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PEDERASTY. Pederasty is often subsumed within the generic category of intergenerational sexual acts, practices, and identities. Unlike pedophilia, which defines adult male or female attraction to a prepubescent girl or boy under thirteen, and korephilia, which denotes adult female attraction to girls, pederasty specifically defines emotional, intimate, and physical adult male attraction to teenage boys. The contested issues generated by such relationships across a number of academic disciplines, **media**, and cultures give crucial insights into shifting contemporary attitudes related to gender, sexuality, class, race, and most significantly age relations, throughout the twentieth century. Contemporary Western understandings of, and meanings on, pederasty have invariably (yet problematically) drawn on a Classical Greek lexicon, where the term "paiderastia" denoted an asymmetric pedagogical and erotic relationship between an adolescent boy (pais) and an adult male lover (crastes). However, over-reliance on such archaic meanings obscures diverse cross-cultural manifestations of pederastic sexual practices and intimate loving relationships involving adult men and adolescent boys. These have been widespread in different cultures, where they were devoid of a Western homosexual label or social stigma. Historical and cross-cultural variations on pederastic relationships (including the older and younger partners involved) can be explained by differing conceptions of **childhood** and **adolescence**, sexual behavior, class, gender, and various unique, context-specific factors. Such relationships reflected structural power dynamics within the societies in which they were negotiated; many also provided and inspired a rich literature and iconography celebrating male youth aesthetic beauty, reciprocal desiring subjectivities, and close intimate friendships.

Explanations for pederasty vary, and the meanings associated with such relationships are hotly contested. Factors commonly cited include: transferring special charisma to the younger partner; an asymmetric sexual order in which older males inseminate younger; patriarchal and militaristic social systems; adopting particular sexual identity and gender roles; and a youth's coming of age. Strong associations can be seen in pre-twentieth-century pederasty and class. For example, Central America Mayans ritually prescribed pederasty according to political and social ascension, in which noble youth were constructed as objects of **desire** by the leaders of society. European ethnographers in nineteenth-century China described sexual and intimate relations between mandarins and their servant boys, alongside widespread male youth prostitution, and Japanese pederastic practices lasted up until the early twentieth century within religious communities and in Samurai warrior codes.

Late-nineteenth-century Europe witnessed a revival in interest in classical antiquity. In Victorian Britain and Imperial Germany, many educational and cultural elites adopted Platonic notions of "Pedagogical Eros," with paternalistic emphases on mentoring. In early ethnographic interpretations, such "high" European conceptions of intergenerational male love were contrasted with non-European "base" sexual practices, which were depicted as "immoral" and "primitive" (Bleys 1996: 185). Despite such claims, there has been an extensive and long-standing tradition of pederastic relationships between European men and boys in various non-European locations (notably North Africa, Sri Lanka, and the Far East). Recent labeling of such relationships as "child sex tourism" fails to adequately address the extent to which many non-European cultures tolerated and even embraced the educational, financial, and friendship benefits of such contacts.

There is also strong evidence of a thriving underground artistic and literary pederastic movement called the Uranians in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. UK Pederastic themes also emerged in the literature of key writers during this period (Alger and Melville in the United States, Houseman and Wilde in the United Kingdom, and Goethe and Mann in Germany). Whereas in many of these pederastic, cross-class relationships, older middle-class partners often eroticized working-class boys as "transgressive other," contemporary writers (Whitman and Carpenter) provided an alternative, idealistic framework of a democratic cross-class, cross-generational ideology based on male comradeship. In his 1908 anthology of poems, "Iolaus-anthology of friendship," Carpenter dedicates a whole section to Whitman's poetry and philosophy. The theme of male comradeship comes across in Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" (1891) poem, and throughout his life, Whitman established several intense intergenerational friendships, notably when helping wounded young soldiers in the U.S. Civil War.

Pederasty has also been linked with patriarchal **gender roles**. For example, Evans-Prichard conducted a study of sexual relationships between young warriors and boys amongst the Azande of Sub-Saharan Africa. These were organized in fighting units between "abakumba" (married men) and "aparanga" (bachelors) who lived together in barracks. In South Africa, Zulu boy-brides ("inkothsare") accompanied miners on their work. Pederastic attachments even extended to formal marriages between men and boys amongst the Egyptians, Western Australia Aborigines, Inuit, Algerians, and Greek Orthodox Albanians. A long-standing pederastic tradition also exists to the present day in many Arab countries, with a common lexicon in Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, and other languages for adult males who are attracted to boys. Although such ties were instituted and maintained through intimate and romantic associations, they were explainable by factors such as inheritance rights and the segregation of women. Finally, the Melanesian model construed sexual contacts between adult males and boys through the ritual transference of semen to facilitate the male lineage. The Sambias believed femaleness to be innate unless men intervene as "secondary socializers" (trainers, enforcers, teachers, elders and shamans) through ritual procedures in the form of initiation practices to protect them from female contamination, and promote strength.

It has been a widely held view by historians of sexuality that paradigmatic shifts took place in western Europe away from pederastic to androphile (adult male same-sex or gay) relationships as the dominant modes of homosexual desire. By the early twentieth century, in Europe and the United States, an emerging body of moral and scientific literature maintained that the seduction of boys could impair their "normal" physical and emotional development. In the UK, after a series of sexual **scandals** involving

high-profile figures and male youth prostitutes, increasing attention was paid to the seduction of youths by men. Pre-World War I Canada also witnessed an upsurge in middle-class fears of working-class boys being "led astray" by "fallen men."

The social and political context of post-1945 North America was especially conducive for constituting young people within Cold War discourses. Here special attention was paid to "vulnerable youth," with fears that **homosexuality** was predatory, wreaking physical and psychic havoc on youth. Homosexuality was constituted as "un-American" and a danger to children, who were in turn, held up by conservatives as a metaphor for the very future of the West and the associated family and gender roles it represented.

