

maxims. Julius Caesar proclaimed himself an Epicurean. Under the Empire Stoicism vanquished its rival and vied with Christianity, which when triumphant anathematized Epicureanism.

The text of Lucretius survived into the Renaissance and was disseminated in printed editions that naturally provoked intense controversy, since the author's materialism and polemics against religion called forth unmeasured attacks and subtle defenses. The author became the favorite of a small coterie of materialists, of the libertines in the seventeenth century, then of the Enlightenment thinkers, and finally of the Soviet Communists, who naturally ranked Epicurus above Plato as the greatest philosopher of antiquity. The rehabilitation of Epicurus was the achievement of Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655), a priest of unimpeachable orthodoxy. Acquainted with most of the leading intellectuals of his time, though not himself a great scientist or a great philosopher, Gassendi exerted enormous influence on both Newton and Leibniz.

For others Epicureanism was a respectable philosophical cloak for mocking impiety or lighthearted sensuality. The intelligent courtesan and leader of fashion Ninon de l'Enclos was of this stamp, while Molière and Cyrano de Bergerac admired Epicurus and Lucretius for their candor, their courage, and their sensible view of life. The Epicurean outlook, accepting sensual pleasure as a good and not as the necessary evil which an ascetic morality would barely allow, opened the way to a more tolerant attitude toward the forbidden forms of sexual expression that is implicit in the work of such philosophes as La Mettrie and of legal reformers such as Beccaria, not to speak of the Marquis de Sade. So Epicurus contributed to the Enlightenment trend toward abolition of the repressive attitudes and laws with which Christianity had burdened all forms of nonprocreative gratification.

See also *Libertinism*.

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William A. Percy

EPISCOPALIANISM

See *Anglicanism*; *Protestantism*.

ESPIONAGE

In our society the role of espionage operative is one that has certain affinities with homosexuality. Because the homosexual is forced from his mid-teens—from the moment of self-discovery—to lead a double life, the normal boundaries between candor and deception, between loyalty and disloyalty, between self-concealment and self-revelation may be effaced so that a morally ambiguous existence becomes second nature. Unless he has “come out of the closet,” the homosexual is compelled to deceive others as to his real intents and motives in the most private sphere of his life, and he can with relative ease transfer this art of duplicity to his professional activity. The self-discipline that comes from learning not to reveal a secret but to live with it for years on end is also an asset of homosexual character that lends itself to a career in espionage. Then, too, the homosexual, typically unmarried, is free of the usual family ties—the “hostages to fortune”—that make the heterosexual loath to leave his home for prolonged service “in the field,” often under the assumed identity that is crucial to his intelligence-gathering role. That is why the successful homosexual is sometimes also the best actor, diplomat, undercover agent, and spy; indeed this very skill in maintaining a façade that convinces the outside world of his “normality” was cited by psychiatric authors of the 1890s as a proof that homosexuality could not be a disease, since the mentally ill are totally unable to orient their behavior with such constant finesse.

Moreover, the homosexual may also harbor a grudge against the society that oppresses him and in rare cases feel justified in harming it as an act of retribution, so that betrayal becomes revenge for past wrongs. John Costello has argued that this motive was important for Anthony Blunt. That he is in certain respects an eternal outsider can deprive him of the final motive for identifying with the governing forces of the society in which he lives. And his involvement in a clandestine network that flourishes in spite of society's prohibitions and sanctions makes him part of a counterculture that can create its own loyalties and direct its own channels of information and influence.

A further consideration is that the sexual activity of the homosexual exposes him to pressure and blackmail if it becomes known to interested third parties. Magnus Hirschfeld and his supporters made this a prime argument for repealing Paragraph 175 of the Penal Code of Germany, but the echo of their propaganda boomeranged when, during the 1950s **McCarthyism**, homosexuals were branded as security risks by the United States Government and dismissed from positions even in areas that had nothing to do with military or diplomatic functions.

The earliest instance of a homosexual's using his contacts for espionage purposes that became publicly known was that of the First Secretary of the French Legation in Berlin, Raymond Lecomte, who infiltrated the circle around Prince Philipp von Eulenburg and revealed to the Quai d'Orsay that Germany was bluffing in the first Morocco crisis (January–April 1906). This episode provoked open charges against Eulenburg on the part of the journalist Maximilian Harden, leading to the trial and disgrace of the Kaiser's intimate friend. Then in 1913 the Austrian authorities discovered that Alfred Redl, the homosexual head of the military intelligence service of the Dual Monarchy, had been acting as a double agent on behalf of Russian officials who had taken advantage of his

need for money. A contrasting case is that of the celebrated [T. E.] **Lawrence of Arabia**, who functioned on his own country's behalf in reconnaissance and subversion in the Ottoman Empire before and during World War I.

