

nority at last demanding its place in the sun and the freedoms which Americans had been taught since childhood were the right and heritage of everyone. The gay subculture that outlasted this radical episode in American politics—a radicalism which quickly faded once the Vietnam War ended, at least provisorily, in 1973—has been the archetype of a wave of political and cultural innovation throughout the world, so that the modern phase of the gay movement can truly be said to have begun on those June nights in Greenwich Village outside the Stonewall Inn.

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STRACHEY, (GILES) LYTTON (1880–1932)

English biographer and critic. The son of a general in the Indian Army, Strachey attended Abbotshulme School, Leamington College, Liverpool University College, and Trinity College, Cambridge. As a boy at Leamington he experienced homosexual crushes, which left him with an abiding vision of his need for ideal male companionship. At Cambridge Strachey, whose gawky and unattractive figure was no bar to recognition of his brilliance, was elected a member of the exclusive Apostles group, together with John Maynard Keynes and Leonard Woolf. He embarked on his first grand passion, with the painter Duncan Grant, whom he was shortly to lose to Keynes.

After taking his degree at Cambridge, Strachey settled in London, where he was almost immediately integrated into the Bloomsbury group. The first years of his literary career were difficult and, apart from reviews, produced only a textbook, *Landmarks in French Literature* (1912). In 1917 he settled into a country house with the painter Dora Carrington, who had fallen in love with him. After

the war, they were joined by an ex-officer Ralph Partridge in a ménage à trois. This arrangement gave Strachey the serenity and support he required to complete his biographical works, *Eminent Victorians* (1918), *Queen Victoria* (1921), and *Elizabeth and Essex* (1928). Written with great panache, these books effected a revolution in biography through their ironic, often mocking distance from their subjects. Strachey's last years were enlivened by several successful affairs with young men, notably Roger Senhouse. After his death from cancer, his companion Carrington committed suicide.

As a result of the reaction against aestheticism occasioned by the Depression and World War II, Strachey's work went out of fashion, along with Bloomsbury itself. In the freer climate of the 1960s, however, this attitude changed, and Strachey's sexual unorthodoxy, which had been largely hidden, became an asset. The major factor in the restoration of his reputation came in the 1,200-page life story by Michael Holroyd, the homage of one major biographer to another.

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STUDENTS, GAY

Until the end of the 1960s the plight of the gay college student on an American college campus was a difficult, sometimes even a tragic, one. Confronted with the growing consciousness of his own sexual orientation, he found himself in a society where negative attitudes toward homosexuality were reinforced by peer pressure, where the obligations and opportunities of undergraduate life were all cast in a heterosexual mold, and where confidences made to a psychologist or psychiatrist could be betrayed to the college authorities. Such betrayal would entail disastrous consequences: further disclosure to his parents and family, forced psychiat-

ric treatment, or even expulsion. The few courses in which homosexuality might have been mentioned usually treated the subject with evasion or disdain; the books available in the college library relegated the topic to the realm of the pathological or criminal. If the student was fortunate, he could make the acquaintance of another individual who had accepted his homosexuality, found a *modus vivendi* in the midst of an intolerant society, and begun the arduous task of fashioning a mask to deceive the unfriendly heterosexuals around him. If he failed to make contact with the **gay subculture** that existed on some campuses or the nearby **bohemian** milieu, he could be doomed to lead a lonely life of silent alienation from the world of the rest of the undergraduates. Opportunities for social-sexual contact with others of his age such as the dances and fraternity-sorority life offered the heterosexual were unavailable to the homosexual student.

The introduction of war veterans on American campuses in the late 1940s (through legislation known as the "GI Bill of Rights") might have changed matters, for many of these older students had experienced freer sexual lifestyles in North Africa, Europe, and the Pacific. Though generally credited with pioneering a new seriousness that competed with the pre-war model of late adolescent hedonism ("Joe College"), the veterans were generally too preoccupied with economic struggles and grades to accomplish much social innovation on campus.

The First Campus Groups and Their Vicissitudes. Only toward the end of the 1960s did this situation begin to change, reflecting a new mood among American youth. Robert A. Martin (b. 1946), a student at New York's Columbia University (which in 1945 had suspended undergraduate Allen Ginsberg for suspected homosexuality), conceived the idea of a student group that would create a movement presence on the campus. Martin, better known under the name Stephen Donaldson, had

been a member of the Mattachine Society of New York since the spring of 1965 and had spent the summer of 1966 living with **Mattachine Society** of Washington president Frank Kameny.

Returning to the campus as a bisexually-identified sophomore in September 1966, Donaldson discussed the idea with interested students and, finding resistance within New York Mattachine to an autonomous group on campus, he chose the name Student Homophile League (SHL). The incipient group, which mixed both gender and orientation, found a protector in the courageous Episcopal Chaplain of the University, John Dyson Cannon. In October 1966 the chaplain arranged a meeting in Earl Hall to introduce the organization to the administration and the religious and psychological counselors. A certain amount of opposition was voiced, and to gain official standing the group was required to submit a list of names of members to the university administration—which could have been ordered to disclose them to the government. This proved an insuperable barrier until a set of prominent student leaders agreed to become the official charter members in April 1967.

With this list in hand, the university capitulated, and when the resultant story printed in the *Columbia Spectator* came (a week later) to the attention of the *New York Times*, on May 1, 1967 the front-page news was broken to an astonished world: "COLUMBIA CHARTERS HOMOSEXUAL GROUP." The reaction was all the more violent in that college administrations had everywhere clung to the concept of *in loco parentis*, that they replaced the parents as moral guardians of the students and their sex lives, and often held that students needed "protection" from such corrupting influences as homosexuality. The Columbia administration was flooded with letters from indignant alumni, many of whom assured the school that they would never give it another penny.