Modern-day critics have imposed late modern victimological discursive formulas, whereby all male lovers of youth are stigmatized as sex offenders, and all initiatory or willing younger partners labeled victims. In contrast, pederastic historians like Brongersma have imported historical sexual practices into modern-day sexuality debates and overly eulogized the romantic and positive aspects, while failing to accept critical aspects of pederastic relationships, including potential power imbalances and harmful consequences. Nevertheless, quantitative research suggests positive accounts from younger males in pederastic relations, conventionally silenced in dominant victimological positions.

Claims for young peoples' sexual rights outside protectionist frameworks highlight discrepancies in the way young people are presented as active agents in some areas, yet constituted as unknowing dupes in sexuality. Here the general sex-negative, ageist Western cultural scripting for adult-child sexual relationships (including state intervention and professional pastoral monitoring) is heavily criticized by child liberationists. Liberationists argue that although children are subservient to adults in all areas of social life, their rights in certain contexts (including financial and political) are institutionally recognized, and youth should be allowed to experience loving and sexual relations with whosoever they choose. Many European countries have reduced their ages of consent, and there is increasing evidence of a lowering of the age at which children have their first sexual experience.

Nevertheless, "boylover" movements, for example, the North American Man Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), have largely failed to achieve their demands for abolishing age of consent legislation, or generate acceptance for man-boy relationships. Their attempts to inject a counter-discourse of man-boy love, in contrast to stressing man-boy sex, have also failed to allay public suspicions. The impetus for maintaining the current injunctions on such relationships can be explained by a long-running campaign by the **gay and lesbian movement** to remove the stigmatic association of homosexuality with the seduction of youth and pedophilia. The near universal adoption of child sexual abuse (CSA) positions by national and global organizations, together with mounting stories drawn from male survivors of abuse, has further entrenched popular attitudes against such relationships. See also Child Abuse; Colonialism/Postcolonialism and Sex; Indigenous Peoples; Mental Health and Sex; Politics; Sex Crimes; Sexual Abuse and Assault.

Further Reading: Bleys, Rudi. *The Geography of Perversion: Male-to-Male Sexual Behavior Outside the West and the Ethnographical Imagination 1750-1918*. London: Cassell, 1996; Brongersma, Edward. *Volume 1 Loving Boys. A Multidisciplinary Study of Sexual Relations Between Adult and Minor Males*. Amsterdam: Global Academic Publishers, 1986; Evans-Prichard, Edward. "Sexual Inversion among the Azande." *American Anthropologist* 72 (1970): 1428-34; Herdt, Gilbert. *The Sambia: Ritual and Gender in New Guinea*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1987;

IPCE. See <http://www.ipce.info/ipceweb/Library/overview.htm>. Research articles, references, and annotated bibliographies; Murray, Stephen. "Southwest Asian and North African Terms for Homosexual Roles." *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 24, no. 6 (1995): 623-29; Rind, Bruce, Robert Bauserman, and Philip Tromovitch. "A Meta-Analytic Examination of Assumed Properties of Child Sexual Abuse Using College Samples." *Psychological Bulletin* 124 (1998): 22-53.

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POLITICS. Politics is the process of group decision-making. Sexuality and politics have often been considered to be of opposite natures: sexuality being among the most private of individual activities and politics an essentially public concern. Yet, the two have had an intimate relationship throughout history and their connection has become even more prominent through the democratization and mass-mobilization of politics. The interaction between sexuality and politics has taken place in two main ways. First, politicians of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have, like their counterparts in earlier eras, attempted to control and regulate sexual activity and **gender roles**. Political concerns and goals have led to the passing of laws promoting or banning various sexual practices and modes of love. But the relationship has also gone the other way as the political process itself has been influenced by issues of gender and sexuality. This can be seen most prominently in increasing participation of women in the political process in countries around the world. It can also be demonstrated by the injection of sexual themes, language, and metaphors into the political process, even when this process is itself not about sexuality.

Beginning in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many states claimed ever-greater powers to regulate their citizens' personal and sexual behaviors. The state often supported religious leaders who claimed to promote or protect a mode of family life they considered under threat from social or technological change. By 1900, many states around the world had outlawed heterosexual **sodomy**, homosexual sex of any kind, contraception, and **abortion**. Non-Western states that did not traditionally revile **homosexuality** often adjusted their legal codes in this way in order to conform to European standards. This was often required in trading agreements and treaties. Thailand, for example, outlawed sodomy in the first decade of the twentieth century for this reason, although its Buddhist religion had long tolerated individuals of same-sex, transvestite, or transgendered identities, together called *katoey*. This standardization along Western lines was a prominent feature of the first half of the twentieth century, as states claimed increasing power over their citizens' sexual behaviors because of the idea that the citizen's body and behavior was of essential importance to the welfare of the state.

During the last half of the twentieth century, many countries re-evaluated their legal codes. This re-created local differences, traditions, and values. Thailand, which decriminalized homosexuality in 1956, is home to one of the world's most vibrant and public homosexual and **transgender** communities. Other countries, like India, have maintained their colonial legacy outlawing sodomy despite local efforts to rescind Section 377 of Indian Penal Code, which was enacted by the British 150 years ago.

Many countries that still restrict their citizens' sexual activities do so largely because of pressure from local religious authorities. In Iran, homosexuality is still illegal under the country's strict interpretation of Islamic law, and is punishable by death in some cases. But the state sponsors and even mandates gender reassignment surgery for male-to-female transgendered persons, based on the idea that they could then pass as women and enter into heterosexual marriages.