

Book Ends

Anthropology has been criticized because it was so slow to pick up sexual themes. These days the field takes off. Will Roscoe who contributed several books and articles on Native-American two-spirited persons or berdaches has written an overview **Changing Ones. Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America** (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998). He underlines the importance of syncretism: traditions mutate in intercultural exchange. Two-spirited positions thus remain a viable option for today. He also answers Ken Plummer's question whether berdaches have anything at all to do with homosexuality in our terms with a strong affirmation. Because the example of berdaches was quoted as a form of homosexuality since the earliest days of homosexual emancipation and medicalization and because inverts of the turn of the century and berdaches had both a different gender identity. The book ends with a nice table that summarizes all third and fourth genders among Native-Americans delved up from literature.

An excellent ethnography is Annick Prieur's **Mema's House, Mexico City. On Transvestites, Queens, and Macho's** (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). She lived for long periods in a household of **jotas**, transgenders who are prostitutes and hairdressers. It is a fascinating portrait of group of lower-class drag queens with few options between a streetlife of paid sex and macho clients and a homelife of families that are equally oppressive for them. While Mexican gay men mostly have left their families of origin, **jotas** are reasonably well integrated in their families and neighborhood. They are an alluring element for the men of the vicinity. The house of Mema is the **jotas'** clubhouse where they can feel safe and free and have sex with their lovers.

A somewhat older book that has not received much attention is Marie-Christine Anest, **Zoophilie, homosexualité. Rites de passages et initiation masculine dans la Grèce contemporaine** (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994). As an anthropologist she did fieldwork in Greece in the late seventies and analyzed bawdy songs. Both bestiality and homosexuality are still common among male adolescents in villages. Groups of young men go out to the beach or into the fields to have sex with each other or with animals. Favourite animals are she-donkeys, cows and sows. Sex with donkeys is highly regarded because it should enlarge the boys' penises. Scenes of bestiality often fade into group masturbation. Anest discusses these group scenes as rites of sexual initiation for boys between 7 and 17 years of age who

should not indulge in these practices after that age. These sex acts are secret although they take place with the silent approval of fathers. In these initiation rites, Anest sees survivals of Ancient Greece because of symbols and places being used.

Quite another perversion is masochism. Anita Phillips wrote **A Defence of Masochism** (London/Boston: Faber and Faber, 1998). It may be a fascinating topic, the apologies written in favour of such perversions often disappoint because the aim is to normalize and sanitize the activity under scrutiny. Phillips is doing the same in an intelligent way but apologizing always removes desire from sex. Her unnecessary differentiation of good masochism and evil pedophilia will convince neither perverts nor puritanicals.

Social and political sciences are getting their textbooks. The fat collection **The Gender Sexuality Reader. Culture History Political Economy** edited by Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo (New York/London: Routledge, 1997) includes well-known work by Gayle Rubin, David Greenberg, Teresa de Lauretis, Thomas Laqueur, Arlene Stein and many others. Peter M. Nardi and Beth E. Schneider edited **Social Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Studies. A Reader** (New York/London: Routledge, 1997) with about 40 key essays on identity- and community-building, globalization, constructionism and so forth. Marc Blasius and Shane Phelan edited **We Are Everywhere. A Historical Sourcebook in Gay and Lesbian Politics** (New York/London: Routledge, 1997) with texts from the eighteenth century till today. As a novelty it includes Sade but it is a pity that after 1945 the world shrinks to the United States.

Steven Seidman, prolific writer in sociology, put several of his essays together into **Difference Troubles. Queering Social Theory and Sexual Politics** (Cambridge: CUP, 1997). It is a fierce critique of modern sociology and a stimulating apology for postmodern social and sexual sciences and politics. Someone who long before Seidman tried to queer sociology was Martin P. Levine (1950-1993). He edited **Gay Men. The Sociology of Male Homosexuality** (1979) and posthumously Micheal S. Kimmel edited his pioneering but unpublished thesis **Gay Macho. The Life and Death of the Homosexual Clone** (New York: New York UP, 1998). It includes both the dissertation from 1986 and some articles written after Aids devastated New York's clone community.

Two reports have been published that do little good to the Netherlands' liberal reputation. **De heteroseksuele school** (Nijmegen: Wetenschapswinkel, 1998) by Nique van Overbeek and

José Renkens describes the world of schools as a straight domain with a strict gender dichotomy where normalcy reigns and boys and girls who might come out as gay and lesbian face hostility. Jacomijn de Vries did in **Verschillen verkend** (Differences explored; Utrecht: Forum, 1998) research on the attitudes of ethnic pupils regarding (homo)sexuality. The amazing result is that few of them ever got education on homosexuality. In general they do object to homosexuality in their family, but not to gay and lesbian teachers while most eagerly desire more information and education on homosexuality. The schools themselves seem to be rather prudish when it comes to the subject of homosexuality. As a conclusion both reports demand a greater investment in (homo)sexual education.

