

*The Twentieth Century.* The hypocrisy with which English culture enveloped the phenomenon of homosexuality long obscured the facts of this subculture in the London of the twentieth century. Although English law was as punitive as German, no organized gay movement analogous to the one in Berlin could develop in the British capital, even if circles like the **Bloomsbury** one could quietly cultivate a homosexual ethos in a rarified milieu inaccessible to the British masses. The **theatre** and other cultural institutions were enclaves of homosexual influence, but they always had to defer publicly to the conventional norms of sexual morality. The conviction of Sir John Gielgud for public importuning in 1953 lifted the lid for once on this covert phenomenon.

The campaign for adoption of the recommendations of the **Wolfenden** Report was too limited in its scope and the roster of its supporters to affect the life of the average homosexual in London, which after the austerity of the immediate post-war period changed into the center of a vibrant, influential mass culture. The Beatles and the Rolling Stones were symbols of the world-wide impact of this new wave, which was paralleled by legalized gambling and Carnaby Street fashions that shaped the image of "swinging London." The plays of **Joe Orton** (who was, however, murdered by his lover in 1967) caught much of the wit and nonchalant cynicism of this era. During this decade a commercial gay subculture arose, with its base in the roaring pubs of South Kensington and Hampstead. The police continued even after the law reform of 1967 to harass individuals whom they caught in public places such as parks and "cottages" (toilets).

The **Stonewall Rebellion** in New York in 1969 created American political models such as Gay Activists Alliance which were then imported into the mother country, crystalizing first in a national gay organization, the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE). Those who saw this

group as too conservative and middle-class set up more radical formations, at first under anarchist and then increasingly under **Marxist** auspices. During the 1970s the London-based *Gay News* (now defunct) ranked as one of the world's three or four leading gay newspapers.

The economic setbacks experienced by the country caused rising social tensions, marked by racial disturbances in London and elsewhere. While several London boroughs gave direct financial aid to gay and lesbian organizations, a rising tide of homophobia was abetted by manipulation of the AIDS crisis through sensational articles in the tabloid newspapers. The new political situation—including a solid Conservative majority in Parliament—led to the passage of Clause 28 of the Local Government Act (1988), which forbade local governments to do anything to "promote" homosexuality, yet technical errors in the drafting of the bill rendered it at least partly inoperative. With all the ambivalence of its history, contemporary London is firmly established as a major center of homosexual life.

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## LORCA, FEDERICO GARCÍA (1898–1936)

Poet and dramatist, Spain's most famous author after Cervantes. Born in the southern province of **Granada** and influenced by the Andalusian revival of the early twentieth century, Lorca lived from the age of 20 in Madrid. In the famous "Residencia de Estudiantes," he met and collaborated with such future celebrities as Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, with the latter of whom he had an amorous relationship of several years' duration.

An emotional and literary crisis in 1928 led to an extended visit to New

York and Cuba in 1929–30. With the birth of the liberal Spanish republic in 1931, Lorca moved from intellectual to mainstream circles. The government sponsored his traveling theatre troupe, "La Barraca," which took Spanish classics to isolated small towns. His own plays were produced with success, and he began to receive a significant income from royalties.

The revolt against the Spanish republic in 1936 brought Lorca's assassination by a semi-official death squad. An extensive literature exists concerning the mechanics of and motives for his death, which immediately became an international incident and a symbol of fascist stupidity and anti-intellectualism. Lorca's leftist sympathies, friends, and relatives would be sufficient to explain his execution, but much evidence suggests that his sexual orientation, activities, and writings were at least as important.

