

PART I: MALE (HOMO)SEXUAL PRACTICES AND IDENTITIES IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY pdf

1: Intergenerational Sex and Relationships | www.enganchecubano.com

Part I: Male (Homo)sexual Practices and Identities in the Early Twentieth Century The first portion of the book focuses on defining and shedding light on the early existence of gay communities and cultures in American history.

Over the course of eleven days, 36 shows from 8 countries were performed for hungry New York lesbians. Within 18 months the group had a permanent space at E. The space they built was part: It took time and money to get things going. Currently numbering over twenty nationwide and with origins in s lesbian-feminist movement, these festivals provide public venues for women- and lesbian-identified music, performances, and comedy acts. Camp Trans logo[14] Lesbian Families The construction of lesbian cultural spaces does not occur only within public sites of artistic production, such as music festivals and performing theatre groups. Often, spaces of community are established within an individual networking of friends and family and at times in places of employment. Facing employment discrimination and the possibilities of losing a job, the ability to maintain an out lesbian identity in the workplace is of course difficult to manage and varies according to different working conditions: What are the effects of policing cultural space and claims to identity? Such a policing of lesbianism as an identity category has its historic roots as well: All three are instances in which rigid policing worked to oppress and exclude lesbian women who already possessed a minority status. This section will attempt to problematize the seeming solidity of lesbian identity by further examining the ways in which such identities are constantly negotiated and rendered unstable. Classical Hollywood Cinema and Lesbian Representability. She emphasizes two key concepts: The conventions of the ghost film and the maternal melodrama as ways in which filmmakers could encode lesbian representability in their work: Furthermore, she cites the work of Deborah Bright as an example of lesbian identification with and appropriation of classic Hollywood imagery. These practicesâ€”inference, retrospectatorship, appropriation, and borrowingâ€”are all instances of negotiation, of the dialoguing that occurs constantly between dominant culture and lesbian identity formation. *Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, disidentification is figured as a means of empowerment for oppressed minorities: Disidentification is about recycling and rethinking encoded meaning. Thus, disidentification is a step further than cracking open the code of the majority; it proceeds to use this code as raw material for representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture. Their films and performances, he argues, utilize and rework forms of dominant culture through parody, mimicry, and mockery in order to represent and empower a subject who is both lesbian and of color. As Patricia White suggests, Bright renders lesbian spectatorship and desiring visible within these films: Here, in *Dream Girls*, Bright presents a disidentification with mainstream Hollywood: Conclusion Examining the practices of shifting negotiations and identifications within lesbian subcultures reveals the extent to which lesbian identities are continually reworked and refashioned. Identity categories can be sources of empowerment and political tools for minority subjects while simultaneously acting as exclusionary and policing, but they are nonetheless unstable sites of permanent contestation and reconfiguration. For, ultimately, it is both within and through culture that lesbianism is constantly contested and renegotiated. *Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U. A Feminist Studies Reader*, ed. Indiana University Press, , p.

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2: History of homosexuality - Wikipedia

