

homosexual expression as sinful drove him into an absolute and rigorously maintained atheism. Housman's ambivalence about his homosexuality certainly shaped his inner, emotional life; he felt guilty because of his homosexual desires, yet believed them not utterly wrong. In one of his poems he described himself as "a stranger and afraid/In a world I never made" obliged to keep "These foreign laws of God and man."

Once he had crossed the English Channel and found himself in a country where "the laws of man" did not penalize homosexuality, he at once set about gratifying his forbidden cravings with male prostitutes, including sailors, ballet dancers and other inhabitants of the Parisian demimonde. He also frequented the Turkish baths of Paris, and gratified his fondness for haute cuisine which had been raised to its absolute peak by such master chefs as Ritz and Escoffier. Here, too, he could acquire pornographic writings in English, among them works on flagellation, as well as the French and German classics of sexual science. So his double life did afford him some relief from the frustrations of the façade that he carefully maintained while in London and Cambridge—a pattern not uncommon among homosexuals who cannot afford to compromise themselves in the community where they live, but at an appropriate distance lose most if not all of their inhibitions. On a visit to Constantinople Housman admired the features and complexions of the male Greeks and even more of the Turks, in whom he discerned traits of the British aristocracy.

In his lifetime Housman had an ambiance of repressed pederasty, simply because the society to which he belonged would not allow him to be open about his sexual feelings. Only some four decades after his death was the truth about his sexual orientation finally revealed to the world. It does not diminish his stature as a scholar or a poet, but reminds the reader of

his work of the tragedy inherent in the inability of human beings to express their inner feelings or to communicate with one another.

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Warren Johansson

### HUDSON, ROCK (ROY SCHERER FITZGERALD; 1925–1985)

American film actor. Becoming a major star with the release of *Magnificent Obsession* in 1954, Rock Hudson came to personify unproblematic heterosexual masculinity for millions of women. Ironically, for most of his life he was predominantly homosexual. His image was carefully nourished and protected by his agent Henry Willson, who gave him his screen name and identity. Hudson's lack of acting training and flair seemed to help in establishing an air of authenticity that history has revealed to be spurious. When the rumor mills began to grind, and it was feared that the truth about the actor's sexuality would surface in one of the popular Hollywood gossip magazines, Willson arranged for Hudson to court and marry his secretary Phyllis Gates in 1955. They were divorced three years later, and Hudson settled into a series of male affairs, the last of which was with Marc Christian, who went public in a dispute about the star's inheritance. Having been diagnosed with AIDS on June 5, 1984, Hudson first tried to keep the matter secret—to the subsequent distress of his unwitting co-stars and sex partners. As his condition grew worse, however, concealment became impossible, and before his death on October 2, 1985, Rock Hudson's condition and his homosexuality had exhaustively aired in the media.

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