

sion as a motive for improving the mind of the sexually receptive contrasts sharply with the thoroughly materialistic Roman use of property for sexual gratification. (6) Rome's exploitation of a vast empire created an inequity between rulers and ruled that influenced paradigms of sexual conduct.

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RÖMER, L. S. A. M. VON (1873-1965)

Dutch physician, historian, and student of homosexuality. Lucien Sophie Albert Marie von Römer was born in Kampen as the scion of a noble family that had lived in the Netherlands since the eighteenth century. He studied medicine at Leiden and Amsterdam, passing the licensing examination in 1903. Thereafter he studied and worked in Berlin with Albert Moll and Magnus Hirschfeld, and met two well-known transvestites, Willibald von Sadler-Grün and Freiherr Hermann von Teschenberg, who made no secret of their predilection and let themselves be photographed for Hirschfeld's *Jahrbuch*. Von Römer had an idealistic philosophy of life and a great reserve of personal dynamism; he was an admirer of Erasmus,

Spinoza, and Nietzsche, whose *Thus Spake Zarathustra* he translated into Dutch. A trip to Greece in 1912 interrupted his term of service as health official in the Royal Navy. After 1913 he settled in the Dutch East Indies, where he occupied various functions in the health service until 1932. In the course of his career his campaign against injustice earned him the hostility of many of his colleagues, and his energetic measures against unhygienic conditions won him the title of "the medical Napoleon." After his retirement he practiced neurology and psychiatry in Malang, where he lived until his death at the age of 92.

Von Römer's articles on various aspects of homosexuality were for their time major, path-breaking studies that assembled a vast amount of material that was little-known or had been deliberately ignored by official scholarship. His first article was a biography of "Henri the Third, King of France and Poland," which appeared in the fourth volume of the *Jahrbuch* in 1902; in the same volume he commented on the abusive reception of Arnold Aletrino's paper at the Congress of Criminal Anthropology in Amsterdam the previous year. In the fifth volume (1903) he issued a study of more than two hundred pages on "The Androgynous Idea of Life," a survey of myths and beliefs concerning androgyny and hermaphroditism from remote antiquity to the present. In 1904 he published in Dutch a book entitled *Unknown People: The Physiological Development of the Sexes in Connection with Homosexuality*, and in the following year *The Uranian Family: A Scientific Investigation and Conclusions on Homosexuality*. This latter work examined disparities from the normal sex-ratio in the sblings of homosexuals in the aim of demonstrating that they were biologically disguised members of the opposite sex. A German version was published in 1906, together with an article in the *Jahrbuch* on "Uranism in the Netherlands before the Nineteenth Century, with Especial Refer-

ence to the Great Uranian Persecution in the Year 1730," the classic study of a wave of intolerance in which 250 men and boys were prosecuted and 57 put to death. His last work on the subject appeared in 1908, an anthology of passages from Nietzsche on homosexuality in the *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft*. In the same year he unsuccessfully attempted to have a medical dissertation on homosexuality accepted by the University of Amsterdam, but it was rejected on the ground that a number of passages were judged "in conflict with morality and offensive to others." The hostile climate engendered by the Harden-Eulenberg affair in Germany may have influenced him to turn away from the subject. Following Hirschfeld, von Römer always laid stress in his writings on the social obloquy and **blackmail** that embittered the lives of his homosexual subjects, and by defending the existence of innate homosexuality he sought to deliver them from the reproaches of sin, sickness, and degeneracy. He also combatted the Dutch version of the "social purity" movement of his time and idealization of sexual abstinence. A last work of his, the fruit of thirty years' labor, he showed in manuscript to Magnus Hirschfeld when his former teacher visited the East Indies in 1931; it has remained unpublished.

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ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR (1884-1962)

American public figure and journalist. Born into an old New York family of Dutch patroon ancestry, she was the niece of President Theodore Roosevelt and a distant cousin of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whom she married in 1905. Even before her marriage she had been an active

and able promoter of social causes, and she continued this career after becoming the wife of a rising star in the Democratic Party who was its vice presidential nominee in 1920. When Franklin was stricken with poliomyelitis in 1921, she overcame her shyness in order to be his liaison with the political scene. When her husband, returning to the political arena, was elected first governor of New York (1928) and then president of the United States (1932), she played a leading role in women's organizations, in promoting consumer welfare, in struggling against unemployment and poor housing, and in furthering the rights of minorities. In 1933 she held the first press conference ever staged by a president's wife, and in 1935 she began a daily column "My Day," which, syndicated in newspapers throughout the country, gave her the opportunity to focus attention on social problems of the time.

Eleanor Roosevelt recast the role of president's wife in a far more activist, political tone, breaking with older conventions and earning the intense hatred of the foes of the New Deal. In an era when the feminist movement, having achieved the goal of women's suffrage in 1920, was in abeyance, she symbolized the career-oriented, politically active, socially concerned woman of modern times.

From 1945 to 1953, and again in 1961, she was United States delegate to the fledgling United Nations Organization, and in 1946 she was named chairwoman of the Commission on Human Rights, a subsidiary of the Economic and Social Council. In the 1950s she remained in politics as a leader of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party and a supporter of Adlai Stevenson. As one of the most prominent women of the first half of the twentieth century, she won an enduring place in American political and social history.

The question of a lesbian component in Eleanor Roosevelt's life and personality is somewhat complicated by the problematic of lesbian self-definition as it emerged in the middle decades of the