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Sex, Gender, and Sexuality: By exploring a particular problem in the history of gender, sexuality, and homosexuality in early twentieth-century American culture, I hope to demonstrate how radically different the understandings of sex, gender, and sexuality — and even the conceptual boundaries among them — were only three generations ago in American culture, and thus to argue for the importance of historicizing these categories. Not, I should add, between prostitutes and lesbians, which others have explored. Although this linkage was common in the United States, as I will show, its best known manifestations were British. In Parliament passed the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which criminalized and implicitly linked both female prostitution and "acts of gross indecency" between males, and seventy years later, in , it established a single body, the Wolfenden Commission, to study both "homosexual offenses and prostitution. Moreover, reformers drew on the same panoply of sometimes contradictory theories to explain each form of behavior. Each was attributed variously to urbanization and the attendant loss of family-based social control , male sexual aggression, the inequities of capitalist development, personal failure, or organic degeneration of the moral sensibility. They also attributed both phenomena to immigration. If the British blamed homosexuality on the French, and the French blamed it on the Italians, Americans in this era blamed it rather more indiscriminately on European immigration as a whole, which many feared had introduced foreign immorality to American shores. Thus this paper focuses more on the dynamics of the working-class street culture in which most homosexually-active men participated than on the discursive practices of the reformers, although it concludes by returning to the latter. Reformers found that female prostitutes, working men, and the men they usually called "fairies" gathered in the same places in saloons and cabarets, subway stations and dance halls, certain streets and parks , and that the prostitutes and fairies had developed similar tactics for evading surveillance, such as their use of their eyes to signal interest, and of coded phrases to confirm it. As one well-informed observer remarked in , "a whole jargon unknown to many sexologists" was centered around the fairies, and "our streets and beaches are overrun by [them] An investigator who visited the place several times in while in search of female prostitutes noted that he had "heard of it constantly" and that it made no attempt to disguise its "well-known" character as a "resort for male prostitutes. I have had these propositions made to me, and made repeatedly. One well-informed investigator claimed in that there were at least six such "resorts" by which he meant saloons or dance halls on the Bowery alone, including one located directly across the street from Paresis. Five years later, just before a crackdown closed most of the most infamous resorts, the Jumbo and several other halls on the Bowery still functioned as "notorious degenerate resorts," according to the men who organized the crackdown, while the "chief attraction" of several places on Bleecker and Cornelia Streets was said to be "perversion. Indeed, as my book *Gay New York* shows, the Bowery resorts were only the most famous element of an extensive, organized, and remarkably visible gay subculture, with its own institutions, argot, cultural norms and traditions, and geographical enclaves. To the worried anti-vice investigators who reported on Paresis Hall, it represented the most egregious manifestation of urban disorder and degeneration. But to the men who gathered there, it was one of the key institutions sustaining their efforts to forge their own alternative social order. The men at Paresis Hall were not considered degenerate simply or even primarily on the basis of their sexual encounters with other men, what we would now call their homosexuality. Understanding the highly visible subculture of the "fairies" will help us understand that relationship, as well as the sexual culture of the urban working class which tolerated their presence and in which their own identities were forged. Thus I begin with an analysis of their social world and cultural status, of the strategies of self-representation they developed to negotiate their relations with other men in the streets and saloons of working-class New York. But they had also transformed such resorts into a haven. Other sources indicate that

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at Paresis Hall, for instance, a group of men had organized a social club, the Cercle Hermaphroditis, which rented private rooms where members could gather by themselves and store their personal effects. Their appropriation of the resources available at Paresis Hall was emblematic of the way in which gay men appropriated and transformed the cultural practices and institutions of their natal cultures as they forged their own. If some of the Bowery saloons became major centers of gay social life, such saloons were, after all, almost as central to the social lives of many other immigrant, working-class men. Gay men gathered on the same street corners and in the same saloons and dancehalls as their "normal" counterparts did, organized the same sort of social clubs that were popular among other immigrant youth, and sometimes, like the others, rented saloons or dance halls for parties or theatrical events. They also created cultural institutions and rituals that sustained and enhanced their communal ties and group identity, much as the ethnic theater and dances of their natal communities did. The largest of these events attracted thousands of dancers and spectators, including numerous celebrities and representatives of respectable society as well as the notice of the tabloid press. More significant to my argument today, the very prominence of the fairy subculture helped shape the terms by which homosexual relations were understood. The fairy constituted the primary pejorative category in opposition to which male sexual "normality" was defined, and thus both influenced the culture and self-understanding of all sexually-active men and offers a key to the cultural archaeology of homosexual practices and mentalities in that era. They were thus often called "invert" who had "inverted" their gender rather than "homosexuals" in technical language. The fundamental division of male sexual actors in turn-of-the-century working-class thought was not between "heterosexual" and "homosexual" men, but between conventionally masculine males, who were regarded as "men," and "effeminate" males, known as "fairies" or "pansies," who were regarded as virtual "women," or, more precisely, as a kind of third sex, intermediate between men and women. Taking on the role of the fairy, that is, allowed men to reject the kind of masculinity ascribed to them by the dominant culture, but to do so without rejecting the basic tenets of their culture concerning the gender order. Many homosexually-interested men rejected the role of the fairy as inauthentic or too dangerous to their status as "men," but many others embraced it because it embodied a way of understanding how they, as "men," could have the feelings their culture ascribed exclusively to "women. Although "fairies" were known as "female impersonators," transvestism was not central to their self-representation. Nonetheless, certain clothes were associated with fairies, and in the right context a man could signal his identity by appropriating even a single "feminine" or unconventional style or article of clothing, such as a colorful scarf, a green suit, swede shoes, or, most famously in the 1890s and 1900s, a red tie. Some such cues would be recognized only by other gay men; others would be understood by everyone in the streets. Perhaps most commonly, and dramatically, men used unusual styles in personal grooming to signal their sexual character. As one man noted in 1907, "Plucked eyebrows, rouged lips, powdered face, and marcelled, blondined hair" were the essential attributes of the "fairy" Potter. As one government investigator explained in the late 1890s, after being asked how he identified homosexuals when he investigated bars suspected of serving them, "the most striking feature [of homosexuals] would be the fact that although they represent and are dressed as one sex they act and impersonate the opposite sex A limp wrist or an exaggerated swivel-hipped, mincing walk known as "swishing" in the gay world was regularly caricatured on the vaudeville stage and occasionally seen on the street as a signifier of the "true" fairy, but more subtle stances were also read as gender specific. As a gay sailor explained, when pressed in to explain how he identified another man as "queer": The expression with the eyes and the gestures If a man was walking around and did not act real masculine, I would think [he was queer]" Chauncey, 1929. They were "stereotypes," to be sure, but the stereotypical or conventional association of such signifiers with "fairies" reveals much about the cultural construction and representation of gender in this period. The fact that men were identified as fairies on the basis of such minimal deviations from the conventions of masculine demeanor and dress indicates the narrow range of deviation from normative gender styles allowed most men, and suggests the extraordinary sensitivity of men to subtle markers of gender status, thus highlighting the pervasive character of gender