Lorca is an exceptional case of an author subject to self-censorship and, after his death, to deliberate manipulation and "cleansing" of his image by surviving family members. As a result his works and thought have been inaccurately discussed, and they remain imperfectly known and in some cases all but unknown. At the time of his death Lorca was best known for his *Gypsy Ballads*, still his most popular and accessible, yet somewhat unrepresentative book. Lesser-known volumes of poetry, and those dramas found unoffensive by his heirs, were published or reprinted in 1938. His central but difficult *Poet in New York*, incorporating an *Ode to Walt Whitman* privately published in 1933, first appeared in 1940; *The House of Bernarda Alba*, suppressed by his family, in 1945. In 1954 his family "rediscovered" the early but important drama *The Butterfly's Evil Trick* ("butterfly" is a Spanish slang term for homosexual). Only in 1974 was the long-unavailable *Impressions and Landscapes* reprinted. The overtly pederastic and Pirandellian *The Public* was published from an incomplete draft MS, over his relatives' opposition, in 1976; the final

text is still unavailable. (The play was very well received when premiered in Spain in 1987; its title has been borrowed for a major Spanish theatrical magazine.) The *Sonnets of Dark Love* were withheld by his family and published clandestinely in 1983. Important juvenilia are only slowly being made available, and of his extensive correspondence only that part without reference to sexual themes has been published.

Lorca was given to discussing works in advance of or during composition. Among those he mentioned are *The Destruction of Sodom*, in which frustration of homosexual desire causes incest, *The Blackball*, "the tragedy of a homosexual in conflict with society," and *The Beautiful Beast*, a treatment of zoophilia. These exist only as tiny fragments or in the published recollections of his friends.

It is difficult and risky to outline Lorca's thought without full access to his works, but it is known in part. Central to his writings is the power, universality, and goodness of the sexual and reproductive instinct, and opposition to forces—especially the Catholic church—which repress and frustrate it. In his plays, many of which have female protagonists, he treats the frustrated desire for offspring; a long religious poem presents a beautiful crucified Christ as a figure of sexual liberation. A second current in his thought is the need for spiritual, cultural, and economic reform of Spanish and world society. Finally, there is the theme of isolation and melancholy. He explores poetically problems of self-acceptance and relating to a hostile world, the difficulty of transcending isolation through love, and a general existential and irresolvable anguish.

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## LOS ANGELES

Today the Los Angeles metropolitan area is believed to be the twelfth most populous conurbation in the world. The growth leading to this concentration is the result of several factors, notably the mild Mediterranean climate, which attracted immigration as well as certain industries not dependent on proximity to raw materials, such as motion picture production and aircraft manufacture.

A number of elements account for the emergence of Los Angeles as one of the leading urban foci of a homophile subculture by the mid-twentieth century. The long stretches of fine beach on the Pacific Ocean, coupled with long summer seasons of good, sunny weather eventually incubated a subculture of bodybuilders and physique photographers that became well-known around the country. Another factor appears to have been a spinoff from the film industry: like the theatre from which it in part derived, Hollywood used the talents of costume and set designers, makeup artists, and hairdressers—all vocations in which the homophile is be-

lieved to be represented in disproportionately high numbers. Another factor may have been religious diversity. Large numbers of Christians affiliated with a great diversity of Protestant denominations, as well as a number of Jews, and some immigrants from Asia who were adherents of Buddhism and other faiths, flocked to California in the latter half of the nineteenth century. As a result, no one denomination established such a hegemony as to be able to dictate moral standards. While same-sex relations were generally anathema to the various denominations for many years, the foundation was laid for increasing tolerance on the part of several of them.

Los Angeles developed its port of San Pedro beginning at the turn of the century, and facilities for maritime commerce emerged at the same time as those to serve the needs of the United States Navy. While many seafarers, whether civilian or military, sought out prostitutes or girlfriends during their time on shore, Los Angeles and its port district of San Pedro and maritime suburb, Long Beach, were no different from similarly situated communities in the development of opportunities for same-sex encounters involving sailors.

*Victorian and Pre-World War I Periods, 1848-1917.* The annexation of California to the United States pursuant to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848 led to the formation of state government in 1849 and admission to the Union the following year. One of the first acts of the new State's Legislature was to pass "An Act Concerning Crimes and Punishments" on April 16, 1850. Section 48 stated: "The infamous crime against nature, either with man or beast, shall subject the offender to be punished by imprisonment in the State Prison for a term not less than five years, and which may extend to life." This was derived from Field's Draft New York Penal Code. The 1880 Federal Census found three persons incarcerated in California for "crimes against nature." In an important