Recht rond zedendelicten. Handboek voor de (juridische) hulpverlening by Martin Moerings and Bart Swier (Alphen aan de Rijn: Samson, 1997) is an introduction to Dutch sex law and jurisprudence. It discusses sex laws, criminal prosecution and rights regarding damages for victims. An interesting overview of legal history of homosexual practices offers Flora Leroy-Forgeot's **Histoire juridique de l'homosexualité en Europe** (Paris: PUF, 1997). In four chapters she summarizes the Ancient attitudes, Christian ideas of sin and crime, decriminalization since the Enlightenment and the recent recognition of gay and lesbian relations. It is a history from splendour to misery and back again. Much legal work is still to be done in the fields of privacy, freedom of (sexual) expression, partnership, adoption, inheritance, labour, consumption, and so forth. Some problems linger on, like feelings of male honour that harm not only the **jotas** of Mexico, but also gays and lesbians in Europe. Leroy-Forgeot sees victimology as an important inroad for legal theorizing on sex topics.

With pedophilia an important question is who the victims are: the pedophiles or the children they have sex with? After the Dutroux-scandal and discussions on sex tourism to poor countries, pedophilia and sexual abuse have become synonymous. Contemporary arguments against pedophilia are straightforward. Children under a certain age (which age is however not clear) are innocent and should have no sex and no sexual knowledge. Sexual relations with adults are especially dangerous, while those with kids of a similar age might be innocuous. Robert Bauserman and Bruce Rind give an interesting overview of the literature in "Psychological Correlates of Male Child and Adolescent Sexual Experiences with Adults" (**Archives of Sexual Behavior** 26:2, April 1997). They studied non-clinical surveys.

It appears that only a minority of men who had sexual relations in childhood or adolescence reported negative effects. These were most common among those who had forced sex or relations with relatives. An environment that rejects puerile erotics could also cause problems as do the agonies of investigations by family, police, psychiatry. Neglect in families predisposes children to victimization. The conclusions are clear. There are victims but for most boys sex with adults does not create damage. Relations with adult women are experienced as a form of sexual initiation. Those with men are more problematic because boys will often start to feel insecure about sexual orientation and gender identity. These problems are not inherent in the relation but in a social context that abhors unmasculinity and homosexuality.

These conclusions fit very well with the research of Rüdiger Lautmann, **Die Lust am Kind. Portrait des Pädophilen** (Hamburg: Klein, 1994). His focus is not on children, but on the "real pedophile". He differentiates between this figure, secondly the "Ersatzobject-Täter" who is not able to find adult sexual lovers and lastly the pathological criminal like Dutroux. The real pedophile does not harm children and awaits their sexual consent. Lautmann's research made him an object of loathing for German journalists who disclaimed him as a defender of child abuse. The same happened in supposedly liberal Netherlands where Theo Sandfort who wrote extensively on child-adult relations became an object of contempt for a journalist whose products were widely distributed in the Dutch media. Sandfort sued the journalist and enjoyed a Pyrrhic victory. Lautmann gave a clear answer to his detractors in his **Der Homosexuelle und sein Publikum** (Hamburg: Männerschwarmskript, 1997).

In France the monthly **L'infini** (issue 59, September 1997, on **La question pédophile**) asked a group of intellectuals to react to some questions on the Dutroux-scandal. About 40 answers came in from well known persons from arts and politics. Elisabeth Badinter simply wrote: "pedophilia is too burning a question nowadays to discuss it as it should be done". The general impression is one of amazement with regard to the absolute rejection of pedophilia that has overtaken society in such a short period of time. Many authors point to the changing status of children from unpitied creatures dying in large numbers to innocent saints that are private property of parents. Childhood is prolonging, while tolerance of even the smallest blemishes in kids has withered away. In an always more

sexualized society the impossible demand is being made that sex should be kept hidden for children.

Many respondents confirm that they had real and imaginary sexual experiences in childhood, most of them with other minors. A psychoanalyst says to remember in detail the oedipal stages that he passed before the age of five and also the sexual exploits that came immediately afterwards. Innocence seems only to exist in the mind of ignorant experts. The question that imposes itself is how to deal with child sexuality. The proposal by a committee of the British government to start with sexual education on the threshold of puberty deserves everybody's support. The best way to prevent sexual exploitation is to promote sexual knowledge, as Bauserman and Rind concluded. In education, practice is the best way to learn language, sport, music, so why not the intricacies of sex?