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surveillance in working class street culture. Many men switched the mannerisms on and off as easily as they changed from feminine to more masculine attire. This enabled them to manipulate such conventions to avoid being labelled as queer, since by wearing conventional masculine attire and carrying themselves with a "masculine" demeanor most men could pass as straight in hostile settings, even if they chose to camp it up when in a secure gay environment. As a man who moved to New York from Michigan in the s recalled, "back in the early twenties, people had to be quite effeminate to be identified, at least that was true in my case. Another gay man gave the same point a somewhat different emphasis when he commented in the s that the men he knew "talk and act like women, have feminine ways, It was a way to publicly declare a queer identity and to negotiate their relationships with other men. McIlhargy, questioned by Atty. Van Wagner and myself for Saturday night. He was so obviously a "third sexer," a different species of human being, that his very effeminacy served to confirm rather than threaten the masculinity of other men, particularly since it often exaggerated the conventions of gender difference and deference between men and women. The fairies reaffirmed the conventions of gender even as they violated them: Indeed, it took enormous bravery for men to carry themselves as fairies, and many men did so only in neighborhoods distant from their homes, where they constructed different, more "normal" identities. Mockery and contempt often colored the public interactions between fairies and other men in the working-class districts, even though gay men themselves sometimes contested the conventions of such ridicule. Fairies, like women who crossed certain lines " even such narrow ones as daring to walk down certain streets alone, without male guardianship " were considered fair game as targets of sexual violence by many gangs of youths, as the memoirs and recollections of gay men from this era make clear. Although I have argued that fairies were considered woman-like in their behavior and self-presentation, that is really too imprecise a term. No single norm governing "feminine" or "masculine" behavior existed in the early twentieth century; such normative gender injunctions varied along class lines and among immigrant groups. That gay men themselves shared this identification accounts, in part, for the popularity of "strong" or "tough" women, such as Mae West, as gay icons and drag personas: As a result, many men seem to have regarded fairies in the same terms they regarded prostitutes, and this conflation may have made it easier for them to distance themselves from the fairies " and to use them for sexual purposes in the same way they used female prostitutes. Farley, owner of a newsstand in the basement of the Times Square Building at Forty-second Street and Broadway, complained to a visitor in that "whenever the fleet comes into town, every sailor who wants his d[ick] licked comes to the Times Square Building. It seems to be common knowledge among the sailors that the Times Square Building is the place to go if they want to meet any fairies. In no way, however, did he indicate that he thought the sailors looking for sex with the fairies were themselves fairies or otherwise different from most sailors. The visitor, a private investigator, himself observed "two sailors Indeed, their final report recommended that the state close the bar precisely because it "permitt[ed] prostitutes to congregate with male customers By the s and twenties, it was increasingly common or both gay-and straight-identified men to sell sexual services to gay-identified men. But before then the predominant form of male prostitution seems to have involved "fairies" selling sex to men who, despite the declaration of desire made by their willingness to pay for the encounters, identified themselves as normal, though they were sometimes called "trade," the term originally used for the customers of female prostitutes. Indeed, while the term "fairy" was widely used to denote a flamboyantly effeminate and homosexually-active man whose self-presentation resembled that of a prostitute, numerous references in the early twentieth century make it clear that the word w as sometimes used more precisely to denote men who actually worked as prostitutes selling sexual services to "normal" men. There were well-known resorts such as Paresis Hall where men and fairies openly interacted, as well as numerous saloons in the Italian Lower East Side where neighborhood men knew they could go to meet young fairy prostitutes. But his costume and demeanor " like that of the fairies at Paresis Hall " did signify to "the boys" that he was not a normal man, either, but rather a third sexer, with whom they could have sex without complicating their understanding of their own sexual character Shufeldt, , While "fairies," "trade," and other "men" all engaged in what we would define as

