

New Books

On May 15th 1897, the first gay movement of the world, the **Wissenschaftlich-humanitäre Komitee**, was founded in Berlin-Charlottenburg by Magnus Hirschfeld and others. In the same year, the first gay journal was published by Adolf Brand, **Der Eigene** (till 1932). Two years later, Hirschfeld began the annual **Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen** (1899-1923) the volumes of which surpassed several times the 1000 pages. Marita Keilson-Lauritz analyzes the flaming history of both journals, their literary criticism as well as the establishment of a gay literary canon in both publications in those early days in her voluminous and very readable dissertation **Die Geschichte der eigenen Geschichte. Literatur und Literaturkritik in den Anfängen der Schwulenbewegung** (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1997).

Last year offered an incredible outpouring of gay iconography. Berlin had several exhibits on gay history, the main one on hundred years of gay movement. The catalogue **Goodbye to Berlin? 100 Jahre Schwulenbewegung**, edited by Monika Hingst and others (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1997) offers an impressive overview of this history, however excluding the lesbians. Other exhibits focused on the leather scene, in the "Schwules Museum", and on police and homosexuality, amazingly in the Berlin "Polizei Präsidium" where the visitor was welcomed by saluting officers. Elmar Kraushaar edited a separate, well illustrated book on the centenary of the gay movement **Hundert Jahre schwul. Eine Revue** (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1997) that got splendid reviews.

James Gardener in **Who's a Pretty Boy then? One Hundred & Fifty Years of Gay Life in Pictures** (London: Serpent's Tail, 1997) uses mostly photographic images from Britain. Genitals in some kiddy porn are made invisible because of English laws, notwithstanding the fact that the boys are probably not any longer among the living. Thomas Waugh's **Hard to Imagine. Gay Male Eroticism in Photography and Film from Their Beginnings to Stonewall** (New York: Columbia UP, 1996) came out belatedly. The intended printers would not do the job because of the "obscenity" of some material. Here also, pictures have been made unrecognizable, now for reasons of privacy. It is an interesting overview of gay porn before Stonewall, although it is a pity that Waugh has no idea of European history and did a bad job in subtitling the photographs. The complete re-edition in three volumes of the **Physique Pictorial** (1951-1990; Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag, 1997) can be read as an postwar addition to Waugh's study.

An excellent book is Abigail Solomon-Godeau's **Male Trouble**.

A Crisis in Representation (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997) on male nudes in French art between 1780 and 1850, with numerous beautiful illustrations. She attributes the rise of the male nude not so much to the revival of ancient art, but to the strengthening of male domination and the development of new ideals of masculinity after the French revolution.

Queer images offer queer space, another upcoming topic in queer studies. Aaron Betsky's **Queer Space. Architecture and Same-Sex Desire** (New York: William Morrow, 1997) looks nice because of the many pictures, but is disappointing because of its superficiality. A better introduction offers **Queers in Space. Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance** (Seattle: Bay Press, 1997), edited by Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne Marie Bouthillette and Yolanda Retter. The so-called Dangerous Bedfellows focus in **Policing Public Sex** (Boston: South End Press, 1996) on New York. One article gives an interesting overview of the city's porn laws that turned seedy Times Square into respectable Disney family Land. Public space becomes clearly one of the most important topics on the political agenda of sex movements. This is also a topic in **Creating a Place for Ourselves. Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community Histories** edited by Brett Beemyn (New York/London: Routledge, 1997) which offers an overview of queer communities, to my regrets only for the United States. The book includes older essays of Chauncey on Times Square, NY, in its sleazy period, Esther Newton on Cherry Grove, Elisabeth Kennedy & Madeline Davis on Buffalo, and new ones by Nan Alamilla Boyd on San Francisco and Tim Retzloff on Philadelphia who both announce a book on their topic.

Lynne Segal has nothing on the essential topic of space in the book she edited **New Sexual Agendas** (New York: NYUP, 1997), except for an astonishing article on the Lesbian Avengers by Anna Marie Smith. The book gives an overview of postmodern sexual politics, important but too academic. Alan Sinfield concludes "we" have to do more subcultural work, but he explains in no way what that means. The special gay and lesbian issue of **Sociologies et Sociétés** XXIX:1 (printemps 1997) edited by Line Chamberland, all in French, is also quite academic, but more innovative in particular because of a wider range of cultures discussed.

The field of sexual and queer studies is quickly expanding, so the world needs overviews and introductions. Joseph Bristow did **Sexuality** (London: Routledge, 1997) and Annamarie Jagose **Queer Theory. An Introduction** (New York: NYUP, 1996), both concise and readable books. Bristow pays too much attention to

Freudian and Lacanian theory to my taste but others might like it. Both books have an Anglosaxon bias and completely neglect non-anglosaxon contributions except for (translated) "great masters" as Michel Foucault which does not seem very politically correct. An impressive overview of gay and lesbian studies in the States are two grand volumes of interesting and readable essays edited by Martin Duberman, **A Queer World. The Center for Gay and Lesbian Studies Reader** and **Queer Representations. Reading Lives, Reading Cultures** (New York: NYUP, 1997, 705 and 400 pp).