Helmut Graupner's article on "Sexuelle Mündigkeit" (sexual maturity) in the **Zeitschrift für Sexualforschung** (10:4, December 1997) offers an interesting overview of the ages of consent and rules regarding seduction and sex in situations of dependency. Amazingly Malta and Vatican State are among the most liberal countries in Europe with an age of consent at 12 years! Depending on the kind of sexual contact, the highest ages range between 18 for male homosexual contacts in England and 21 for seduction in Monaco. The data make one wonder on the laws of desire.

A kind of pederasty is the topic of Jane Gallop's distressing but funny **Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment** (Durham: Duke UP, 1997). Gallop, a feminist and specialist in women's studies, had at the beginning of her career consensual sexual relations first with teachers and later with students. Sex was a way to appropriate knowledge. Recently she was accused of sexual harassment by two of her female students. In her perspective she had maintained intense relations with both young women who had come to her because of her academic reputation. The furthest they had gone physically was kissing on a queer studies conference. As both students had disappointed her intellectually, they had received low gradings. After that both women filed complaints. As no factual sexual harassment had taken place and Gallop's low grading could not be understood as retaliation, she was not found guilty. But she got a warning not to be too close to her students. Gallop however believes that close relations stimulate learning and sees such extension of the original meaning of "sexual harassment" to all forms of consensual intimacy as undermining education that is based on

transference. Eliminating erotics from teaching makes it dull and unproductive. She objects also to extension of the concept of sexual harassment beyond the situation of men who victimize women. Gallop will however not be the last female victim of the regulations against sexual harassment.

Dorelies Kraakman unwraps in **Kermis in de hel. Vrouwen en het pornografisch universum van de 'enfer' 1750-1850** (Amsterdam 1997) a gender prejudice.¹ She analyzed about a third of the 207 different erotic titles from 1750-1850 that are kept in the Enfer (Hell) of the Parisian Bibliothèque Nationale, the French version of the British Library's Private Case. With the new housing of the National Library, the Enfer that was established around 1870, disappeared again. In popular opinion, pornography is a male genre, written, produced, distributed and read by men. Kraakman comes to another conclusion as she found on all levels participation of women. Women were no passive victims of the male gaze. The modern view of female sexuality as passive or absent, now slowly on the decline, shielded the fact that women could well be active sexual beings before the Victorian age. Not only women's stake in pornography is remarkable, also the change in the genre. Pornography was heterogenous until the 1820s, the texts a mixture of philosophy, subversiveness, literature and eroticism. In a later period it becomes homogenous with the utter and only aim of sexual discharge for men.

French sexual culture, literature and philosophy have a central place in Western history but the French seem to need outsiders like Kraakman to realize this. Happily studies of French sexualities are rapidly developing in the United States. Vernon A. Rosario's **The Erotic Imagination. French Histories of Perversity** (New York/Oxford: OUP, 1997) is a nicely illustrated overview of sexual science from Tissot's damnation of solitary vice to the fetishists who inhabited Paris and Parisian literature in the Fin-de-Siècle. Lawrence R. Schehr earlier published two books on twentieth-century literature, **Alicibiades at the Door. Gay Discourses in French Literature** and **The Shock of Men. Homosexual Hermeneutics in French Writing** (both Stanford: SUP, 1995) and now coedited with Dominique D. Fisher **Articulations of Difference. Gender Studies and Writing in French** (Stanford: SUP, 1997). For some readers it may come as a surprise that the title is meant to refer to homosexuality.

¹. Translation: Carnival in hell. Women and the pornographic universe of the 'enfer'. The book will soon be translated in English and/or French.

Essays discuss Baudrillard, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Liane de Pougy, René Crevel, Elvire Murail, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Michel Tremblay and many others. Two articles discuss nineteenth-century French sexology, one by Vernon Rosario who summarizes his book in an essay that earlier appeared in another collection: postmodernist recycling. The other essays are new and original.

But the French are not completely silent on sex. Jean-Claude Guillebaud wrote **La tyrannie du plaisir** (Paris: Seuil, 1997). It is a long historical essay that underlines the importance of sexual rules and criticizes both the eighteenth-century rationalization of sex that produced an extreme puritanism and the sexual revolution of the sixties that brought misery. We should invest in love's freedom, not in pleasure's tyranny. Guillebaud is a leftist person with a conservative outlook on sexual politics.