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homosexual behavior, they and the people who observed them were careful to draw distinctions between different modes of such behavior: The organization of the relationships between fairies and their husbands, trade, and customers all serve to highlight the cultural presumption that the men in such relationships were defined by their differences – manifested in their different sexual roles or their differently gendered modes of self-presentation – rather than by their similarities – their shared "homosexuality." While today we might regard all of them equally as "homosexuals," in other words, they recognized no "homosexual" category in which they all could be placed. To classify their behavior and identities using the simple polarities of "homosexual" and "heterosexual" would be to misunderstand the complexity of their sexual system, the realities of their lived experience. The most visible gay men in the city worked as prostitutes – or had adopted the styles of dress and bodily presentation that marked women as prostitutes. They related to men as if they were women – particularly those "tough" women who dared venture into the social spaces dominated by "rough" men – and in a manner that confirmed the complex social conventions of gender difference, deference, and inequality characteristic of that culture. In their minds, both the women who worked as prostitutes and the men who behaved as fairies not only had flaunted the demands of respectability but had thereby evidenced their moral and hence physical degeneration. Not only had the fairy displayed his inverted character through his womanlike behavior, but prostitutes, too, according to some doctors, must suffer from a partial, organic inversion, since only this could explain their masculine assertiveness and their utter lack of feminine honor. Female prostitutes were "lewd, degenerate, and promiscuous by nature," as one man wrote in , for they lacked "the instinctive and inherent purity of mind of the normal woman" Hall, , in Rosen, , 48; Chauncey, , This was said of lesbians, too, and was one of the reasons lesbians and prostitutes were also often linked, although prostitutes received more attention from reformers and played a greater role in the sexual culture of the streets, especially before the s, when, in a changed political and cultural context, the "lesbian" emerged as a more potent cultural symbol. Such reformers were likely, for instance, to label any woman who had sex with a man outside of marriage, not just those who charged for the encounters, as a kind of prostitute. As Kathy Peiss has shown, they frequently interpreted working-class conventions of treating in these terms, labelling women who were willing to offer sexual favors to men in exchange for a night on the town, or even as part of an ongoing relationship, as "amateur prostitutes" or "charity girls" Peiss in Peiss and Simmons, , ; Connelly, , , Most understood the distinctions working men drew between "fairies" and their "normal" partners or "trade," and they sometimes replicated such distinctions in their own sexual typologies by calling the fairies "inverts" whose sexual inclinations were inverted and beyond their control and their partners "perverts" who had willfully "perverted" their natural sexual inclinations. But as the appellation "pervert" suggests, they were less willing to countenance homosexual behavior on the part of a so-called normal man than many working-class men were. As the chief physician of the New York City Prison wrote in , "Let us punish most severely the man who yields to the advances of these individuals [or inverts], for such as he are worse than the [invert] and deserve no sympathy" Lichtenstein, , Women had constantly to attend to their reputations, carefully negotiating their relationships with men lest they be branded charity girls, bad women, or prostitutes, and homosexually-active men, as we have seen, generally had to abide by widely-understood social conventions lest they be branded as fairies. For the fairy and the prostitute served as the standards by which all homosexually-active men and heterosexually-active women had to measure themselves, the stigmatized images they had to reject, or embrace – but certainly contend with – as they organized their own ways of living, negotiated their own relationships with others, and constructed their own public personas and more private self-identities. By no means did all men and women who ventured beyond the boundaries of normative heterosexuality identify or carry themselves as fairies or prostitutes. But the centrality of those images to their culture, which was dramatically reinforced in the early twentieth century by the intensification of state efforts to regulate urban sexual life, forced them to situate themselves in relation to them. But the association of homosexuals with prostitutes was based on more than such structural affinities. Gay men were equated with prostitutes because they were equated with women. But not just any kind of women. Medicine

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and the Changing Conceptualization of Female Deviance". *Journal of Social History*, Basic Books forthcoming in French from Fayard, Connelly, Mark Thomas, *The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era*.

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3: Gay New York (May, edition) | Open Library

Gay New York: gender, urban culture, and the makings of the gay male world, pt. I. Male (Homo)Sexual Practices and Identities in the Early Twentieth.