More recently, in the era of the cold war the case of two British diplomats, Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, was paraded before the public to demonstrate that homosexuality was tantamount to sympathy for communism and proclivity for treason. The art historian Anthony Blunt was also implicated, but his part in the affair did not come to light until many years later, when he was stripped of his knighthood. It was subsequently claimed that Blunt was the ringleader, using his knowledge of the sexual proclivities of the British establishment for blackmail to advance his work for the Soviet cause.

In February 1950, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin made "sex perverts in government" an issue with which to attack the Truman Administration, and a Senate subcommittee of 4 Democrats and 3 Republicans upheld his charges—even though the only case which it could cite was that of Redl in 1913—after another investigation had accused him of perpetrating a "fraud and a hoax" on the Senate by using unimportant and public information as the basis for groundless assertions, mainly that some Federal employees had been members of the Communist Party. (*See McCarthyism.*)

For two decades a policy of excluding homosexuals from "sensitive" positions prevailed in official circles in the United States and its allies, and it is only recently that the public position of the State Department and other administrative agencies has begun to change. Behind the scenes, however, the reality was probably little different from what it has been in the past, simply because the heterosexual cannot always acquire the art of duplicity which the homosexual must often master as a condition of survival in an unyieldingly hostile environment. The politically

compromising nature of successful espionage—and the fact that records of such operations belong to a nation's most secret and inaccessible files—will keep the full truth from being known for decades if not generations. Only the breakdown of society's taboos could genuinely alter the situation—and perhaps deprive a few homosexuals of the motive for mastering an exceedingly dangerous but sometimes psychologically and financially rewarding profession.

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Warren Johansson

ETHICS

Ethics may be defined as a body of moral principles which are capable of application to human conduct. The term also designates the branch of philosophy that studies such principles.

In recent times the general ethical upheaval in Western civilization occasioned by the decline of Christianity and the rise of relativism has substantially eroded the earlier consensus on ethical norms. The resulting pluralism and openness has had a leveling effect, making it possible for such formerly marginalized groups as homosexuals to have their concerns addressed on the same plane of seriousness as the mainstream. Nonetheless, the lingering sense of guilt that afflicts some gay men and lesbians may foster a gnawing sense that they are somehow deficient in ethical responsibility.

It is a notable fact that homosexuals, a stigmatized minority, nonetheless remain basically law abiding and respectful of the rights of others. They scarcely live in the profligate state of "unconditional self-surrender to the immoral" that is the caricature of the hostile ignoramus.

Ethical Dilemmas of Homosexuals. Few ethical questions are pertinent to homosexuals alone, but several need to be considered as they are of frequent occurrence in daily life.

Older analyses of the matter contain discussions about whether it is right to engage in homosexual activity at all. Those who take this position almost invariably base their arguments on some particular tradition of religious rigorism or asceticism. In the sense that human sex organs make the behavior possible, homosexuality is not unnatural; nor is it per se injurious. It is a reasonable assumption, in view of the collapse of the earlier consensus rooted in Judeo-Christian precepts, that the censorious view that homosexual acts are in and of themselves unethical will continue to recede in prominence and plausibility.

But once this negative and anti-humanistic approach is discarded, other concerns arise. For the practicing homosexual or lesbian, maintenance of the closet—the age-old habit of hiding heterodox sexual preferences—poses a challenge. Should one refrain from coming out to one's parents in order to spare them stress, or will they benefit from the disclosure in the long run? Should an individual refuse to take his lover on a holiday visit to his parents in order to save them emotional turmoil? Is the obligation to live a truthful life higher than the duty to avoid causing others distress? Should one reveal one's sexual identity to blatant homophobes, or to personal enemies who may use the fact to one's patent disadvantage? To what extent is it ethical to "pass" at all? In the heyday of gay liberation in the 1970s it was often maintained that every gay person's obligation is to come out. However, there is general agreement that coming out remains in the last analysis a personal decision; it is wrong to reveal someone else's homosexuality without his or her consent (this reservation is sometimes termed "closet rights").