The newly recognized Student Homophile League was primarily interested in educating the campus, in promoting gay rights, and in counseling. Lectures and panels drew hundreds, while some 15 to 30 people attended the business meetings, and informal parties were held, though at first no public dances. Many students still in the process of "coming out" needed peer counseling, while frequent, informal discussions in the dormitories had the aim of enlightening the rest of the student body. A series of leaflets taking uncompromising positions foreshadowing gay liberation ideas was issued.

Two other SHL chapters were formed at New York University (under Rita Mae Brown, later author of the lesbian novel *Rubyfruit Jungle*) and at Cornell University (under Jearld Moldenhauer, subsequently an editor of Toronto's *The Body Politic*, and with the sponsorship of well-known anti-Vietnam War activist Rev. Phillip Berrigan), and in the fall of 1968 an independent organization called FREE was established at the University of Minnesota. The fledgling gay student movement participated in the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations (NACHO) and its Eastern Regional Conference as a radicalizing force, with Donaldson holding several offices at various times.

On April 23, 1968 (coincidentally the same day radical students began a week-long occupation of campus buildings), the SHL, denied participation on a psychiatric panel on homosexuality held at the Columbia medical school, picketed the event and distributed over a thousand multipage statements to members of the audience, many of whom turned over their tickets to the protesters, who proceeded to dominate the question period. This was the first demonstration against the psychiatric establishment's "medical model" of homosexuality.

The Columbia uprising of April 1968 did not involve the gay movement immediately, as the radical groups on

campus—following the Old Left and Maoist rejection of sexual reform—kept their political distance from it. The Columbia SHL did, however, join the student strike after a few days and issued its own set of demands.

By the spring of 1969 the gay student organizations were beginning to integrate school dances and sponsor their own, while their ideological positions, originally heavily influenced by Kameny through Donaldson, who broke away in 1968, became even more assertive in enunciating what were to become known as "gay liberation" doctrines.

Then the radical wave of the late 1960s, within which the Columbia revolt had become a worldwide symbol of the rebellion of alienated youth, sparked the **Stonewall Rebellion** of June 1969, which marked the beginning of a new, far more aggressive and activist phase of the homosexual emancipation movement. Following the lead of the antiwar protesters who occupied campuses, marched through the streets with huge banners, and constantly agitated for their cause, the supporters of the Gay Liberation Front defied centuries-old conventions and taboos and "came out" for gay rights. With this model, the student groups multiplied across the country, and by the end of the 1970s virtually every major campus in the country had one. To be sure, the end of the draft for the Vietnam War in 1973 saw student activism fade, but the gay student movement remained, constantly renewed as new generations of homosexual students entered the colleges and universities. The activities of the groups were mainly social, with a certain amount of peer counseling as a sideline. Gay dances became a feature of campus life, the organizations were able to sponsor lectures and public discussions, and each year on Gay Pride Day in June the groups would march behind their banners in the parades held in major cities from Boston to San Diego.

Stabilization. By 1975 at least 150 gay and lesbian groups had been estab-

lished on American college campuses. They tended to be concentrated in the Northeast and on the West Coast and to be most vigorous in older private universities and major state institutions. A decade later the number had at least doubled, and the groups were well represented in the mid-west and south as well as the older areas. Even many religious colleges had their groups, though the gay students at Georgetown University in Washington DC (Catholic) had to take their case to the federal courts. Although the gay groups were sometimes resented by insecure heterosexually identified students (and feared by administrations as a potential focus of alumni grumbling), the new associations fit well enough into the existing kaleidoscope of campus clubs which catered to blacks and Asians, to vegetarians and chessplayers. A new factor is diversification: twenty years after the founding of the Student Homophile League, Columbia University boasted fifteen separate groups spread out among the affiliated institutions on Morningside Heights instead of just one. Some schools even provided special counseling services for gay and lesbian students, though funding shortages tended to make the future of these uncertain.

Gay student groups sprang up in other English-speaking countries, notably Canada and Australia. On the European continent the American model did not take root, because European universities do not usually have campuses as such. In a few countries gay youth groups fulfilled some of the same functions.

A number of North American campus groups sponsored annual conferences attended by hundreds of students from their respective areas, which were an opportunity to hear talks by prominent activists and leaders of the national gay movement, as well as to discuss the problems of coping with enemies on the campus and around it. In recent years regional conferences with a long list of workshops

and speakers have been held at major schools in the Northeast and elsewhere.

In the history of the gay movement, the student groups have been significant as pioneers of intellectual innovation, as seminars for leaders who went on to mainstream organizations, and as a source of "out front" militants willing to take risks their job-holding seniors were reluctant to undertake.

Gay studies as a unified academic discipline have not fared so well; after some promising beginnings in the 1970s they largely disappeared from college curricula, and the Gay Academic Union founded in New York City in 1973 was unable even to produce a textbook for an introductory course, while in the same time women's studies were able to take root and create institutes for research and teaching. In 1987 two separate projects for similar institutions that would promote academic investigation of homosexuality were launched at Yale University and the City University of New York; the future of both is problematic. While the social needs of the gay undergraduate and graduate student are far better served than before the late 1960s, the academic side of the movement faces many tasks and challenges in coming decades.

See also Education; Public Schools; Youth.

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SUBCULTURE, GAY

The term "subculture" (introduced as recently as 1936 by the sociologist Ralph Linton) applies to ethnic, regional, economic, and social groups showing special worlds of interest and identification which serve to distinguish them within the larger culture or society.