History Overview Cartoon from Punch magazine in illustrating the use of "gay" as a colloquial euphemism for being a prostitute. The word gay arrived in English during the 12th century from Old French gai, most likely deriving ultimately from a Germanic source. For example, the optimistic s are still often referred to as the Gay Nineties. It was apparently not until the 20th century that the word began to be used to mean specifically "homosexual", although it had earlier acquired sexual connotations. The word may have started to acquire associations of immorality as early as the 14th century, but had certainly acquired them by the 17th. A gay woman was a prostitute, a gay man a womanizer, and a gay house a brothel. Such usage, documented as early as the s, was likely present before the 20th century, [2] although it was initially more commonly used to imply heterosexually unconstrained lifestyles, as in the once-common phrase "gay Lothario", [13] or in the title of the book and film *The Gay Falcon*, which concerns a womanizing detective whose first name is "Gay". Similarly, Fred Gilbert and G. This usage could apply to women too. The British comic strip *Jane*, first published in the s, described the adventures of Jane Gay. Far from implying homosexuality, it referred to her free-wheeling lifestyle with plenty of boyfriends while also punning on Lady Jane Grey. Gertrude Stein and her *Family*, the portrait "featured the sly repetition of the word gay, used with sexual intent for one of the first times in linguistic history," and Edmund Wilson, quoted by James Mellow in *Charmed Circle*, agreed. *Bringing Up Baby* was the first film to use the word gay in apparent reference to homosexuality. When another character asks about his robe, he responds, "Because I just went gay all of a sudden! Gross, executive secretary for the George W. They have a way of describing themselves as gay but the term is a misnomer. This association no doubt helped the gradual narrowing in scope of the term towards its current dominant meaning, which was at first confined to subcultures. Gay was the preferred term since other terms, such as queer, were felt to be derogatory. In mid-19th century Britain, where male homosexuality was illegal until the Sexual Offences Act, to openly identify someone as homosexual was considered very offensive and an accusation of serious criminal activity. Additionally, none of the words describing any aspect of homosexuality were considered suitable for polite society. Consequently, a number of euphemisms were used to hint at suspected homosexuality. Examples include "sporty" girls and "artistic" boys, [24] all with the stress deliberately on the otherwise completely innocent adjective. The s marked the transition in the predominant meaning of the word gay from that of "carefree" to the current "homosexual". In the British comedy-drama film *Light Up the Sky!* Similarly, Hubert Selby, Jr. It has nevertheless been claimed that gay stands for "Good As You", but there is no evidence for this:

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4: Gay - Wikipedia

68 male (homo)sexual practices and identities in the early twentieth century the Slide, where female prostitutes also gathered and where many of the fairies were not only called "male prostitutes" but (in the language of the.

Men had to be many things in order to achieve the status of "normal" men, but being "heterosexual" was not one of them. Heterosexuality had not become a precondition of gender normativity in early-twentieth-century working-class culture. I have my hands or head full with Mrs. In the absence of physical labor, in the scarcity of dangerous tests of strength, heterosexuality is invented. But the sexual fluidity of working class men was built on intense sexism and restrictive gender roles, and the post-industrial economy probably represents an historic advance for women. Maybe in cultures with aristocratic traditions of non-laboring men, but not here. Chauncey deepens his portrait of middle class angst. He points out that the number of salaried, nonpropertied men grew eight-fold from to Many were derived from the slang of female prostitutes. At its broadest Gay New York is the story of the turf struggle, commencing in the Progressive Era, between working class and bourgeois understandings of acceptable sociability and use of urban space, between middle class reformers and a host of evils they saw in urban life. Such is the ironic fate of a persecutorial dossier meant to spur enforcement from laissez-faire city cops local police precincts could and often were paid off to ignore bath houses, or even, in some cases, to provide door security for drag balls. The streets and corners were crowded with the sailors all of whom were on a sharp lookout for girls. It seemed to me that the sailors were sex mad. A number of these sailors were with other man walking arm in arm and on one dark street I saw a sailor and a man kissing each other. It looked like an exhibition of male perversion showing itself in the absence of girls or the difficulty of finding them. The tenant felt free to invite whom he met on the street into his room. One summer evening, for instance, he invited an undercover investigator he had met while sitting on the basement stairs. Upper- and middle-class New Yorkers resorted to gangster-run basement speakeasies, immigrant restaurants and working-class rent parties to get their drink on. His resistance was physical, as well. He was a lb six-footer who could kick some ass. Once, after winning a drag contest, Malin wandered into a late-night cafeteria, still resplendently gowned and high on solidarity: After beating three of them into insensibility, the fight went into the street, with two taxi drivers coming to the assistance of the surviving member of the original foursome. Still, it ended on a suitably camp note. When the fight was over, Malin was said to have had tears in his eyes. During the next four decades, the SLA revoked the liquor licenses of hundreds of establishments that served or tolerated gatherings of men plainclothes investigators thought gay. Liquor licenses were revoked and bars shut down because men were overheard discussing opera, or because a bartender was observed serving a man wearing tight pants. The threat of revocation and ruin deputized bar owners and restaurateurs in an anti-gay movement, and spooked those who would cultivate a gay clientele. The only entity that could afford to pay off police and absorb the costs of frequent closure and relocation was the Mafia, which got into the gay bar business in a big way after WWII.

