for hedonistic self-indulgence and raw sex flourished as never before. No longer stunted by the inhospitable climate of the 1950s, gay organizations revived on both coasts. While San Francisco began its rise as the "gay capital," the gay lifestyle expanded into new areas in the interior.

Sponsored by East Coast homophile groups, where Barbara Gittings and Franklin Kameny broke with the conservative old guard, the first public demonstrations were held in Philadelphia and Washington—a harbinger of the role that the East Coast was to play after 1969. As D'Emilio wrote:

Kameny argued relentlessly for gay activists to embrace an aggressive direct action strategy modeled on the civil rights movement. . . . [The movement's three options were:] social service, information and education, and civil rights-direct action. The first two, he stated, must take a back seat to the third. "No LASTING good can be accomplished by administration of social services alone," he wrote. . . . The prejudiced mind, he asserted, "is NOT penetrated by information, and is not educable." . . . Kameny's civil rights orientation led him to break decisively with the East Coast homophile movement's lingering respect for experts. "We cannot ask for our rights," he told an audience of New York activists, "from a
position of inferiority, or from a position, shall I say, as less than WHOLE human beings."
Kameny condemned the movement's receptivity to medical theories about the causes of homosexuality and to the belief that gay men and women were susceptible to cures. . . [He declared] "I take the stand that not only is homosexuality. . . not immoral, but that homosexual acts engaged in by consenting adults are moral, in a positive and real sense, and are right, good, and desirable, both for the individual participants and for the society in which they live."
Under Kameny's influence, members of Washington Mattachine wrote every Representative, Senator, Supreme Court Justice, the President and his Cabinet, as well as numerous federal bureaucrats, to arrange meetings to air their grievances. In May 1963 they protested to the head of the Selective Service, Lewis Hershey, against the policy of disclosing data about sexual preference to state and federal agencies, a sort of indirect outing. They countered Hershey's refusal with a visit to the Secretary of the Army's office, but he proved equally adamant. That very month the Democratic Representative John Dowdy from Texas introduced a bill to revoke the Society's permit to raise money, and despite the joint efforts of Kameny and other liberal groups the House approved an amended measure.
Nevertheless, Washington Mattachine survived with its prestige at a new high. It contested police harassment with vigorous legal action rather than weak editorials. For example,
Kameny took up the case of several men who had been arrested at a restaurant. One of the defendants had been hauled away merely for "winking at my friend." The police called him a "queer" and a "cock-sucker" and then beat him badly. Kameny tracked down the victims, assembled affidavits, and complained to the Washington police department and to the city’s board of commissioners. Washington Mattachine won the support of the local ACLU, which in August 1964 condemned the ban on homosexuals as "discriminatory" and appealed to the United States government to "end its policy of rejection of all homosexuals."

Inspired by Kameny, in the fall of 1966 Robert A. Martin formed the first student group, the Student Homophile League, at Columbia University in New York City, which officially recognized it in April 1967. However, during the uprising and student strike that began on April 23 of the following year the group could obtain no support at all from Columbia SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), which lingered under the spell of the "party line" emanating from Havana and Peking that castigated homosexuality as "bourgeois decadence" and gay people as "enemies of the revolution." Half a dozen student groups formed, but for most coming out in public was still too traumatic.

Annual meetings took place of a growing American and Canadian coalition of almost all the homosexual organizations, which frequently feuded bitterly with one another, the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations (NACHO, 1966-70). Only a few people attended and their activity received scant
notice in the media, but their debates anticipated the burgeoning movement of the following decade. Their achievements, like those of the even older West Coast groups, are often slighted by those who imagine that the struggle for gay rights began only in New York City in June 1969. However, it must be acknowledged that as late as the spring of 1969 the homophile movement was still a tiny, semi-clandestine affair. It had yet to make more than a small dent on prevailing public opinion. In all the States there were perhaps two score organizations, with 150 committed activists doggedly fighting the society's massive indifference and obloquy. They remained politically invisible to the leaders of the radical wave that had swept over the campuses. Most would have been afraid even to testify before the closed hearing of a legislative body, much less hold a public demonstration or just participate in an anti-war action under their own colors, although several hundred marchers had in fact done so. The strategy of these groups was still to seek law reform as obliquely and unobtrusively as possible lest any publicity on the subject activate the "sodomy delusion" and so unleash an avalanche of hate and abuse that would preclude a rational move on the part of legislatures and executives. When two Toronto homosexuals appeared on a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation television interview in 1968, their faces were shrouded in shadow to prevent recognition. A David Susskind program from New York in 1969 showed homosexuals being interviewed with bags over their heads. 

_Mattachine Review_ had
ceased publishing about 1963, although Dorr Legg's ONE was still appearing in 1968; four final issues came out in 1972. The Advocate was a local sheet published in Los Angeles. Jim Kepner heroically at great expense continued to build up what was destined to become the IGLA (International Gay and Lesbian Archives) in Hollywood. The chapters of the recently founded Student Homophile League were dwindling on account of losses from graduation and the hostility of university administrations. Our movement needed a shot in the arm!

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