Impressive is also the 1997 Lesbian and Gay Studies list of Routledge which announces many promising titles. The funniest book might be **The Eight Technologies of Otherness** edited by Sue Golding. These technologies are curiosity, noise, cruelty, appetite, skin, nomadism, contamination and dwelling. Very desirable seem also **Social Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Studies** edited by Peter M. Nardi & Beth E. Schneider; **Women, Men and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium** edited by Liz James; **The Passionate Camera. Photography and Bodies of Desire** edited by Debora Bright; **Language and Desire. Encoding Sex, Romance and Intimacy** edited by Keith Harvey and Celia Shalom and **Playing with Fire. Queer Politics, Queer Theories** edited by Shane Phelan.

Also in Slovenia gay and lesbian studies are getting from the ground. Andrej Luksic edited **Gejevske in lezbicne studije** (Ljubljana: Univerze, 1995) and Suzana Tratnik & Natasa S. Segan **Zbornik o lezbicnem gibanju na Slovenskem, 1984-1995** (Reader of the lesbian movement in Slovenia; Ljubljana: SKUC, 1995). Other new books on sex from former Yugoslavia are mostly medical (Thanks to Bogdan Lesnik for this information).

Robert Richmond Ellis' **The Hispanic Homograph. Gay Self-Representation in Contemporary Spanish Autobiography** (Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997) offers a lucid overview of gay writing in Spain that is very helpful for someone who does not know the language. It seduced me to read some of the discussed books. Thanks to authors as Paul Julian Smith with **Vision Machines. Cinema, Literature and Sexuality in Spain and Cuba, 1983-1993** (London: Verso, 1996) and David William Foster & Roberto Reiss who edited **Bodies and Biases: Sexualities in Hispanic Cultures and Literature** (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) the Ibero-Latin world gets quite some attention in gay and lesbian studies. Earlier works of Joseph Carrier on Mexico, Ian Lumsden on Cuba and Mexico, and Richard Parker, Peter Fry and Rommel Mendès-Leité on Brazil have

opened up Latin-America. An historical-anthropological overview proffers **Sex and Sexuality in Latin America** edited by Daniel Balderston and Donna J. Guy (New York: NYUP, 1997). Themes are sexual identities, policing sexualities and family values.

In France, Europride raised a surprising discussion on queer studies. Frederic Martel who wrote a detailed but biased history of the gay movement **Le rose et le noir. Les homosexuels en France depuis 1968** (Paris: Seuil, 1996), questioned the quality of queer studies while famous sociologist Pierre Bourdieu affirmed it. Although gay scholarship is not well developed in France, Patrick Cardon has tried to promote it in the series "Université" from his gay press GayKitschCamp. The two men most active in the field in France, Rommel Mendès-Leité and Pierre-Olivier de Busscher, wrote together **Back-rooms. Microgéographie "sexographique" de deux back-rooms parisiennes** (Lille: GKC, 1997) on a fascinating topic that needs more sociological attention. Mendès-Leité also contributed to the bisexual boom with **Bisexualité. Le dernier tabou** (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1996). For those who do not read French, **Homosexuality in Modern France** (New York/Oxford: OUP) edited by Jeffrey Merrick and Bryant T. Ragan Jr. offers a nice introduction in French queer history.

Anne-Marie Sohn's **Du premier baiser à l'alcôve. La sexualité des Français au quotidien (1850-1950)** (Paris: Aubier, 1996) is an wonderful history that gives detailed information on sexual acts. Using criminal archives and autobiographical material, she offers a picture of sexual relations that are often pleasant with some taboos and violences. Heterosexual anal sex is except for one late case absent from her material. Oral sex, kissing and nudity are abhorred in the nineteenth century, but become more widely accepted after the first world war. People are not afraid of venereal diseases which are rampant, but much more of pregnancies. The most used methods of contraception are onanism and abortion the numbers of which rise very quickly after 1900. Gay and lesbian sex is not strongly tabooed, but incest, relations with children and bestiality are. The age of consent rises from 11 in 1832, to 13 in 1863 and to 15 in 1945, against the trend that children are ripening sexually on an earlier age. Sohn points to the absence of a sexual market which forces many people into celibacy. The sexual revolution starts according to her in the 1880s, with women in the leading roles because they had to transgress more social taboos than men. Her book may be not very theoretical, but amazes because of funny and grisly data.