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5: Project MUSE - Noel Coward and Sexual Modernism: Private Lives as Queer Comedy

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society:: Re-So Sexuality Childhood, in most modern cultures, is defined in large part by its separation from adult sexuality. Prepubescent children, in most modern cultures, are not legitimate objects of adult sexual desire or behavior. Paradoxically, it is this very separation of childhood and adult sexuality that so closely links childhood to sexuality in modern cultures. Societies attempt to enforce that separation through elaborate systems of laws, institutions, and ideologies. Public debates about the proper role of sex and sexual images in the mass media and public culture often turn on notions of childhood innocence. A whole constellation of social practices have been created because modern societies attempt to protect children from sex and adult sexuality. PUBERTY, the biological process of maturation into sexual and reproductive maturity, commonly marks the end of childhood. It does not, however, always mark the entry into adulthood or adult sexuality. Adolescents are clearly sexual, but not clearly adult. Biological and social maturity are not always considered equivalent. How, then, should the sexuality of youth be regulated or controlled? These are not new problems in human history. Human societies have grappled with the common problems of biological and social maturation for thousands of years. But just as the meaning and experience of childhood has differed dramatically across cultures and through time, so have the social definitions of childhood, youth, and sexuality. Ancient and Premodern Societies Writing about the history of sexuality is always a complicated task, as it is difficult to find direct evidence about the meaning and practice of sex in history. We come to knowledge of sex indirectly, through debates about sex, regulations governing sex, representations of sex, prohibitions against sex, or demographic data which may, for example, reveal something of the frequency of conception outside marriage but little about the acts of sexual intercourse that produced it or the meaning of such acts. The problem of access to historical information about sex and its meaning is compounded when dealing with children, who have largely been defined outside the licit realm of sex and sexuality. This problem is compounded further when writing about societies in the distant past or about premodern, nonliterate societies. In the case of nonliterate tribal cultures, it is difficult to know how accurately the practices documented by travelers and, later, anthropologists, reflect actual practices and whether those practices are longstanding traditions or relatively recent developments. However, the works of classicists, historians, and anthropologists offer some insight into the distant past. Most strikingly, they reveal something of the enormous variety of cultural definitions of childhood, and of the relation of children and youth to sex and sexuality, that have existed in human cultures. A survey of a single continent, AFRICA, offers some sense of the great diversity of cultural practices surrounding childhood, youth, and sexuality in premodern cultures the discussion in this section is particularly indebted to the informative synthesis provided in A. According to documentation from the late nineteenth century, about five thousand distinct tribes remained in sub-Saharan Africa at that time. The meaning and experience of childhood differed from tribe to tribe, and so did traditional attitudes toward youth and sexuality and the practices that regulated them. In many sub-Saharan tribes, though children learned gender-appropriate tasks from an early age, puberty marked a new stage of life and was marked by some sort of initiation ceremony, which might last days or even years. Here, recognition of sexual maturity often combined with entry into adult responsibilities and status. Among the Pygmy, a boy was not considered ready for marriage until he had killed an antelope or buffalo. Among the Ngoni, boys celebrated puberty with a cleansing ceremony in the river after the first nocturnal emission. The nomadic Fulani gave boys charge of cattle at age ten, at which time ritual circumcisions were performed. Bedouin boys were also ritually circumcised and, in order to gain the endurance of a camel, were expected to eat a piece of bread that had been smeared with camel dung. The Ganda, who considered children property