Some topics get an overwhelming attention. Literary studies of sodomy in England from Renaissance till eighteenth century are such a popular genre. Alan Stewart's **Close Readers. Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England** (Princeton: PUP, 1997) got abundant praise from Alan Bray in **History Today** (February 1998). Stewart focuses on the role of humanist scholars born in lower classes who move upward and get involved in relations of not well defined intimacy with their masters. Cameron McFarlane's **The Sodomite in Fiction & Satire 1660-1750** (New York: Columbia UP, 1997) offers an interesting criticism of Randolph Trumbach's "model of the queen". The gender-model in same-sex relations is according to McFarlane not so much an expression of gendered sexual identities, but of power relations. He stresses once again the sodomite as transgressor with transgression offering the surest access to sodomy. Another recent title is Jon Thomas Rowland's **"Swords in Myrtle Dress'd". Toward a Rhetoric of Sodom. Gay Readings of Homosexual Politics and Poetics in the Eighteenth Century** (Cranbury NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1998). Elizabeth B. Keiser's **Courtly Desire & Medieval Homophobia. The Legitimation of Sexual Pleasure in Cleanliness and its Contexts** (New Haven/London: Yale UP, 1997) is on an earlier period.

The many faces of Don Juan are discussed in D.G. van der Steen's **Tussen verlangen en verlies. Anthropologische aspecten van de Don Juan-figuur in de tijd van de Romantiek** (Between desire and loss; Nijmegen: Vantilt, 1997). He analyzes the figure of Don Juan in the literary work of Hoffmann, Lenau, de Musset and Gautier and comes to the conclusion that they discuss not promiscuity and punishment, but music, freedom, literature

and architecture respectively. Don Juan becomes from a sexual a metasexual person.

Annet Mooij's **Out of Otherness. Characters and Narrators in the Dutch Venereal Disease Debates 1850-1990** (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 1998) got good reviews at the time it appeared in Dutch. The study starts off with the medical regulation of prostitution and ends with preventive campaigns against Aids. Twice the medical profession had to face a partial defeat. In the nineteenth century against moralists who expected the magic bullet not from medicine but from religion, socialism or feminism. In our time against patients who have become competitors in medical knowledge and sired some victories in getting medicaments at an earlier stage but who have rarely contested the medical definitions of disease.

Rather successful was the medicalization of sexuality in Japan. Sabine Frühstück wrote **Die Politik der Sexualwissenschaft. Zur Produktion und Popularisierung sexologischen Wissens in Japan 1908-1941** (The politics of sexual science. On the production and popularization of sexual knowledge in Japan, Wien: Institut für Japanologie, 1997). In the early twentieth century Japan adapted in many ways the more restrictive moralities of Occidental origin. An important channel for Western sexual knowledge were popular journals completely devoted to sex topics. While such periodicals did not exist in the West, Japan saw quite a score - an innovation in sexual publishing. Frühstück used these and similar publications for her fascinating study on sexual modernization in Japan, the country that is both the most eager and most resistant disciple of Western culture.

Translated from the Chinese is Zhou Huashan's **Histoire de "camarades". Les homosexuels en Chine** (Paris: Paris-Méditerranée, 1997). It is a rather depressing book on communist policies regarding homosexuality but offers some hope for the future. June 1998 saw a conference on the topic in San Francisco's diaspora organized by Gary Wu who contributed an afterword to Huashan's book. Homosexuality is coming out of the closet also in the mother country. Li Yinhe wrote with her husband **We**, a book that is available in China and still awaits a translation. With the strict limits on reproduction (only one child per family allowed) childless homosexuals earn a better place. With the social changes in the People's Republic and a rapidly expanding sexology the most populous country of the world may soon produce some surprises.

James H. Jones' fat biography **Alfred C. Kinsey. A public/**

private life (New York/London: Norton, 1997) gives fascinating new information on the United States' major sexologist. Too many pages are devoted to his getting and loosing grants and to the statistics of his research. Jones' love of details thwarts interest in a broader sexual context. But the pages about Kinsey's private sexual desires are mesmerizing. According to Jones Kinsey was a closeted homosexual whose repressed desires were the driving force of his unrelenting criticism of North America's puritanism. His favorite technique was inserting straws and later brush backs up his penis. Kinsey who was a married man with children seems to have rarely acted upon his homosexual and masochist desires with others. The major exception were staged and filmed scenes of homosexuality, heterosexuality and s/m in the offices of his Institute for Sex Research. Under the cover of science Kinsey became a voyeur, not a participant of such acts. The most amazing story concerns an autoerotic scene of Kinsey hanging at his balls from the pipes of his office. In the clumsy way he tells the story Jones who otherwise strongly identifies with Kinsey shows a lack of empathy with such queer desires. The book changes the sexual image of Kinsey that remains however rather vague. It is enchanting to realize that the man who was so able in getting sexual histories of others, succeeded to keep his own sexual history clouded in mysteries.

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