The Netherlands is quite active in the field of the history of prostitution and sodomy. The European Center at Harvard housed this spring a small conference devoted to 'Sexuality and the State in the Netherlands'. Joyce Outshoorn discussed contemporary regulations of prostitution, and I the question how liberal the Netherlands nowadays is. Petra de Vries summarized her dissertation that she defended some weeks later: **Kuisheid voor mannen, vrijheid voor vrouwen. De reglementering en bestrijding van prostitutie in Nederland, 1850-1911** (Chastity for men, freedom for women. The regulation and combating of prostitution in the NL; Hilversum: Verloren, 1997). With Lotte van de Pol's **Het Amsterdams hoerdom. Prostitutie in een vroegmoderne stedelijke samenleving, 1650-1800** (Amsterdams's whoredom. Prostitution in a premodern urban society; Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 1996) and Gail Pheterson's **The Prostitution Prism** (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 1996) that is however not only about Holland, there is now a rather complete overview of the history and politics of prostitution in the Netherlands since the seventeenth century.

The history of Dutch sodomy is covered in three studies. After Dirk Jaap Noordam's **Riskante relaties. Vijf eeuwen homoseksualiteit in Nederland, 1233-1733** (Hilversum: Verloren, 1995) and Theo van der Meer's **Sodoms zaad in Nederland. Het ontstaan van homoseksualiteit in de vroegmoderne tijd** (Nijmegen: SUN, 1995) recently appeared posthumously Leo J. Boon's **'Dien godlosen hoop van menschen'. Vervolging van homoseksuelen in de Republiek in de jaren dertig van de achttiende eeuw** (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1997). Noordam researched the period 1233-1733, but certainly not completely. He found for the period before 1730 about 100 court cases of sodomy, most of men involved in anal sex. Half of them were executed. According to Boon, in the period of 1730-1732, 174 men were arrested for sodomy of whom 91 got the capital punishment while another 7 died in their cell, because of torture or suicide. Many more sodomites went in exile to escape prosecution. Until 1803, approximately another 100 men were executed for sodomy. Although Boon found only for one court definite proof of misbehaviour by the authorities, this "grand persecution" fitted otherwise very well in the spirit of the era that sharply condemned sodomy. Even the sodomites themselves felt guilty and denounced their partners before mounting the scaffold. Van der Meer focuses on the question whether these men already had a homosexual identity. Although he affirms this for the late eighteenth century, all depends on definition. If we use his own

definition, a "desire for same-sex contacts", it is according to me of all ages and cultures. If a homosexual identity however implies a self-conscious and public choice for same-sex relations with men of similar age and preference, excluding heterosexual marriage, and if that identity is widely recognized both among men involved in same-sex behaviours, authorities and the general population, the answer is definitely no even for the late nineteenth century. With three books, we now know a lot about the prosecution, but nothing about such themes as artistic representations of male love that certainly existed, and also nothing about the intriguing "socratic war" that started in Holland in 1769, as earlier in Germany, with the main question if idealized Socrates was a foul pederast. And because the three books have been written without knowledge of the others, we also miss a concise overview.

An important question in this history is at what point men with homosexual interests were considered to be effeminate, or as Trumbach described them, became "queens". Noordam holds so for the late seventeenth century, while Van der Meer sees a progressive history of the development of a homosexual identity from the late seventeenth to the late nineteenth century. The following question becomes when and how lesbian interests started to be constructed. Gender inversion was quite common for women since the seventeenth century, but had more to do with desires to enter male worlds than with sexual desires for women. Geertje Mak in her **Mannelijke vrouwen. Een studie naar de veranderende grenzen van sekse in Europa in de negentiende eeuw** (Amsterdam: Boom, 1997) discusses the change from gender positions to gender identities in the nineteenth century, but makes clear how different it worked out for women and men. Men got the possibility to separate gender and sexuality, and to choose between homosexuality or transvestism, while "manly women" such as lesbians or cross-dressers, had no such choice because women were defined by their sexuality and could not separate sexual and gender identity. Therefore, a lesbian identity developed much slower than a gay identity.

The intricacies of sex and gender are also explored in **Thamyris** (4:1) that invited Rajeswari Sunder Rajan to edit its **Gender in the Making. Indian Contexts** as contribution to the fiftieth celebration of Indian independence. Two articles discuss sexuality at length, "Virgin Mother, Beloved Other" on erotic undertones of Tamil nationalism by Sumathi Ramaswamy and "The Impossible Subject. Caste and Desire in the Scene of the Family" by Susie Tharu.

The conference **Beyond Boundaries** held in Amsterdam July 29 - August 1, 1997 was devoted to "sexuality across culture". Notwithstanding an embarrassing anglosaxon domination, many interesting papers were presented. Research on sexualities outside the occidental world is getting from the ground, promising a further growth of the field of interest for this journal. The conference has led to a multitude of initiatives that will generate more research and books making soon any overview of an emerging and polymorphous field very difficult.

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