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and rarely raised their own children, did not mark puberty in any way and had no rituals for passage into sexual or social adulthood. Among the Ngoni in central Africa, as in many other African tribes, girls were placed in isolation huts during menstruation. After her first menstrual flow ended, a girl underwent a cleansing ceremony. Afterwards, she was taken to the dwelling of her aunt and given instruction on proper behavior for her new stage of life. Female circumcision was a common initiation rite at puberty, though the procedure sometimes took place in infancy or during childhood. The sunna circumcision, performed by central Ethiopian tribes on infant girls, removed only the prepuce from the clitoris. The remaining portion of the labia majora were sewn together, or infibulated, and her legs bound together for up to forty days until her vulva fused closed. Infections of the urinary tract and vagina were common, as were difficulties in menstruation, and the fused vulva created pain during sexual intercourse and complicated eventual childbirth. Pharaonic circumcision or simple infibulation was practiced throughout Africa, though not by all peoples, and continues to this day in approximately twenty-six or more than half of the total African nations. About 90 percent of girls in the Sudan still undergo pharaonic circumcision. As Islam and Christianity spread through Africa, these particular religious traditions merged with local tribal customs and influenced understandings of sexuality, childhood, and family. Especially in areas influenced by Islam, by the eighteenth century marriages were contracted and performed at increasingly early ages, ranging from age seven in the San region to ten in Madagascar and twelve or fourteen in the Sudan and southeast Africa. Premodern Pacific Island cultures also illustrate the great range that existed in the social regulation of sexuality. Among the Tiwi, for example, girls were married before puberty while boys underwent a ten-year-long period of initiation, beginning at puberty, before they could marry. On Vanatianai, in Melanesia, sexual activity was seen as an appropriate and pleasurable activity for both boys and girls once they entered puberty at about the age of fourteen. Through most of human history—and still today in many places—children and youth have been exposed to sex very directly. The vast majority of people lived in small dwellings. Privacy was scarce, and concepts of privacy were different from those of contemporary American and western European cultures. Children commonly slept in the same room with their parents; in many places, especially in cold climates, the entire family might share a single bed or its equivalent. In such conditions, children commonly heard and saw adults having sex. And it was not only people who lived closely together in small spaces. Animals were often a source of sexual knowledge. In rural areas and towns alike, children—often responsible for animal care—learned about sex from watching animals copulate and give birth. Just as people in pre-industrial and premodern societies were more directly exposed to the processes of birth and death, they were more directly exposed to knowledge of sex. Children shared that knowledge. They were not protected from exposure to sex. However, simply because children had knowledge of sex does not mean that they were not protected from adult sexuality and sexual contact. That protection did exist in many cultures. Early written records of human civilization, reaching back to the Sumerians, specify to some extent the proper treatment of children. For example, the eighteenth-century B. The Egyptian Book of the Dead gives some sense of the restrictions governing sex with children, including "sexual relations with a boy" in its list of acts that would prevent a man from entering into the next life. The ancient Hebrews also prohibited sodomy with children, considering it a form of idolatry related to the worship of the body. Sodomy with a boy under the age of nine was punished by flagellation, and by stoning if the boy were older than nine years. While these restrictions may have aimed less at the protection of children than the prohibition of certain sexual acts, they stand in significant contrast to other cultures in which children found little or no protection. Along the Mediterranean coast, the Phoenicians, who were active in the first millennium B. Infant and child sacrifice, in which babies and small children were burned alive, was common, and the Phoenicians maintained official "temple boys" or "sacred" prostitutes, who were sodomized by adult men. Roman child-rearing practices combined signs of great affection for children with a striking lack of protection for them. Abandonment of children was common, and the abandoned child—if it survived—was likely to be enslaved or sold into prostitution. Abandoned male infants intended for prostitution were sometimes castrated in order to prolong their androgynous, boyish appearance. Such practices were prohibited

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by the emperor Nerva during his brief reign from 96 to 98 C. Subsequent emperors Trajan and Hadrian built upon these reforms, with Hadrian enforcing the law against castration of boys and prohibiting the sale of children for sexual purposes. Significantly, he extended these protections to slave children as well as to the freeborn. Regulations of sexuality for children and youth also developed around the issue of property. Commonly, elite families with inheritable property were much more concerned with controlling the sexual behaviors of their children. Legally recognized marriages and the production of legitimate heirs were proportionally more important to families with property, and such concerns fostered emphasis on the virginity of daughters before marriage. In ancient China, while among the lower classes young people commonly mated around the age of fifteen, the sexual experiences of elite youth were closely monitored, indicating the greater significance of marriage to those with property. In ancient Persia, girls of elite families commonly entered into polygamous marriages at the age of fifteen. Familial control over sexuality and property here was extreme, as incest was not a taboo, and men could marry their own daughters. Marriage marked the passage to adulthood for girls; only through marriage did a girl become an adult woman. Boys, on the other hand, celebrated passage into manhood and citizenship at the age of eighteen or nineteen—a moment marked not by biological sexual maturation but by their relationship to the state. In medieval and early modern western Europe, the regulation and control of youthful sexuality was structured by the demands of economic subsistence and by the increasing power of religious authority. The highest priority, in what were primarily subsistence agricultural societies, was survival. Limiting reproduction and thus the number of mouths to feed and the number of children among whom to divide resources was critical, and families and communities regulated sexuality in order to limit fertility. Biology helped; puberty came relatively late, usually between fourteen and sixteen years of age for girls, because of poor nutrition. Combined with short life-spans life expectancy in early modern England was thirty-five to forty years and early menopause, women had a much shorter period of potential childbearing than is common today. However, young people did not commonly mate or marry at puberty. The average age at marriage in early modern western Europe was later than in most contemporary societies: While children began work at early ages, and were often sent away from home to serve as apprentices in their midteens, they did not move directly from childhood to adulthood at puberty or at the beginning of their work lives. Instead, the period of "youth" lasted until the young man and woman were able to marry and set up their own household. Thus, most were in the dependent category of youth for almost half of their lives. It was in part a question of resources—the labor of the young was needed to sustain the family, and it was often only upon the death of the older generation that youth inherited sufficient resources to set up their own households. However, even among affluent, elite families in which there were ample resources, sexual maturity was not the only criterion for marriage. Marriages did occur at earlier ages among the wealthy, but, for example, when the son of the Countess of Warwick was married at nineteen to a young bride, his mother sent him abroad while his wife remained with her; she felt they were too young and inexperienced to live together. Certainly, among the poorest, such controls did not always obtain. But in much of medieval and early modern Europe, the family and the community attempted to control the behaviors of these sexually mature but not "adult" young people. In that respect, they worked in concert with the church. Christian thought, from the High Middle Ages forward, clearly posed adolescence as a time of sexual danger, requiring spiritual control. As Guibert de Nogent wrote in his autobiography from the beginning of the twelfth century, "Thus, while my young body grew little by little, my soul was also aroused by worldly life, titillated in its own right by sexual desires and lust.

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6: Sex & Sexuality in the 19th Century - Victoria and Albert Museum

On Tuesday 8 th April , thirteen speakers and twenty delegates, from PhD students to professors, gathered for a one-day symposium at University College London called 'New Directions: Gender, Sex and Sexuality in 20 th Century British History'.

Kelsey Gordon 1 Comment Chauncey, George. Whether homosexuality is good or bad, chosen or determined, natural or unnatural, healthy or sick is debated, for such opinions are in the realm of ideology and thus subject to contestation, and we are living at a time when a previously dominant ideological position, that homosexuality is immoral or pathological, faces a powerful and increasingly successful challenge from an alternative ideology, which regards homosexuality as neutral, healthy or even good p. He has served as a historical consultant in numerous public history projects and has participated as an expert witness in more than thirty cases regarding gay rights. Since he has been awarded several fellowships and recognitions, has published two books including *Gay New York*, and worked as an editor for two others. Chauncey is currently working on a follow up book that will study race, urbanism, and gay male culture and politics in postwar New York City. Brief Summary of the Book: Chauncey centralizes his study on the changes of gay culture, specifically gay male culture, in New York city between and The book challenges ideas not only on what homosexuality has been historically defined as, but also how homosexuals communicated with one another and how they saw themselves within the larger context of pre-World War II American society. It also highlights the differences many homosexual men argued when comparing themselves with both heterosexual men and other homosexual men within their communities. Most importantly, this book gives a historical narrative that supports the existence of gay culture and community prior to the Stonewall Riots in Chauncey organizes this fifty years into three sections that he claims defines the overall attitudes towards gay culture in American history: *Male Homo sexual Practices and Identities in the Early Twentieth Century* The first portion of the book focuses on defining and shedding light on the early existence of gay communities and cultures in American history. Chauncey does well in providing a foundation that explains how individuals navigated the secret, underground world of homosexual partnerships and networks. Chauncey argues that during the beginning of the twentieth century, many homosexual communities served as refuges for not only white members of the community, but also welcomed many gay African American men who melted gay culture with that of the Harlem Renaissance. Faced with the dangers of discrimination and marginalization based on their sexuality, many queer men found themselves leading double lives in which one persona was recognized as straight while the other was recognized as gay. Being forced once again into discrete life habits due to social and political push back against homosexual communities, gay men were forced to develop, or often return, to new methods of communication and engagement with other homosexuals within their public networks. I felt that not only did this book do extraordinarily well with detailing the history and culture of gay communities during the fifty years between and , but it also emphasized the point that gay communities and individuals have long been a part of the larger narrative of American history as a whole. Chauncey makes clear arguments on how gay culture has not only existed, but has continued to thrive regardless of being marginalized and numerous attempts made at destroying it. Therefore, I must offer my apologies to not only the readers of this blog, but also to Dr. Chauncey himself for having to leave out as much as I did. I encourage those who do decide to read the book to take special note of the role of bath houses, the particular interesting telling of the formation of drag shows, and the attention that Chauncey gives use of language and word choice that was used within homosexual communities.

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